

THE LAST MERLIN

By David R Hughes



JULY 22, 2025
INNER PLANES PUBLISHING
Fort Worth, Tx USA

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David R. Hughes was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1948 but lived in Fort Worth, Texas since early childhood except for a four-year stay in Houston, Texas in the late nineteen seventies while performing with his band Merlin. He is a musician, singer, recording artist, sound engineer, and now author, as this is the first book written by him. But this book is not just about music and sound recording for the author is also a devout seeker of spiritual truth. Throughout many years of his search for truth he remained doctrinally neutral from churches and other organizations to objectively explore diverse ideas and sources existing in this spiritually confused world. The Last Merlin is a result of that search. It is a book of history and legend, facts, and fiction as well as truth and deception that will lead you backward through time much as the book's namesake Merlin the Magician claimed to be living his life backwards. After revealing the purpose of Merlin's reappearance, you will first journey to a beautiful new world in the future and drift gently back to the tumultuous period just before its birth. After that you will slide backwards through time to the author's earliest years in music and then much farther back to the astonishing spiritual origin of the throne of England. Merlin will then transport you into the present where he conveys an urgently profound and extremely important message to England and the world through the music of the revived musical group Merlin and their travelling show called "The Gospel According to Merlin". Merlin also exposes an ancient false religion, which was re-established in the world through the magic deception of Simon the Sorcerer. The magical music wand of Merlin now waves across the land for he has returned in Britain's greatest hour of need to proclaim the name of the true high king but this time by revealing the secret of the Sword and the Stone and unveiling the truth of the Holy Grail.

AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

In the year 2007, I transcribed some old tape recordings of my musical group back in the seventies named Merlin onto CD's. This trip down memory lane led me to reflect on some of my life's more significant events including a lengthy search for historical and spiritual truth that covered several decades. All sources of information were acceptable to me going into that search, as I was not associated with any organization, philosophy, or religion although my childhood background was of the Protestant Christian faith and mostly in the Baptist denomination. This book was written because of the conclusions drawn from that search and a recent series of unusual events. Creating the CD inspired me to make a folder for each member of the group containing copies of it and all the group's memorabilia that I had retained. Showing a folder to my wife, Mary necessitated telling a brief history of the group to her. This historical review brought forth from my subconscious mind a long dormant idea conceived back in those days for the group to perform a grand magic illusion within our musical show. After all, our name's sake was Merlin the Magician. Due to circumstances at that time, the illusion which was to make Merlin appear on the stage and then disappear after delivering a message to the world, was never developed. I obtained and customized the plans for a flash appearance portal illusion that I titled the "Time & Space Portal", but the group disbanded before creating it. However, the memory of that proposed magic illusion and the reason for its failure to materialize back then inspired me to write this book and many revealed truths about myself and my ambitions regarding music and illusion magic that compelled me during those years and even in my childhood.

I believe we are at a time in the history of mankind when we must boldly examine our spiritual direction and need to discern for ourselves what is true and what is false concerning spirituality, the world around us and ourselves. We must use the intelligence given to us as human beings and focus on this issue with an open mind because I believe that it will soon be critical to the continuing existence of our lives here on the earth. In writing this book I have chosen to assume that the Bible, which contains the Holy Scriptures of the ancient Hebrews and witnesses to the life and teachings of Jesus (Yahshua) Christ, is true and divinely inspired by God, the creator of all that exists. I have been studying many sources for scriptural interpretations of biblical prophecy and other scriptures since 1976 and have come to an understanding, with much help from those sources, that the Bible in its entirety reveals God's (Yahweh or YHVH) complete plan of salvation for man from the beginning (the fall of man in Eden) to the end of this current age of good and evil, ruled by the fallen angel Satan, and beyond.

Understanding end time prophecies is now critical to our lives so this book was written with great urgency for I believe that everyone will soon be forced to decide what to believe is truth concerning spiritual life and spiritual death. Some will cling to their culture's old traditions while others will accept newly revealed truths and understanding of the scriptures to replace old proven falsehoods. And others will completely reject all religions and the existence of spiritual life including God. Regardless of what we choose to believe or disbelieve, if the Holy Scriptures in the Bible are true

then Yahweh God, who is spirit, not seen with our human, material-oriented eyes, and the creator of all that exists in our universe therefore being the author and the God of truth, is going to reveal the truth of His existence and His true way of life very soon to the entire world. But when He begins to reveal this truth through two modern-day prophets spoken of in the book of Revelation, everyone will be compelled to accept it or reject it and then His righteous judgments will follow. Those who reject His truth and hate His two prophets for the message they bring will be rejecting God, His Law, and His kingdom government that He will establish here on the earth at the return of Yahshua Jesus Christ after His judgments upon the world. I believe that the Boy Scout motto “Be Prepared” is very wise advice especially with regards to spiritual life because it involves eternal life or death. And the only way I know to be prepared is for us to seek for God’s spiritual truth and righteousness diligently and to implore the God of Truth to lead us out of spiritual darkness and into the light of His infallible truth. The only thing that will protect us from the coming great deception of the evil one is an overpowering love of truth. We must love truth more than family, religion, tradition, culture, and ultimately more than our own lives. Truth is freedom. The first chapter of this book is a synopsis of the Arthurian legend for context. The second and third chapters are fictional but based on prophecies in the bible about end of the age events and the coming millennial Kingdom of God on earth. Chapters four through seven are a true account of my musical and personal life. Chapters eight and nine are fictional. The last two chapters contain the present-day message of Merlin to the world and the purpose of Merlin’s return.

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“What is a Merlin?” you may ask. The definition of a merlin in the online dictionary is a small dark falcon that hunts small birds, found throughout most of Eurasia and much of North America. The meaning of Merlin in the Merriam-Webster dictionary is “a prophet and magician in Arthurian legend”. The World History Encyclopedia states “Merlin's character originated in Welsh folklore featuring the Wildman in the Woods motif, a half savage on the fringe of civilization possessing great power and wisdom. Merlin the magician first appears in literature in the History of the Kings of Britain by the Welsh cleric Geoffrey of Monmouth c. 1138.” The most famous version of the King Arthur legend is Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur*, first published in 1485, and another popular Arthurian book, *The Once and Future King* by T.H. White, is partly based on Malory's book.

The Arthurian legend takes place in the fifth and sixth centuries after the Romans abandoned Britain leaving it vulnerable due to a void of unified military power. The Germanic tribes which included Anglos, Saxons and Jutes were a constant threat to the Britons without a unified kingdom. To make things worse, Britain king Vortigern who had previously invited the Saxons to help in an invasion of Picts and Scots had questionable ties to the Saxons undermining the other kings' defenses for his own advancement. Enter Merlin the magician who saw the impending danger and devised a plan to unify Briton under one high king. First, he had to produce a son of royal blood which warrior king Uther the Pendragon, the foremost leader in Britain at that time provided by having Merlin set him up in disguise as the duke of Cornwall so Uther could be with the duke's wife while the duke was in a battle with Uther's forces in which the duke was killed.

As a stipulation to help Uther be with Igraine, the duke's wife, Merlin had required that Uther turn over the infant child of that illicit affair to him which Uther did, and Merlin gave the child to Sir Ector, a nobleman and knight to raise while keeping the truth of his parentage a secret. Uther married Igraine but Arthur was brought up by Sir Ector in an environment with mixed influences of Christianity and the old pagan ways of Druidism. It was a time when Catholic Christianity was rising in Britain, and the Druid's old pagan ways were fading away. When Vortigern invited the Picts to help with the Anglo-Saxon invasion they brought with them Catholicism recently introduced by St. Columba, an Irish missionary. St. Patrick brought Catholicism to Ireland in the 5th Century. However, in the legend, Arthur's actions and deeds as king showed that he had accepted Christianity as the way. When Arthur was a boy, Uther was killed, and Merlin created the sword in the stone to reveal to the Britons who the true king of Britain was. Merlin, knowing who it was to be, released the sword Excalibur from the stone when Arthur attempted to draw it after many knights and nobles failed to draw the sword from the stone. Arthur later proved himself in battle and all the kings and nobles except Vortigern eventually united under him as the high king of Britain and together they were able to fend off the Germanic Saxon

invasion. Arthur often turned to Merlin for personal advice and help with decisions in affairs-of-state and battles because he was considered a seer, prophet and magician or sorcerer and wizard. and he was also Arthur's close friend. That, my friend, was a condensed account of the first Merlin.

After forming the knights of the round table, Arthur sent them on quests all around the kingdom to do good deeds and help people in need. At one point it was discovered that the holy grail, the cup of the last supper with Jesus the Christ, brought to Britain by Joseph of Arimathea after Jesus's death, which had been in Britain's possession was lost. So, Arthur sent his knights on a quest to find the grail and restore it to the kingdom. No one was able to locate the grail for a long time until Percival or Galahad, two knights who were pure in heart, finally found it but the grail was never returned to the kingdom.

Some authors write of Arthur's death and his eventual return and the legend persists that he will come back again to take back his rightful throne at the time of England's greatest peril. And Merlin will play a part in his return to the throne.

Just as T.H. White's book *The Once and Future King* suggests, the story of Arthur and Merlin is not over. There is so much more to the Arthurian legend than you could ever have imagined, as it has profound meaning and earth-shaking implications for our world today and beyond. So, now to finish the story, I will reveal how I have been chosen to be the final and last Merlin. England and its ancient brothers in the United States and other English-speaking countries are once again in danger of losing their freedom and dominance in the world because they have been deceived and are rapidly turning away from truth and justice, and accepting a form of morality based on human selfish desires. In the past, the Merlin used dark arts to accomplish his purposes. His methods included necromancy, divination, magic incantations and sorcery. However, all these practices led to much pain and suffering and the eventual destruction of the intended results. Now as the last Merlin I reject those methods and am resolved to adhere solely to the truth that has been revealed to me from God. I will reveal the true king who will come to take the throne of England. As my predecessor in sixth century Britain tried to bring lasting peace, justice and security to England but failed, I will reveal the truth to the English-speaking people who are ready to accept and walk in the truth. This truth which is void of deception and relativity will save them from slavery and even death. Adherents to truth must love truth more than anything else in this world or fall prey to a grand deception that is soon coming upon the whole world and is in fact already here. I will reveal the high king, not with the sword and the stone, but rather by revealing the long-held secret of the sword and the stone. However, first I must show you a vision of things to come for the ones who accept, love, and adhere to the truth.

Chapter 2 A VISION OF THE FUTURE

I was sitting and reflecting on the passing day's events while observing that golden orb we call the sun drop slowly behind the towering oak trees across the street. As I relaxed on my comfortable front porch bench, considering the peacefulness of the moment, I could only thank God for the peace I had long prayed for. Suddenly two quite friendly and inquisitive neighborhood children, a boy and a girl who looked to be about eight years old walked up to the porch and asked about the story behind the antlers hanging on the wall just above my head. I have told the story many times, but I was always glad to reveal to new curious minds how my life was changed and saved from destruction in the old world before the cataclysmic judgements. These antlers, I told them, were kind of a crown I was given before the fallen world was destroyed. The children whose names were Michael and Maria looked startled and amazed as I continued telling them my previous life of deceit and magic. Then there was a distant calling of the children's names to return home so I told them we could finish the story later. They agreed and happily scurried down the road toward the voice calling them.

It had been a beautiful, mild and sunny Seventh Day of the week in April that began with an outdoor thanksgiving and memorial service under a large open-air revival tent that survived my traveling music show in the days before the final world war. With that well-worn tent always making us feel at home wherever we went, and an eighteen-wheel tractor-trailer rig transformed into a travelling stage, our revived folk-rock group from the nineteen seventies, Merlin performed shows in North America and England. It was our mission and privilege to deliver an astonishing and urgent spiritual message to the old lost and dying world, that played a small part in the birth of this beautiful new world. Just thinking about the old tent makes me realize how much I truly miss seeing my old friends who were part of that travelling show we named "The Gospel According to Merlin". During those years of travelling, the members of the group and our entourage became so closely attached that we were like a large family. The tent also served as a wonderful place to visit, rehearse, play games and have fun during our spare time while on the road. We even had weekly morning worship services in our own friendly, relaxed and casual style beneath its faithful protection. The whole group ended up here in the Rendon, Texas area where we managed to survive through those terrible days after the final war broke out. Rendon is a quaint and peaceful community located in a lush oak forest a few miles southeast of old downtown Fort Worth. Now it seems the tent, a pleasant memory, and an occasional email are all that remains of our travelling family show since the other members chose to return to and help rebuild their respective communities after the war's miraculous abrupt end. Since there were no gas stations in operation Bob, the drummer scoured the area and found just enough diesel fuel to drive the cab from our tractor trailer rig back to his lake house in Weatherford. Claude, the bass player/singer and Linda, our singer and front person, procured several animals, wagons and carts to form a caravan back to the Houston area with hopes of finding some working vehicles with gas on the way. They boldly set out on the long journey with Mike and

Lynn, our security team and a few other production assistants. Now that God has revealed himself to all mankind and poured out his judgments on the wickedness of the old world there is no shortage of believers to fill up the weekly services under that welcoming tent with so many patches and wonderful memories. And still the old tent continues, witnessing and recording a whole new era of beautiful memories.

Some friends here in the Rendon community helped me erect the tent in a peaceful meadow with flowers, tall grass and a few scattered oak trees where we parked the trailer that had been transformed into a stage. We hope to use them for outdoor concerts after they are connected to our local electric grid. The area is nestled just above a natural lake that was created along Village Creek by land movement during the great earthquake. It is located several hundred feet downstream from the old Rendon Road Bridge which somehow survived the quake. Sometimes when it is raining, I like to sit under the tent and read or play guitar and sing because even with all its many patches it still doesn't leak so I feel safe and warm there and a special closeness to God and his magnificent creation. The land had long been abandoned, but before the final war it was beautiful farmland used for growing hay. It flooded often during heavy rain, so it was an ideal spot for the creation of a small lake. A dam that was recently built a few miles farther downstream also keeps the creek at a higher level, making small boat navigation possible between here, Kennedale and the Burleson area where there are other small communities. Today at the tent service we cast lots to select the representative from our community to attend the yearly feast this autumn in Jerusalem. There will be many people attending from New America and most everyone here would love to go. It is mandatory that every year all nations select people from their communities to send as representatives to the feast, and the New Earth Kingdom Government provides round-trip transportation to Jerusalem. I recently read in the New Earth Kingdom News on the restored Internet about a small nation in Europe that was experiencing severe drought because they were still clinging to the misconceptions of the old false religion and refused to send representatives to the feast even though they had been informed what the consequences for their rebellion would be. Before the final war, that area of the world was highly populated and controlled by false religion and it is one of the few places where many of its adherents survived the war and judgements. There is still hope for their salvation as the high king, Yahshua has instigated many projects and programs to reveal the truth and free them from their old misconceptions, fears and superstitions.

The tent service today was a special one because our local Priest-King spoke to us for about an hour on the importance and historical fulfillments of the annual Feasts. He has a gentle voice, yet he speaks with passion, authority and clarity revealing spiritual truth and wisdom that rejuvenates our souls each time he comes. At the end of his sermon before leaving he simply and earnestly said, "thank you all so much for giving me this opportunity to serve you today, Yahweh God is with you" and he quietly walked off into the woods where he vanished. There was a disturbance before the service when three scoffers who live in a small wilderness town near our community walked up to the tent and started yelling obscenities as we prepared for the service. We weren't afraid of

them, but we felt badly that they were reverting to the old world's self-destructive ways of selfishness, anger and hatred. Especially since these were the very things that kept them from participating in the new Kingdom fellowship, they were so envious of. Suddenly our priest-king appeared out of thin air right behind them and spoke. The scoffers who were startled turned around quickly and began to blurt out accusations at him, but he just raised his right hand and calmly said something to them that we could not hear, and they all cowered down and walked away. Evidently the priest had been working towards their enlightenment for quite some time.

After the service, we enjoyed singing songs under the tent until our voices were exhausted. Some of the people in our congregation play acoustic instruments and we learned a couple of new songs together over the past month, so the music really sounds wonderful. It has turned into a rather large community acoustic band and chorus. While we sang songs, others were at the picnic tables we had placed at the back of the tent preparing lunch and making hand-cranked ice cream for everyone. The younger folks who weren't interested in the music were throwing Frisbees, playing games or swimming. From my vantage point I could see everyone under the tent while in the background there were people in canoes and paddleboats on the lake. Cattle, sheep and goats could also be seen peacefully grazing in other areas as the beautiful weather, music, food and sound of children playing in the meadow created a most pleasing Sabbath morning and early afternoon.

The enjoyment continued until late afternoon when we all mounted horses, bicycles and electric carts to head home and prepare for tomorrow's evening block fellowships held on the first day of each week. These get-togethers allow us to become closer acquainted and share the good things happening in our new lives. Now as I sit here relaxing on the front porch a light breeze is blowing, and the leaves are gently whispering. The locusts, crickets and frogs have begun their hypnotic sounds creating yet another forest symphony. The Hispanic family across the street is having a congenial party with guitars and singing on their front porch while young ones from several homes are laughing, frolicking and playing games. People of all colors and nationalities in our community now live, work, socialize and share together as it becomes evident that the racial tensions and prejudices of the previous world have passed away. The small electric cars and golf carts occasionally driving by at a slow relaxed pace are so quiet they don't disturb this peaceful evening in the least.

This is such an amazing life and wonderful time to be alive. I can almost feel the earth healing from the wounds of war and hatred that nearly destroyed our planet just a few years ago. Everyone who survived is fully aware that all life on earth would have been lost if Yahweh God had not intervened by sending His son Yahshua, our new High King and Priest to end the unrestrained evil of men responding to the "evil spirit voice" and take his rightful place on the ancient throne of Israel's king David to rule the nations of the new earth in righteousness and justice with strength and power. Thankfully the awful memories are beginning to fade away as a wonderful new way of life is blossoming before our eyes. Once again, I am feeling very satisfied and totally at peace with life.

These late Seventh Day evenings are when I like to consider all the adventures I will be involved in for the coming

week. On the first day, I have offered to serve the food for a block breakfast we will be having under the massive carport beside my house. A neighbor will be coordinating the cooking and food selection to be served so everyone in the neighborhood is looking forward to another magnificent meal. I have also been asked to read some from the Old Testament Holy Scriptures and explain the meaning of the yearly feasts of God. I am also going to sing Psalm sixty-seven which I put to music and explain how it was a prophecy that is now being fulfilled. I installed a small stage and sound system under the carport for singers and speakers to use on these occasions. To make room for events like the block breakfasts the community council convened last year and decided on a good place to stash all our old gas burning vehicles where they would be out of the way until they could be disposed of properly. Thankfully this new world is not controlled by oil, the blood of the old-world system, and the days of sitting on congested freeways and roads ended just before the war when gasoline became scarce, and all the various types of disasters converged on our nation. Our country's financial collapse along with the great social upheaval and utter chaos rendered what was left of the old government almost useless. There was no money to pay the military or other federal, state and local government services but a few people kept working in the remaining offices out of a sense of loyalty even after the capital was destroyed and the European occupational forces assumed power. With gasoline being unavailable since that time there was no longer a use for any of those old dormant vehicles, and the air was so clean and fresh now that no one wanted to start driving them again anyway. Our new means of getting around by electric cars, boats, golf carts, bicycles, mules and horses provides adequate transportation for our current needs, and we are all healthier and happier for it.

After breakfast tomorrow, I am taking a group of children on a bicycle hike down to the creek to take water samples, which we will send to the county water protection service to be analyzed. I always look forward to these short trips because the children are so well-behaved and eager to learn. It is a great way to have fun while teaching them about nature and its importance in our lives. The counties are much smaller than the ones we had before the war, and they are divided into many sectors for weekly water pollution monitoring. The water protection service determines if anyone is adding or leaking pollutants into the water. We receive regular reports pinpointing any possible violations in our sector and the community council acts swiftly to initiate an investigation and prosecute offenders. All disputes including those over water purity are handled at monthly court sessions in each community and are presided over by judges appointed by the county's priest-king. The Rendon Community Court convenes at a former restaurant now being used for various community activities. Our goal is to keep all the water above and below ground fresh and clean with very little if no additives needed for drinking. Fortunately, here in Rendon we have access to several deep-water wells that have an excellent quality of water. Coffee, tea and water are the primary drinks available to us now as all the soft drink manufacturers, distilleries and breweries closed before the war. Alcoholism as well as drug addiction are no longer a problem, and it turned out that these addictions were in one way or another responsible for a large part of

the crime and sorrow in the old fallen world. There are a few scattered vineyards around for making juice and wine, but those drinks are still hard to get and cannot be counted on. This change in drinking habits along with improved diets has resulted in a much healthier community and greatly reduced the need for medical care. A high percentage of doctors did not survive the war because they were concentrated in big cities which were mostly destroyed and the few that survived now live in communities such as ours and serve them using the bartering system. The local priest-king and his healing touch take care of any major medical problems so there is no longer a need for all the expensive medical tools and buildings that increased the cost of health care so much in the old earth after the insurance companies collapsed financially, that by the final years only the wealthy could afford it.

For the bicycle trip tomorrow, I was told that some extra bicycles would be needed for a few children who don't have access to one. I'm not worried about getting them because I know they will be easily procured from some of the willing neighbors at the block breakfast. Our hiking entourage will make a stop at a recently established park with a large pavilion, picnic areas and camping grounds close to the creek where we will collect water samples. We have already built five such parks, but we have plans for five more, so they will eventually surround the whole community. A series of winding paths and trails connects the parks, so you can walk from one to another enjoying the beautiful sights and sounds of nature. There is a waiting list of residents hoping to become park attendants for the upkeep of the new parks and each park will have a cozy little cabin for their use while on duty. The kids and I will inspect the new park that we visit and clean up, if necessary, but our main purpose is to plant some strawberries, blackberries and a couple of small peach, apple and pear trees so there will be food available to the campground. The area is already peppered with pecan and mulberry trees. When we arrive back here at the house around high noon several of the children's mothers will have a tasty lunch waiting for us. I appreciate their contribution, and I know that for the mothers it is always a labor of love.

When we are finished with lunch, I plan to walk up the hill and put in a few hours of work on the new wind turbine being erected by the Rendon Power Initiative. It is a group effort to provide self-sufficient electric power to Rendon, and every able-bodied man in the area is expected to sign up for weekly time slots to help build and maintain it. Our community of about two hundred dwellings already has six small turbines but the goal is to have ten by year's end. That number of turbines along with the use of salvaged solar panels should supply adequate electricity for everyone hooked into our small grid. We got the plans to build the wind turbines on the Restored Internet from a web site provided by the New Earth Kingdom Government, which has information regarding building or rebuilding everything needed for rural communities still intact to survive. The Internet no longer contains anything lewd, perverted, hateful or offensive. The new government has vowed to deal swiftly and harshly with anyone foolish enough to think they could interject that type of vanity into the new web.

After the final war, there was no power available locally, so we used laptop computers to access the Internet and small

generators to recharge the batteries. The Internet is our most reliable form of world news and personal communication as there currently is no cell phone service. When I was reading current news on the Internet yesterday, I was pleasantly surprised to see a picture of present-day American plains Indians hunting buffalo conveying the message that it represented another step in the progress of earth's restoration. Some of the tribes that lived far away from cities survived the war and have returned to their ancient traditional way of life but now with the guidance and blessing of Yahshua and His law. The wireless towers and satellites were virtually all destroyed in the war, but cable remained mostly intact so that is how the Internet is currently being made available. During that first post-war year we occasionally assembled small caravans with horses and mules travelling into the deserted downtown area of old Fort Worth to siphon the gas we needed from abandoned and wrecked vehicles for our generators. Fort Worth is one of the few large downtown areas that haven't been destroyed by earthquakes, floods, mega-storms, fires or bombs. However, it did not escape financial destruction as well as devastating diseases and now without maintenance it is slowly deteriorating away. The large, concentrated amount of concrete and buildings make it difficult to live in the big cities under current circumstances because food doesn't grow there. Our houses don't require much electricity now since the climate is much milder than it was before the geographical upheavals the earth endured in the years during the final war. Electricity is sparingly used for refrigeration, televisions and small non-battery-operated appliances. All the television programming available is broadcast locally in the old analog format and is for teaching basic educational subjects as well as first aid, farming, ranching, animal husbandry, food preparation and preservation, building and maintaining electrical power infrastructures and water utilities, music, art, and of course teaching God's true way of life. Professional sports in America went away with the economic collapse and then in the rest of the world before the end of the war. But no one seems to miss them with all the exciting things going on right here in our own neighborhood. After being away from spectator sports for so long now I realize that I was continually placing my emotional life in the hands of athletes who were playing a game for money so that when they played well and won the contest, I was elated but when they lost, I was depressed. I was becoming addicted to the elated emotion I felt when my preferred team won a game or made a spectacular play. Now I can see and understand the emotional roller-coaster millions of people were riding by worshipping this second-hand feeling of victory.

Because of the amount of power it consumes, television broadcasting is only provided for a few hours each day. The nuclear power plants that were not destroyed in the war have been shut down safely by the surviving technicians and engineers who are also helping communities all over the world to operate and maintain more conventional forms of electric generation such as hydro power from dams, wind and solar energy.

Whenever we visit old downtown Fort Worth, we like to stop by the zoo to assist the workers who care for and are preparing the animals to be released from captivity. They are teaching the carnivorous animals to eat hay and other vegetation that now grows

abundantly in the wild. For any animal that did not have a mate they arranged with other zoos to provide one from another area. A side effect of the mega-storms is that they spread numerous types of seeds all over the continent so with the mild weather and timely rains there is now edible vegetation everywhere for animals and humans. There are many types of flowers and exotic trees and plants spreading so rapidly that the earth is beginning to look like a true paradise. All the animals seem to notice the drastic change in mankind and are much friendlier now and more approachable. Even the birds are losing their fear of humans.

When I finish working on the wind turbines, I plan to check out one of our community's electric carts and set off on my own personal quest of taking down unneeded barbed wire fences. I have already removed several hundred yards of fences, but I won't be satisfied until all these unnecessary barriers are gone from our area, so people can travel freely across the land without encountering these dangerous obstacles.

On the second day of the week after feeding the chickens and milking the cow I am looking forward to planting my allotment of vegetables in the community garden. My neighbors on each side and behind me joined together to obtain the chickens and the cow and we all share in the responsibilities for their care as well as the eggs and milk they produce. The garden is about two full acres of fertile farmland located close enough to the creek to irrigate when needed. An old-fashioned water wheel lifts the water and lets it drain into a trough made from salvaged rain gutters leading to the garden. Recently we attached a small make-shift generator to the water wheel, so we could have a few lights in the area. We tried to till the ground using an electric cart rigged to pull a tiller, but it wasn't powerful enough and it kept getting stuck, so we had to resort to the old-fashioned method of mule power. Fortunately, there were a few senior citizens in the community who had knowledge of this skill, and they taught some of the young men how to hook up the mules and plow after we found an old one. It is worth all the work everyone puts into the garden to see it in its spring fullness and to enjoy its fruits all year long. I will be planting four long rows of peas and green beans in the next few weeks and will be responsible for monitoring them and caring for them throughout the growing season which now lasts almost all year long. Only the people who work in the garden are allowed to harvest anything from it so there is at least one member from almost every household participating in the work. The congregation provides food for any household that does not have a physically able-bodied worker for the garden so no one in our community ever goes hungry. The earth is now yielding such great increase as Yahweh our God blesses us that there is more than plenty of food for everyone. We also maintain fruit and nut orchards that thrive using the same community based systematic effort.

The third day of the week is one that I have dedicated to camping and fishing. It is something I never had the time to do in those crazy years leading up to the end of man's rule on the earth. Our latest version of a time-share is a campground with a large tent on the creek upstream from the dam. On Third Days, it is reserved for me, but four other families have it on different days of the week. We often let others use our day, so they too can enjoy the peacefulness that it offers. Everyone who uses it is very

conscientious to follow the camping rules and keep the area clean and ready for the next campers. On Fourth Day, all the time-share holders often meet there together along with some of the more mature young ones. We teach them all the aspects of responsible camping and living with nature at these get-togethers. It is always a joy to watch them picking their spots, pitching their tents and carefully setting up their individual camps. In the center of our camping area, we fly the flag of the New Earth Kingdom government just above the New America flag for all to see. This part of the creek embankment has tall grass you can sit on or lay down in while fishing or resting, and just a short walking distance upstream from the camping area there is a small rocky waterfall, which pours into a swollen part of the creek, creating a magnificent swimming hole with a comfortable sandy bank. Pecan, plum, mulberry and peach trees grow wild at this part of the creek and there are blackberry and strawberry fields that provide snacks at any time of the day. Because of the water and the abundance of edible vegetation in this area there are a lot of animals that frequently visit. Even some deer have returned, and they will come right up to humans with no fear at all. In the afternoon, we like to read prophetic scriptures from the Bible and explain to the young ones how some were recently fulfilled, and others are being fulfilled now. At nighttime, we all sit around a campfire by the tents and sing songs, tell stories or just talk. Without the air pollution and the bright lights of the city many people have discovered the new wonder of a starry night. I always enjoy pointing out the constellations to the kids and watching their newfound interest in the stars develop. It reminds me of those wondrous nights as a child when we went to the country and studied the stars in the Boy Scouts. The creek is usually full of water at the camp location and has plenty of fish, so with the fishing, fellowship, endless barbecue cookouts and swimming at the waterhole, there is never a dull moment.

This coming Fifth Day I will spend at home in my office working on a new Internet website. On my personal page it will have an image of Christ standing in a doorway beckoning all to enter through him. Visitors will enter Christ, the door by clicking on it. The door will open and when inside they will find themselves on a road leading to eternal life that runs through a world of heavenly inspired music and teaching of biblical truth and understanding. All the music that is freely offered on the site will be positive and uplifting for the benefit of everyone.

There is a limited postal service running with electric cars between several of our local communities, so we can ship small physical items like compact discs or portable storage devices to others in return for items that we agree to accept as payment. The postal services are privately operated, and they will accept one or more items of value from each person sending something. They hand out lists monthly of goods they need or desire so that we will know what their trading preferences are. The old paper currency is worthless except maybe for starting fires but so far, this bartering system has worked very well in place of it. The new world economy is based on human need and improvement rather than growth and bottom-line profits. There has been no need for a currency so there is nothing to be hoarded or carried around. The old saying that time is money does not apply anymore.

On Sixth Day, I will be in the sound studio recording a new song that one of my neighbors wrote. I also plan to work on a recording of a speech that advocates the song, America the Beautiful for our new national song. The New Earth government has announced that one will be selected from all the entries by the end of this year for New America. Several of the local music fanatics got together with me and remodeled an abandoned game room building nearby into this nifty recording studio, which we named Avalon Sound Studio after my old home studio. That room in my home was changed into a comfortable lounge and game room creating an unintended ironic role reversal for the two facilities. Of course, there is no gambling since all forms of that addiction were outlawed when Yahshua assumed universal governmental power. Solar Panels and a large windmill, which operates a small generator, provide electricity until we get the building hooked into the community electric grid. Fortunately, the studio equipment is computer based while the instruments are mostly acoustical, so it doesn't require much electricity to run. We also duplicate compact discs and USB drives there since CD players, tablets, and laptop computers are now the primary sources of playback. The CDs are used to trade for goods that other people produce or salvage from abandoned properties such as rechargeable batteries, solar panels, building materials, office supplies and electric wire. After adding electricity to the revival tent from the generator attached to the water wheel, we started recording Seventh Day services and duplicating them for free distribution to anyone who requests them.

At the end of Sixth Day in the evenings of Seventh Day Sabbath, it has become a tradition for some of the children in the community to visit the studio. After listening to the latest music recorded in the studio, they like to sit around the control room and listen to stories of life before the final war. For yesterday evening's tale, I collected all the old tapes, CDs, photographs and news articles of the Merlin band and traveling Music Show that I was able to preserve through the troubled war years, so I could tell them Merlin's inspiring testimonial story. The children all gathered around and got comfortable on the studio sofa and some large pillows for the ones on the floor. I spread out the pictures and articles on the floor and lit up a few candles to add more light and create a pleasant atmosphere while explaining to them that the story began when the old world was in its final stages of insanity and although most people were unaware, it was on the verge of colossal changes and massive destruction. The world was starting to go crazy and government leaders were so paranoid of losing power that they squashed free speech and persecuted anyone speaking about prophecies in the Bible about end time events pertaining to their respective countries. At that time, I found myself in a very desperate situation. As crazy as this may sound, I was arrested in Fort Worth to be extradited to England and tried for subversion of the British Throne because of a profound message I had delivered in the travelling music show, Merlin, to many of the British people about Britain's royal throne and their future. But my faith in the Eternal God and his plan of salvation for mankind I had learned of in the Holy Scriptures helped me through those times and he delivered me from the hands of that government, so I could be here now to tell this story. And so, with that small group of excited and inquisitive wide-eyed children, the saga of the Last Merlin began.

It seemed fitting that Merlin's magic musical quest would come to an end in Fort Worth, Texas, where it all began several decades before. The guards in the Tarrant County jail who were sympathetic to my cause snuck in an acoustic guitar for me at my request and my mind wandered back in time to a British musical group from the sixties and seventies, the Moody Blues. Their music was a symphonic light rock style with lyrics of love, peace and enlightenment and my old band, Merlin enjoyed performing many of their songs. I was reminiscing about a verse from one of their early songs, "Lost in a Lost World" and as I began to sing, "I woke up today I was crying, lost in a lost world" a ghastly roaring sound from outside the building interrupted me. I peeked out a tiny slit in the south wall they called a window and saw a large gathering of seemingly insane people celebrating something. It appeared that the booze was flowing as freely as the elated emotions. Suddenly an old car amid the people with what looked like crosses painted on it, which had been battered and demolished for entertainment, burst into flames and the insatiable crowd cheered loudly again. Some were holding up signs that said, "Gay Pride" and others that stated the recent political and legal advances the Gays had made including legalized marriage and the teaching of homosexuality in schools as the preferred lifestyle. Accompanying them was a small group of atheists displaying various signs pertaining to their non-belief in God and denouncing creationism as a myth while proclaiming the truth of evolution, which they had finally succeeded in presenting to all school children, as the only valid explanation for life. After struggling for several decades to achieve legal recognition and universal acceptance these groups were now expressing their jubilation and enjoying the fruits of their many years of persistence against an ever-shrinking Christian resistance to their cause. I could barely make out the words on a battered sign laying on the street that explained what the vial celebration was about. It simply read "REPENT". There must have been a small group of Christians demonstrating at the courthouse that was countered and disposed of by the unruly opposition. Violent and destructive protests were common in those days, and this shocking site only served to confirm to me how far humanity had strayed from grace, truth and wisdom. Yet I knew that when I looked out that window the next morning, all business and human activity would return to its outward disguise of peaceful civility. The scene reminded me of an old original Star Trek episode where the people on a planet called Beta III were ruled by a mysterious being named Landru. His rule was enforced by servants wearing hooded robes called the lawgivers who forced anyone not of Landru's system to be absorbed through a process that put their minds into a state of contented mindlessness. When the Red Hour struck, which was the beginning of the festival, they went wild with debauchery and lawlessness. In the morning, they were all transformed back into pleasant orderly people again but without independent thought. Unfortunately, I knew the horrific display of uncontrolled jubilation here today was being portrayed in many cities

throughout America.

A few years before no one would have believed that Merlin, a resurrected rock music show originally from the late nineteen seventies and now with an extraordinary magic illusion called The Reappearance of Merlin would be responsible for a controversy which would so anger the British government when we made our first and only overseas tour in England. Nevertheless, there I was locked up for extradition to England for subversion and sedition of the British Throne. With the backing of the new leader of the European Union the British government was able to coerce the waning US government to turn us over to them, thus surrendering our right to free speech. I had always considered the message of Merlin to be a hopeful and positive thing for England, and the world for that matter, but the British government didn't see it that way because we told how the throne would be removed from the royal family and taken by Messiah to Jerusalem who's soon coming was imminent. The royals in England had turned away from their heritage relating to the Israelite tribe of Ephraim and descendance from Judah's throne of King David when they drifted from God's law and towards the world's acceptance of paganism.

The European Union wasn't happy with our message either, but we never performed there so we escaped their clutches. The message was not against any people, religion or nation but the enemies of its truth successfully used bits and pieces of it out of context to promote misunderstanding and hatred. Even the Protestant Christian churches, recently reunited with the Roman Catholic church, raised a loud voice against Merlin's message about the new European leader through his benefactor the Pope. Since the show was advertised and opened to people of all faiths it became vulnerable to a few closed-minded zealots who were against any change that didn't agree with their vision for the world. A recent denial of the British Monarchs' true heritage, which connected them to ancient Israel, accompanied by pride and fear of losing power and wealth also led them to accept a false interpretation of the message. The social and political unrest of the British people resulting from questions regarding the succession to the British Throne also fanned the flames of controversy. Then while finishing up our three-month tour of England, the British government became aware of Merlin's message and banned the show. They managed to keep it from spreading beyond the few thousands of people who had seen the show except for a group of faithful fans who went underground to spread the message.

At the end of our tour, we received news that the authorities were going to apprehend the band, so we cancelled our last show in England and went to the American Embassy to ask for help getting out of the country before the English government officials got to us. After returning to the United States the members of the group became deeply depressed because of the British government outlawing our show and so vigorously confiscating all existing advertisements, news articles, videos and photos of the band. It was as if, to the world, the Return of Merlin never happened and no trace of it was left in any form of media. I didn't think something like that was possible but our whole time in England was completely erased and to finish the job they were trying to erase us from existence. So, I tried to cheer them up by reminding them that we all knew it had happened and still had some of the pictures we had hidden away. I

assured them that the truth would prevail in the end. My assurance had a positive effect on the group until we were apprehended at our last concert in Fort Worth.

By this time the children were getting a little restless, so I paused the story for a moment and asked if any of them knew who King Arthur was. I wasn't really surprised that not one of them had heard of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, because life was so wonderful now that people didn't dwell much on old world legends. So, I continued by explaining the band's namesake, Merlin the Magician from the Arthurian legends, was a famous Druid, seer and prophet. Druids were a class of priests in Ireland, Scotland and Wales who also served the people as judges and teachers. They had a strong connection with nature possibly even to the extent of worshipping some aspects of nature. Merlin was also known as a tutor, advisor, wizard and sorcerer. The name Merlin or "The Merlin" is the title for a benevolent Celtic shaman who appears when the land is in great distress and the people need guidance to help them out of a desperate situation.

Some of The Merlin's legendary counts of sorcery during his appearance in sixth century Britain were amazing feats such as moving the giant bluestones of Stonehenge from Mount Killaraus in Ireland to Britain, an engineering accomplishment. His sorcery included disguising King Uther, Britain's foremost leader, as Gorlois, the Duke of Cornwall, during a battle between their two armies. After receiving the disguise from Merlin Uther entered Cornwall castle and slept with Ygraine, the Duke's wife, conceiving Arthur while the duke was killed in the battle. In another example of his sorcery Merlin built a home at the Lake of Diana for Vivian, the love of his life and with his power of sorcery hid her domain so that anyone passing by would see only the lake. He was most obviously in the legends a master sorcerer. The Merlin mostly practiced white magic or sorcery intended for the benefit of others, but he once used magic against Morgan le Fay, Arthur's half-sister, who was trying to destroy Arthur through her son Mordred who was also Arthur's son conceived by Morgan le Fay's sorcery. She blamed Merlin for the death of her father, Gorlois, and her vengefulness compelled her to learn sorcery to destroy him and Arthur. Merlin was also believed to have been a bard or poet, and lawgiver in southern Wales. At this point in telling the story, I had to pause and make sure the children were aware that sorcery and all sexual immorality are strictly forbidden by God and are against God's eternal way of life.

Young children of this new age are very intelligent and able to absorb tons of information, so I continued with the story of Arthur and Merlin. Now children, the Arthurian legends are about a time around the fifth and sixth century in Britain when the Saxons coming from Germany and the Angles from South of Denmark were invading England. The Romans vacated Britain about 410 A.D. leaving the Celtic people of Britain without a strong army to defend it. There was continual fighting between the kings and dukes scattered throughout Britain and they were in grave danger of losing their land to the Saxons because of their division. Merlin then received the Sword of Power named Excalibur from the Lady of the Lake and magically set it in a stone. He conveyed to the Britons that only the true and rightful king of Britain would be able to remove the sword from the stone but everyone who tried failed. Then Arthur, who was the son of the recently deceased king Uther Pendragon, although he

and the people did not know it, successfully pulled the sword from the stone. Merlin revealed Arthur's true heritage to the people and eventually he was accepted by all as high king and was able to unite the Britons and defeat the invading Angles and Saxons. He ushered in the age of chivalry by creating the Knights of the Roundtable who went throughout the land doing good deeds and confronting evil wherever they found it. In one version of the legends, the roundtable was designed and constructed by Merlin who modeled it from the Grail Table created by Joseph of Arimathea.

The Holy Grail in the Arthurian legends was the cup used by Jesus and his disciples at the last Jewish Passover meal before Jesus was killed as God's ultimate sacrifice in place of mankind for our breaking of God's laws which required the penalty of death. Jesus's willing sacrifice had been depicted in the Jewish Passover ritual law since the night before the Israelites were freed from slavery to Egypt hundreds of years earlier. On that last night in Egypt, they were instructed by God through Moses to kill a spotless lamb representing the coming sinless Messiah and spread some of the blood on their doorposts so the last plague on Egypt would not harm them. That night God's angel of death would kill the first born of every family and their animals, but the angel would Pass Over any house with the lamb's blood on the door post. Of course now if we believe that Jesus was truly the son of God and he was resurrected by God to life from death and we acknowledge our sins to God and repent of them by completely turning away from that sinful lifestyle, God will forgive our sins and not require the death penalty by giving us eternal life at the resurrection when Jesus returns to establish the kingdom of God on earth.

The cup was considered holy because it was to have once contained blood from the crucifixion of Jesus after he was pierced with a spear by a Roman to prove he had died. It was brought to Britain by Joseph of Arimathea after Jesus the Christ was crucified when Joseph received a grant of land near Glastonbury from a king named Arviragus who had fought against the Romans in earlier years. Joseph knew Arviragus from the past when he sailed to Britain with young Jesus to buy tin which he sold to the Romans. At that time Glastonbury was an island called Avalon where Arthur was taken after being mortally wounded in battle with his son Mordred. Arthur also built the great city of Camelot and peace prevailed throughout Britain during most of his reign.

During an ill-advised fight with Lancelot before Arthur knew him, Arthur broke the sword Excalibur because he was using it for his own selfish, egotistical purpose against a just man. Before either man was killed Arthur repented and Lancelot became his best knight. Arthur threw the broken sword into a lake where the Lady of the Lake repaired it and then offered it back to him. In a different version of the legend this fight was with King Pellinor instead of Lancelot. Later, Queen Guinevere and Lancelot fell in love and had an illicit affair but were caught and Mordred used the incident to condemn Lancelot and Guinevere to death according to the king's law. That was the reason for the war between Arthur and his son Mordred. Although Arthur and Mordred killed each other in a battle, it was believed Arthur would return at a desperate time of turmoil in the future to unite Britain once again.

Meanwhile, Merlin had fallen in love with a woman named Vivien or Nimue who did not love him. However, she coveted the

knowledge and magical powers Merlin possessed so she used his love for her to convince him to teach her. After several years of apprenticeship under Merlin she gained all his knowledge and power. Eventually she used this power against Merlin to lure him into a cave and seal him in a rock. Merlin's lust for Vivien had blinded him to her true motives and even though he knew what his fate would be he was unable to stop himself.

The part of the Arthurian legends involving magic and deceit led me to giving the children another lesson in Biblical morality. So, I told them, now you all need to know and accept that the eternal God is against using any kind of sorcery or witchcraft and it is sternly prohibited in the holy scriptures. As you can see from the use of sorcery in the legends, the outcome always had bad results even when it was used believing it was for a good purpose. Children in this new age are quick to accept and abide by the truth in the holy scriptures and they all appeared to agree with what I said.

The idea for the Reappearance of Merlin illusion was conceived back in 1977 while I was playing in the original Merlin band. At that time, the reappearance illusion never materialized because I didn't know what Merlin would do or say after he appeared. It wasn't until 2007 that I reflected on the events of my life after many years of searching for spiritual truth that I realized what Merlin's new mission could be. In the years of the seventies Merlin band, before I was converted to true Christianity without the addition and substitution of pagan traditions, I had long believed that magic illusions influenced the mind to question reality, and that music is one of the most effective means for reaching multitudes of people with our ideas. So, children, I do confess to using these two vehicles in the form of Merlin the Magician's return to convey a profound truth to the world regarding the Throne of England and the true King. A message so shocking that if not presented through music and magic, most people would have otherwise never opened their minds and hearts to it.

Now children, I said, try to imagine what it was like for the band Merlin and myself in that crazy time before the last days of the age. I recall being in that jail cell was quite a contrast from the previous night when Merlin was performing on stage in what would be our final show at a park near downtown Fort Worth. We were just beginning the Reappearance of Merlin illusion when police rushed the stage and took the band into custody and confiscated our magic apparatus. Fortunately, my wife, Mary, did not go to the concert, so she was spared seeing the humiliating scene. After being incarcerated I was silently wishing I could contact her to let her know I was all right and while pondering that thought, suddenly one of the friendly guards walked over to my cell and whispered secretly "Hey Merlin, you want to use my cell phone?" I quickly replied, "Yes, but please don't call me Merlin. My name is David". He just shrugged his shoulders and said, "Okay Merlin, whatever you say". The children chuckled at that, but I could tell they were beginning to get tired as it was getting late, but I continued for a while longer. I explained how some things seemed to magically come to me when I needed them, so this time was no big surprise. As for the name, I had unwittingly assumed the ancient position of "The Merlin" by bringing the previous Merlin back into this world. The many attempts to stop fans of the show from calling me Merlin while off-duty so-to-speak were mostly futile, but I kept trying. Not wanting

to get the guard in trouble, I sent a quick message to Mary letting her know I was fine and handed the phone back to him.

That night as the police were escorting me off the stage I looked back and saw Bob, the drummer and singer who had reluctantly, because of his ailing knee, joined me in the rebuilding of Merlin. He was hobbling off willingly in the hands of an attractive female officer so I figured he would easily survive the ordeal. I had known Bob since I joined a band starting in my first summer out of high school named The Gentlemen in which he played drums. We both attended schools in White Settlement, Texas although he was two years ahead of me. While attending Junior High School I remember the first time I saw him which was at a High School Powder Puff football game where he dressed up as an extremely well-endowed woman, staggering as if drunk across the field, smoking a big cigar and blowing the smoke out through his trombone as he played. It was quite a comical scene, and I will always have that picture in my mind, as it was my first impression of him. His son Garren, who had agreed to join us as a sound and light technician and as a back-up drummer for Bob, disappeared into the crowd and was able to avoid being arrested. He was an energetic young man of average height, slender physique and coal black hair like his dad in his younger days. Garren and I once worked on a job for a local wholesale food and tobacco company in Fort Worth that required us to travel to Oklahoma City for several days. On our way to Oklahoma, we talked some about a church named the Philadelphia Church of God, which I had recently become familiar with and some of their beliefs about Britain and the United States in biblical prophecy that eventually put me on the path to this current fate. The church had its headquarters in that city, so we made a brief stop on the way home and I met some of the members and picked up some reading material from them. We also talked about his aspirations to be a police officer and got to know each other somewhat on that trip.

Claude, the bass player, singer and songwriter, was dragged off kicking and screaming. He was yelling out "You can't do this to us; we are law-abiding, taxpaying citizens and we have rights". I think he was trying in vain to draw more of the police to him so I could have a chance to get away. Claude is a jovial fellow of medium height and strong stature. His long brown hair and a distinguishing mustache made him stand out in a crowd. He attended high school in Houston, Texas and played in Country & Western bands there before hooking up with Merlin.

Three young male officers quickly surrounded Linda, the singer and songwriter but it appeared as though she was charming them all the way to the squad car smiling, laughing and signing autographs. It wouldn't surprise me if she had managed to lock them all inside the car and walk away free. Linda's petite size, bubbling personality and generous smiles had always captivated our audiences and in this situation, I'm sure, served her quite well.

Then I caught a glimpse of Mike and Lynn, my two Houstonian friends blending safely in with the crowd. They joined the group to help with security and transportation. I spent many days with Mike in Houston back in the seventies fishing and relaxing at a local lake there. He was dark-skinned, suave man of Italian descent who enjoyed being around the members of Merlin. He was also self-confident and somewhat of a philosopher being well read so we discussed diverse subjects stretching from religion to war and peace.

Back in those years Mike managed a bowling alley in a Houston suburb, and he gave me a few bowling pointers that really improved my game. Lynn was a tall, lanky, friendly, obtainer of things and “gets it done” person. He helped us gather the materials to put together a stage light system back in the original Merlin days and provided a place for us to rehearse when we expanded from a duo to a trio. I am proud that so many of my friends risked their freedom and even their lives to help deliver Merlin’s urgent message to England and to the English-speaking people of the world.

It was getting very late, and I could see the children were now too tired to stay with me and some were starting to nod off. So, I told them we would continue the story at another time, and I dismissed them to return to their respective homes. Even though it was late, I knew the parents weren’t worried about them because they knew the children were safe at the studio with me, and the old-world storytelling had become a cherished custom they loved and always looked forward to. Most of the time one or two of the parents came along to listen and they also enjoyed the music and stories.

After everyone had left the studio, I couldn’t help thinking about that trip down memory lane, so I sat down in the comfortable studio control room chair, closed my eyes and continued the story in my mind as if the children were still present. Now where was I? Oh yes, I was telling about the end of the Merlin band and the inglorious fate of our travelling show, *The Gospel According to Merlin*. I remember now how I looked around at those cold, colorless jail cell walls and pondered my fate as well as the amazing chain of events that led me there, it was very humbling. The belief that I had always been in control of my life was just an illusion as I realized I could never have made it to where I was spiritually without supernatural guidance and help all along the way. I learned that once you devote your life to truth and love, it is no longer really your own. It was astounding to me that an average musician, singer and songwriter such as myself could have had an impact on significant events in the world. Although my situation was dismal, I still considered myself fortunate to be sitting there in that cell knowing I shared a similar fate with many other figures in history that attempted to deliver profound truths to the world and were imprisoned for it. I suspect that many of those historical giants may have also considered themselves to be average and ordinary just as I did. One person’s life doesn’t seem like much when considering the universe and eternity but now I know that one person on a quest of finding and knowing the truth while guided by the spirit of truth can move mountains. I was thankful for having the opportunity to reflect on my life and see the spiritual significance of events occurring over the previous years of my life. It was clear to me that all those events had led me to that very moment and were all necessary to my contribution in the making of history.

I knew that the old world was filled with much evil, but I continued to hope and pray for a world where there was no hypocrisy, hate, greed, fear and all the destructive ways that kept the world in darkness. My hope for the earth was that all creatures, humans and animals would be able to roam freely and peacefully across its surface without fences, going wherever their hearts’ desires lead them. Mountains, valleys, hills, prairies, deserts, plains, forests, streams, rivers and seas are all sources of tremendous beauty and should be available for everyone to freely and responsibly enjoy and experience peace in their lives. If our greed, arrogance and pride had

not led us to subduing the North American Indians and taking away their way of life, we could have learned valuable lessons from them. A free and friendly exchange of knowledge between our two cultures would have been very beneficial to both. The Plains Indians such as the Sioux had always lived freely with nature, so they did not accept the concept of owning land, as it did not appeal to them. Many of the European American's had an arrogant, narrow-minded view of the Indians, conveniently lumping them all into one group of heathenistic, warring peoples. Their possessions were limited to what they could carry from campground to campground including the items necessary for survival and their way of life. Fortunately, some Native Americans held onto their traditional ways and managed to resist the destructive practices of Western Civilization. A few of their traditions were incorporated into the teachings of American organizations such as the Boy Scouts giving young men a small glimpse into their way of life. American Indians acknowledged "The Great Spirit" or creator as well as an evil god causing disaster, suffering, and death. Some tribes also believed in an afterlife and the immortality of the human soul. They felt a kinship with plant and animal life as the material and spiritual worlds existed as a unified realm of being. Believing that spirit existed in all living things, they held all forms of life in reverence and turned to their ancestors and The Great Spirit for guidance. Of course, they are now being taught to worship the true eternal God of creation in truth and in spirit.

I came to realize that our modern civilization with all its cities, commerce, conveniences, and modern transportation systems including automobiles, trucks, trains, buses and airplanes may have provided comfort and mobility in many ways, but I also became aware of the tremendously high price we and the environment paid for them. All those things reflected the restless and busy lives of the people they served so I asked myself, "How necessary for a fulfilled life are these noisy, pollution-making machines anyway?" All our modern conveniences became such a burden that they prevented most from having fulfilled lives. It seemed impossible to return to a simpler life as the worldwide bestial system demanded that we participate in it or die without allowing any other options. I began to understand how the American Indians must have felt when their way of life was being squeezed out of existence by greed and selfish pride. The world system's prosperity had resulted in private ownership of so much of the land by individuals, businesses or governments that we could only walk a few steps before encroaching on someone else's property. Even in the great national parks and forests people were herded together into crowded, noisy campgrounds while all the other areas were off limits and posted with no camping and no fire signs. Although Americans were considered free by most of the world, it was obvious to me that we were not free because we were slaves to the great materialistic world system, which we had built, but was controlled by the unseen spirit ruler through the minds of selfish and greedy humans. Our lack of freedom was especially evident during that time of such a great, numerous population that filled the earth with so many people. So many people lost in a lost world. There was that Moody Blues song again. I couldn't seem to get it out of my mind.

Chapter 4 CONCEPTION OF THE BAND MERLIN

In my early teenage years, I acquired a love for magic and for music. I was intrigued by magic illusions since my childhood when I used allowance and lawn mowing money to purchase small illusions and books of magic by mail order that I performed for family and friends. My first encounter with Merlin the Magician was in the movie Camelot as it was for millions of other people in the late sixties. My love for music began when I learned to play the trumpet, which I played in bands throughout my school years. In Junior High School, with several of my friends in the school band, we formed a small combo that we named The Texas Twisters. That combo played popular fifties music at several functions in White Settlement schools. While attending High School I also learned to play guitar and formed another small combo with my brother Howard and some other friends from school, Gary Ottwell, Gary Archa and later Larry Tidwell, which performed at the local youth center, private parties and several "Battle of the Bands" contests. We named that combo The Outlanders. Shortly after high school graduation in 1967, the love for music and desire to perform led me to join a rock & soul dance band named The Gentlemen. I played in that group while attending college for three years majoring in trumpet with a minor in music. The group was locally popular as Little Joe and the Gentlemen in the early sixties but had split up when the singer, Joe Pfaff, went into the armed services. Some of the original members along with some new ones were reforming but without Joe at the time I joined. That was where I met Bob King who was to become my long-time drummer friend. The Gentlemen band was moderately successful performing for local clubs, special occasions and college dances throughout the Dallas, Fort Worth area. We had several changes in membership before settling in as an eight-piece band. Bob was replaced with a drummer, James Williams whose nickname was Smiley, and Jamie Kendrick, our lead guitar player and leader, who later quit so I assumed the position of lead and rhythm guitar player and the organizational structure of the band became democratic. John, the bass player, was replaced with Gary Boyd, an old friend of Bobby Albin, the singer. Gary and Bobby Albin were members of the original Little Joe and the Gentlemen. Then Bobby, the singer, quit the band due to a fall-out with Smiley and was replaced with Jimmy Fuller, a friend of Smiley's. Later we added Keith McElvain, who was a trombonist, and Tommy Abshire, a trumpet player I knew from college. After all these changes James Miller, the saxophone player, and Steve Hunter the organist were the only members left from when I first joined the group. It sounds comical now but many groups in those days played this sort of traumatic musical chairs.

A nightclub named Omar Khayam's in Fort Worth became The Gentlemen's home club in the late sixties. It was a rough place known for fights and brawls and we got to see our share of them. Whenever the chairs, tables and beer pitchers started flying the band would use microphone stands, instruments and leg kicks to fend off the encroaching madness until the bouncers arrived to put out the fire by escorting the offenders with legs kicking and arms flailing to the door where they would continue out the door to a solo flight into the parking lot. It was good to know that those bouncers were our friends and always looking out for us but sometimes I worried that they might not be able to survive one of those vicious bar room brawls

which would occasionally end the night's business for the club. The guys in the band and everyone else there drank a lot of beer every night and we placed our bottles on top of the guitar amplifiers. The empty bottles accumulated on the amps and served as self-deluded trophies of our drinking abilities. I drank my share for show but never developed a taste for it, so I finally quit drinking beer a few years later when I finally realized it wasn't necessary for me to continue playing that senseless charade.

While playing at Omar Khayam's the Gentlemen built a good following and began to prosper. We rented an old abandoned Dairy Queen in downtown White Settlement which we cleaned up and converted into a practice room. Everyone pitched in and furnished it with used chairs and other comfortable furnishings we could obtain at no cost. The building came complete with restroom, electricity and running water so it quickly became a favorite place for the band and some of our following to hang out. By early 1970 I had grown weary from the strain of working and going to college full time, so I dropped some of the courses in music that I didn't care about and an algebra course I was having difficulty maintaining a good grade in. Dropping those courses caused me to lose my full-time student status, which made me eligible for the military draft.

The Vietnam War was going in full swing and so many men were being killed every day that the government increased the draft by creating a lottery based on birthdays. I considered it to be a lottery for death and unfortunately the number for my birthday was one of the first ones drawn from the rotating drum, so without the student deferment it looked as though I would be drafted into the army. I was one of the many at that time who was against fighting the seemingly pointless, futile war with no end in sight and I did not want to pursue a military career so I knew that if I was drafted, I would be an expendable pawn on the front lines and would most likely not survive, being placed in a kill or be killed situation, and that was unthinkable to me. The thought of killing anyone was extremely repugnant and the military had to train men to become killers. Of course, the thought of being killed or maimed myself was also repugnant.

Then it occurred to me that there might be a way to avoid that fate. Since the time I was about ten years old I had suffered occasional episodes of bronchial asthma so I went to the old family doctor and asked him to write a letter that I could submit to the draft board stating that I had asthma. He reluctantly wrote that I had been treated for asthma once at an early age even though I had gone to him several times in the years since that time getting increased dosages of a cough syrup type of medicine, he prescribed that didn't have any effect on me anyway. So, it looked like I would soon be carrying a rifle and dodging bullets in Vietnam. After sending the letter to the draft board I waited anxiously for either a draft notice or a medical deferment. A few weeks later I was greatly relieved when I received a medical deferment, and I did not have to experience the evil of the war in Vietnam. Many years later I realized that for all those years I spent suffering with asthma, praying for God to heal me and asking why I had to suffer with it, the asthma was a blessing in disguise for keeping me out of that horrible war. If only no one had been forced to be involved in its vanity and waste of human life on both sides. In retrospect, I see that my question of why I had to suffer with asthma was answered and just a few years later I was introduced to a doctor

who prescribed me medicine that actually worked. The asthma attacks decreased more and more with the passing years until at about the age of forty years when they ceased completely, and I was healed of that condition. Those childhood prayers for healing were answered in God's time and for His purposes.

While working with the Gentleman I met and fell in love with Peggy McDonald, my first wife. She had attended White Settlement schools also but was two years behind me, so I didn't know her during that time. When we first met in the summer of 1970 I was struck by her beautiful, tanned skin, stylish short blond hair and warm, friendly personality and smile. I was honored that she wanted to meet me, so I asked her to go with me to the Four Seasons nightclub in Fort Worth where we were playing. We quickly became close friends and were inseparable during the band's breaks. After a few months of dating, we decided to be married and set the date for December 15, 1970.

On the night before the wedding several guys in the band convinced me to visit some Dallas nightclubs for a bachelor's party. On the way, they stopped at a store and bought wine and beer to get started then we went to a men's club where I drank a Hurricane and became somewhat drunk. On our way to the last club, which was called The Losers Club, I decided to stop drinking and sober up so I would be able to function when I got home and the next day at the wedding. I did sober up well but while riding in the car back to Fort Worth, I became extremely ill from the alcohol, and the guys had to make several stops for me to heave ho on the shoulder of the highway. Because I managed to become sober, I was completely aware of the horrible sick feeling and remembered it well, even to this day. Since that experience, whenever I drank alcohol and got even just a little buzz from it, I would flashback to the bachelor party and stop drinking immediately because I never wanted to go through that self-inflicted sickness again. Considering all the alcohol I was offered and exposed to in the following years at nightclubs, that one single event probably served to keep me free from alcoholism, which was a big problem for many club musicians. The next night the entire band, wearing our classy uniform suits, was included in the wedding ceremony at a local Baptist church and they were matched by an equally impressive set of beautiful bride's maids. My brother, Howard was my best man and Jim, the singer in the band, sang a beautiful rendition of the song "The Twelfth of Never" and it was truly a night to remember. Our honeymoon at a local hotel was partially spoiled by some of my high school friends who discovered where we were staying and messed up the room before we got there. We tried to get another room, but none were available. It really didn't matter too much because we were so glad to be together.

Earlier that year, The Gentlemen purchased a 1955 Greyhound bus with a double clutching standard shift and worn-out reverse gear. Keith, the trombone player, and Jim, the singer, took on the task of driving the behemoth vehicle while the rest of us became a band of nervous navigators and back seat drivers. We tore out most of the back seats to make room for equipment, had some minor repairs done and loaded up the bus to set out on our first road trip. It didn't take long for us to start learning temporary fixes for diesel buses because it broke down on our first road trip to Buffalo, NY. It was mid-winter and one of the suspension air bags on the bus punctured so Jim crawled under the bus to check it out and hopefully

repair it. We ended up having to take it to a truck repair shop, but the weather was so cold and rainy that Jim ended up with laryngitis, which affected his voice and our shows for several weeks. Another time the air compressor belt broke, and Jim got it working again with a lady's nylon stocking.

Peggy couldn't travel with me on the road at first but after a few weeks on our first road trip she joined me at a job up North. However, life on the road for a musician's wife can be very boring at times and it wasn't long before she chose to stay at home in Fort Worth while I traveled. Later she travelled with me to Los Angeles where the group signed a recording contract with a well-known music producer/songwriter in Hollywood and recorded a single record. While recording in Los Angeles our name was changed to Angus by the producer and the democratic structure of the band was replaced with a single person leadership having complete authority. Smiley, the drummer, was chosen as the leader by the producer to communicate with on behalf of the group. On that trip, the group also worked in Orange County near LA for a few weeks. Some of us stayed at a nice little motel on the beach where Keith and I spent several days body surfing with small inflatable rafts. One day we got caught in a riptide and both of us almost drowned. It took all our strength to battle the breaking waves and slowly fight our way back to shore. When one of those big waves breaks over you it tosses you helplessly around like a leaf in a whirlwind, so you can't tell up from down or right from left. After you finally recover from it you find yourself farther out to sea than you were before. Keith told me about a lesson in relativity he learned after being in the cold Pacific Ocean for several hours. When we returned to our motel rooms after surfing, he decided to take a hot shower. In a few minutes his wife, Jan, got the notion of joining him but when she stepped in the shower she began screaming and jumping out as fast as she could. Keith's body temperature was so cold from being in the ocean that he thought he was taking a hot shower, but it was almost ice cold.

Angus was persuaded by our producer to accept a manager from Los Angeles, which some or maybe even all of us soon became disappointed with because as far as we could tell he did nothing except arrange one job, which was for less than our union's minimum wages. When the group returned to Fort Worth, we played a few local clubs there and in Dallas. After playing a job one night in Dallas, I drove home to Fort Worth at about two thirty in the morning and fell asleep at the wheel on a freeway going about sixty or seventy miles per hour. My car headed straight for the concrete embankment at a bridge but just a few yards before hitting it, I suddenly awoke and was able to swerve quickly to the left and just barely miss what would surely have been a fatal crash. I wondered what made me wake up just in the nick of time and concluded that it must have been God or an angel because I was completely asleep and there was absolutely nothing else to waken me. A few weeks later the start of another road trip took us to Indiana at a lake resort called Indiana Beach. It was in the late spring of 1971 and Peggy went with me to Indiana but while there we decided to separate. Her heart desired a home and family, but my heart was still in music, the road and the pursuit of fame and fortune, which I was unwilling to give up. Ultimately, being apart from Peggy, so much of the time because of the road trips had proved to be too detrimental to our relationship. We remained separated until we were finally divorced later that year.

A change in the direction of Angus by the new leadership soon led to a growing split in the group. Tommy, the other trumpet player, had already left so the remaining horn section consisting of trombonist Keith, saxophone/flute player James and myself split from Angus along with Steve, the organ player who joined us. The remaining members of the group, Smiley the drummer, Gary the bass player and Jim the singer were very displeased with this rebellion and the ending was not pleasant.

Several weeks before playing the final gig as Angus, the members of the rebellion began to form a new band, which we named Colossus. This group was a show and dance band that performed a variety of pop, rock & roll, jazz rock and soul music. Gary Carpenter, a locally well-known singer from "The Jumpin' Jades" of the Sixties in Fort Worth, joined Keith, James, Steve and me in the new endeavor. Also, Fred Cox, a top-notch lead guitar player and singer who once played with another popular group, the Big Beats, joined the group. To finish out the group we added Tommy Beavers, a left-handed drummer who was an excellent drummer. Later, Tommy quit and was replaced with Chuck, a North Texas University music major who was also an excellent player. We did not originally have a bass player as Steve the organist doubled on the bass keys but later when Steve suddenly quit the band we brought in John aka Rick from Haltom City, Texas, who filled in on the bass and really helped us out in a bind. Rick fit in well with the band and became an integral part of our shows by performing some comical skits, most notably as "Cowboy Burt". We discovered that the old Gentlemen's Band Bus had been abandoned by Angus, and we were able to acquire legal rights to it. We also bought an old Cadillac hearse and traveled throughout the Midwestern USA having a good time creating shows and performing. Our most successful show was titled "CIA", which was an acronym for Colossus Intergalactic Airlines. It included several popular songs referring to space travel and a very funny skit about a person having a job interview with a computer. My favorite show was titled "America", which contained several popular songs about America and others about life in America. I sang the widely misunderstood song by Mark Lindsey, lead singer of Paul Revere and the Raiders, titled "Do You Miss America". In the show, there was a funny skit about big city traffic using a strobe light on the dance floor, small four-wheel dollies to sit on while moving around the dance floor with simulated toy steering wheels held in our hands. A recording of noisy traffic sounds and people yelling and honking at each other in traffic was played to accompany the scene on the dance floor. Also included in the show was a comical song by Jerry Reed titled "Another Puff" about a person's attempt to stop smoking in which Steve, the organist, hid behind a huge box of cigarettes puffing smoke out the top during the intro, then jumping out to sing when the first verse began. Everyone in the band really liked doing that song and thought it was hilarious, but audiences usually had no reaction to it at all. I suppose it was because during the early seventies it wasn't popular to be on the stop smoking band wagon because so many people smoked and didn't want to hear that kind of satire. The road trips also had plenty of arguments, misunderstandings and petty bickering but through it all we managed to remain friends and create many good memories.

In the fall of 1972 Colossus was performing at a club in Houston where I met Linda VanWaters who would eventually

become a co-founder of Merlin in a few years to come. I was originally attracted to Linda's friend Joey and started seeing her while in Houston. Several weeks later they came to Fort Worth to see the band, so my friend and then roommate, John Boshers, and I took them on a double date to Dallas where the band was playing. After partying that night, it was very late, and we were too tired to drive back to Fort Worth, so we rented a hotel room for all of us to crash in. Linda and I stayed up late talking after the others fell asleep and became close friends so in the morning, we switched partners and all of us seemed to be comfortable with the switch. My divorce from Peggy was pending so Linda and I long-distance dated for a few months until it was final.

By this time in my life, I had strayed completely away from biblical morality and God's law, deciding for myself what was right and what was wrong. Some of the members of Colossus were atheists and they were my closest friends, so I often unwisely turned to them for advice and direction. Playing the fool, I was mostly being guided by my resentments from failed relationships, selfish pride and ambition to be rich and famous. Many years of tears and heartaches would pass before I was finally able to break away from that selfish, destructive mindset and I would never have changed without the patient persistence of correction and disciplining by God throughout my life, even though from my viewpoint at the time, God was not present in my life.

Linda and I gradually fell in love and eventually I asked her to leave Houston and come to live with me in Fort Worth. I was surprised when she chose to quit her job, pack up her few possessions and move to Fort Worth to be with me. After failed marriages, neither one of us believed in the institution of marriage anymore, which was common with many of our generation due to the diminishing morality in society at that time, but later we did become married by common law. Linda traveled with me as the band rolled down the highway in our converted Greyhound bus and old Cadillac hearse. The bus was difficult to drive because of its size and the need for double clutching but I took on the task along with Keith because we needed two drivers. Sometimes our booking agent would have us starting a job the next night after finishing at two o'clock in the morning in another city many miles away. We would have to load up and leave without sleeping to get set up for the next job on time. It is frightening to remember that whenever that happened and we were on a long stretch of highway, Linda would sit on a stool next to me and steer while I slept sitting in the driver's seat ready to brake or slow down if she woke me.

Once when I was driving the bus, we crossed a two-lane Mississippi River Bridge with no shoulders that was so narrow only two cars could comfortably pass each other going in opposite directions. However, instead of cars, eighteen-wheelers were barreling down at us from the opposite direction like they had all the room in the world. I was poking slowly along, watching the sides of those big trailers whiz by so close you could smell their axle grease. My leg was shaking with fear so badly that I could hardly keep the accelerator pedal pushed down. The bus was hugging the right side of the lane as the wheels were screeching loudly against the curb when a side view mirror went flying off into the river below after it was greeted by the cold steel of the ancient suspension bridge. It is a miracle that we all made it alive through those traveling days. At

one of our jobs in New Orleans where we had booked a club hoping for a rest from the cold winter, Linda and I got checked into a motel and the weather was beautiful but after the band played the first night an unusual cold front blew in. It snowed all night, and the temperature dropped into the low twenties. The heaters in the motel rooms quit working so we went to the office to report it, and they told us that the heaters only worked in temperatures above forty degrees because it never got colder than that in New Orleans. So, we asked for extra blankets, and they said there weren't any because it never got cold enough to use them in New Orleans. Then we asked for our money back so we could try to find a room with adequate heat, and they refused to return the money so we went back to the ice box they called a room and tried everything we could think of to stay warm. First, we turned on the hot water in the shower and that helped a little, but it didn't last long so we pulled out a trusty cheap little travel hairdryer from Kmart, which lasted about thirty minutes until it stopped working. Somehow, we made it through that night, but we moved to the local Holiday Inn as soon as we were able to come up with the extra money.

Colossus grew in proficiency and popularity but the egos and self-importance common to so many musicians & artists also grew occasionally creating hard feelings and disagreements. Sometimes the disagreements turned into arguments or shouting matches but in the end, reason always prevailed, and we managed to remain friends while enduring those harsh road trips. After one long tour, we were returning to Fort Worth from Michigan driving on the Interstate through Greenville, Texas at night when Keith, who was driving yelled out that he had seen a body lying on the side of the highway. A little way down the road we signaled the hearse and a truck we had rented to stop at a gas station so we could call for an ambulance. After making the call several of us took the hearse and went back to where the body had been seen to help and wait for the ambulance. The body was a woman who had been beaten and dumped but she was still alive. The ambulance and the Greenville police arrived at the scene, and we gave them statements regarding what little we knew and told them that we called for the ambulance. I asked one of the officers if we could leave and he said yes so, we all got in the hearse and headed back to meet the rest of the group at the gas station. When we arrived at the station everyone got back into their respective vehicles, and we headed on down the road with the hearse leading the way.

About five miles down the highway several police cars raced past us in the bus and truck with their lights blazing and pulled over the hearse. We stopped and parked the bus about fifty yards behind the hearse and the truck parked a short distance behind the bus. One of the band members in the bus walked up to the hearse to see what the situation was. When he failed to return another member went to the hearse and he did not come back. Finally, a police officer walked up to the bus and asked if we were with the people in the hearse, which we acknowledged, and he said we were all being held for suspicion of murder. That included band member's wives and a pregnant girlfriend. The injured lady had died, and the police determined that we were most likely responsible for her death since we were a travelling band and were at the scene. The police had already handcuffed and arrested the ones in the hearse while pointing shotguns at them and they also arrested each band member who

walked up to the hearse from the bus. After holding us for about two hours and searching our vehicles they let us leave because they could not find any evidence tying us to the woman's murder. We learned from that episode that when helping a victim of a violent crime, you are taking the risk of becoming the prime suspect in that crime if the victim does not live to exonerate you.

It was a fitting end to a trip that started with Police in Michigan pulling over the hearse because they said the driver looked suspicious. Rick the bass player who had a black beard with no mustache was driving and he was wearing a black top hat, so he looked like Abraham Lincoln driving down the road in an old black hearse to the policeman. The officer searched the hearse and gave it a complete safety check trying to find something he could write a ticket, impound the vehicle or arrest the driver for. Failing to find anything wrong he checked the emergency brake and said that it did not hold tightly enough so he wrote a ticket for that and let us go. Later we discovered that the emergency brake had to be pumped two or three times, and the car would not budge. The old hearse had the most efficient emergency brake I had ever encountered.

All the negative experiences on the road were a heavy strain on my emotions so eventually I became weary of that lifestyle. I also became disillusioned with the musical direction of the band, so in late 1973 I decided to leave Colossus and move on to other endeavors. Working in those show and dance bands allowed me to acquire valuable experience, better understanding of working relationships and the knowledge needed to form professional bands and make a living doing it.

At that time in my life, I became aware that I was spiritually bankrupt and felt chained to a life that was going nowhere. I was baptized in a Baptist church at an early age. But toward the end of my time there the services mostly seemed lifeless and meaningless, so my spiritual life withered away, and I quit going to church in my later Junior High School years. Except for my childhood and another brief encounter with the Baptist denomination at the church of my High School girlfriend, Charolotte Groce, in late 1965 through early 1967, I had no lasting involvement with a church. Even then I primarily enjoyed the fellowship with friends and spending time with Charolotte, but I did not grow spiritually. While attending that church I sang in their excellent youth choir and was involved in its other church youth organizations as well. Looking back now I can see that I was outwardly trying to keep an appearance of goodness to impress others, but I had lost faith in God or perhaps had never actually had true faith. Because of my lack of faith in God I developed a very rebellious attitude about recent events in my life that did not go the way I wanted and continued pursuing destructive thoughts and activities without remorse. Eventually my rebelliousness resulted in a feeling of contempt for all religion and spiritual belief. If it wasn't for the light of love shining on me through Charolotte, I believe I would have fallen so deep into spiritual darkness that I might never have been able to rise out of it. Sometimes we come to crossroads in life when the hand of God reaches down and intervenes so that we will have an opportunity to choose the direction leading to the light and to righteousness. He reached down and touched my life by giving her young, innocent and faithful heart to me. Unfortunately, I was so blind to God's gift because of my selfishness and rebelliousness, that I eventually threw

God's precious gift away as if it was worthless. Hopefully she will be rewarded by God for patiently enduring my cruelty while participating in an important part of my eventual release from self-centeredness and rebellion.

Shortly after breaking up with Charolotte in 1967, I started dating Carol Nuckols, another girl that I knew in the high school band. Carol took me to her family's Episcopalian church, but I was uncomfortable with that type of service which was much like a Catholic church Mass service. We continued dating for about one year and I hoped we would someday be married but to my surprise Carol broke up with me. That break-up led me to write my first song in 1969 titled, "Soft Summer Breeze". The song relates how a person can feel deserted and alone after losing the person they love and losing the hope of loving again. It is about one of those cross-roads when you can choose to turn to God in prayer and self-reflection while suffering loss or you can rebel and go down the dark, lonely path of anger and self-destruction. Unfortunately, since I still had a rebellious attitude, I chose the dark path. There would be many years of failed relationships to come before I finally understood how the scripture "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" was working in my life.

After leaving Colossus, Linda and I grew closer together in our personal relationship while I helped to form another small club band, which we named Shades and later changed to Alexis. I hooked up with guitarist Rick Siebman who had also left Colossus after me and he convinced a bass player, Jack Wadsworth, to join us. My drummer friend, Bob King from the original Gentlemen band also joined with us, and to complete the group, Frank Cagigal, a local keyboard player with a Hammond B3 organ joined with us. I purchased a PA system and convinced all the new members to join the musician's union, so we were allowed to rehearse for a few weekends at the union hall until we got a playing job. After a few months of success, we added a new drummer and Bob switched to trombone and percussion, but Frank decided to leave the band, so we added Bill Hartman on electric piano and synthesizer.

Also, at that time Linda introduced me to Astrology and a book called The Kybalion containing the Hermetic philosophy, which I took an immediate liking to. It states that there are seven principles of truth and whoever knows and understands them will possess the Magic Key that opens all the Doors of the Temple. It is based primarily on writing attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, who is associated with the Egyptian god Thoth and the Greek Hermes, god of knowledge. Hermes claims that Zoroaster discovered part of the wisdom of the universe, astrology, and taught it to man. Not realizing I might be delving into paganism and the occult; I jumped into the Hermetic philosophy headfirst. In Hermetic thought the movements of the planets have meaning beyond the laws of physics and have metaphorical value as symbols in the mind of "The All". The Hermetic principle of Mentalism teaches that "The All" is spirit and is the true reality behind all outward manifestations, which we experience with our senses and know as the material universe. It teaches that the world or universe consisting of matter and energy is a mental creation of THE ALL, subject to the laws of created things, and that everything exists in the Mind of THE ALL. This Principle of Mentalism explains the existence of mental and psychic phenomena. In the Hermetic Philosophy, Astrology has influences

upon the Earth, but does not dictate our actions, and knowledge of these influences as well as learning how to deal with them can give us wisdom. These influences are based on another one of the seven Hermetic principles known as The Principle of Correspondence, which explains the Hermetic axiom "As above, so below: as below, so above". This principle reveals that there is always a correspondence between the observable facts and events as well as the laws of the various planes of existence. In other words, with regards to Astrology, what occurs in the heavens correspondingly occurs on the earth. I quickly obtained several books about astrology and even aspired to become an astrologer. As I grew in the knowledge of astrology, I did a few astrological readings for acquaintances as well as my own.

Another Hermetic Principle known as the Principle of Vibration was very interesting to me in part due to some personal experiences that were related to it. The Kybalion states that "Nothing rests; everything moves; everything vibrates." This Principle explains that varying rates of vibration cause the differences between different manifestations of Matter, Energy, Mind, and even Spirit. The ALL, which is Pure Spirit, is the highest vibration, and the grossest form of Matter such as solid rock or lead is the lowest vibration. I had several dreams where there was a humming vibration which kept getting closer and louder. The hum was like the OM sound made in Eastern Meditation. Believing there was an evil presence in the room with me I was so afraid that I was unable to move or speak although I was never harmed in any way, and I would always awake in fear before the hum got any closer. Then one time while having this same dream the sound overtook me and suddenly, I found myself outside of my body and able to fly. The flying was like swimming under water, only much easier and with no resistance. Later, my flying dreams were always preceded by the humming sound, which I was no longer afraid of. I concluded that those dreams might have been a form of or a subconscious reference to the Hermetic Principle of Vibration where my consciousness was changing from one level of vibration to another.

Also, one of the seven Hermetic Principles is the "Principle of Polarity" which states that everything is dual, having two poles or pairs of opposites. This universal duality is illustrated by the phenomena of light/darkness, heat/cold, truth/falsehood, good/evil, positive/negative and even love/hate. These are the two opposite extremes of the same thing and the degree of each of them fluctuates between two extreme poles. For example, darkness is only the absence of light. They are both the same thing but vary in degrees between the two poles of absolute darkness and absolute light. Mastery of this principle enables a person to change his own polarity as well as that of others, so I set new goals for my own life to change hate into love, evil into good and falsehood into truth.

The Principle of Rhythm is the fifth Hermetic Principle. It holds the truth that there is a pendulum-like motion in everything. This principle works in the affairs of the universe, suns, worlds, men, animals, mind, energy and matter. The swinging movement is manifested in the creation and destruction of worlds, the rise and fall of nations, the life of all things and in the mental states of Man. In humans, it can be illustrated by the emotional swing between depression and joy, conflict and peace, or hate and love. This eternal rhythmic swing cannot be stopped but knowledge and understanding

of the principle can neutralize its effect when by using the will we polarize ourselves at the point within the swing we want to rest. This mental determination will neutralize the swing that would have carried us to the other pole, and it creates a mental strength, which appears impossible to the masses that continue swinging back and forth like the pendulum. Naturally I desired to move away from my self-destructive attitude and rest at the joy, peace and love stage of the pendulum's swing in my life. Unfortunately, many people, unaware of it consciously and some who are aware of it, decide to rest at the negative end of the swing as I had done previously. A few years later when leaving Houston and the Merlin band behind, I wrote a song for Linda titled "Hold on to the Spirit" which was based on using this principle to overcome self-defeat and self-destruction.

The sixth Hermetic Principle is important in our daily lives. It is called the Principle of Cause and Effect, which means that there is a cause for every effect and there is an effect resulting from every cause. It states that everything happens according to law; nothing ever merely happens and although there are varying planes of cause and effect, nothing ever completely escapes the law. The lower planes of existence are dominated by the higher planes, but still none escape the law. By mentally rising to a higher plane, we can dominate our own moods, character and environment allowing us to become causers instead of merely being affected by our environment or the wills and desires of others stronger than ourselves. Even if we master this principle, we will still obey the causation of the higher planes, but we will help to rule on our own plane.

The seventh and final Hermetic Principle is The Principle of Gender. It states that "gender is in everything; everything has its masculine and feminine principles and gender manifests on all planes". On the physical plane, it is manifested as sex and on the higher planes as higher forms but always of feminine and masculine nature. Humans consist of males and females and each person within humanity as well as everything else in existence contains both male and female elements. This principle is involved in creation, generation and re-generation. Unfortunately, the Principle of Gender is often perverted and used by some to promote degrading lustful practices resulting in some of the ancient forms of Phallicism, which lead to the destruction of the mind, body and soul. Sexual immorality, homosexuality, effeminacy and gender dysphoria are some effects from the causation of perverting the Principle of Gender and those effects are great stumbling blocks to much of humanity's spiritual growth.

Now with all this exciting new knowledge, my life seemed to be going in a whole new positive direction at last. As the year 1974 came near an end, I decided to leave the Alexis band and start a musical duo with Linda when I discovered she had a good strong singing voice and could sing lead and harmony vocals in tune. This endeavor was a struggle from the beginning as the music was very different from the previous bands, and we didn't have the support of all those other musicians. Naming the duo was particularly hard. For weeks, we continually tried to think of one and even searched diligently through the dictionary but a name we both were comfortable with eluded us. Then one day as we were driving into a Fort Worth shopping mall, a song came on the radio, which caught our attention. It was a song by The Moody Blues, an English Rock group titled "Are You Sitting Comfortably?" It is a song, which

refers to Merlin from the Arthurian Legends, and immediately we both knew the name of our duo was to be Merlin. There was no question in our minds, and we didn't need to discuss it. We were both filled with excitement and said "Merlin, that's it!" in unison and the search for a name was over. To go along with the name in our logo we chose a particular eight-pointed star, which I later discovered, was believed by some to be the battle star shield of the biblical King David.

One night, Linda and I were sitting cross-legged on the floor in our apartment staring at each other in silence when we suddenly saw each other as older oriental people. I didn't know what that meant, but Linda suggested that it was a vision of previous lives since she believed in reincarnation. Another time we were at a drive-in restaurant sitting in silence when we both started speaking the exact same words at the same time. The words were unimportant, but it was as if they were floating in the air and entered our minds causing us to speak simultaneously. After these unusual events, we suspected there was a psychic connection between us.

The duo we created now named Merlin came together quickly as we added song after song to our repertoire. Working together, all the music we chose came easily as if an unknown force was guiding us in a certain direction. We had a mutual desire to create a positive influence on people as we carefully selected songs to learn from John Denver, The Moody Blues, Seals & Crofts, The Beatles, Carol King, Barbara Streisand, Neil Diamond, Credence Clearwater Revival, The Eagles and many others. We also added a few well-known, upbeat classic Gospel songs like "Will the Circle Be Unbroken" and "I Saw the Light". Merlin began to develop a personality of uplifting positiveness that fueled our desire to perform.

In early 1975, after several disappointing failures in acquiring music jobs in the Fort Worth area, I decided it might not be the right city for Merlin. So, we performed in a showcase of bands for booking agents at a hotel in Dallas. One of the agents from Houston took an immediate liking to Merlin and asked us to sign a contract to perform indefinitely at the Intercontinental Hotel restaurant and club at the airport in Houston. This opportunity was just what Merlin needed to get started and have a chance to grow without the worry of continually looking for jobs. So, we moved to Houston and rented an apartment where strangely enough we discovered that living right next door to us was a person that was very interested in and well acquainted with the legends of Merlin and Arthur.

As Merlin grew and performed, we built a modest local following. The sound coming from Merlin was full and energetic as we employed the magic of electronics, and Linda dazzled the multitude of audiences with impressive dance moves, singing and a friendly personality as our front person. After several months at the Intercontinental Airport Hotel, we felt stagnated and isolated from the city, so we decided it was time to move on from that job to expand our base of fans and friends. So, we signed up with another booking agency that kept us booked steadily all around the Houston area. Our first job with the new agent, Dave Vandiver with the Gerlach Agency, was at a Holiday Inn in Houston. One night while we were performing there, while playing "Tie A Yellow Ribbon", a song by Tony Orlando and Dawn, a man who was dancing with a lady had a heart attack and died right there on the dance floor. The club manager

decided to close early for the night due to the somberness of the event and the lengthy interruption with an ambulance and medics carrying out the dead body. Linda and I felt awful for the man and like we were part of the reason for his death by playing that song and encouraging everyone to get up and dance. It was a very depressing way to end the night but thankfully it wasn't on our last night at that club.

Another job our agent, Dave obtained for us was at the Houston Shamrock Hilton Hotel near the Medical Center area. The club had a rotating stage partially encircled with a ledge, and tables in front of the ledge for customers who wanted to be close to the entertainment. We didn't want to use the rotation, so I placed the PA speakers on the ledge to the left and right of our position on the stage. While we were performing a song, something triggered the stage rotation where the PA amplifier was, but the speakers remained stationary on the ledge. We had to stop the song, and I hurriedly turned off the PA amplifier and unplugged the cables from the speakers as the stage slowly rotated. Since I had never inquired about the rotation, I did not know where the switch was located, so I asked the bartender, and he was able to stop the rotation. I had to get the stage facing forward, plug in the speakers and turn the amp on for us to get started again. Another time at that club, while we were playing an original song, "It's Always Been the Same", a dwarf or "little person" came up to the stage making a bit of a scene just as we started singing the lyrics, "We are here for just one purpose, to live our lives it's all a circus". Linda and I looked at each other, a little embarrassed and uncomfortable, and we didn't know if the dwarf or anyone else heard or noticed the vague connection to the lyrics or was offended by it, but no one ever indicated they did.

On another night at the Shamrock Hilton, we were approached on a break by a Mexican man who told us he was there because he had a daughter in a hospital in the Medical Center. He asked us if we would travel by airplane to Torreón, Mexico to sing for his daughter's birthday and he would pay for all the expenses. We hesitantly said, "yeah, that sounds great", assuming we would never see him again. A few nights later he came to the club and handed us two round trip Aero Mexico airplane tickets to Torreón. Secretly astonished, we took the tickets and told him we would be there, so we worked the date into our schedule and when the time arrived, headed off to Mexico. There was a layover in Mexico City which was the smoggiest city I had ever seen, including LA and Houston. When we arrived at the small airport in Torreón, no one from the man's family was there to meet us, so we were detained by customs officers who went through all our baggage looking for drugs or something we might be smuggling into Mexico. They were just about to disassemble the TEAC cassette deck we used for soundtracks with our music when the man we met in Houston finally showed up and explained in Spanish to the officers why we were there, and they finally let us go.

On the drive into Torreón, we passed by a shanty town and realized that we were now in a third world country. Almost all the tiny shacks of corrugated metal, plywood and plastic had television antennas sticking out of them and we wondered if we had made the right decision going there. The city of Torreón was a tremendous contrast to the outskirts of town and our Mexican friend set us up in a nice Hotel and provided us with some Mexican spending cash. We

sang at the birthday party which was on the patio at the family's house. After meeting the members of the family, they showed us music albums recorded by an older daughter who was a singing star in Mexico. The next day, they took us to dinner at a nice restaurant with a wonderful buffet and later took us shopping and bought gifts for both of us. Overall, the trip turned out to be a great experience.

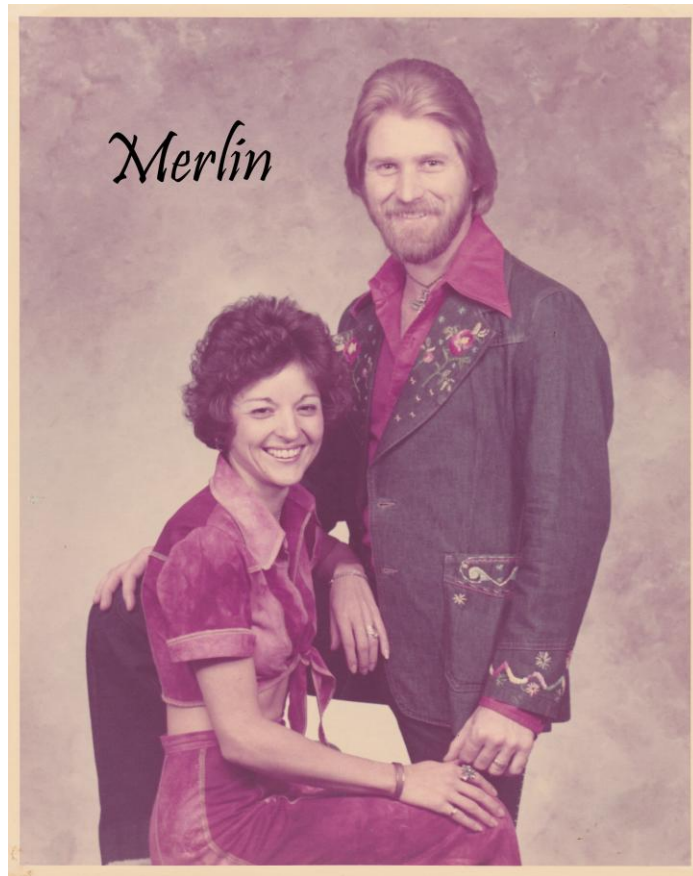
My search for truth took a detour when Linda introduced me to the books of Carlos Casteneda. He wrote of an American Indian shaman named Don Juan who agreed to teach him the ways of a shaman using peyote, mushrooms and other mind-altering plants. I became so obsessed with Casteneda's books that I wanted to go to the desert and find a shaman who would teach me these ways. This was a ridiculous, far-fetched idea but it was something on my mind. Later, these books would have an influence on my spiritual journey but in a way I never expected.

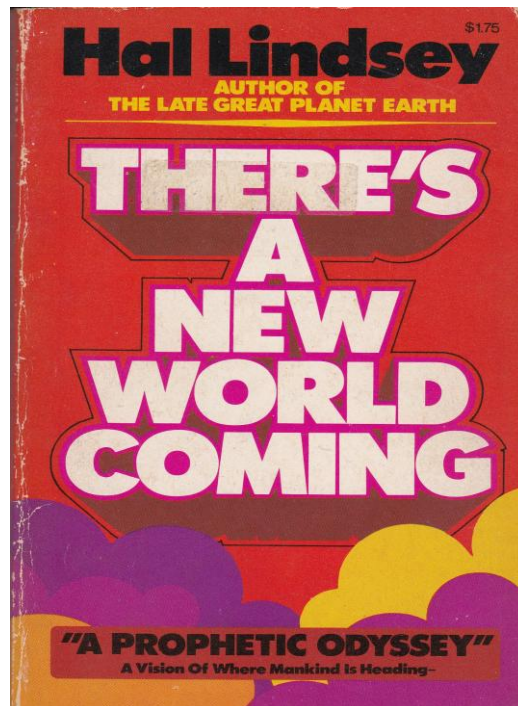
By 1976, our repetitive lifestyle had led us to dissatisfaction and boredom as personal differences and arguments began to interfere with our musical goals. We both became disillusioned with the progress of the music and a time of depression engulfed both of us. We handled the depression in different ways and soon grew apart. I decided to stop accepting jobs temporarily and took a trip to Fort Worth to visit with my parents for a while. One night at their home I went to sleep while reading the Carlos Casteneda book titled *Tales of Power*. While I slept, I had a dream that many angry voices were yelling at me from all directions. One of them had a bible and shouted angrily at me the words "So you want to talk about God?" while it tore pages out of it and threw them at me. The voices surrounded me, and I began to float into the middle of them. Then they started twirling me around and I couldn't tell which way was up or down like being tossed around by a big ocean wave. Finally, I started yelling for help and suddenly awoke to find my body lying perfectly still and quiet. This was quite a contrast to the chaotic state I had just experienced in the dream, and I remember feeling very fearful, like I had encountered demons. The part about God and the bible didn't make any sense to me because I hadn't looked at a bible in about ten years and religion was far from my thoughts at that time.

I never finished reading that book and I was soon to discover that the desire to learn more of Don Juan's teachings had left me completely. The next afternoon I was very depressed and sitting in the den at my parents' house staring at an old bookcase I had made in Jr. High School wood shop, when one colorful book caught my eye. I walked across the room and pulled out the book which was titled "There's A New World Coming" written by Hal Lindsey. Sitting down and getting comfortable, I casually opened the book somewhere in the middle when Lo and Behold, I had turned right to a section about Carlos Casteneda's writings of Don Juan. Lindsey explained that Casteneda's books opened people's minds up to worshipping demons and warned that these books were spiritually deceptive. That was enough confirmation for me, and I didn't want to have anything to do with demons, so I disposed of all my Carlos Casteneda books and read the whole book by Hal Lindsey. In it he explained how many of the prophecies in the Bible were being fulfilled in our lifetime. My next step was to dust off an old bible sitting in the same bookcase which was given to me by my high school girlfriend, Charolotte, sometime after we broke up, probably with the hope that I would read it and change my ways. It took

several months, but I did read that bible from beginning to end and it was the start of a new and profound chapter in my life. The whole experience later inspired me to write the song, "How Do You Stop?" with one line in the lyrics saying, "Turning around, a new direction; Kingdom of Heavenward bound I am to stay". As I reflected on my spiritual life I recalled the popular bible scriptures I had learned in those early church involvements "Seek and you shall find", "Knock and the door shall be opened to you" and "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free" so I embarked on a new way of seeking spiritual truth, which would take me in many different, unusual and exciting directions

Although my childhood experience with religion was in a Baptist church and I considered myself to be a Christian, I had not lived like one for many years as I had slipped into spiritual rebelliousness, disbelief, selfishness and a sinful lifestyle. Even with a biblical upbringing, Christianity did not seem very relevant to my life and the concept of sin and needing forgiveness was not clearly defined in my mind because of my refusal to see the truth due to my rebellious and self-centered attitude. So, my focus changed to gaining knowledge of the Holy Scriptures in the Bible and to understand the end-time prophecies contained in it. Hal Lindsey's book had made a huge impression on me, and I was ready to step out in that new direction.





In our day, drug addiction has swelled into a flood across the nation. With it has come an unprecedented tide of witchcraft and demonism. I've talked with people who've been on LSD for a long time, and they've told me, "Demons are no strangers to me!" Demons and drugs are very similar in their effect on the human mind. They can take over a man to the point where he's completely altered in personality.

An article in *The International Journal of Social Psychiatry* (Spring, 1971) dealt with the reality of demon possession and how to diagnose it, and gave the following instruction: "There is a need to ascertain if there is any involvement in drug addiction, as it is common that addicts, especially with heroin and alcohol, become involved in black magic and vice versa. . . . (Some) have been known in some cases to have been very religious people who defaulted, and thus left themselves open to some power other than God to control their lives."

The interesting thing to me is that in many cases with which I am familiar the person first used drugs, then got into witchcraft. But when a deep involvement with the occult followed, drugs were eventually dropped in favor of the more powerful experience with spirits.

CASTANEDA'S STRANGE JOURNEY

A powerful writer of our time, Carlos Castaneda, has written of his own personal experiences along this line in his bestseller of the 1970's, *Journey to Ixtlan*. In this book and his two previous ones, he tells of his initiation into the practice of Indian sorcery in Mexico through such hallucinogenic drugs as peyote, Jimson weed, mushrooms mixed with other plants, and other natural drugs.

While Castaneda was on his "trips" he had all kinds of encounters with "beings" he couldn't understand. He was continually urged by an old Indian sorcerer named Don Juan to seek to really "see" the other world. Whether Don Juan really exists or is simply a creation of Castaneda's pen, no one knows for sure. But Castaneda

has spent ten years of his life seeking to "see" by negating the routine use of the five senses and to experience firsthand the world of spirits and psychic phenomena. For his efforts in this field UCLA gave him a Ph.D. for *Journey to Ixtlan*!

One of the most important things that Castaneda discovered in his journey to becoming a sorcerer is that drugs are only necessary in the beginning. As a seeker becomes fully committed to sorcery, a "spirit entity" attaches itself to the seeker and gives him unimaginable power.

The reason I've taken so much space to mention Carlos Castaneda's writings is that these three books of his, *The Teachings*, *A Separate Reality*, and *Journey to Ixtlan*, have sold in the millions and are now considered by many in the academic world as among the most important anthropological research of all time. And do you know what it is they are so excited and stimulated about? The Bible calls them *demons*!

According to the prophecies of the Book of Revelation, those who reject the truth about Jesus Christ will become so deceived that they will not only *believe* in the reality of demons, but they will actually *worship* them through the coming one-world religion called "mystery Babylon" (Revelation 17).

THE PLAYBOY PHILOSOPHY

The third prominent sin of the Tribulation will be rampant immorality. *Porneia*, the Greek word used in this verse, refers to all kinds of sexual activity outside of its Biblically-sanctioned function between a married man and woman. The marriage vow will be virtually unknown at this time, and there will be a complete breakdown in family relationships.

The *Futurist* magazine devoted the whole April 1973 issue to "Man-Woman Relationships in the Future." In the lead article Dr. Herbert Otto says, "A psychologist foresees a society in which men and women will explore new depths of intimacy, and the pursuit of joy will become an art form. . . . More people will indulge in group sex . . . and the ideal life will not be marriage,

Chapter 5 GROWTH OF THE BAND MERLIN

During the stay at my parents' home in the spring of 1976, I also spent a lot of time listening to John Denver music. It seemed that most people either hated his music or loved it but for me there was nothing better for treating my depression at that time than some of his uplifting songs. Although John Denver was one of the most popular entertainers of the nineteen seventies and into the eighties it is very strange that several years later so many people's dislike of him would make me hesitant to admit that I enjoyed his music. Perhaps his songs about relationships, love of nature, hope, peace and true love were too bright of a light for much of the morally decaying world. His musical talent and vocal endurance were impressive, and his voice was strong, clear and true. For a person to not like his style of music is understandable as everyone has different tastes but to hate it could possibly reveal a hatred of what he stood for. Although I never knew him personally, I felt a bond between us, which was created through his music. I realized that John Denver's songs had rekindled a love for nature, which I had known in my Boy Scout years. The bright lights, excitement of city life and the desire for fame and fortune had blinded me to it until his music reopened my eyes. It was then that I realized a deep-rooted attachment to nature, animals and all living things. I began to develop more love for lakes, rivers, streams, mountains, valleys, deserts, forests and all that is natural on this earth. At the same time my love for cities, massive buildings, fortune and fame started to fade away. His music also reawakened a hope of true love for all and gave me an inner peace that I had almost lost. But I was most grateful because at that time in my life he gave me songs to sing from the heart.

While staying with my parents, my depression finally faded, and I began to feel musical inspiration again and the idea came to me that we needed to add a drummer to Merlin, which would give the music a more solid sound and newly revived energy. I gave Linda a call and she agreed with the idea, so immediately I searched for my old friend and drummer, Bob, who I found living in a garage apartment only a few blocks away in White Settlement. I was surprised to see that he had grown very long hair down to his waist and he had a bushy beard. He had also been depressed and was stuck in a negative lifestyle including alcohol and drugs, that he had not been able to escape from on his own. Bob didn't know anything about Linda and our duo, but I gave him a brief history and asked him to pack up his drums and move to Houston and be the drummer of Merlin. Because of his situation, he eagerly accepted the invitation, and within a day or two we loaded up his car and my old blue '69 Chevy Van and headed to Houston.

Upon our arrival in Houston Linda took one look at Bob's hair and let out a light scream. After introducing them, she said, "Bob, I'm sorry but we will have to do something about your hair." Convincing Bob to cut his hair was quite an ordeal but when a professional hairstylist finished with him, he was very pleased. Linda had acquired a place for us to rehearse at one of the storage stalls where her friend, Lynn's, parents were managing the property. After about one week of practicing our booking agent, Dave, also a trombone player, liked our new sound and immediately began looking for our first gig. During the interim time between jobs, I

continued to consider the book I had read by Hal Lindsey and was hungry and extremely anxious for more. However, I never mentioned anything about it or the author to the other members of the group. I especially wanted to get a book that was advertised in Lindsey's New World Coming book titled The Late Great Planet Earth. Money and extra time were in short supply so I couldn't just go out searching for books, and in those days, there was no internet and no bookstores that I knew of. But after the apparent miracle of finding Hal Lindsey's book with the section on Castaneda's Shaman apprenticeship and the demonic dream, I decided to go out on a spiritual limb and ask God for more, and He quickly responded. When our agent, Dave, secured a job for the band at the Mansard House apartment complex restaurant and club in College Station, Texas, we all loaded up the van and headed for another exciting adventure. Upon arrival, we were each assigned a fully furnished room at the apartment complex, and I entered the room assigned to me to check it out. I looked around in the living room and kitchen, but as I entered the bedroom, I couldn't believe my eyes. Sitting on top of the dresser was a copy of Hal Lindsey's book titled The Late Great Planet Earth just waiting there for me to read it. I assumed this was confirmation that my spiritual search was going in the right direction because no one knew of my interest in Hal Lindsey's books and none of us knew in advance which room we would be assigned to. I had finished reading "There's A New World Coming" at my parents' house and did not take it with me to Houston. I was the only one, besides God, who knew of that book, the demonic dream and my new interest in biblical prophecy. The apartment manager didn't know anything about it and said that the previous tenant must have left it behind, so it was mine to keep. Several months later Linda gave me another book of Hal Lindsey's as a gift and although it wasn't a miraculous event because the other members then knew of my interest, it was truly appreciated.

In addition to Linda's singing voice and dance moves, I had earlier discovered that she wrote good lyrics but couldn't write music for them. That was no problem because I was good at writing music, but struggled with writing lyrics, so we made an excellent songwriting team. When we performed some of our original songs at gigs, they were well received by the audiences. Merlin's fan base grew quickly and a few months later we decided to add a bass player. Linda's high school friend and bass player, Claude Wooley was available and was a good fit for the band. Claude brought more originality and versatility to the group because he was an accomplished songwriter as well as a good singer and bassist. We added four-part vocals to many of the songs and included some of Claude's originals in our repertoire. Our fan base grew to a point where it became stressful for us to take breaks with so many people we had met and knew personally in the audiences. We wanted to visit with them all so we would split up and go in four directions during the breaks so at least one of us could briefly talk to as many of our new and old friends as possible. Sometimes there was so much self-imposed pressure on us to visit with everyone during the breaks that we were relieved to get back on the stage.

Merlin continued to perform in hotel and restaurant clubs in Houston, San Antonio, Brownwood, McAllen, Beaumont and New Orleans. Although the group was enjoying some level of success, Linda and I grew farther apart and eventually separated. However,

we chose to keep working together in the band we had formed. The arrangement was a little uncomfortable at times, but we managed to cope with it and continue, on our path to musical success.

In May of 1977 I had a profound dream that I wrote down so I would never forget it. In the dream, a group of children were by a large body of water singing a song about American's being free. Then a large flock of ducks swam in and walked up on the land where chickens were peacefully walking around. The ducks, being of higher intelligence began to order the chickens around and control them. A herd of goats then came running down from a mountain in double file and scattered the ducks and chickens disregarding anything that got in their way. Then I was given a crown of antlers and went on my way for the cause of freedom. As I was walking, I came to a hill with a cross on it and people were gathered around it. Jesus Christ was hanging on the cross and being curious I walked up to him. He told me something about the kingdom of heaven and with one hand free even though it was bound with rope and nailed to the cross, he reached out and touched my head with the rope and blessed me. I left that place and journeyed to a cave where there were many graves with crosses on them. When I was leaving the cave, I accidentally knocked over some crosses and tore something like tin foil, which covered the ground around the base of the crosses. I felt very bad about damaging the graves, so I left the cave and was going to get some materials to repair them. As I was walking, I came upon a large army invading the land. I hid from them behind a hill until they passed and then continued on my way. The meaning of this dream remained unknown to me until many years later.

One of our favorite gigs was in the Steak and Ale restaurant club circuit. They were nice cozy little clubrooms with small corner stages that we managed to squeeze into. The band received free salads, bread, baked potatoes and non-alcoholic drinks and we sometimes found a Warren House with furnished apartments or a motel nearby that we rented weekly. Another club we really enjoyed playing in was Diamond Lil's at a hotel in Houston. This club was large enough for all our friends and fans to come see us, and they helped to fill it up many times. It was at Diamond Lil's that Bob met and fell in love with a Houston girl named Peggy who was working as a single musical act playing banjo and singing in the restaurant. She was a pretty, petite and friendly girl with loads of musical talent and a warm smile. It seems love was in the air, and I met and fell in love with a friend of Peggy's named Elsa, a beautiful Hispanic girl who worked in the same restaurant as a hostess. Claude and Linda also entered a love relationship around that time.



MERLIN BANDMEMBERS: From left, vocalist Linda Van Waters, drummer Bobby King, keyboardist David Hughs, and guitarist Claude Wooley.

Chapter 6 DEMISE OF THE BAND MERLIN

At Merlin's peak in 1977, we had recorded two single records. One was a novelty record of two songs about Pet Rocks written and funded by Linda's previous employer, Thomas N. Corpening a medical doctor and author of the book, "Auto-biofeedback". The two songs were from another of his books, "The Pet Rock Joke Book" which he asked me to put music to. The other record was financed by my parents with two original songs "Why?" and "Who Are You?" They were philosophical songs asking the age-old questions; why are we here in this existence and who or what are we in reality? To release our records to the public we established Stonehenge Records expressing our ties to England and Inner Planes Publishing suggesting that the road to the higher or deeper planes of existence leads inward. The songs Why? and Who Are You? got some airplay in New Orleans where we were interviewed on a local radio station. We also managed to get some small radio stations around Houston to play the records. Merlin's future appeared to be looking good but unfortunately our personalities and differences were slowly eroding the bonds we had previously made. Claude and Linda's relationship took a turn for the worse. Bob wanted to add Peggy to the group as an additional singer and a piano player and eventually we all agreed. But before she started rehearsals with us Linda recapitulated and refused to work with her for reasons that the rest of us were not sure of. She was unmovable in that decision, so Bob decided to leave Merlin and start a duo and a new life together with Peggy. Since Linda was such an essential part of Merlin I chose to continue the group, as a trio with Linda and Claude but we all seemed to be moving in somewhat different directions.

I experienced another profound spiritual experience during this time when Claude's brother, Doug and their mother, took me to visit a Pentecostal church they attended. I listened to a very good preacher who had a prison ministry and spoke plainly and was easy to understand. He delivered a message titled "Eat That Which Is Good". The message was based on scriptures from Isaiah 55:2, an Old Testament prophet and was referring to spiritual food and feeding your mind with good food. It was intended to show us that our physical and spiritual fruits would reflect the type of things we fill our bodies and minds with. I was pleased to absorb the message but toward the end of the service I started weeping uncontrollably and could not stop. I was visualizing the release of pent-up hatred, anger, negativity and rebelliousness from past events in my life floating up and out of me while weeping. After a few minutes I stopped crying, but it was very embarrassing, and I really wanted to leave. However, Doug supported me, and I was able to endure the humiliation until the end of the service. This event was another step on my way to true conversion to Christianity and later I accepted that it was nothing to be ashamed of. After this experience, I began seeking spiritual truth more diligently and I wrote the songs "The Inner Road" and "You Can Be Free".

By the late summer of 1978, my relationship with Elsa had grown deeper and led to another totally different kind of spiritual encounter. Many of my discussions with her included my past spiritual experiences and limited Biblical understanding. Elsa seemed interested so I would sometimes babble on and on saying much more than she probably wanted to hear. After dating for a few

months, I questioned the sincerity and depth of our relationship. I knew I cared for her very much and really enjoyed all the time we spent together. It seemed that she cared for me too, but I was reluctant to make a permanent commitment to her and I didn't understand why. So, while Merlin was playing a two-week engagement at the Sheraton Hotel in New Orleans I prayed and fasted for several days about this dilemma asking God for truth and understanding concerning what was in my heart, concerning our relationship, why I was hesitant to make a commitment to her, and what His will was for us. Suddenly on Friday evening of the second week of that engagement, it seemed as if a veil was lifted from my eyes, and I knew that my love for her was genuine and true and I wanted us to be together always. I felt like my life would be empty and meaningless without her with me, and I was ready to make a commitment, so without delay I called her apartment in Houston to tell her that I loved her and ask her to marry me if she felt the same way. It was about 8:30 P.M. before we started playing that I called but there was no answer. After we finished playing that night, I called her again but there was still no answer. Since it was about 2:00 A.M. I was worried about where she might be and if she was all right.

After falling asleep that night I had a dream about Elsa. In the dream, I went to visit her, and she wasn't home, so I went looking for her. I came to a large house and walked in, but no one was in sight. There was a hallway with several doors on each side, so I started to open the doors to see if she was in one of the rooms. As I opened a door on the left of the hallway, I encountered a chubby and partially bald man who was sitting naked in a bathtub. He was embarrassed because I had seen him naked, so I apologized and closed the door. I then walked over to a door on the right side of the hallway and started to open it. Before opening the door, I realized that I was afraid of finding Elsa in the room with another man. I did open the door, and Elsa was in that room where she was talking with a young man and woman. I told her that I loved her and asked her to go with me, but she said that these people were her brother and sister, and she wanted to stay with them. So, I left the house and started walking back home when I realized that I should go back and try harder to persuade her to leave with me. I walked back toward the house where I had originally found her but then my legs became so weak I couldn't walk any more. I started crawling and pulling myself across the ground trying to get back to her, but I could not. Then I suddenly awoke from the dream and was very fearful that something had happened to her or that she was with another man. It was about four in the morning, and I called her apartment but there was still no answer. I called again about nine o'clock A.M. and there was still no answer. So, I called her parents who lived in the house in front of Elsa's garage apartment. Her younger sister answered the phone, and I asked if she knew where Elsa was. She said that Elsa had left Friday evening in a van with several other people and Elsa said they were taking her to a place to find God. Apparently, I had just missed her by a few minutes on that same Friday evening when I called to ask her to marry me.

Time passed slowly while waiting to finish the job Saturday night because I was so anxious to get back to Houston and see Elsa. I packed up on Saturday night after the job was finished and headed back to Houston immediately. Driving straight to Elsa's apartment I

arrived early Sunday morning to find she had still not returned. I spoke with her parents, and they told me she had been seeing a religious group called the Moonies who she had left with Friday night and they were worried also. That morning the first cold front of Autumn blew into Houston from the north along with a dreary rain as I waited anxiously at Elsa's parents' house hoping that she would call on the phone and say she was coming home. I didn't know what a Moonie was, so I started researching the term and found that it refers to a member of the Unification Church headed by Reverend Sun Myung Moon. More research led me to a large wood-frame house in Houston housing a local group of Moonies, which looked very much like the one in my dream. I walked up to the door and knocked. A friendly young man opened the door and invited me in. There were several young people in the living room, and they all greeted me. Then I noticed a portrait of a man on the wall, and it was the man I had seen in the bathtub in my dream. I asked the young man, who seemed to be a spokesman for the group, who the man in the portrait was and he told me it was Reverend Moon. I introduced myself and said that I was looking for Elsa. The young man stated that he was the leader of their group, and that Elsa was currently at their spiritual retreat. He also explained that she would not be allowed to see any of her family or previous friends without at least one of their church members present. We engaged in a short and friendly conversation about their church. There was a piano in the room and they sang a song for me and explained how happy they were and how wonderful the Unification Church was. They referred to each other as brothers or sisters and it was obvious the leader was in control of them. I thanked them for the song and left.

It didn't take long to find out that the spiritual retreat where Elsa went to was in Nacogdoches, Texas and I obtained directions to get there. When I arrived in Nacogdoches, I drove down several long dirt roads ending up at an ordinary brick house isolated in the East Texas forest. I walked around and saw there was a large garden behind the house and a nice-looking barn located on the property, but no one was in sight. So, I knocked on the door of the house and a young girl opened it and invited me in. I could see an acoustic guitar sitting in the living room, which I had given to Elsa, so I knew she had been there. Evidently the young girl thought I was a Moonie, so I talked with her to try to get some inside information. The group Elsa was in had already left to go back to Houston, but she showed me around the place and the barn which had been converted into a training room for Unification Church initiates. Seeing there was no other useful information to gather, I thanked her for showing me around and returned to Houston.

I obtained the phone number at the Moonie house in Houston so one day I decided to call with the hope that Elsa would be there. She was there and they let me talk to her on the phone. When I asked if I could see her, she invited me over to the Moonie house for dinner the next day. I accepted and the phone conversation ended. To let her know my feelings about her I spent the rest of that day and the next morning writing a song to sing to her that I titled, "Please Tell Me Now". I drove to the Moonie house the next evening with high hopes of taking Elsa with me. When I arrived, there were about ten or twelve Moonies, and we all had a nice Mexican food dinner. One strange thing I noticed was the girls walked with quick short steps. They would not let me talk to Elsa alone so I asked if I

could sing a song, I had written for her with them being present. So, I sang the song, "Please Tell Me Now" with lyrics about my experiences related to Elsa's disappearance and my worries about what had happened to her. The lyrics also pleaded with her to say what was in her heart so I would know how she felt about me. After singing the song I told her that I loved her and asked her to go with me, but she politely said no because this was now her family. The other members explained to me that their church was like John the Baptist preceding the second coming of Christ who they believed was Reverend Moon. They gave me one of their church books titled The Divine Principle and I left in disappointment but was glad that I got to see her. The dream I had turned out to be a vision of these events.

One day when I was visiting Elsa's parents, I went into her garage apartment to see if I could find more information about the Moonies and why she had joined the Unification Church. However, what I found was a box full of letters that I had mailed to her over the past year when I was on the road with the band. When I read the letters, it opened my eyes to why I couldn't commit to her and how she would be confused about our relationship. The letters went back and forth between wanting to be with Elsa and maybe getting back with Linda. I didn't believe that Linda and I would be able to have a good relationship together because of our past difficulties but I wasn't able to completely let go of her. Then I realized that God had answered my prayer to show me what was in my heart about Elsa's and my relationship and why I couldn't make a commitment to her. And since her choice was to be a Unification Church missionary, I started thinking that it might not be God's will for us to be together.

After more research, I learned that Reverend Moon performs the marriages for most of the people who join the Unification Church in mass weddings after he personally selects who will be paired together. His preference is to mix races and nationalities. After marrying them he tends to keep them apart on separate missions so their loyalties will remain focused on himself and not their spouse. His church teaches that Korea is the biblical New Jerusalem and that the Messiah would be born in Korea as Moon was. The primary mission of the church is to unite all of Christianity, hence the name Unification Church.

I tried several times to contact Elsa and eventually I did talk to her on the phone, and she agreed to meet with me alone at a local park. At the park, we walked around and talked as she told me about the Unification Church and its mission. When I told her again that I loved her and asked her to marry me she again said no because she wanted to be a missionary in the church and did not know for how long. Since we were alone without the influence of her brother and sister Moonies and she seemed happy, contented and even excited to be a missionary in the Unification church, I decided it was time to let go. Others had advised me to take her away from the Moonies by force and have her deprogrammed, but I didn't believe it was the right thing to do because she chose to accept their doctrine of her own free will even after I warned her of the prophecies in the Bible of false prophets and false Christs at the end of the age. That was the last time I saw or talked to Elsa.

Merlin was now a trio since Bob had left the group and married Peggy. Claude and I had to wing it without Linda one week when she flew to Bogotá, Columbia to rescue a close friend who had been arrested and imprisoned five months earlier. His release from

the roofless, pigsty of a prison was legally obtained with bribe money through a Columbian lawyer, and it was a humiliating and harrowing experience for Linda. But the rescue was successful and just in time as his health was failing because of the lack of food and the unsanitary conditions. After Linda returned from Columbia we resumed to playing as a trio, but Claude and Linda's relationship continued worsening to the point that our performances were being affected negatively. The strange events that occurred with Elsa were still on my mind and it was hard for me to focus on the music. Even rehearsals were becoming difficult and unproductive, as we all grew farther apart. It was only a few months later that I decided to stop seeking jobs for Merlin. Claude and Linda did not agree with my decision, but I could no longer see a good future for us together. I asked our close friend Mike what he thought about breaking up the band and he said he was surprised we were able to keep it going as long as we did.

After our last job with Merlin in early 1979, I worked odd jobs around Houston for a while mostly doing yard work, and Claude joined a local country band named Branded. Linda started rehearsing with some other local musicians but was unable to keep her musical career moving forward. After all the success with Merlin it was sad to see it end this way. Only a few months later in spring of 1979, I decided there was no reason to remain in Houston so I packed up my Chevy van and headed back to Fort Worth to stay with my parents until I could find a new direction. As I drove by downtown Houston on the way out of town the smog was unusually thick, and it was cloudy and dreary. Although I had many positive experiences in Houston and made many new friends, this ominous scene and many of the bad memories made me feel like I was escaping rather than just leaving.





Chapter 7 MY SEARCH FOR SPIRITUAL TRUTH

While living with my parents in White Settlement, Texas I started dating Coral Nuckols, the twin sister of my second high school girlfriend, Carol. Coral and Carol were identical twins who usually dressed identically in high school, so it was hard to tell them apart. They were both beautiful, highly intelligent girls with brown hair and pretty smiles. While still living in Houston those last few months, Coral sent me some of her songs to make demos, so we started writing and becoming closer that way. After moving back to Fort Worth, I often went to the rent house where Carol and Coral were living to visit, and Coral and I worked on more of her songs. We also started singing some love songs together and eventually we fell in love and got married in December of 1979. We kept singing and playing our guitars together and the relationship quickly blossomed. After getting married I moved into her apartment, which was on the top floor of an old two-story house in South Fort Worth, and Carol had already moved to another place.

Around May of 1980, I received a call from Bob who was living in Houston. He told me that he had broken up with his wife, Peggy, and was going to move back to Fort Worth. Coral and I invited him to stay with us for a while until he got on his feet. When he arrived, we talked about starting another band, but it never materialized and Bob took a job at the wholesale company where his brother, Bill, was part owner. It was a candy and tobacco company named Lee's Candy & Tobacco. While going to college I worked for Lee Murray in his small home-based company, Lee's Candy, located at his house and garage close to my parents' home in White Settlement. I loaded trucks and stocked the garage warehouse after college classes and after music jobs with the Gentlemen band. Lee also got me a job with Wrigley Chewing Gum Co. during the summers selling to local stores and he would always hire me back when I was in between music jobs. While I lived in Houston, Lee Murray, Bill King, and Bud Crow went in together to buy a vacant grocery store in neighboring River Oaks. They were joined by another local business owner, Kenneth Adcock and Lee's Candy business was moved to that location and expanded by adding tobacco to their products and later they added grocery products.

Bob only stayed with us for a couple of weeks before moving out after getting his own place. During the summer of 1980 we all managed to survive an extreme heat wave and drought in Texas. The temperature was over one hundred degrees for 29 straight days with highs up to 113 degrees, and though storm clouds and thunder would come through to tantalize us, not a drop of rain would fall from the sky. The area's lakes became dangerously low, and water had to be rationed. It seemed as if God was holding back the rain for some reason. Ever since that time I have continued to have a deep gratitude for mild summers and especially for summer rains.

Since Coral was also a singer and songwriter, we didn't waste any time getting a duo started, which we named Destiny. We agreed to ask a singer from Dallas, Janet Kollmeier, to join the group because she had an excellent singing voice and I had recently worked with her on recording projects with Ron DiLulio, a local musician/producer/engineer and Tony Vann, another local singer/songwriter. Our friend Tony also shared an interest with us in the legend of King Arthur and Merlin. Several years later in 1993

one evening while watching the movie Excalibur, Tony and I would both experience an epiphany simultaneously about the sword and the stone. In the heat of a battle when Arthur was fighting Uriens who opposed his kingship, he gained the advantage over Uriens and Arthur demanded his allegiance, or he would be killed. Uriens refused to acknowledge Arthur as king because Arthur was only a squire, so to everyone's amazement Arthur agreed with Uriens, boldly surrendered his sword to Uriens and asked to be knighted by Uriens right there on the spot. Uriens, while being urged by his followers to kill Arthur, instead recognized his great faith and courage, and suddenly concluded that he must be the son of the late king Uther Pendragon, so he knighted Arthur and gave his allegiance to him. It wasn't just being the son of Uther's royal blood, but it was the combination of royal bloodline, great courage, love of truth and great faith in God's purpose for him as the leader of Britain that he alone was able to draw Excalibur, the sword of power from the stone that it was locked in. Our simultaneous realization served to validate this conclusion.

When our new promo package was completed, Janet surprisingly decided not to work with Coral and I before we secured our first music gig. So, we continued moving forward as a duo, but changed our name to Reunion, with a repertoire of country, folk rock and soft rock music with a few originals thrown in. Meanwhile Linda started working in Houston as a talent agent and contacted me about possible jobs. After receiving Reunion's promotional material, she booked us as a duo for the remainder of 1980 and into early 1981 on a tour of country & western clubs in West Texas, which was a big change in music style for me. We were successful although my heart wasn't very much into the hard-core type of country music many of those audiences wanted to hear. After finishing the West Texas Tour, we added Gerard Bendiks, a versatile drummer and percussionist. Gerard had a personality and style that fit well with us, so we were thankful that he was available and willing to join the group. Then in the spring of that year Linda started booking us as a trio, with a final job at Captain Cooks restaurant in Dallas.

After performing as a trio with Gerard, Coral and I became weary of road engagements, and discouraged with the lack of venues for our style of music in the Dallas, Fort Worth area. With our failure to find desirable local venues to perform, the magic of the music seemed to be a distant memory, and it felt like we were rowing in a "Boat Against the Current" which was the title to a song written by Wyndi Harp from Tyler that I would record a few years later as a demo with Janet's vocal. We made that recording into a 45-RPM record along with a song Coral wrote titled "Hasta LaVista" on the other side. Wyndi's song was an excellent pop/rock song with lyrics about trying to save a difficult relationship while Coral's song was a catchy Spanish style song with clever lyrics about the different ways of saying good-bye in Spanish. Coral wanted to pitch Hasta La Vista to Marty Robbins, the famous classic country singer, but unfortunately, he passed away before we got a chance to present it to him. If we had been able to get the song to him in time before he died it would have made a perfect farewell song for him and probably would have sold millions if he had recorded it. In music and show business timing is everything and we missed the boat with that opportunity.

After retiring from the road in 1981 I took a warehouse job

offered by Bob at the wholesale company and Coral started working as a travel agent for a local agency. I also attended a recording school and built a modest home recording studio at our apartment in South Fort Worth which I named Avalon Sound Studio. The name came from the ancient island of Avalon in the Arthurian legends that is now known as Glastonbury. In the studio we recorded demos for local songwriters but also managed to squeeze in a few of the songs I had written while in Houston and some of Coral's songs. Then suddenly encounters with gospel singers and songwriters started coming my way. Sharon Reynolds, a local gospel singer who was struggling to get started in the contemporary gospel music field recorded a full-length cassette in the studio with the encouragement of Shirley Piper, her close friend and volunteer manager. Wyndi, the songwriter from Tyler, Texas also sent many of her Gospel songs to have demos made and other secular songs she had written. Janet and Sharon sang on some of the demos recorded for Wyndi and the recording studio seemed to be moving in a good direction.

In 1983 I became interested in Herbert W. Armstrong after seeing him speak on his television program, *The World Tomorrow* about the United States and Britain in Bible prophecy. After reading some pamphlets distributed by the Worldwide Church of God including one on the US and Britain in prophecy and another one about Pagan Holidays & God's Holy Days, I became very interested and intrigued by Armstrong's teaching but had no other involvement with the church at that time. However, Armstrong did inspire me to search for certain spiritual truths in the bible that I was previously unaware of and a few years later my interest in the WCG would be rekindled.

Also, during those days my interest in Christianity grew as Coral and I watched the miniseries movie *Jesus of Nazareth*, which made the historical person of Jesus much more of a reality to me although I still did not fully grasp what true Christianity was all about yet. The knowledge of Christ I had retained from the bible consisted mostly of the miracles he performed, and his death and resurrection as taught by the churches I attended, but I didn't grasp some aspects of Jesus's and especially St. Paul's teaching. Before watching the *Jesus of Nazareth* movie my search for spiritual truth had been focused mainly on the fulfillment of prophecy in the last days but that movie caused me to also start focusing on the life and teaching of Christ. In addition to his teaching and the healing miracles witnessed by his disciples I was especially inspired by the wisdom he displayed when dealing with the pious and hypocritical religious leaders of that time who wanted to discredit and destroy him.

His descent from King David by Joseph and Mary's marriage was established through the lineage shown in the Bible, and he fulfilled all the Hebrew prophetic scriptures regarding the Messiah, but most of the Jewish people refused to accept him as their Messiah. The Jewish religious leaders rejected Jesus because of his refusal to deny that he was the Son of God as his followers proclaimed, which was his claim of authority to forgive sins. They also rejected him because of his teaching concerning some of the laws of God and his criticism of their many laborious required traditions and his condemnation of their hypocrisy relating to religious abuses while proclaiming service to God. After being rejected and scorned by so many of his own people Jesus still had the faith in God and the courage to offer up his own life to certain torture,

humility, disgrace and death because he believed and knew that according to God's plan of salvation his sacrifice could redeem the people of the earth and free them from their bondage to sin. That tremendous act of faith, courage and willingness to lay down his life for all of humanity, the miracles, wisdom, his gospel teaching and miraculous resurrection made him worthy to be called the Messiah and King of Kings prophesied in the ancient Hebrew Holy Scriptures. To sum it up I came to realize that He was the most courageous, kindest, wisest, loving and selfless person I had ever heard of.

A significant change for Coral and I occurred in 1984 when we bought a house in Southern Tarrant County. I used a bedroom for the recording studio, but about one year after moving in we decided to build a more professional home studio in the house. We used the living room, which was isolated from the rest of the house with walls, for the control room and the adjoining two-car garage for the studio portion. Frank, a carpenter I knew from the job at the wholesale company, closed in the garage and installed a large double glass window and a door from the control room to the studio, and later I built a small soundproof room in the studio section. Frank also installed double doors from the control room to the entrance hallway of the house to seal off the studio from the rest of the house. We started out with an eight-track recorder but an opportunity to expand the studio capabilities came when my recording engineer/producer friend, Ron DiLulio offered to sell me a sixteen-track reel tape recorder, mixing console, several professional microphones and other studio equipment all for a reasonable packaged price. I managed to obtain a small business loan for the equipment by putting up all the studio equipment as collateral, so we started advertising and for the next ten years many local artists recorded at our new Avalon Sound Studio.

In 1985 a man who was involved with live gospel music in Fort Worth contacted me to ask if I would provide the sound system and engineer for the Fort Worth Gospel Opry. His name was Ron Cotnam, and an acquaintance of his named Jack Lake was presenting the gospel music variety show. It was located at a large old church in the historical stockyards area of north Fort Worth that Jack had leased. The show was presented on Friday and Saturday nights, and I was exposed to many excellent gospel groups and singers. My first taste of praise music came from the local well-known Bethel church choir and orchestra that performed one night at the Opry. This type of music was new and exciting to me, as I had only known the more traditional hymnal music from the Baptist churches I attended, some contemporary gospel music, and older classic Gospel music. I also supplied the Opry with candy, drinks and supplies from Lee's Wholesale, for them to sell.

As a travel agent Coral was able to take company paid trips to various places outside of the USA. A passion of Coral's had for a long time been traveling abroad, and fortunately I was able to go with her on some of the trips. One summer we traveled to England where we visited sites such as Glastonbury, also known as the Ancient Isle of Avalon, London, Stonehenge, and Avebury standing stones. We hiked to the top of Glastonbury Tor, climbed up in the ruins of St. Michael's church, and gazed on the land in all directions conceding that the area could easily have been an island before the marshes were drained. There is a memorial to King Arthur in the ruins of the Glastonbury Abby where it is said that he was buried.

In 1988 we again traveled to England to attend the third Merlin Conference where R.J. Stewart, author of many Merlin books, and British cultural historian & author Geoffrey Ashe were speaking on the possibility of Merlin and Arthur's actual existence in history. We met Courtney Davis, the artist for a book written by him, and Peter Quiller, for sale at the conference. Many people we met in England were into mysticism and the occult, as was their book titled *Merlin the Immortal*, which is about the reappearance of Merlin in modern times. The author states that in 1967, Helio Arcanophus, who I discovered several years later is a channeled entity claiming to be from ancient sunken Atlantis, prophesied that Merlin would soon awake and those who know the secret of extracting the sword Excalibur will tap into revitalized power centers generating peace and confidence among peoples of the world adding impetus to the forces of light in the battle between harmony and chaos. This entity also predicted a tilt in the earth's axis, a melting of the north polar cap, a resurgence of the land mass known as Atlantis and the sinking of other major landmasses. In 1984 when *Merlin the Immortal* was written, the author goes on to say that Merlin is a being of energy, and he has returned to encourage us at this crucial planetary moment in our quest for greater stability and enlightenment. While in England we also visited a hill fort being excavated named Cadbury Castle, which was suspected to have been a possible site for Camelot. England is a beautiful country and so much of our heritage is linked to theirs that it is easy to see why English legends are so prominent in the minds of many Americans.

The trips to England were mostly intended to be a search for possible truths residing in the Arthurian legends. However, when visiting Stonehenge, our research took me in a different direction as I discovered the legends and belief that Jesus visited the British Isles during his younger years and established several churches along the River Brue. According to the legends, Joseph of Arimathea, a secret disciple of Jesus and a man who scripture suggests may have been an uncle of Mary, the mother of Jesus, was an importer in the tin trade where he had gained wealth. Since there were large deposits of tin around Cornwall in the British Isles, he traveled there to obtain the tin. On at least one of these trips to the British Isles Jesus in his younger days accompanied him. The legends that Jesus visited, and established churches are widespread in several cities along the River Brue leading up to Glastonbury near the Mendip Hills where lead, copper and other metals, which formed alloys with tin, were mined. After Jesus was crucified, it is believed that Joseph of Arimathea moved to Britain and brought with him family heirlooms such as the chalice from the last supper also known as the Holy Grail. There is a well at the foot of Glastonbury Tor fed by an invisible spring of pure crystal-clear water where Joseph is said to have dropped the Holy Chalice in to hide it. He was given twelve hides of land by the British King Arviragus whose father, Bran, an Arch Druid was the first royal convert to Christianity in Britain. The land given to Joseph was in the Isle of Avalon, now Glastonbury where Joseph, having been taught by Christ, built a church and brought the pure uncorrupted Gospel of the Kingdom to that part of Britain around 63 AD. That church ground is where later, the Glastonbury Abbey was built and became a major center of Christianity in Britain until its dissolution by Henry VIII in the year 1539.



Bob King, Coral and David Hughes



the 3rd Merlin Conference

THE 1988 THIRD MERLIN CONFERENCE MERLIN AND MUSIC
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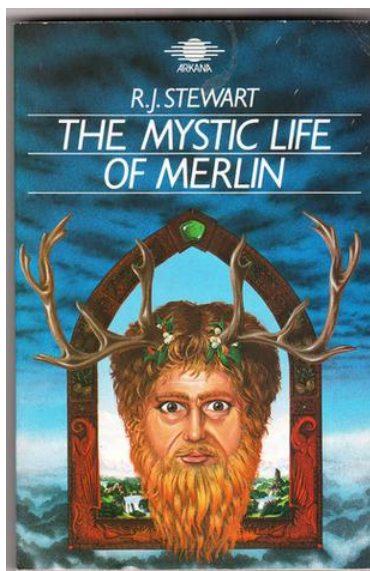
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The primary religion in Britain for many years had been Druidism, which had some similarities with Christianity. They taught of a coming Savior named Yesu who was known as the "All Heal". Druids served with the combined duties of priest, arbitrator, healer, teacher and administrator of law. Some were long-time polytheists and worshipped in the forests that they loved and were lovers of all nature. Julius Caesar and others have condemned Druids for barbaric human sacrifice while others believe that is not true. It must be taken into consideration that Caesar was not an unbiased witness as he was at war with the inhabitants of the land. It is possible that some sects of Druids were practicing human sacrifice at the time of Caesar's invasion of Britain and some were not. If he had witnessed the incidences of the so-called Christian groups in modern times led by Jim Jones and David Koresh, he might have condemned all of Christianity as barbaric. Eventually many Druids who did not oppose Christianity voluntarily merged with it. That is most likely why the Arthurian Legends are a mixture of Druidism and Christianity and why Merlin of Druidic background helped to establish a Christian Kingdom. Of course, by this time the uncorrupted Christianity had been replaced by a paganized version of Christianity, so the time of Merlin and King Arthur was the ending of Druidic dominance in Britain and the beginning of Roman Catholic dominance. The holy grail or the uncorrupted Gospel of God's Kingdom brought to Britain by Joseph of Arimathea was lost.

In addition to Joseph of Arimathea there are other connections of ancient Semitic peoples to Britain. One such connection is the discovery of archeological evidence that an ancient people known as the Hyksos, Semitic descendants of Noah, who left Egypt after completing the Great Pyramid moved to Britain and began mining tin. They invaded Egypt around 1700 BC and due to their military superiority over them were able to subjugate the Egyptians. It is notable that Hyksos Pharaohs would have been ruling when Joseph, one of the twelve patriarchs of Israel, was sold into slavery by his brothers. This could explain why Joseph, a non-Egyptian slave was able to be promoted to second in power only to the Pharaoh and why the Pharaoh welcomed Joseph's family into Egypt. The Egyptians drove out the Hyksos around 1570 BC and the ascension of Egyptians to Pharaohs would explain why the Hebrews who had formerly been friends and guests in Egypt became enslaved there. After their expulsion from Egypt the Hyksos are suspected to have migrated to Britain. Their knowledge of Astrology and the stars could have led to the creation of Zodiacal charts made of earth and stone such as Stonehenge and other standing stone sites in Britain.

Around 1444 BC the Israelite tribe of Asher conquered Phoenicia on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea where the city of Tyre was located. As was their custom they adopted the name of the land they conquered and became known as Phoenicians or Tyrians. The Asherites had fleets of trading ships scattered over the Indian and Atlantic oceans and the Tyrian pennant waved on the coasts of Britain and the shores of Ceylon. By the eleventh century BC they established a tin trade with the Scilly Islands and Cornwall in Britain. By 600 BC when Asher's trade by sea reached its maturity the Asherites, now called Phoenicians, were at their zenith in greatness. All of this points to a strong Semitic presence in Britain since around 1550 BC.

In previous studies I had learned of a biblical connection

between Britain and Israel from Herbert W. Armstrong, founder of the Worldwide Church of God. It was based partly on a prophecy in the book of Genesis where God appeared to Jacob, the son of Isaac who was the son of Abraham. God changed Jacob's name to Israel and told him that a nation and a company of nations would come from him, and kings would spring from him. Years later when Jacob was near death, he adopted Joseph's sons Ephraim and Manasseh by his Egyptian wife and blessed them with a substantial portion of their father Joseph's inheritance saying they were to perpetuate Jacob's name, which by that time had been changed by God to Israel, and the name of his ancestors Abraham and Isaac. Manasseh was to become a great nation, but Ephraim would be greater than Manasseh and his seed would become a multitude or a company of nations. They were also to grow into a multitude on the earth. So, Joseph's two sons received the unconditional birthright heritage of Jacob, which was passed down from Abraham and Isaac. Neither tribe fulfilled these prophecies before they were finally defeated and taken into captivity by Assyria with the other northern kingdom tribes around 718 BC. While captive in Assyria they lost their Hebrew language and their identity as Israelites. Therefore, we may deduce that since we are now in the last days of this age, we must investigate the past for nations that have historically fulfilled the prophecies of Jacob for Ephraim and Manasseh and that would be where the descendants of these two lost tribes would reside. Historical evidence gives us reason to believe that the tribe of Ephraim is now in the British Isles (a company of nations) and the location of Manasseh is in the United States of America since no other nations throughout history have fulfilled the descriptions of Jacob's prophecy as these two have. The United States and Britain are historically brother nations just as Ephraim and Manasseh were brothers.

Jacob also blessed the tribe of Judah with the kingly scepter promise, which would later be passed on to David and his descendants forever. God had sworn to David in 2 Samuel 7 that he would establish his throne forever and God also promised David that his throne would rule over Israel through all generations, which includes all generations up to the present day. David's throne appeared to be cut off when king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon defeated Judah around 585 BC killing all the nobles of Judah and all the sons of Zedekiah, king of Judah before putting out King Zedekiah's eyes and sending him into captivity in Babylon where he died in prison.

However, the king's daughters were not killed. It is recorded that Jeremiah, a prophet of God, was with them at Mizpah, the headquarters of Gedaliah who had been made governor over a remnant of Jews left in the land by the king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. The king of Ammon plotted with a Jew named Ishmael and they assassinated Gedaliah. Ishmael carried away as captives the remnant of Jews in Mizpah including Jeremiah and the daughters of deposed King Zedekiah. Johanan replaced Ishmael as the leader of the remnant and took them to Egypt in fear of reprisals from the king of Babylon, ignoring a warning from Jeremiah that Nebuchadnezzar would kill them if they went to Egypt.

The Jews banded with Johanan were killed by Nebuchadnezzar, but a small number of the captives escaped, which included Jeremiah, his scribe, Baruch and the king's daughters. This remnant traveled back to Judah and then according to Armstrong,

David's throne was removed from Judah, and fulfilling a prophecy in Isaiah 37:31, took root downward or planted, and bore fruit upward. The way this happened is very interesting.

First, the throne was overturned from Judah's (the tribe of royalty) first-born son Pharez's line to his twin brother Zarah's line and removed from the land of Judah. In Hebrew culture the first-born of Jacob's son Judah would have received the promised scepter of kingship. However, it is recorded in Genesis 38 that Zarah started to come out first at their birth by putting out his hand, which was marked with a scarlet thread by the midwife to be the first-born, but he drew back his hand and Pharez was born first. Pharez means breach and this ancient breach was healed by the overturning of the throne from the line of Pharez's male descendants to a descendant of Zarah. Herbert W. Armstrong states that while still in the land of Judah shortly after its fall, Jeremiah and his party were visited by a prince of Ireland who had been given the title of Heremon upon ascending the Irish throne of his father. This Heremon had been in Jerusalem at the time of the Babylonian siege when he became acquainted with Tea-Tephi who was a daughter of King Zedakiah. They were married shortly after the city fell and had a son. This marriage was significant because about four hundred and fifty years earlier in the days of King David, a colony of the line of Zarah, Pharez's twin brother and Judah's son arrived in Ireland where they settled and established a kingdom.

According to H. W. Armstrong Ireland's ancient history, recorded in the book, *Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland*, states that in 569 BC, a few years after the fall of Judah, an elderly white-haired patriarch, sometimes referred to as a saint came to Ireland. This patriarch is believed to have been Jeremiah. With this white-haired patriarch was a princess, daughter of an eastern king and a companion called Simon Brach. The princess had a Hebrew name Tephi, a pet name, and her full name was Tea-Tephi. Also, in Irish history before that time there was a man known as Ollam Fodhla, who was a great king. In Hebrew the name Ollam can mean eternity and he taught men to look to him who keeps the times and seasons in his own hand, and according to the Hebrew Scriptures would incarnate appear at some certain time in the east. The name Fodhla in Hebrew means wonderful. In other sources he was also the chief and founder of the Order of Ollams in Ireland which was an order of priests or sages known as Druids or Draoi. This is particularly interesting since Taliesen, a Welsh authority on Duridism stated that his lore had been delivered to him in the Hebrew language. Therefore, Jeremiah, since he matched the traits and teaching of one called Ollam Fodhla in Irish history, evidently may have been called by that name in respect for or in confusion with the great king before him. Jeremiah appears to have converted some of the Druids from Paganism to Judaism, which was looking forward to the appearance of a Messiah. And in some English legends it is said that Merlin, the onetime Archmage of Britain, who helped Arthur to unify the country into a Christian kingdom, was a Welsh Archdruid.

In addition to these occurrences, in Irish history long prior to around 718 BC when the ten northern tribes of Israel were conquered and taken into captivity by Assyria, a people called Tuatha de Danaan meaning Tribe of Dan, one of the tribes of Israel arrived in Ireland in ships and settled after driving out other tribes in around 1440 BC. Those people would only be a portion of the Tribe of Dan,

coinciding with the time of Israel's exodus from Egypt. About 700 years later, the remaining tribe of Danites was taken north of Israel into captivity by Assyria and later migrated west across Europe leaving a trail of places named after Dan their patriarch. Their descendants finally settled in Ireland rejoining their fellow Danite tribesmen's' descendants about one hundred years before the fall of Judah in 585 BC, which would have been about three hundred years after the descendants of Zarah (Judah's son and Pharez's twin brother) migrated to Ireland during the reign of King David and established a kingdom. The descendants of Zarah arrived in Ireland at a time that coincides with the arrival of Ireland's legendary Milesians, which was around 1000 BC.

Through biblical and historical accounts Armstrong has concluded that Jeremiah took the king's daughters from the land of Judah to Ireland where they were free from Babylonian rule. The first chapter of the Old Testament Book Jeremiah refers to the Throne of David, as it states God set Jeremiah over nations and kingdoms to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build and to plant. One of the Hebrew princesses with Jeremiah named Tea-Tephi, a descendent of King David and Judah in the Pharez line married the Heremon prince of Ireland, a descendent of Judah in the Zarah line overturning the throne of David from Pharez to Zarah, now in Ireland. David's throne had now been rooted out from the land of Judah, pulled down from its position of power in Jerusalem and destroyed, thrown down from the exalted line of Pharez, built up by the marriage of Tea-Tephi to Ireland's Heremon, and was now planted in Ireland. Then continuing to fulfill a prophecy by another Hebrew prophet in Ezekiel 21:27 pertaining to the throne of David it was overturned by marriage and transplanted again, this time in Scotland. Then it was overturned a third time and replanted in Britain where it is not to be overturned again until Jesus Christ (Shiloh), also a descendent of King David, comes to receive it and finally move it back to Jerusalem where He will rule all the earth in righteousness and justice.

On the journey to Ireland from Egypt, Jeremiah brought with them an ark, a harp and the Stone of Destiny called Lia-Fail, which is also called Jacob's pillar-stone and the Stone of Scone. It is the stone that Jacob placed his head on to sleep one night on the way to Laban around the year 1935 BC when he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached heaven. The angels of God were ascending and descending on it and the Lord stood above it saying He would give Jacob and his descendants this land and his descendants would be like the dust of the earth and would spread abroad to the west, to the east, to the north and to the south. The Lord also said that by Jacob and his descendants all the families of the earth would bless themselves. Jacob's sons became the twelve tribes of Israel, which became thirteen tribes when Joseph's sons Ephraim and Manasseh both received his birthright. After the dream Jacob named the place Bethel and left the stone there while he continued his journey. It was carried to Egypt around 1883 BC and given to Joseph when Jacob and his family moved there. Then it was carried out of Egypt in the Exodus and forty years later to the land of Canaan. Around 1383 BC it was with Joshua at Shechem where kings were crowned standing on or by it. Then somewhere in the general vicinity of 700 BC the stone was moved to Jerusalem. In 583 BC Jeremiah took the stone from Jerusalem to

Ireland, and it is known to have been in Ireland at Ulster where Irish kings were crowned on it. Then it was moved to Iona, Scotland by King Fergus who had it brought from Ulster around 500 AD. While in Scotland, many Scottish kings were crowned on it. Finally, English King Edward I moved it to England when he overcame John Balliol, king of Scots in 1296 AD. It has sat beneath the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey in London since that time although it was temporarily moved back to Scotland in 1989, but to be returned to England at the next coronation. This temporary move was not an overturn like the previous three moves as it still belongs to and will be used for coronations by Britain.

In Windsor Castle there is said to be a genealogical table showing the descent of the British kings from David through the Irish and Scottish lines however there are unofficial genealogies available to everyone showing the lineage from Pharez down to Queen Elizabeth. Since 1727 a song named "Zadok the Priest" composed by the classical composer, Handel has been the most often used piece of music in the coronation ceremony. It is about the acting high priest named Zadok who remained faithful to King David in his last days by supporting Solomon as his successor over Adonijah who endeavored to secure the throne with the help of another priest named Abiathar. It becomes obvious that the song about Zadok may be more than just a casual reference to loyalty. The belief that the inhabitants of Britain are descended from Israelites is known as Anglo-Israelism or British-Israelism. There are many other proponents of this belief besides H.W. Armstrong but there are also many who oppose it. After reading the explanations of those who are in opposition to British Israelism that I was able to find I was still inclined to accept it as being compatible with the Holy Scriptures. I watched Herbert W. Armstrong's TV program often in the early nineteen eighties, listening to him say many things that sounded logical and true. By this time, he was very old and may have appeared unhinged to many, but I could hear the ring of truth in his messages, so I kept listening, reading and watching.

Eventually Herbert W. Armstrong's teaching was pushed to the back of my mind again while in the mundane world I worked at Lee's Wholesale company as a store merchandiser until early 1989 when I took a supervisory job at Erin's Stores, a small chain of convenience stores in Fort Worth owned by Ken Adcock, a co-owner of Lee's Wholesale. I was only at that job for a few months when I quit and started working full-time in my home studio. Most of that year I made demos for local songwriters and provided sound systems for some local bands. Then in the fall of 1989 I was offered a job as floor manager at a Town and Country Drug Store, part of a local chain of drug stores, which I accepted. This job provided me with a small steady income while allowing me to continue working with music in the evenings and on weekends.

By early 1990 Coral and I had grown apart in our professional and personal lives from differences we were unable to resolve. Even though I believe we both still cared deeply for each other, we were unable to provide each other's needs, so we separated and were divorced several months later. She would soon become involved in new musical and personal endeavors in another city that was more favorable to the music industry. For about one year after the split, I remained alone while diligently seeking truth about religion and spirituality. During this time, I read the Bible, the Book

of Mormon, Jehovah Witnesses publications, a book on the seven Religions of Man, books about Religious Cults and some books on Eastern Religion and thought.

One book titled Autobiography of a Yogi by Paramahansa Yogananda was particularly interesting to me. Among other things the author speaks of Astrology and some similarities between Christianity and the Hindu religion, and I had read publications about young Jesus also travelling to India and studying there. Quoting Yogananda's master, he described Astrology as the study of man's response to planetary stimuli and that the stars send forth positive and negative radiations which do not help or harm humanity but offer a lawful channel for the outward operation of cause-effect equilibriums (balancing between opposing forces or actions) that each person has set into motion in the past. He also stated that a child is born on the day and hour when the celestial emanations are in mathematical harmony with his individual karma. His description of a natal chart is "the message boldly blazoned across the heavens at the moment of birth". These words concerning Astrology gained more relevance later when I discovered that German-born Johannes Kepler, considered to be the "Father of Modern Astronomy" calculated that in the years 7 through 6 B.C. there was a triple conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in the sign of Pisces. A triple conjunction means that it occurred three times in one year. This conjunction was of extreme importance to the Jewish people because in ancient Jewish tradition, Jupiter was called the King's Star and Saturn was the star of final authority or the Star of David. Ancient astrologers called the planets wandering stars because they moved across the sky in relation to the other stars and they did not have telescopes to determine their true composition. Also, a more modern researcher of calendar errors and Astrological calculations I came across while trying to determine the year of Christ's birth, determined that on March 1 in 5 B.C. a "Grand Cross" emerged in the stars. It is an ancient astrological configuration indicating obstacles or hardships. Then the configuration of two vertically opposed five pointed stars emerged from the Grand Cross creating the Seal of Solomon or the Star of David. It was at the end of the age of Aries and the beginning of the age of Pisces and the end of one "Great Year" consisting of 25,920 years of astronomical precession. The Seal of Solomon conjunction is a once in forty million years event. He states that this conjunction was the star that the Wise Men or Magi followed to the birth of Christ. The Hebrew Prophets did predict that the arrival of the messiah would be associated with a celestial event.

In his book Yogananda refers to a discourse with his master, Sri Yukteswar where he states that "The knowledge of good and evil promised to Eve by the serpent in the Garden of Eden refers to the dualistic and oppositional experiences that mortals under maya or illusion must undergo. Falling into delusion through misuse of feeling and reason, man relinquishes his right to enter the heavenly garden of divine self-sufficiency". A footnote explains "When God sent Adam forth from the garden to till the ground from whence he was taken it meant that whereas the divine man first made by God had his consciousness centered in the omnipotent single eye in the forehead at that spot where the all-creative powers of his will were focused, they were lost to man when he began to till the ground of his physical nature". This tilling would refer to acting upon selfish and unrighteous desires, and especially the desire for animalistic

procreation inherent in our bodies that laid dormant until Eve believed the lie that humans would not die if they followed the path of knowing good and evil. This kind of sexual desire appealed to the female mental nature of feelings and emotions, and she succumbed to its deceitfulness. Adam's mental nature of logic and reasoning to discern truth was inhibited by desire to lust as observed in the animal kingdom, so he followed her lead. According to the Bible, Jesus Christ, the second Adam, never succumbed to the deceitfulness of such selfish desire. Sri Yukteswar suggested that since Adam and Eve were created by God to be above the animals with reasoning and other abilities, they were not originally intended to procreate in the same manner, but rather to become one with God by eating of the Tree of Life which meant receiving knowledge from him instead of learning good and evil under the influence of selfish desire. By gaining all knowledge from God, man would eventually have the creative and procreative powers of God.

Jesus stated that if your eye was single then your whole body would be full of light. In Hinduism the third eye represents spiritual enlightenment, and a dot is usually painted on the middle of the forehead just above the eyebrows to depict that state. It is also spoken of as a gate that can lead us to inner realms of higher consciousness. In eastern Indian tradition, it is known as the eye of knowledge where our inner teacher resides. If Jesus Christ was referring to this ancient Hindu concept, then it would mean that if a person sees through his single or spiritual eye, and not the physical eyes of the flesh, his whole being will be enlightened. However, Christ also added "but if your eye is evil, your whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness". From this I concluded that since the two human eyes can only see the material world, and if we only see through self-centered human eyes, we will be full of spiritual darkness or spiritual ignorance, and that kind of darkness is great because it leads us to spiritual death. If the only light in you is from the physical vision which is colored by individual selfish desires and self-preservation, your understanding can only be of material things leading to the spiritual darkness of covetousness, idolatry, hypocrisy or even atheism. To see spiritually you must view existence through the unselfishness of the third or spiritual eye of understanding. Through that single eye we can see that all life has a grand design and purpose and has grown out of the elements of the earth, and we are living, learning, growing, experiencing and analyzing the earth and this universe using our five bodily senses and our ability to think and reason. Therefore, we can see that we are related to all life, existing as individual humans, interacting with other humans and earthly creatures while being subject to physical and spiritual laws. Belief that we are separate from other living creatures is an illusion.

Studying the five states of consciousness in Eastern teaching also helped give me a better understanding of myself as I related it to Christianity and Western thought. The road to truth about ourselves is the first step to becoming one with our spiritual creator. Believing in an all-powerful creator God who has the power to destroy your soul can lead to a fear that prods you into self-inspection if you suspect you might be living against his will. So, it is extremely important that we diligently seek to know what God's will is and what displeases him. As far as I could tell, Eastern religion and thought do not provide us with that knowledge.

A study in human consciousness inspired a song I wrote titled "The Inner Road" which I recorded on my album "The Power of Positive Singing". I also named my publishing company "Inner Planes Publishing" about the same concept. In the **conscious** state we are only aware of our body's needs and what we are experiencing in the world around us. Newborn babies and the animal kingdom are an example of living beings mostly in the conscious state only. All those things we experience through the conscious mind are stored in the **subconscious** mind even though our conscious mind may not be able to recall all of them. In the **sub-subconscious** state, we are aware of our conscious mind experiencing existence, and recall memories of past events. Using those memories, especially highly impressionable memories, we respond to what the conscious mind is experiencing. Even animals can operate at this level on a very limited scale such as a dog that receives a treat each time it performs a certain action like sitting for its owner. Although its subconscious may be very limited, the dog in its sub-subconscious state recalls the pleasing memory in its subconscious mind of getting a treat for sitting, and consciously responds by repeating the action, expecting to receive another treat. An example on the human level would be when a student in their sub-subconscious state is aware and understands that if they study the curriculum hard enough so that all the required information is retained and stored into the sub-conscious mind, the teacher will give them a good grade for recalling the information when their conscious mind is tested to see if they have the required information in their subconscious mind.

The next deeper state of consciousness is the **sub-superconscious**. In that state we become aware of and observe the workings of our sub-subconscious mind which we are actively doing in this study. The sub-superconscious state is where we can discern truth from falsehoods, learn of abstract ideas, spirituality and philosophy. The deepest state of consciousness is the **superconscious** mind, also known as the Higher Self or the Self God. In reference to the third eye concept the physical center of superconsciousness is in the frontal lobe of the brain, at a point midway between the eyebrows, also known as the Christ center or spiritual eye. The more we can draw our energy and awareness upward to that center, the higher or deeper our level of awareness. To this I would add that from the eastern Paramahansa Yogananda perspective of Christianity the superconscious is not God, but it would correspond with the creative spark that God placed within humans where emotions and imagination originate. In this state of consciousness, we are aware of ourselves operating in all the other states while being in the presence of God to which we are drawn and seek to become one with in our choices and our free will. Our love of all life flourishes in this state as we see the perfection of creation and our link to all life within it.

This made me think of Christianity when the Holy Spirit is received from God after repentance, baptism and touching of hands by a minister with God's spirit, it will make known to us his whole plan of salvation for humanity through the sacrifice of Christ until the end of the age and beyond, and he will then impart in us understanding of God's ways, righteous thought and any special gifts he chooses for us to have for his glory. In becoming one with the only true God through Jesus Christ, we accept his way, become part of his spiritual church and he begins preparing us for his righteous

kingdom on the earth. But since we were also created by God with free will, we can choose to be blind to God's truth and way of life and accept the darkness of falsehood offered by the eternal created fallen angel Lucifer who would lead us to believe that he should be worshiped as God. That choice would result in the development of the negative states of hatred, envy, cruelty, abuse and all that leads to evil and destruction. Since his desire is to be the God of humanity he will use lies and deception to trick you into loving him and building his kingdom of darkness on the earth. In fact, humanity accepted Satan's rulership when Eve believed his lie that she would not die if she ate the forbidden fruit, meaning her soul would be immortal like God. And while living in God's Garden of paradise in Eden, Adam followed her lead and they both chose to walk the path of knowing firsthand, good and evil. Because of that choice, they were banned from paradise and the tree of life, God's Holy Spirit teaching them his way of righteousness, so they could not have eternal life until the part of God's plan of salvation for mankind was completed through the willing sacrifice of sinless Jesus Christ by his death, burial, and resurrection, and by individual acceptance of his kingship and way of life.

Being spiritually enlightened was certainly important to me and I was very attracted to the enlightenment through eastern religion and thought. However, with enlightenment comes great responsibility and profound consequences for the soul. In the end I was left unsatisfied with Eastern religion because it didn't deal with the problem of our sins and there were also many beliefs and teachings that I did not want to be involved in and become a part of. Most notably, the multitude of idols in Hinduism.

All this diverse information began to overwhelm and confuse me to some degree in my search for spiritual truth, so I decided to take a different approach. Going to a traditional Christian church didn't make much sense to me at that time because even within Protestant Christianity, which supposedly bases all doctrine on the Bible, there are many different denominations with as many different doctrines. They all emphatically believe their version of biblical doctrine to be correct yet the doctrines they teach are all quite different, so I concluded that either all were at least partly wrong or only one is correct, and if so, I was unable to determine which one. There are only a few major doctrines traditional Christianity mostly agrees on such as Jesus being the Son of God, the Messiah or Christ, the Trinity nature of God and Sunday worship. Although I had visited and attended diverse types of those traditional Christian churches during my life, I was not particularly drawn to any of them, and several were even repulsive to me. However, I was drawn to the teachings of Herbert W. Armstrong and the Worldwide Church of God, but it would be a few years before I would return my focus to that church's teaching.

In the spring of 1991, my brother Howard called one day and asked if I would accompany him and his wife DeDe on a blind date with a recently divorced real estate agent in the office where he was also an agent. Her name was Mary, and neither of us had ever been on a blind date before, but we both decided to take a chance. She was of average height and slender with long black hair and brown eyes. I was very attracted to her natural beauty and outgoing personality. Mary and I were very comfortable together and we had a great time at a dance club in West Fort Worth. I never was much

of a dancer, but I managed to stumble around on the dance floor without mashing her toes too much. We dated for several months and slowly began letting down the defenses and falling in love again. However, before the relationship grew solid and permanent Mary's previous ex-husband showed up and wanted her back. Mary's heart was torn and caught in the middle, but she decided to go back with her ex-husband and try to start again with him although they did not remarry. It was a difficult time for me because I was very disappointed and I thought she was probably making a mistake because he had been described by some as an abuser, but I respected her choice, and I was not looking forward to being alone again.

Over the next four years I did not have an opportunity to start a close relationship with any woman and Mary was often in my thoughts and I continued to feel a strong connection with her. Also, during that time Linda's brother, Gary VanWaters called me and said his sister, Linda, my ex-wife from the group Merlin, was ill with pneumonia and was not expected to live through the night. Her family and friends had all converged on the hospital to say their goodbyes. My heart went out to her, and I prayed from the depths of my soul for God to heal her, so she could have another chance to turn her life around. After some time in prayer a feeling of peace came over me and I was no longer worried for her, so I thanked God and went on with my daily tasks. Later I discovered that she had a miraculous turn for the better when her dad discovered through a past job associate involved in US quarantine affairs that her illness could be Chicken Pox of the lungs, after he described to him all the symptoms she was experiencing. Linda's daughter had just recovered from Chicken Pox a week earlier, but no one inquired about it. So, he relayed the information to the doctors, and they confirmed the diagnosis with tests and changed her medication immediately. Receiving the right medication, she recovered quickly and was released in good condition within a few days. If Linda's dad had not been persistent in discovering her true ailment, she probably would not have lived through that night so, the answer to my prayer was achieved through God putting it into her dad's mind to contact his customs associate just in time to relay the information to the doctors who changed the treatment and saved her life. That is what I believe happened, but only God knows.

During those years of searching, I also engineered recordings, provided sound systems and engineered live sound for local bands and small concerts. One of the recordings was for Doug Stovall; a local singer/songwriter who had a band based in Arlington, Texas named The Persuaders. Doug was also a lover of Moody Blues music, and he had a good voice for rock music of the sixties, seventies and eighties. He would often emulate the English accents of the British Invasion groups for effect. With his wit and personality, he could always make you feel good whenever he was around. Ben Von Bose, the bass player and singer was slim and energetic with long auburn hair and his rock band moves on the stage gave a visual excitement to the group. The drummer, Danny Frye, was tall and powerful so when he played you could really feel the drums. For about one year we all worked on a rock music album of Doug's original songs before finally getting it mastered and duplicated. The Persuaders also contracted me to provide the sound system and engineer all their local gigs. I met The Persuaders at a recording school all of us attended several years earlier where I

learned of our mutual interest in Moody Blues music. We had a great time recording, playing gigs, going to concerts, camping and doing other things together. Attending concerts with them and seeing other good live musical performances inspired me to keep trying to revive my musical career.

When the studio music work finally dwindled in 1994, I decided to make a career change and sought temporary clerical office work. My first assignment was for Harris Methodist Health Plan in Arlington, Texas. On the first day at work, I was surprised to run into my niece Alison who unknown to me had been working in the Accounts Receivable department as a temp for several months. My job was mostly filing and support in the A/R department, but I learned their computer software office systems on my lunch breaks on a spare computer by taking software tutorials. My brother Howard loaned me a PC, and I was able to learn the old DOS operating system, which was prevalent at that time. With the help and instruction of Kristi, the A/R supervisor, I was able to grow in knowledge of the department while I temped for thirteen months until I was hired as a full-time employee in May of 1995 by a new supervisor, Ann, who recognized my potential. The Accounting Assistant position I accepted oversaw all cash receipts and related reports. By 1997 two additional employees were added to the cash desk and I was designated as team leader. Then in 1998 another employee was added, and I was promoted to cash desk supervisor, so my new career appeared to be going well. Then in 1999 due to heavy financial losses the health plan sold to PacifiCare, which was based in San Antonio. That company moved all the health plan membership to their system in San Antonio and laid off most of the workers in Arlington who chose not to relocate to San Antonio. I worked with the A/R and A/P departments in Arlington until it was closed at the end of the year 2000 and I was laid off.

After being hired full-time, in mid-1995 I also started working as a single musician/singer and signed up with a local music store owner and booking agent, Logan Swords. He was able to get me a two-week job in October of that year at a Holiday Inn club in Arlington, very close to the health plan job. The hotel provided me with a room so I could stay there instead of commuting to my home in Rendon when I wanted to. It was a great job, and I performed well with good responses from the audience, but the time of the job coincided with the controversial trial of O.J. Simpson which the club had its televisions tuned in to. The distraction of the trial made it difficult to keep the customers' attention so, for much of the time I was just background music. Logan continued to book me at private parties, weddings and receptions, and other small venues.

Later, in 1995 along with Chris Eigenmann, a drummer I had earlier met in a failed attempt to rebuild the late sixties group I was in, The Gentlemen, we formed a duo named Merlin and Friends. After a short time learning songs and only getting a few jobs we added a female vocalist, Terri Christi. She was an excellent singer with whom we had recorded a cassette album of dance songs for her parents' dance instruction business. We also recorded a cassette album of popular songs featuring Terri singing, including one of her original songs. After she agreed to join our group, we rehearsed together and created all the promo materials needed to start seeking jobs, but the jobs didn't materialize and eventually Terri decided to go in a different direction. Still determined to form a group, Chris

and I contacted Gary VanWaters, Linda's brother who had played guitar and sang in our failed attempt to revive The Gentlemen. He was an excellent lead guitarist and singer, so we asked him to join us, which he did, and we started getting jobs quickly. Gary had moved to Fort Worth from Houston several years before when his tour of duty in the Air Force flying transport planes brought him to the local air force base. We played country, pop and rock music mostly at American Legions, VFW's and Senior Citizen Centers in the Tarrant County area.

Back in 1992, I came across the old booklets from H.W. Armstrong again and re-read some of them. Once more his words influenced me so much that after re-reading the booklet about the US and Great Britain in prophecy, I considered becoming a member of the Worldwide Church of God. But when I contacted them to ask for another Herbert Armstrong book I saw advertised, they would not send it, and I was told they no longer published his books. This was confusing to me because Armstrong was the founder and leader of the church. So, I came to a temporary roadblock in learning more from that church.

In early 1993, I watched a religious program on TV, which was discussing the teachings of H.W. Armstrong produced by the Philadelphia Church of God. The speaker, Gerald Flurry explained that the Worldwide Church had disavowed many of Herbert Armstrong's teaching and doctrines but claimed the Philadelphia church still held to them. Many people had turned away from and were rejecting the teachings of Armstrong regarding keeping the Commandments of God among other things. H.W. Armstrong died in 1986 and by 1989 the doctrinal changes led to a split in the Worldwide Church of God after a group of church members decided that Armstrong's teachings were wrong, so they began to merge with the beliefs of the general community of traditional Protestant Christian churches concerning the trinity and keeping the laws and commandments of God, including the Seventh Day Sabbath, thus shedding their cult status among Protestant churches. They also stopped giving out copies of Armstrong's books and would not allow anyone else to publish them since they owned the publishing rights to his books. The Philadelphia Church of God claimed to remain faithful to the teachings of Armstrong and interpreted this split as a fulfillment of prophecy regarding the true church of God in the end times. They claimed the split marked the end of Revelation's prophesied Philadelphia church era and the beginning of the Laodicean era.

After hearing this I contacted the Philadelphia Church of God and asked for copies of Armstrong's books. Since they were legally barred from publishing new books written by Armstrong, one of the members kindly sent me a used copy of his book, *Mystery of the Ages*. At a used bookstore I bought a used set of the *Encyclopedia Americana* to verify as much information from Armstrong's book as I could. I also found a copy of his complete book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* at that store, which identifies the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel and explains why they were lost to history. So, with these tools in hand, I began once more learning what Herbert W. Armstrong taught.

Armstrong wrote that in the book of Exodus God commanded Israel to keep the Sabbath day holy. God also told Moses that the Sabbath day was a sign between God and Israel

throughout their generations, given in order that they might know that it is God, the Lord that sanctifies them (sets them apart for a holy purpose). God also sanctified the Sabbath day (set it apart for a holy purpose). The creation story in Genesis points out that God created for six days and rested on the seventh day. Then he made that day sacred and set it apart. This passage in Genesis indicates that the Sabbath was to be one eternal recurring space of time, every seventh earthly rotation of twenty-four hours, as a memorial to the act of creating so that it would continually point man to the existence of God, the creator. Also, it would point to the people who keep the Sabbath as being His people.

Several generations after entering the Promised Land in Canaan the tribes of Israel became a United Kingdom under Saul. But after Saul's successors, King David and his son Solomon were gone, there was a civil war, and the nation was split between north and south into two kingdoms. When the northern kingdom called Israel, which consisted of ten of the thirteen tribes under its new King Jeroboam began using idols to worship God and stopped keeping the Sabbath Day holy, God allowed them to be conquered and sent into captivity in Assyria around 718 BC where they eventually became lost or no longer identified as God's people, Israel. The southern kingdom, named Judah, which consisted of three of the original tribes of Israel, Benjamin, Judah and Levi, eventually fell into idolatry also, so God allowed them to be conquered and taken into captivity by Babylon around 585 BC. However, Judah did not lose their identity as God's people because they continued to keep the Sabbath Day. After Judah was taken into captivity the king of Babylon populated Palestine and Judah with Babylonians who brought with them the Assyrian-Babylonian Mystery religion. The three southern tribes of Israel known as the kingdom of Judah returned to Jerusalem 70 years later and became known as Jews, which is derived from the tribal name and kingdom name of Judah. Jacob's kingly scepter and rulership promise in Genesis 49:10, just before his death, previously passed down from Isaac to Jacob, Abraham to Isaac, and God to Abraham was inherited by Judah at Jacob's death.

The Babylonian Mystery religion was conceived in ancient Babylon by Semiramis, the widow of Nimrod, the first king of Babylon. She and her followers developed a religion based on recognizing Nimrod being reborn in her son, Tammuz. There are numerous ancient pre-Christian era depictions of Semiramis holding her child Tammuz in her arms that the Christian church later adopted and claimed it to be Mary and Jesus. Other depictions of that same mother and child include the Egyptian "Isis and Osiris", from India "Isi and Iswara" in Asia as "Cybele and Deoious" and in Pagan Rome as "Fortuna and Jupiter". That virgin mother myth made Semiramis a goddess since she claimed to be the mother of the sun-god Nimrod now in the body of Tammuz. Nimrod is also known in other mythologies as Ninus. Semiramis is believed by some to have been a prostitute who was extremely beautiful and created a religion of sexual perversions and secret ceremonies and initiations known only to her priests and a select few which were all bound to secrecy. The goal was for everyone to be educated with only the select knowledge given by the priests to bring the whole world into dominance by the Babylonian monarchy. The religion required secrecy to survive and grow in the patriarchal world of that time dominated by the sons of Shem who held to the righteous teachings handed down from Shem's

father Noah. Semiramis was also known in various ancient religious mythologies as “Belti” the Mother of gods, “Alma Mater” or the Virgin Mother, “Baalti” or the English “My Lady, the latin “Mea Domina” corrupted to “The Madonna” in Italy, the Greek “Queen of Heaven”, the Roman “Cybele” or “Rhea” and the Egyptian “Minerva the Mother of the Gods” just to name a few. This Babylonian idolatry spread throughout the ancient world along with the many conquests of subsequent Babylonian kings seeking world dominion. The worship of Semiramis and Tammuz was even practiced by the priests in Judah prior to Judah’s defeat at the hands of Babylon’s king Nebuchadnezzar. Biblical scripture states that Ezekiel was taken in the spirit inside the temple and shown their idolatries.

After the Babylonians were defeated by Medo-Persia some of them migrated west and settled in Italy taking their false religion with them to Rome and some stayed in Samaria. During the days of the original apostles of Christ there was a man named Simon the Sorcerer in Samaria, the land where the Northern Kingdom of Israel resided before their captivity. Simon was leader of the Babylonian Mystery religion having the title of Pater or Peter, meaning Papa or interpreter of oracles. He was impressed with the healing miracles performed by the disciples of Jesus, so he became baptized. Seeking an elevated position in the new Christian church he approached the apostles and asked to be taught how to convey the gift of the Holy Spirit by the touching of hands. They perceived that his intent was not right, so they refused and when he offered them money to teach him, they again reprimanded him and turned him away. The word simony, which means to buy or sell a position of influence in the church, came from this event. Being rejected by the disciples he left and began proselytizing or seeking converts. He appropriated the name of Christ, used the Christian principle of Grace as a license to sin by doing away with the need to obey God’s law and he founded his own Christian church. Under his version of the doctrine of grace, a person who professed belief in Christ would always be forgiven by God regardless of the sin and how many times it was committed and especially if they contributed to the church. This false interpretation of Grace turned it into a license to disobey God.

Simon Pater’s newly formed Christian Church soon gave birth to an anti-Semitic doctrine called Replacement Theology which teaches that the Jewish people forfeited their salvation and inheritance by rejecting Christ, and the new Christian Church became the sole recipient of the promises made to Abraham which were passed on to Isaac, Jacob and then to the tribes of Israel. This false doctrine flourished in the church throughout the centuries following the crucifixion of Christ and eventually resulted in massacres of Jews during the Crusades and the time of the Black Plague. Centuries later at the beginning of the Reformation Martin Luther helped to perpetuate the doctrine by calling for Christians to burn Jewish Synagogues and schools, destroy their houses, confiscate their Talmudic writings, forbid their Rabbis to teach, take their money and compel them into forced labor. Luther promoted hatred of Jews and demonized them because of their continued refusal to accept Christ as the Messiah. During Germany’s Third Reich holocaust, Adolf Hitler declared Martin Luther to be the greatest encouragement of his life. Hitler, professing to be a Christian was given a standing ovation by a large group of church leaders just before World War Two when he praised Luther and declared his intention to continue Luther’s path

of ridding the world of the Jews.

Also, in the early days of Simon Pater's church it changed the Sabbath from Saturday, the seventh day to Sunday the first day of the week, which was the Ancient Assyrian-Babylonian day of sun worship. In 321 AD Constantine, the Roman emperor made a new edict known as the Sunday decree: "All judges and city people and the craftsmen shall rest upon the venerable Day of the Sun. Country people, however, may freely attend to the cultivation of the fields, because it frequently happens that no other days are better adapted for planting the grain in the furrows or the vines in trenches. So that the advantage given by heavenly providence may not for the occasion of a short time perish". In effect that edict made the Sunday worshipping Christian church the official state church of Rome. The church also changed the Christian Passover commanded by God to be kept for all generations on the eve of the fourteenth day of Nisan in the Jewish calendar to a Sunday, renaming it after the goddess Astarte or Ishtar. In English it is now called Easter which is derived from the Anglo-Saxon goddess Eostre or Ostara, associated with Springtime and fertility.

Controversies had been brewing over these doctrinal issues for many years until the pagan Roman emperor Constantine made many of these changes official law at the Nicene council in 325 AD, which he had called to settle the disputes. In addition, this council defined God as being three persons thus legitimizing the Trinity doctrine, which was also a source of heated controversy. The Trinity is a doctrine that God is three persons in one: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit whereas others believe the bible teaches that God is the Father and the Son with the Holy Spirit being the spiritual power of God which leads willing souls to salvation through Christ and enters true believers in Christ at baptism. Thus, Jesus said, "whosoever believes in me shall not perish (die) but have everlasting life". In the Holy Scriptures the Holy Spirit is called the Comforter and the Spirit of Truth. Still others believe that God is simply one being. At the time of the Nicene Council the followers of Simon the Sorcerer's Babylonian Christianity were many while the believers in the true uncorrupted non-paganized gospel of Christ had dwindled to a small number, so the doctrinal changes were easily approved. Although now free from Roman State persecution, from that time forward the believers of the true gospel of Christ were persecuted by the newly empowered Roman Christian Church and branded as heretics, worthy of punishment and to be cut off from the government sanctioned Christian society.

The two books by Armstrong were so intriguing that I could hardly put them down until I finished and then I was hungry for more. The Americana encyclopedia helped me with further research on many of the ideas presented in his books and an attempt to confirm their basis in recorded history. H.W. Armstrong had a strong influence on my life, and I spent many hours reading his books and trying to confirm his interpretations of scriptures and his teachings. I did not read about any references in his books to Jesus visiting Britain in His youth, but I could see that these English legends tied in extremely well with his conclusions of the Bible relating to the British People in prophecy. Although I could not confirm everything in his books I was drawn to the logic of his interpretations and his detective-like approach to understanding the scriptures. At the time, I could not agree with all his teaching, but I did learn a lot from him,

and it inspired me to keep searching. Later, all the studies and research flowing from the fountain of spiritual knowledge I had been drinking from for so many years would begin merging into an amazing realization and picture of things to come and the message I was destined to deliver to the world through Merlin.

I researched and studied other publications from the Philadelphia Church, and I read many of their publications, all offered for free, and I watched their television programs for several months. The music with Merlin and Friends was enjoyable but many of the bars and clubs we played in were not my cup of tea. As I became disillusioned with the direction necessary for the group to survive and again discouraged by the lack of small professional variety venues in the Fort Worth area, I became inclined to quit the band, observe God's Sabbaths and try to find a church to attend. So, I told the other members of the band I would be leaving after our current bookings in 1995 were completed and they were welcomed to replace me and go on playing with the same name if they wanted to. Ironically, after contacting one of the leaders of the Philadelphia Church I was not allowed to visit their local services because of my involvement in the remaining musical work I was committed to. Merlin and Friends split up and Gary eventually joined another group as Chris went his own way. I eventually became suspicious about some of their teaching when they began referring so much to their church and a publication of theirs as fulfilled prophecy. So, feeling uneasy about it, I stopped following their programs and contributing to that church, but I started keeping the Sabbath alone.

It was obvious to me that becoming interested in joining the Worldwide Church of God at the time in history when it had split into multiple factions was no coincidence. Once again it seemed that I was to continue my quest for spiritual truth while keeping separate from church life. I learned many truths from Armstrong's books, but I believe it was God's guidance through the timing of events that prevented me from joining the Worldwide Church of God and the Philadelphia Church of God. Then once again worldly concerns became a distraction and H.W. Armstrong's teaching slipped back into the halls of my subconscious mind.

Of all the Christian denominations and other religions, I had become familiar with up to that point, I believed that Christianity was the right choice when it came to choosing the true spiritual way, and I believed that Jesus of Nazareth was truly the son of God, but I continued to be on the fence between several traditional Protestant Christian doctrines and the Church of God doctrines. So, I decided that since the Bible is the primary source for Christian doctrine, that was where I should look for the truth about Christianity. I approached it with the assumption that it contains the actual words of the living spiritual God, inspired and written through humans who were truly seeking him and were dedicated to doing his will. I also assumed that mistakes in translation could have been made, that would alter basic truths so I would have to compare different translations and search commentaries to seek out the correct meaning of some scriptures. It had previously come to my attention that several scriptures have been used out of context to promote incorrect doctrines, so I would have to learn a lot about Jewish and Gentile life and customs at the time a scripture was written and what the context was in the bible, before and after the scripture in question. As if that wasn't enough, I learned there were no punctuation marks in the

original Hebrew and Greek texts, and translators entered them so the scripture would be understood according to their previously accepted doctrine. Chapters and verses were added for references in studying the scriptures, sometimes interrupting the continuity of a scriptural message. My assumptions, along with a more positive attitude while searching the Holy Scriptures, and a better understanding of the history of the church, Israel and the Hebrew people, due to the teaching of H.W. Armstrong, made the Bible much easier to understand and more relevant to my life and the world in general.

In the spring of 1996, I received a surprise call from Mary asking me to sing at her daughter Becky's marriage to Wesley Roberson and play at the reception. I knew Becky from when Mary and I were together in 1991, and I was glad to be part of their wedding. Mary also told me she and her ex-husband had split up again and she was living in a renthouse west of Fort Worth. I immediately asked to see her again and she welcomed me with open arms. We dated for several months and grew closer together when on October 26, two days after her birthday, we were married. The wedding was in the backyard of my home on a Saturday afternoon. It had been raining all week, and the rainy weather was forecasted to remain throughout the weekend and into the next week with the possibility of a break on Saturday. Amazingly the sun came out Saturday morning and the skies cleared completely until the wedding and reception were over and everyone had left, then it started raining again. God certainly provided a beautiful day for our wedding, and to us, it seemed to be a stamp of his approval.

Mary supported my musical endeavors, and I supported Mary in her Real Estate work. Although at first there were times of disagreement and struggles, it eventually seemed to be a good match. Our years together were filled with much love and joy, and I knew that she felt the same. Mary was always strong where I was weak, and I was strong where she was weak. Each of us automatically lifted the other up whenever down or hurt. Without her love and encouragement, I do not think I could have completed all my latest musical endeavors successfully and I thank God for our loving union after failing in so many others.

After being laid off from the health plan job in early 2001, and being unemployed for four months, in May I obtained a temp job at RadioShack Corporation based in downtown Fort Worth. My job was assisting in the Facilities Finance Department. I worked hard to learn the computer software systems and take on as many responsibilities as I could. After a few months Sharon Nellon, the manager, decided that I was a good fit and hired me as a full-time employee. This was a small department of six people and all were openly Christians. I spent many lunch breaks discussing Christianity with one coworker, Charlotte Carroll, who was almost always a cheerful person that loved giving gifts. One of the gifts she gave me was a recent book by Hal Lindsey titled *Vanished into Thin Air*. This was the most comprehensive, understandable book on the basic tenets and beliefs of traditional biblical Protestant Christianity that I had ever read, and it was so informative that I read it twice. It was also about the prevalent belief in Christianity of the pre-tribulation rapture which I agreed with at that time. Several years later I would conclude that it was a false doctrine and not biblical. Another accounting assistant, Ann Overton, turned out to be the sister of one of Merlin drummer Bob's ex-wives, Johnnie who he had met and

married while working at the wholesale company. Ann and her sister, Johnnie, were gracious enough or maybe curious enough to come see one of my Gospel music performances at a church my longtime friend Shirley Piper and her family were attending. Veneeta Reeves, who was also an accounting assistant, took me under her wing and showed me how to do the billing and receiving for her accounts. Mary and I greatly appreciated a beautiful quilt Veneeta made, giving one to each of us at the office. My other coworker, Debby Borgerding, also became a close friend at work and later when we were no longer employed by that company, we kept running into each other at grocery stores and shopping centers for a few years. Eventually all of us either quit or were laid off from that company but Sharon continued getting all of us together for occasional dinners at local restaurants to maintain the closeness of the group.

With Mary's love and support I was able to complete a Gospel album of Psalms put to music titled "Make A Joyful Noise," which took about one year to finish. This was despite being interrupted in November of 2004 for about six months in the middle of the work by a bout with throat cancer and radiation treatments. Because of where the throat cancer was, my tonsils had to be removed, and that procedure resulted in the end of my trumpet playing days. The radiation caused my voice to lower by about two full steps and many of the soundtracks I had recorded were in keys that I could not sing very well. However, I was able to work through that problem with some creative recording techniques and finish the album. Now I am very thankful that I am still able to sing, and I like the lower mutated voice better on recordings. Losing the ability to play the trumpet made me realize how precious and vulnerable our physical talents are. This awareness gave me a much greater appreciation for the use of my eyes, hands, legs and feet to play drums, guitars and keyboards as well as for doing work and basic living. As frightful as that ailment was, I made it through with the help and support of my family and friends. Many coworkers at RadioShack where I was working and some, I didn't even know, personally supported me financially after I learned what the cost was going to be for the radiation treatments. In addition to their financial help, Frank and Rick, my immediate superiors, allowed flexibility in my work schedule so I could continue working throughout those days of radiation treatments.

Mary had also survived cancer back in 1997 and in difficult times like these when facing trouble or even mortality I always turned my life's focus to seeking God's will and asking for His intervention. Mary went through seven chemo treatments that were nicknamed "the red devil" and radiation treatments. Not too long after the chemo treatments were finished, she started having shortness of breath, so we went to her oncologist who diagnosed her with pneumonia and started treating her with antibiotics. The shortness of breath kept getting worse until I finally I had to take her to the hospital emergency room where they confirmed the diagnosis of pneumonia. While in the hospital she did not respond to the treatments for pneumonia and could hardly breathe so once again, I turned to fervent prayer for healing and truth. Then the doctor treating her decided to bring in a cardiologist who examined her and determined that she had congestive heart failure instead of pneumonia. The treatment was changed immediately to the appropriate medications, and she began to recover quickly.



Mary Faye Reed Hughes

It turned out that the last chemo treatment she received damaged her heart and if the right doctor had not been called in, Mary probably would not have survived.

Even though there were so many instances throughout my life when it appeared as though God or some unknown force was leading and helping me it seemed that for much of the time, I had just been sitting on a fence looking for truth and only wanting to believe in the existence of Spiritual Life and God. Yet I was never completely convinced enough to take that final leap of faith accepting and proclaiming the God of the Holy Scriptures as the truth because my fear of being wrong kept me swaying back and forth on the pendulum between belief and doubt. But after surviving my own potentially deadly illness and experiencing all the other close encounters with human mortality I finally realized that I was being lead past my fear into the presence of another world unseen by the eyes of mortal men. Then a renewed focus on seeking spiritual truth resulted in a growth of faith in biblical scriptural promises, and I realized that without having the faith that God is a loving and providing father I could not clearly see and understand the spiritual truth contained in the scriptures because my spiritual vision was clouded by doubt.

Looking back on all the truth and understanding I had been shown throughout my life, and the many times when it appeared that the hand of God had reached down and intervened for my own good, it became obvious that I should no longer doubt God's existence, and that he sent his son, Jesus Christ to free us from slavery to sin and death. There were so many questions answered, prayers answered, and so much spiritual knowledge freely given to me through study and the many profound spiritual occurrences in my life that I could not in all honesty pass them off as coincidences. So, after a lifetime of sitting on that proverbial fence balancing on a platform of skepticism and doubt, I realized God had been lovingly hitting me over the head with a spiritual sledgehammer time after time after time until I eventually learned to see spiritually and that he was working throughout my life toward a specific purpose.

Then I was able to see that without God's supernatural salvation, I was doomed to a continuous repetition of meaningless self-seeking and self-destructive ways, and that kind of life was no longer acceptable to me. Finally, after so many years of searching for spiritual truth, I willingly concluded that God truly exists and my understanding is that he is an eternal creative spiritual mind, invisible to our physical eyes. This physical universe burst forth from the only creator spiritual God of the universe at the command of his spiritual word responding to his spiritual imaginative and unlimited thought and it all exists within his infinite mind therefore he is the ultimate truth concerning everything that exists. All that exists in the universe was created by God and is therefore part of him and he loves his creation therefore he is infinite selfless love. God gave humans freedom of choice, and he does hate sin or rebellion against his way because it results in suffering and death within his creation, so he created a perfect plan of salvation which is still working to change the heart of mankind back to its original condition before his spiritual fall in Eden. He sets human life apart from all other sentient life on earth by creating in us a human spirit that is capable of reasoning and growing in understanding from the input received into the body's

brain through the senses. Since this human spirit can reason it can also make conscious choices including the choice to accept or reject spiritual law and truth or the choice to discern the truth from non-truth.

In Holy Scripture the concepts of spiritual law and truth are likened to light while spiritual lawlessness and non-truth are likened to darkness, for without physical light we cannot see the material world to independently survive in the resulting darkness. Law and truth lead to life and spiritual growth while the absence of law and truth lead to chaos, death and destruction. Assuming that all of that is true, it logically follows that the Eternal Spirit Father God who created us somehow provided us with the means and ability to know him and return to his presence and knowledge of him, which we were cut off from when disobedience to his spiritual law entered into humanity as a spiritual non-truth was accepted as truth. It was the lie spoken by Satan, that old serpent, that if we eat the forbidden fruit of choosing to decide for ourselves what is good and what is evil, that we would not die, therefore our soul would be immortal like God, and not die.

The provision God made for mankind to know him and be reconciled to him is in the well documented history of the Hebrew people including their encounters with God and their relationship to him, and in our human ability to discern truth through reason. Because of biblical Abraham's faith and love of truth God chose him through his descendants to create a nation family of humans who by receiving the knowledge of his law and way of life would have the potential of becoming one with him spiritually. Through Moses God revealed to the Hebrew people known as Israel, the lost tribes, and Judah, the Jews, his kingdom, spiritual law, way of life and plan of salvation for mankind. Although the Hebrews rejected God's way and suffered the inevitable consequences, His law and way survived through a remnant of true followers of Jesus Christ. Having accepted as truth this ancient documentation of Hebrew history contained in the bible with its testimonies of witness to encounters with the true Eternal God I no longer doubted that Yahshua the Messiah also known as Jesus Christ, as witnessed by the writers of the inspired Holy Scriptures, fulfilled the prophecies of the Hebrew prophets and is in truth the Son of God who lived a physical life, died by crucifixion and was risen, just as he was conceived, by the spiritual power of God, and now as our high priest and king, sits at the right hand of God's throne.

Whenever an individual human responds to the creator's Spirit of Truth by accepting Yahshua's kingship, confessing him openly to be the Son of God and choosing to follow his way, the Holy Spirit merges with their willing human spirit creating a newly born spiritual body. This Spirit Father God may also pour out a portion of his spiritual power on believers giving them various spiritual gifts such as healing, teaching or prophesying. With the help of the Spirit of Truth the newly born spiritual body grows in God's eternal way of truth, spiritual understanding and Godly character in opposition to the old body of flesh and bones that still desires its own satisfaction. So, because of the physical body with its desires and needs, there is usually an internal conflict until the physical body dies. The conflict diminishes as spiritual growth and Godly character increases. But when the physical body does die the spiritual body will be raised up by the power of God into an eternal spiritual life at the promised

resurrection of souls. Those who have become righteous in God's eyes through Salvation in Christ that are alive when He returns will be instantly changed into eternal spiritual beings without experiencing death directly after the dead in Christ are resurrected when he returns at the seventh and last trumpet as described in the book of Revelation.

It is faith in God's complete plan of salvation for mankind through Jesus Christ that allows us to return to his presence and enables us to tap into his unlimited power. Only that faith and nothing that we can do will reconcile us to God. Understanding these spiritual truths made it painfully evident to me that my only hope for salvation and righteousness in the sight of the all-knowing Great Spiritual Father God was for the multitude of my sins, or disobediences to his commandments, to be taken away or forgiven by accepting his gift of salvation through the sacrifice of sinless Jesus Christ, the spotless Passover Lamb of God as revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

All of mankind came from the elements of the earth so all are therefore physically brothers from the viewpoint of the creator God, so this free offer of salvation is available to all humans. But those who continue to hate and oppress the righteous by choosing darkness over light after they know and understand the difference will be removed from his creation at the judgment of this world. God will blot out the remembrance of those that do evil from the earth and establish his kingdom on earth with the physically manifested Yahshua Christ sitting on the unending Throne of David in Jerusalem where he will rule the whole earth with the power of God's truth, justice and righteousness. After Christ assumes the throne, he will conquer all his enemies with the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God until he is universally accepted by all nations as king of kings. He will defeat all opposition by any survivors of the world's judgment and make planet earth into a paradise.

Inheritors of the new earth will be judged and governed righteously as opposed to the old earth being ruled, without man's awareness, through carnal men by God's fallen angel, an evil spirit entity named Satan who hates the truth and hates the spiritual potential of humans. In that soon-coming world the leaders and shepherds of all people on earth will not have that deceptive voice of selfishness and fear whispering in their ears and influencing their minds and their decisions. Their focus will be on doing the will of their King rather than gaining wealth and power for themselves. Their king, the Messiah will be focused on doing the will of the Eternal Spirit Father God. The primary focus of education will be the knowledge of God and his eternal way, and the people will eagerly pursue it due to a change in the heart of mankind, which will earnestly desire to help King Jesus Christ restore the earth into a paradise for enjoyment for all rather than a place for creating selfish gain.

Although I knew this pronouncement of belief in the unseen Eternal Spirit Father God would surely bring ridicule upon me from a non-believing world, I was finally compelled to proudly declare that the true King, Jesus Christ whose Hebrew name is Yahshua is the greatest man to have lived in the history of the world and is the Son of the Living God. And there is no other person, idea, philosophy, religion, power or entity in existence that I would rather give the service of my life to than Him. I finally conceded that

Yahshua the Messiah is the way of God, the truth of God, and eternal life in God, and he was sent by and came from that same Eternal Spirit Creator Father God to be our salvation from sin and death. So, from the time of this realization forward my spiritual focus has been on learning his ways and his truth from the Holy Bible.

As my interest in the Holy Scriptures grew, I was compelled to record another Gospel album of Psalms along with other Old and New Testament scriptures put to music titled The Sword of the Spirit. I gave copies to many of my friends and family and although I considered it to be my best work, most people didn't seem to relate to it very well, but I was thankful for the few who did like it and enjoyed listening to it. The album gave me encouragement and uplifted my spirit many times as I listened and recalled how the melodies, arrangements and rhythms to all the scriptures came to me after memorizing and reciting the words and allowing the music to develop naturally in my mind. My favorite way to listen to the album was through headphones and sitting alone in a room with soft lighting. By blocking out all distractions I was able to absorb the meaning of the words as I listened to the musical arrangements. After hearing the complete album several times, I realized how all the songs worked together to present one unified message.





Gary VanWaters, David Hughes and Chris Eigenmann



David & Mary Hughes with Pastor William Henley at wedding
1996



Disk Jockey set-up in 1995

Chapter 8 THE RETURN OF MERLIN

In late 2006 I started working for the telecommunications company AT&T at one of their stores in Fort Worth, Texas. I took a long break from recording in the studio until one weekend after working at the cell phone store for about one year I pulled out some old live cassette recordings of Merlin and listened to them. Hearing the old band inspired me to copy them onto compact discs for each member of the band. To create CD labels and inserts I dug out all the old pictures of the band I had saved to see if one could be used for the artwork. While looking for these pictures I also came across some of our old publicity photos, business cards and other Merlin memorabilia. So, I decided to put together a folder with all the pictures, memorabilia and the 45 RPM records we recorded and make a duplicate set for each member in addition to the CD. This turned into a much larger project than I had originally planned but I thought it was worth the effort because we would all enjoy the memories.

Making the Merlin Folder led to a discussion with my wife, Mary, in which I told her a brief history of the group. That discussion led me to the memory of a long-forgotten idea for Merlin that came to me back in 1978, which never materialized when the group was still together. In that year I saw an advertisement for a magic illusion called the Flash Appearance Portal and it occurred to me that this illusion could be used to bring Merlin back from where some people believe he exists as the communicator of the inner planes. My line of thought was "Could Merlin now be communicating a way for me to bring him back into this world through a magic illusion?" I ordered the plans for the Flash Appearance Portal and when received, I renamed the illusion to a Time-Space Portal and would customize the plans to create the illusion of the Reappearance of Merlin into the present world. However, I didn't try to build the Portal illusion at that time because I had no idea what Merlin was going to say or do when he appeared. A few parlor tricks would have seemed trivial and anticlimactic after the reappearance illusion. Then after making the CD and Merlin Folder for the old group and reflecting on those days when the group was together, I decided to write an autobiography of my life pertaining mostly to music and spiritual matters. After reviewing all the events in my life and all the truth I had come to know and understand I suddenly realized what Merlin was to do and how he would do it. Merlin would appear in our present world to reveal the secret of the Sword in the Stone and the mystery of the lost Holy Grail from the Arthurian Legends and deliver an urgent message to England, the United States and the world.

Of course, I could not present this illusion alone, so I finally considered acting upon a seemingly impossible thought that kept running through my mind while making the Merlin folders, "REVIVE THE GROUP, MERLIN". When I got up off the floor where I had collapsed after laughing uncontrollably at myself, I decided I would love to get back into performing live music again and trying any other live musical endeavor seemed just as impossible at the time. Besides if I was able to accomplish this miraculous feat it would be confirmation that the message was worthy and should be told. However, I knew it would also require help from God to make it happen.

First, I drew up the customized plans for the Time-Space

Portal and created the narration and presentation that would accompany the illusion. Next, I worked out a list of songs to be included in the performance which would last about one and a half hours. Merlin's message would be delivered through music to be more easily accepted and absorbed by the public so several new songs for that part of the show needed to be written. I prepared for every aspect of creating the musical show and the illusion, but there was still a mountain of work to be done. After completing everything I was able to do on my own it was time to contact the other members of Merlin and see if they would be willing to participate in this quest. A quest that sounded insane yet if we were successful, it would have rewards beyond our imagination. I truly must have lost my mind because Bob was now more than sixty years old and was having major problems with one of his legs. Linda and Claude lived in Houston, and both had their families and careers to consider. My wife Mary thought I had gone stark raving mad, but I could not stop thinking about Merlin and moving forward with the plans, so she reluctantly supported me just to get this crazy idea over with and out of my mind.

I was able to arrange a reunion for the members of Merlin at our home in Fort Worth, to visit and play a few songs together, but said nothing about the Reappearance of Merlin, because I'm sure it would have scared them away. All the plans were now ready, and the reunion would prove whether this plane would fly or sputter to a halt on the runway. I tried to prepare myself but nothing else could be done so I left it in God's hands. If this was His will nothing could stop it and if it wasn't, I didn't want it to happen anyway.

On a Saturday evening all the former members of Merlin descended on our home where Mary had prepared a feast fit for a King's court. The old painting of Merlin by Rudy the maintenance man at the Sheraton in New Orleans was hanging on a wall and all the old Merlin memorabilia was spread out on a table below it. Also on display was my old Merlin stage outfit with shooting stars, which of course no longer fit, and my vintage Chet Atkins Country Gentleman electric guitar along with the vintage Fender amplifiers used in that band. Recordings of the old group filled the festive air in the warm candlelit room.

Mary brought out a large batch of freshly baked homemade oatmeal cookies and the tables were covered with chips, salsa, fresh vegetables, fruit, meatballs, taquitos, cheeses and other goodies. Claude and Linda came alone, and Bob brought his wife. Linda had been working as the coordinator for a human behavioral doctor that traveled extensively and gave seminars. Bob worked part-time at the wholesale company in Fort Worth and Claude was still actively playing with a band in Houston. It turns out that Claude had recently written a hit song for the Tejano music market which won a Tejano Country Music Award of the year. Everyone mentioned how they had enjoyed the Merlin Folders, and the live music CD's I had sent them. To my surprise they all mentioned they had been feeling an exciting anticipation in the air recently, but they didn't know what it was about.

That was my cue to bring up the songs I had prepared for us to play and sing together that night and show them my Avalon Sound studio. In preparation I had sent soundtracks of two Moody songs to each member with their respective instrumental and vocal parts to learn so we could play them in the studio without previous rehearsal.

The studio was set up with drums, guitars, keyboards, bass guitar and PA system. The instruments were already tuned, and the PA settings were already set to make everything work without flaws, if possible, on the first attempt. When everyone saw the studio setup, they were anxious to fire it up and give it a try. The soundtracks were ready, and each person took their perspective spot and gave the microphones a quick test. Bob blurted out “is everybody ready?” and we all took a deep breath and nodded yes. Bob finally said “here it comes” so I started the soundtrack and told him to kick it off. Bob began with a solid tom and kick drum beat that sounded like an immense Indian Powwow. I reached over and turned on a rented fog machine for effect while Mary turned off the overhead lights and engaged the stage lighting, which I had set up. I knew it was going to take all these extra efforts to have any chance at selling them on my insane idea of resurrecting the band. Then the guitar and bass chimed in with an ominous B minor chord as the drum beat continued. Finally, all four vocals rang out the lyrics to the first section of the Moody Blues song “House of Four Doors” from their “In Search of the Lost Chord” album. We sang in confident strong unison as four individual spotlights beamed down on each one of us simultaneously:

“Mystery spread its cloak across the sky; we’d lost our way.
Shadows fell from trees, they knew why.
Then through the leaves a light broke through.
A path lost for years led us through.”

The then mood of the music switched suddenly as Bob broke into a rhythmical drum solo entrance leading into the next song, “Lovely to See You Again” from the Moody Blues’ “Threshold of a Dream” album which starts with a fast rock and roll beat and a catchy low string guitar and bass lead. Then the vocals chimed in:

“Wonderful day for passing my way, knock on my door and
even the score with your eyes, lovely to see you again, walk
along with me to the next bend.....

It was as if we had been rehearsing for weeks on the songs, and they sounded great. After finishing the short performance, we all started hooting and hollering and howling like wolves although Mary said we sounded more like a pack of sick dogs. I couldn’t believe it was even better than I had hoped for. By then the others were getting a little suspicious and asked why I went to all this trouble to play a few songs together. I said, “I’m glad you asked because I have an amazing story to tell you.” I then gave a brief synopsis of the events leading up to that night and explained how Merlin was to return through the Time Space Portal and deliver an amazing profound spiritual message to England and the world through an old-fashioned traveling Gospel music show which would be performed by the resurrected Merlin band. I also told them about the Sword and the Stone and the Holy Grail from the Arthurian legend. Finally, I declared my vision to the group that having been chosen to be the Last Merlin after receiving a crown of antlers in a prophetic dream, Merlin’s message would be delivered by me in the songs of a musical show along with them in the return of Merlin.

To my surprise Claude was immediately interested in the

idea and wanted to begin working on it as soon as possible. Linda and Bob reservedly agreed on the message but began citing a long list of practical reasons why the endeavor could never work such as, we were too old and two of us lived in Houston while the other two lived in Fort Worth, not to mention our jobs and families. Then I explained how most of the work would be done by each of us separately in our respective homes at our own convenience until we met for twelve weekends of rehearsal before beginning our first short tour, which would be like a vacation. Remembering the magic of Merlin before, I hoped they would come to see that this might not necessarily be an impossible task.

I suspected there wouldn't be a unanimous decision that night so to add some intrigue and help sway any doubters I asked them to wait on making up their minds until they received a special email message from me. To make sure they had listened to me and understood Merlin's message, the email contained a picture of the Sword in the Stone accompanied by the question: "Who is the true coming, future high king to the throne in Britain?" If they replied with the correct answer to the question, I would reply back showing the sword removed from the stone and a picture of an ordinary grail cup would appear, and with it another question: "How did the Holy Grail get to England?" If they answered that question correctly, I would reply with a picture of a magnificent jewel studded Grail with one final question: "How was the holy grail lost and why was it never returned to the throne of Britain?" If they answered that final question correctly I would reply with a picture of a humble squire being knighted by a king with the statement, "You have been proven worthy and are now officially invited to join the quest that the high king has given to Merlin: to return the Holy Grail from where it has been hidden for centuries, to the throne of England to be revealed to the world." "P.S. please reply with your answer to this request."

Before they all left, I gave them each a copy of a recently written story of my search for spiritual truth and coaxed them all to read it within the next week or two. I would know if they followed through and read it because all the answers to the email questions were contained in the story. Then I would know if they would be interested enough, dedicated enough, and courageous enough to embark on such a grand quest. As everyone left in mild shock that night, we were in good spirits, and I felt like we had truly re-bonded. Two weeks later I started receiving replies to the email and to my surprise all three replied with correct answers and acceptance to join the quest, so it looked as if the return of Merlin had begun. I suspected there might have been some collaboration going on to get the answers but that was all right with me so long as they knew and understood them. I promptly sent thank you replies to them with some preparation instructions for each member. Through a series of emails, we decided on a day to meet and create the detailed plans for our amazing new quest.

The meeting was on a Sunday, and we were determined to pull together with all the resources we had and could obtain to make the new endeavor successful. Since the others had read the unusual events of my life and were now familiar with my search for spiritual truth the conversation naturally drifted into spirituality. At that point I revealed to them many things that I had come to believe as true about religion, spirituality and God's ways. All of us were brought up in traditional Protestant Christianity and fell away from

being active in it at an early age. As with so many of our generation, church life eventually became unproductive and seemed irrelevant to our lives, but we were still inclined to believe in the existence of God. Even though we all had differing opinions as to the ways of God, the knowledge we now shared about the history of Christianity and the Throne of David created zeal we had never experienced before. We unanimously agreed to build a music show, which would hopefully lift peoples' spirits while revealing the amazing truth about the origin of Roman Catholic and Protestant Christianity, the Throne of David, and the British throne through Merlin's magical return. We decided to name the show "The Gospel According to Merlin"

Because of the unorthodox presentation and the message Merlin would convey, we knew that none of the traditional churches would support it, and most would probably oppose it. So, we decided to purchase a used eighteen-wheel rig and convert the trailer into a stage so that we would have a portable, custom-built set-up to present the show wherever we chose or were led. We drew up the plans for the travelling stage and my brother Howard agreed to supervise its construction. One side of the trailer would swing down from the top and create the front part of the stage floor while the trailer bed would become the back part of the floor. An inner sidewall hinged at the top just behind the outer wall would swing up from the bottom with a stage light rack system attached inside at the bottom. After the outer wall was pulled down to create the stage front floor the inner wall would be raised up creating an overhead cover to the stage front with the lighting rack faced inward and down onto the stage. After these two walls were extended a black skirt curtain would be attached to the front three sides of the stage front floor that would hide the space below the stage and black stage curtains would wrap around the back and sides of the inner trailer. The inside walls and ceiling of the trailer and the inside of the wall holding the lights that would swing upward would also be covered with acoustic material to improve the sound. To power everything we needed to purchase a couple of large generators, to be pulled behind our vehicles so John, my friend since childhood, stepped up to the plate and scored two used military surplus generators in excellent condition for us. Getting our hands on some RV's was possible because the high price of gas had made it difficult to use them for recreation or to sell them. To finance all of this we collected everything of value we could get our hands on and sold it all on eBay, garage sales and flea markets. We also solicited donations and set up a web site to sell CD's of the show after recording the songs, and other items. To continue financing the show while on the road we hoped to sell CD's and DVD's of Merlin's return and message. To the public it must have seemed like Noah building the Ark with all of us working together to build this monstrosity when they had no clue what it would be used for. Some local people stopped by from time to time and asked what we were building. When we told them it was for a traveling music show, which would spread the word about the Throne of David and the end time events soon coming, they usually just laughed loudly and went on their way. But we didn't let any of these scoffers deter us because we knew how important our mission was, and we were determined to complete it.

We were all aware that just this part of the plan seemed like an impossible task, but we truly believed in the mission and that we would have help from above. The help we had hoped for did arrive

when news of our quest spread to many of the people we knew. Ideas, money and materials began to flow in faster than we could process them and to our amazement the traveling stage began to materialize before our eyes. Lynn, our friend from Houston managed to purchase a big rig for practically nothing from a failed trucking company and he drove it to Fort Worth where we parked it at my parents' house. From there we transformed it into an impressive, professional stage with the help of many friends and family members. It proved to us that there is no limit to what people can do when they band together in a common cause with harmony and a unified purpose. While we were busy building the stage my long-time friend Shirley Piper and her family used all their Church contacts to locate a large pre-owned revival tent, which was kindly donated to our cause. The tent complimented the traveling stage perfectly and provided shelter for the people to enjoy and receive truth and blessing from the show. To put the final touch on the traveling stage, Michael, my long-time friend, John's brother, and an excellent graphic artist, painted the outside of the trailer with an image of Merlin. We got the design from the book by Courtney Davis and Peter Quiller, who Coral and I met in England at the Third Merlin Conference. The book was titled Merlin the Immortal and Courtney Davis also did the artwork. In the painting Merlin was looking intensely straight at you with his arms outstretched wielding his wand of magic power.

When the traveling stage was finished, we scheduled an initial recording session at Avalon Sound Studio to record the vocals to the songs in our show. Linda hunted down and contacted Dave Vandiver, our old friend and agent in Houston to get started lining up some appropriate venues for the group. Although a traveling Gospel music show was different than anything he had ever worked with before, I was confident that Dave would want to help if he was still around and able. The promo package had already been put together except for a demo DVD that we would make a few weeks later at a dress rehearsal. One of Linda's tasks was to find a location for us to rehearse and store our practice equipment so we could meet at a midpoint on weekends between Fort Worth and Houston to work on the show. Designing and obtaining the stage clothing also was Linda's responsibility. Bob, along with his son Garen put together a professional light show with floods, spots and other specified lighting effects including a smoke machine, and a mirror globe for the traveling stage. Claude was commissioned to procure a specific eight track digital recorder and transfer the soundtrack files onto them, which I made on an identical digital recorder and would send to him via the Internet. My lot was to finish the soundtracks, provide the complete sound system and build the magic appearance portal at my dad's workshop. My dad offered to supervise and provide technical engineering help on building the portal since he had extensive experience creating tools and building models at the local aerospace manufacturing plant. This also gave me a chance to spend more time with my parents and explain to them everything that was happening with Merlin. My brother Howard also provided some of the construction materials needed to build the portal in addition to his skilled supervision of the stage project.

Everything developed as close to plan as could be expected. To rehearse on weekends while the stage was being built, Linda managed to rent a large storage stall with air conditioning and power in the small Texas town of Buffalo, for three months, reminiscent of

the earlier days in the Merlin band. I hung some curtains and other acoustic materials around the room to improve the sound, and I put in a drum set, amplifiers and a sound system from the studio, which could be left during the week when it was not in use. The room was large enough to set up according to the stage plan I had developed including the appearance portal when it was finished. When I first brought in the portal and showed everyone how to assemble it, they were all amazed and jokingly bowed down to it. I quickly sneered “very funny” and gave a copy of the Reappearance dialogue to each member and explained how the apparatus worked as the dialogue proceeded. After showing the secrets of the portal, I had everyone including myself sign a sworn statement that none of these secrets would be conveyed to anyone including family and friends. The statements were then notarized and later placed in a safety deposit box. Absolutely no one was to know the full secret of the portal except the four of us and my dad who had helped with the design.

The revived Merlin group rehearsed diligently every weekend for three months. The music was perfected very quickly, mostly due to each member hearing their vocal and instrumental parts on CD’s I made for them in the studio and gave to them in advance of the rehearsals. The total length of the show was about ninety minutes, and we also prepared two encore songs in case they were needed. Everyone was excited about how fast the show came together and we had a lot of fun improvising at the rehearsals when Merlin appeared. It was necessary for some of the rehearsals for the Reappearance of Merlin to be done in full costume. In this way everyone gradually became comfortable with the person of Merlin being around and we developed some impromptu rapport and comical interactions to help lighten up the mood. Before the first rehearsal with costumes, the group presented me with a set of deer antlers attached to a construction helmet they had put together, depicting the crown of antlers in my dream. It took up too much room to be practical on stage, but I thanked them and set it aside until I could find a good way to work it into the show.

At one of our rehearsals Dave, our booking agent, who Linda had contacted, gave us a surprise visit. We didn’t allow anyone else to attend the rehearsals, but he needed to see what the act was like so he would know what type of venues to seek. We set him up with a comfortable chair and an ice chest with drinks in front of the roll-down door so he would see the show closely to what the audience would see. By this time, we had also added the light system, which would later be mounted on the travelling stage, to the rehearsals. After watching a dress rehearsal of the complete show Dave congratulated us for pulling off the miracle of reviving Merlin and though he did not completely absorb the message of Merlin he liked the music and was sufficiently impressed and anxious to take the show to the public.

Our first performance was at a park in Houston for a large charity organization that was having a fundraising concert. The free show was advertised extensively on the radio and local television prior to the show. We billed the show as “The Return of Merlin” and tried to contact as many of our previous fans from back in the seventies as possible. A crowd of about three hundred people showed up who were mostly young adults and children, and most were not familiar with the legends of Merlin, King Arthur and the biblical history of the Hebrew people. However, it was a good place

to present the show and get an idea of how well it would be accepted by young people. Most of the audience enjoyed the music and the Reappearance of Merlin but they just didn't seem to comprehend or grasp what his message was all about.

New Orleans was the next stop on our maiden tour. This city had been good to Merlin previously and we were sure there would be a lot of fans there that remembered us. The big question was how many of the fans were still living there after Hurricane Katrina in 2005. We chose a park near the downtown area to perform in and shortened the show to about one hour, which was mostly the Reappearance of Merlin portion of the show. Evening shows on Saturday and a 4:00 PM show on Sunday would give us a chance to reach a lot of people and the audience would be diverse. We advertised on a local radio station so our old fans would have a chance to hear about us. These shows were all successful though the crowds were not as big as we had hoped for. We mingled with the people before and after the shows to distribute some background pamphlets on the Arthurian Legends, the British Throne and Merlin's message and to receive feedback from them about the content of the show. This proved to be useful as we discovered many people there were familiar with the legends and liked the music, but they did not grasp the complete meaning of Merlin's message.

It became clear to us that the United States was not the most beneficial place for the Merlin show to be presented. So, we scheduled a meeting with Dave to discuss the possibility of doing a short tour in England where people would be more familiar with Merlin and English legends. We knew Dave was a go-getter from previous years, but we didn't know if he would be able or want to put together a tour abroad. Since he was now so familiar with the show and was excited about the music, we felt like he was the right person for the task if he accepted the challenge.

We were pleasantly surprised when he said he would be glad to travel to England and set up a tour for us. He also came up with the great idea of getting us booked on a cruise ship to and from England playing a variety of easy-listening dance music, which greatly reduced the cost of the trip and gave us an opportunity to promote the travelling show. Dave started immediately on this task and within one month he had the cruise ship booked and a two-month long tour of eight cities and twenty-four concerts including matinees on Sunday. He had contacted a helpful professional booking agent in London who provided him with all the information needed to find the right locations. It turned out there were many parks and other facilities that provided outdoor concerts in England, so it was relatively easy to rent spaces and arrange the tour.

Dave suggested we added a few more Moody Blues songs because they were an English Group and still very popular with the English people and they would enjoy hearing an American group playing their songs. We all loved their music so much that it didn't take much of an excuse to do more, and we immediately thought of some that were perfect for the show. All the preparations were made to leave our jobs in good standing and when the time for the trip to England rolled around Claude, Linda and Lynn drove the truck from Houston to New York. Bob and I rented a one-way van from Fort Worth to New York. Dave had arranged several RV rentals for us to use when we reached England while our friends, Lynn and Mike, took turns driving the truck. It's hard to describe the excitement as

we headed out on this great adventure. We arrived in New York at the cruise ship port and got all the equipment and luggage loaded onto the ship while Lynn took the truck to be loaded on a freighter. Like knights on a glorious quest, we headed off across the sea to Britain, the ancient land of Merlin and King Arthur

Chapter 9 THE REAPPEARANCE OF MERLIN

Although the first Return of Merlin tour in the United States was not received very well our British audiences accepted it with open arms. The people in England were more familiar with Merlin and in tune with the Arthurian and Joseph of Arimathea legends that they had heard since childhood. Many were also familiar with the connection of the British people and the lost Israelite tribe of Ephraim and the ancient Hyksos. The Return of Merlin show grew quickly in popularity and controversy as we proceeded through all the bookings on the tour. Some people were angry about the message Merlin brought about the throne of England and some were angry simply because we proclaimed the return of Merlin. But an overwhelming majority of the people experiencing the show firsthand became enthusiastic fans.

As we were ready to begin our final and most memorable show of the British tour in Cobham, Surrey the home of the Moody Blues, we felt an exceptional excitement growing on stage and in the crowd that surpassed all the shows we had performed up to that time. The first part of the show was extremely smooth yet energetic as the band performed together like a well-oiled machine. Then while playing the last verse of the final song before the Reappearance of Merlin illusion, I triggered a remote foot switch, and the fog machine slowly started to belch out a fine eerie mist around our legs and the monitor speakers. That song ended and it was finally time for Merlin to enter once more into this world.

My anxious fingers commenced playing the first section of The Return Theme Song on a menagerie of synthesizers spread before me. The stage slowly disappeared as the lights were dimmed except for a single spotlight on Linda who announced the illusion and initiated the Reappearance of Merlin narration. "Ladies and Gentlemen, you all know of the legend of King Arthur and Merlin the Magician. You know how Merlin helped to usher in the reign of Arthur and a kingdom that was united against all its enemies. You know of the Knights of the Round Table who faithfully served the king and kept peace throughout the land by fighting against all evils and administering justice with a strong hand. There are those who believe that Merlin became the communicator of the inner planes after his untimely demise at the hand of Vivienne, the woman he loved blindly. Now, on this day, here on this stage you will see and come to know that Merlin is indeed the communicator of the inner planes to this world. It is well known that Arthur would return at the time of Britain's greatest hour of need but before the King returns, Merlin must appear to point the way once more. And now you who are here tonight will be part of the fortunate few experiencing firsthand the amazing Return of Merlin."

The lights came up on the stage as Claude and Bob, now dressed in long black flowing capes, rolled the Portal to center stage and stood on each side. A reserved sigh of awe was uttered in unison by the crowd, which applauded nervously as the strange, huge contraption now captivated their minds and imaginations. The prerecorded instrumental music entered its second stage reaching a higher level of intensity. Then Linda continued with the narrative, "The device you see before you is a Time and Space Portal. Merlin

himself conveyed the plans to build this magnificent structure to a humble musician and songwriter. He was shown that the phenomenon of time is an illusion of relativity and that the universe, when considered down to its most basic structure, is mental. Therefore, it is possible to manipulate these phenomena by the power of mind and machine to rematerialize into this world with the help of today's modern technology. This relatively unknown musical artist spent several years studying the plans, building and attempting to comprehend the reason for being chosen to build the portal and why Merlin was to return to this earthly plane."

"Merlin then communicated to the members of this band that they also were to assist in the mind-bending project that would bring him back into this world to deliver a message of megalithic importance to the people of Britain and the world." "Now without further delay" Linda continued, "Bob and Claude, please rotate the portal clockwise exactly one hundred and eighty degrees according to the Zodiacal markers placed on the floor around it." When the turn was completed, she continued, "Claude, please step through the doorway of the portal to show without doubt the emptiness of the space within its threshold." At this cue Claude stepped up onto the floor of the portal and walked through the doorway, exiting out through the opposite side. After he stepped down from the portal, he again stood on the stage floor at one side of the doorway as Bob stood at the other side. Then Linda said, "Now rotate the portal counterclockwise exactly ninety degrees according to the Zodiacal markers placed on the floor around it." Claude and Bob again grabbed the large handles on the outside edges of the doorway and spun it as directed so that one side of the portal's doorway was facing the audience. After this turn was accomplished, she spoke excitedly, "Now activate the controls and set the sequence of time and space ratios as communicated by Merlin."

Claude and Bob started at the base on each side of the doorway moving quickly upward as they activated and set a myriad of switches, dials, levers and controls until the electrical intensity of the portal could be heard and felt completely throughout the audience. After completing the ignition of the portal Linda spoke out with a stern confident voice, "Rotate the portal counterclockwise exactly ninety degrees to its original position. The instrumental music was now reaching its highest level and matched the intensity of the portal, which was vibrating and flashing with scores of colored lights, dials and meters as flashing bands of electrostatic energy began to pulsate upward between the inner sides of the doorway. A large mirror globe situated over the audience was then engaged filling the room with revolving streams of light. The whole stage was alive with electricity and sound, and the crowd was now on their feet as they could hardly contain their excitement. The music and sound advanced to its highest climactic peak and Linda firmly belted out the final words everyone was waiting to hear, "Ladies and Gentlemen, Behold, the master magician and sage of Britain, Wales and Ireland from time immemorial, MERLIN THE MAGICIAN!!!" Suddenly, accompanied by a loud boom, a bright flash and smoke cascaded from the center of the Portal's doorway as the music, sound and lights climaxed in unison and Merlin suddenly appeared, walking from out of the midst of the portal as if he had been walking in one world and was instantly transported to another.

Merlin's long gray beard was flowing, and his arms were

outstretched as he genuinely smiled and waved greetings to all the people who were now cheering wildly and jumping in the isles. Claude and Bob returned to their instruments after rolling the Portal off to the side of the stage for the Reappearance of Merlin show, and Bob immediately kicked off the first song in that second part of the show as Claude joined in on the bass. Merlin wore a long black cape that danced with glittering, silver shooting stars and a hood, which was not covering his head but draped over his back. Finally, to the pleasure of the fanatically cheering audience he stepped up to a microphone at center stage, pointed to the Time – Space Portal and jokingly spoke out loudly saying “Can you believe? It actually worked” and the crowd responded with a loud cheer.

My mind was running wild with thoughts created by the peculiar situation I found myself in. Using magic, I was playing keyboards with the band while at the same time impersonating one of the greatest magicians who ever lived. Some religious critics accused me of being a medium and using necromancy to bring Merlin back, but I never lost sight of the fact that it was only an illusion, and I was in full control of my body although I must confess it was sometimes a struggle to keep this perspective.

The increasing wild cheers and adulation received from the last few audiences as the word got around that Merlin had returned made me realize how tempting it is to get caught up in the illusion and let it go to your head. I realized that my original intention for wanting to perform magic as a child was to boost my ego by performing an act that seemed like a miracle and amazed others. This ego trip is most certainly what Simon the Sorcerer experienced when he performed magic two thousand years ago in Samaria bewitching the entire country and using deception to create his own new church following using the name of Christ after being rejected by the Apostles. When he offered money to receive the gift of conveying the Holy Spirit it was probably like offering to pay for another magical power. He may have even considered his baptism to be just an initiation into another mystery religion that used deception to create the appearance of miracles. I was finally able to see that the temptation to use magic, sorcery, deception, divination and necromancy even for unselfish purposes is wrong and much too dangerous for man’s vulnerable spirit, so I became inclined to stop seeking any more venues for the show after this tour and not continue getting the message of truth out in this manner. After all, the next logical step would be to bring back the King himself. Perhaps God allowed me to continue down the path of magic illusion for a time to show me its folly and vanity. So, I silently said a quick prayer to be continually reminded of the spiritual danger of that path.

Suddenly Merlin raised his hand, and a black electric guitar embossed with silver on the neck and bridge in the shape of a medieval cross-shaped sword magically appeared in his hand. Merlin strapped on the guitar quickly and started playing along with a rock and roll lead that got the whole crowd moving together. Then he proceeded to sing the first of several songs containing his amazing message to Britain and the world. These are the songs Merlin sang and the words he spoke.

Chapter 10 MERLIN'S MESSAGE
"THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MERLIN"

CAN YOU SEE?
A song by David R Hughes

We've seen the world through windowpanes of eyes that cannot see.

Looking for someone to speak the truth and set us free.

Searching for a hero that will come and save the day.

Someone to come and slay the beast that chased our dreams away.

Depression and a dark despair are hanging in the air.

Anger, greed and hatred surround us everywhere.

The prophecies are fulfilled at last. The kingdom is at hand.

But first the judgment of the world will break the pride of man.

So while the darkness fills the earth we'll walk with inner sight.

The wisdom of the ages will be our guiding light.

Can you see that we are free? We can live eternally.

The truth has come in parables and legends from the past.

Shining ever since the time the evil spell was cast.

Until now for only those able to perceive.

But now it's here in black and white for everyone to see.

Our faith can overcome the fear that's kept us in the dark.

Draw the sword of truth now and let it free your heart.

Can you see that we are free? We can live eternally.

Can you see that we are free? We can live eternally.

Can you see that we are free? We can live eternally.

Can you see that we are free? We can live eternally.

Fear is the Enemy
A song by Claude Wooley and David R Hughes

Have you found the reason you're living in this life?
Can you feel the difference between the day and night?
We're searching in our conscience for a simpler way
To the answers to our questions that haunt us every day.

But we will never see what we need to know
Until we have freed ourselves to letting go.

Fear is the enemy to the truth within us all.
You can overcome it when you tear down all the walls.
Fear is the enemy that hides us from our souls.
Keep the faith around you so you can let it grow.

Listen to the voices speaking from your soul.
Let the spirit take you where you really want to go.
Let the life within you teach you how to live.
Let the love about you show you how to give.

We will never see what we really need to know
Until we have freed ourselves to letting go.

Fear is the enemy to the truth within us all.
You can overcome it now; it's just a self-made wall.
Fear is the enemy that hides us from our souls.
Keep the faith around you now let it start to grow.
Fear is the enemy, fear is the enemy, fear is the enemy.

Merlin:

"The lyrics to that song came from the mind and heart of Claude Wooley, the bass and guitar player. He really hit the bull's eye with the concept that "Fear is the Enemy" because if you follow just about every ill and evil in the world back to its roots they all lead to some type of fear.

SHE
A song by Linda VanWaters and David R Hughes

They taught me well and this I say with loving thoughts of them today.
But what has it got me and where is my head? I've done what they asked me, and I am not yet dead.
Save, save, save that bread. Save all your life 'til you're dead.

A trip through time brought me this far; from the first a shining star.
I went on a climb in an inkling of time and touched on the reason for my deceiving.

I know there's more in this fine place; I'm searching for His loving

trace.

But each day of learning I get an old yearning. My mind's in a frenzy but I will soon be free.

Spend, spend, spend that bread. Two worn hands; one weary head.

Why must I live my life the same? Why must I play these silly games?

The answer is here and quite plain to see. In the beginning it started with SHE

Merlin's narrative:

An ancient Mystery Religion was conceived in Babylon by Semiramis, the widow of Nimrod, the first king of Babylon. SHE and her followers developed a religion based on recognizing Nimrod as being reborn in her son, Tammuz. That virgin mother myth made Semiramis a goddess since she claimed to be the mother of the sun-god Nimrod, now in the body of Tammuz. SHE is believed by some to have been a prostitute who was very beautiful and created a religion of sexual perversions and secret ceremonies and initiations known only to her priests and a select few which were all bound to secrecy. The goal was for everyone to be educated with only the select knowledge given by the priests to bring the whole world into dominance by the Babylonian monarchy. The religion required secrecy to survive and grow in the patriarchal world of that time dominated by the sons of Shem who held to the righteous teachings handed down from Shem's father Noah. This Babylonian idolatry spread throughout the ancient world along with the many conquests of subsequent Babylonian kings seeking world dominion. The worship of Semiramis, the Queen of Heaven, and Tammuz, her son, was even practiced by the priests in Judah prior to Judah's defeat at the hands of Babylon's King Nebuchadnezzar. Biblical scripture states that Ezekiel was taken in the spirit inside the temple and shown their idolatries.

COME OUT OF HER

A song by David R Hughes

I was living in suspended animation
In a rock without the truth, I did reside.
Deceived by an unholy temptress
That led me to the place of my demise.
Her father's name is Simon the Sorcerer
From the ancient pagan way of old Nimrod
She worships pagan gods and wooden idols
She changes times and laws of the true God.

Come out of her Oh God's children.
Don't drink of the golden cup that she does hold.
It is filled with the blood of the righteous
And her fate of desolation is foretold.
Now if you wake up in the morning with this temptress
You'd better look beneath the surface for the truth.
Or you'll share in the plagues that are coming
Just read the words of Revelation for the proof.

She made herself rich beyond comprehension.
Wearing scarlet linen, jewels and gold.
All the merchants of the earth seek her bounty.
She even peddles slaves or human souls.
The merchants of the earth have all gained riches
From the wealth of her unbridled lust.
The kings upon the earth are now her lovers.
The judgment of the Lord on her is just.

Come out of her Oh God's children.
Don't drink of the golden cup that she does hold.
It is filled with the blood of the righteous
And her fate of desolation is foretold.
Now if you wake up in the morning with this temptress
You'd better look beneath the surface for the truth.
Or you'll share in the plagues that are coming
Just read the words of Revelation for the proof.

Narration:

"Since the spiritual fall of mankind, it has been a human condition that we are easily deceived when physical beauty or flattery blinds us to someone's true selfish intentions. These deceptions involving human love can bring us much pain and heartache, but religious deception can bring bondage and even death. Therefore, we must be courageous and open to truth about religion to protect our souls. Just as a prostitute offers the pretense of physical love for monetary gain, Mystery Babylon, the mother of harlots who is exposed in the book of Revelation offers the pretense of spirituality for monetary and worldly gain. This universal mother church accepted idolatrous practices of the pagan religions she absorbed in her quest for worldwide domination. At one time many of the people she deceived protested against her spiritual abuses and disassociated themselves from her. However, those spiritual daughters still cling to the roots of pagan traditions assimilated into the doctrine of their mother church. This false religion was founded after the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ by Simon Magus the great sorcerer who had all of Samaria under his spell. He was the chief priest of the Babylonian Mystery Religion holding the title of Pater, or father and interpreter of Oracles. This Simon Pater was believed by all of Samaria to be the great power of God. Being impressed by the miracles of the Apostles he received baptism and professed to be a Christian but when he offered to purchase the power of giving the Holy Spirit the apostles rejected him. He then went on his way, seeking converts for his own new Christian church. His new church was a universal church, which incorporated aspects of all religions. It justified idolatry and other sinful pagan sun-worship traditions, and through the misuse of the doctrine of grace, allowed for the continuance of sin by unlimited forgiveness if one simply professed to believe in Christ and confess to a priest. It also taught that one could remain a saved member of the church if certain payment was made, a practice known as indulgences. This new doctrine was very appealing to multitudes of people who were deeply involved in the idolatry and pagan religions of that day. After the influence of

Christ's disciples and Apostles was gone, Simon Pater's church eventually became the dominant Christian Church persecuting the True Christian Church which had the testimony of Jesus and kept all the commandments of God. The persecutions came by the governments that the corrupted church eventually controlled, forcing the true church to exist since that time as a small church hidden from the world's view. The world that Simon Pater's Mystery Babylon religion has since created is a grand illusion of beauty, but the eternal God of Truth is now removing the enchanted lenses from the eyes of those who have courage enough to see the truth. However, we must all overcome the fear that naturally arises within us when we begin to see that so many of this world's traditions, religions and beliefs originated from a totally different source than we have been taught all our lives. For the benefit of those souls who now have eyes that can see, God's creation remains to always show its true beauty if we focus on Him and His coming kingdom of righteousness".

Hard To Leave
A song by David R Hughes & Bob King

Sounds of the water, wind through the trees
Things of the past, sweet memories
Mountain and valley, forest and sea
All God's creation beckons to me.

When it seems hard to leave this world I've come to know
I think about the life to come and start to let it go.
Let it go.

Songs of the sunrise, peace in the air,
Still of the dawn, life everywhere
Voices are calling for us to come home.
Soon we'll be reaping from seeds we have sown.

When it seems hard to leave this world I've come to know
I think about the life to come and start to let it go.
Let it go.

Narration:

“Because of the relationships mentioned in the Bible with Jesus’s mother, Joseph of Arimathea is believed by many to have been a great uncle of Jesus and according to the apostle John; he was secretly a disciple of Jesus. He was a rich man and most likely became wealthy in the trade of metals with Rome, which were obtained from Britain. According to English legend when Jesus was a young boy, he traveled with Joseph on some of his business voyages to purchase tin in Britain and founded churches along the River Brue leading up to Glastonbury. In the days following the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, Joseph of Arimathea journeyed with Mary Magdalene and several others to Great Britain. Joseph settled in Glastonbury and built a church where an old friend named Caradoc, better known as Caractacus the Arviragas or high king, gave him land. Arviragas’s father, Bran, an Arch Druid was the first royal convert to Christianity in Britain. From Glastonbury Joseph spread the pure uncorrupted Gospel of the Kingdom he had learned directly from Christ to the people of Britain. He brought with him to Britain the cup of the Last Supper, which represented the new covenant between God and man for the forgiveness of sin through the blood Christ shed on the Cross. This cup later became known as the Holy Grail. When a counterfeit Christianity with man-made idols and false doctrines crept in from Rome and supplanted the true Apostolic Christianity taught by Joseph of Arimathea, this Holy Grail or Cup of the New Covenant was lost, and the religious deception was so great that none of the faithful knights were able to find it until the purist knight, Sir Galahad, found it but it was never returned to the throne in England.

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA

A song by David R Hughes

There once was a man from Arimathea named Joseph a man of the
metal trade.
Disciple of Jesus the Messiah, with whose life the ransom for sin
was paid.
To the Romans nobilis decurio, An officer in Pilate's Judean guard.
A rich man and honorable counselor, a good man held in high
regard.
He often sailed to the island of Britain with young Yahshua and the
ship's crew.
To Cornwall and then on up Brue River to ancient Glastonbury too.

Joseph of Arimathea sailed across the sea.
He set his course for the land we know as Britain
To satisfy his business needs.
Joseph of Arimathea with young Yahshua at his side
Just spreading the news about God's kingdom
To their lost kin folk far and wide.

Then after they killed the lord Yahshua, he buried His body in a
tomb
But after three days He was resurrected, ascended to Heaven but
He's coming back soon.
To claim the unending throne of David and rule the kingdom of
God on Earth.
He'll take up and move the Stone of Destiny to the beloved country
of his birth.
So, Joseph and Mary and several others packed all their belongings
and sailed away.
Across the sea to the land of Britain to Glastonbury where Joseph
stayed.
He brought the cup of the last supper. Some people call it the Holy
Grail.
He was given land by Arviragus. He built a church, and the Gospel
prevailed.

Joseph of Arimathea sailed across the sea.
He set his course for the land we know as Britain
To satisfy his business needs.
Joseph of Arimathea with young Yahshua at his side
Just spreading the news about God's kingdom
To their lost kin folk far and wide.

Narration:

“Here is a story of two princes who were twin brothers that became separate dynasties on one single throne. Judah was one of the twelve sons of Jacob whose name was changed to Israel by God. Judah inherited a royal scepter promise of kings descending from his father, Jacob which had been given to him directly from God. Judah had twin sons, Zarah and Pharez. Pharez inherited the scepter promise from Judah because he was the first-born. The bible states that Zarah started to come out before Pharez with his hand first, so the midwife tied a scarlet ribbon around his wrist but suddenly he withdrew back into the womb and Pharez came out first. The midwife who was delivering the babies called him Pharez or breach which means violation or rupture. King David was a descendant of Pharez. Many generations after King David, Zedekiah, a descendent of David, ruled over the kingdom of Judah on what was then known as the throne of David. The people of Judah who had turned to idolatry were conquered by the Babylonians just as Jeremiah, a prophet of God, had prophesied. To end the succession of kings on the Throne of David the Babylonians killed all of King Zedekiah’s sons and all of the princes of Judah. Then they blinded Zedekiah and threw him into prison for the rest of his life. But Jeremiah, who had been imprisoned by Zedekiah earlier for his prophetic message against Jerusalem, was freed by the Babylonians. He left Jerusalem with King Zedekiah’s daughters and traveled to Egypt and at that point Jeremiah and the king’s daughters drop out of known biblical history. However, Ireland’s ancient history records that in 569 BC, a few years after the fall of Judah, an elderly white-haired patriarch, sometimes referred to as a saint came to Ireland. With him was the princess daughter of an eastern king and a companion called Simon Brach. Because of the timing of this patriarch’s appearance and the similarities to Jeremiah, his scribe Baruch and the Hebrew Princess named Tea Tephi it is most likely true that they were the same people. Also, at that time in Irish history there was a man named Ollam Fodhla, an Irish title that means wise sage. It is reasonable to assume that Jeremiah, the white-haired patriarch and Ollam Fodhla were the same person, especially since they were both known for bringing law and wisdom to Ireland. Then the plot really thickens as we discover from Irish legend that the Milesians invaded and possessed Ireland about one thousand years before Christ and that the descendants of Zarah, Judah’s second born with the scarlet thread are believed to have been part of this invasion. These sons of Zarah established a kingdom there after defeating the Tuatha de Dannen or the Tribe of Dan. Then after Jerusalem fell Tea-Tephi, the daughter of fallen King Zedekiah and therefore a descendant of Judah’s first-born twin son, Pharez arrived in Ireland with Jeremiah and married a king of Ireland called Heremon who was a descendent of Judah’s other twin son, Zarah. This marriage healed the ancient breach created at their birth and overturned the throne of David to Ireland by combining the lineage of Pharez through a daughter and the lineage of Zarah through a son. The prophet Ezekiel, a contemporary of Jeremiah, prophesied overturning the throne when he referred to the removal of David’s throne from Pharez’s lineage. Ezekiel prophesied that the high tree was to be made low, and the low tree was to be exalted.” Pharez was the high tree made low when Zedekiah was imprisoned and all of Judah’s

princes were slain by the King of Babylon, and Zarah was the low tree that was exalted when Jeremiah reestablished the throne in Ireland by marrying one of his male descendants to the daughter of the deposed King Zedekiah.

O JEREMIAH
A song by David R Hughes

Jeremiah the prophet was a hero in my eyes.
He always spoke the truth, was strong in character and wise.
He warned his king of the coming doom if the people did not yield
To the mighty king of Babylon and the sword his hands would wield

But the people did not love the truth, and they hated what he said
So, they cast him into prison, and they left him there for dead
Then the city fell, all its princes slain, for to end the dynasty
But Jeremiah God's prophet by the victor was set free.

O Jeremiah you were faithful to the end.
You left your home and Jerusalem for His word you heard within.
With an ark, a harp, an anointed stone and the daughters of the king,
You planted the throne in Ireland for the peace it would one day bring.

We called you Ollam Fohdla for a great and mighty king.
You brought us truth and wisdom and you taught our hearts to sing
Of the one who was coming, the redeemer of all men
Who would rule with truth and justice from the New Jerusalem.

Tea-Tephi, the king's daughter to Ireland's Heremon was wed
A son of Zarah, twin son of Judah, his second born with scarlet thread
And the throne lay in Ireland till the last two overturns,
First to Scotland then to England where it stays till Christ returns.

O Jeremiah you were faithful to the end.
You left your home and Jerusalem for His word you heard within.
With an ark, a harp, an anointed stone and the daughters of the king,
You planted the throne in Ireland for the peace it would one day bring.
You planted the throne in Ireland for the peace it would one day bring.

Narration:

“When Jeremiah traveled to Ireland he took with him some ancient holy relics. Among them were King David’s harp, the Ark of the Covenant and a stone called Lia Fail. The stone is also known as Jacob’s Pillar Stone or the Stone of Scone. It is the stone on which Jacob laid his head when he had a dream of a ladder to heaven and God prophesied to him that his descendants would be as numerous as the dust of the earth, spreading in all directions and that a company of nations and kings would spring from him. The stone was eventually moved from Ireland to Scotland and then to England where it was made to be part of King Edward’s coronation chair. Until recent years this chair had a plaque attached that read “Jacob’s Pillar Stone”. Many kings and queens of Ireland, Scotland and England have been crowned in the presence of this stone which is a continual witness to the promise by God of kings descending from Jacob. Jacob’s Pillar Stone is the subject of England’s Sword and the Stone legend indicating that only the rightful king can draw and wield the Sword of Power from the eternal promise contained in the legacy of the Stone of Destiny and the true heritage of the English people that ties them to Israel. A portion of God’s prophecy to Jacob that his descendants would be a company of nations which would spread over the earth like branches over a wall was fulfilled by Britain as “the sun never set on the British Empire”

THE SWORD AND THE STONE

A song by David R Hughes

Do you know the secret of the sword and the stone?
Have you heard the story of the ancient Stone of Scone?
Do you know the history of King David’s throne?
Do you know the secret of the sword and the stone?

The stone is Jacob’s Pillar of England’s coronation chair.
On which he laid his head to sleep and heard his God declare
His offspring would be like the dust of earth and spread all ways.
In them the nations of the earth would all be blessed in future days.
And that a company of nations and kings would spring from him.
So, he anointed the stone and called the place Bethel that he was in.

Do you know the secret of the sword and the stone?
Have you heard the story of the ancient Stone of Scone?
Do you know the history of King David’s throne?
Do you know the secret of the sword and the stone?

The sword of power is the truth that man was meant to know.
The word that issues from God’s mouth and conquers every foe.
And only one can draw it from the ancient Pillar stone
He of royal blood entitled to the promised throne.
He who had the will to keep the law of the Lord.
And he who had the faith in God to take Him at His word.

Do you know the secret of the sword and the stone?
Have you heard the story of the ancient Stone of Scone?
Do you know the history of King David’s throne?
Do you know the secret of the sword and the stone?
Now you know the secret of the sword and the stone.

Narration:

“Here is the secret of the Sword and the Stone:

Yahweh, the God of Israel promised King David that there would be a descendent of his sitting on the throne of David forever and that He would never break that promise for any reason.

In the days of King David, as part of the Milesian invasion, a colony from the Zarah line of Judah settled in Ireland and established a kingdom. They were descendants of Jacob’s son, Judah through Zarah, a twin son of Judah but King David was a descendent of Pharez, Judah’s other twin son.

A breach occurred at birth between the twins Zarah and Pharez when Zarah started to come out first but then withdrew back into the womb as Pharez came out. Therefore, Pharez inherited the kingship from Judah since he was his first born.

About four hundred years after King David’s time Babylon conquered the kingdom of Judah under King Zedekiah, a descendent of King David and all of Judah’s princes were killed. Jeremiah the prophet in obedience to God’s word removed David’s throne from Judah and planted it in Ireland by taking Jacob’s Pillar Stone and the daughters of King Zedekiah there.

The breach between Zarah and Pharez was healed by the marriage of Tea-Tephi, a daughter of King Zedekiah of the Pharez line to Heremon, king in Ireland who was from Zarah’s line of Judah.

Many years later the throne was overturned from Ireland to Scotland and then from Scotland to England completing the three overturns of the throne as prophesied by Ezekiel before the kingdom of Judah was conquered.

While in each of those countries Jacob’s Pillar Stone was present at the coronations of their Kings and Queens serving as a witness and a reminder of God’s promise to Jacob that many kings would spring from him.

The Royal Families of Ireland, Scotland and England were descended from the bloodline of David through Tea-Tephi, a daughter of King Zedekiah.

THE THRONE IN ENGLAND IS THE THRONE OF DAVID

The descendent of King David, occupying the throne at the end of this age will descend into moral decay with the world and succumb to European supremacy.

When Jesus Christ, whose Jewish name is Yahshua, returns He will destroy the final European dictator and his government with the Sword of the Spirit.

Jesus Christ being a descendent of King David will depose the king of England and assume the Throne of David.

Yahshua/Jesus Christ will return the throne and Jacob’s Pillar Stone to Jerusalem, the future capital of the Kingdom of God on earth where He will reign for one thousand years”.

We're Taking A Train
A song by David R Hughes

We're taking a train to the kingdom of God
We're packing some things for our spiritual bod.
Faith and salvation and righteousness too,
The Gospel of Peace and the love of the truth.
The law of the Lord and His spirit's sword,
These are the things that will get us on board.
And you must receive His Spirit to enter in
But it's free for the taking so turn from your sin.
If you want to join the family that the Father's begun
Your ticket is your faith in Messiah His son.
You can live forever with the coming king,
But there are some things that you just cannot bring. Oh no, no, no.

No more divination, no more necromancy
No more numerology, no more sorcery
No more witchcraft, no more voodoo
No more idolatry, no more false enjoyed derisions
No more fornication, no more adultery
No more effeminacies, no more homosexuality
No more covetousness, no more drunkenness
No more thieveries, no more reviling the faithful
No more swindling, no more religious deceptions. Oh no, no, no.

Now if you don't want to leave that baggage behind
There's another train on the tracks you will find.
The choice is yours, may your decision be wise
Because a trip to this world's fate
Is what a ticket for that train buys. Oh no

We're taking a train to the kingdom of God.
We're taking a train to the kingdom of God.

CAN YOU HEAR?
A song by David R Hughes

Can you hear the sound? See what's going down.
A fire is burning all around.
The day is getting near when everyone will hear
And every tear will disappear with our fear.

We're the chosen ones believing in the Son,
And the work that he has done.
His love will overcome in the millennium
The lower forces will succumb to the Son.

Can you feel it now like a mighty plow
Churning up the world somehow?
We're just a breath away from life another way.
It could be starting any day. Come my way.
Come my way. Come my way.

YAHSHUA IS THE WAY
A song by David R Hughes

So many people in this world have gone astray.
Wandered from the path and from the light and from the way.
Hurting each other never looking deep inside.
Running from the truth about themselves without a guide.

How many years will you play that hurting game?
How many tears will you shed for love in vain?
Long ago the price was paid to free us from that fate.
Accept the gift of life and let your inner self awake.

Yahshua is the way, the truth and the life.
Yahshua is the way to Yahweh.

The day is so near when the tribulation starts.
You'll face it here alone if you don't humble down your heart.
The Spirit of Truth will lead you to the other side.
But you can't hear the Spirit through a wall of selfish pride.

Your freedom is waiting, simply throw away the chains.
Your mind is debating and resistant to the change.
Your past is just a memory, life's open for today.
Your future is eternity if from the heart you'll say

Yahshua is the way, the truth and the life.
Yahshua is the way to Yahweh.

As the instrumental part of the chorus was repeating over and over Merlin removed his guitar and placed it straight up on a stand so that it appeared to be the sword Excalibur as the spotlight briefly moved from Merlin to the guitar. He calmly walked to the front of the stage and met the anxious crowd with handshakes and friendly greetings. The prerecorded music kept the song playing as Claude and Bob rolled the Portal back to the center of the stage and quickly reactivated the apparatus. Then as Merlin stepped back and stood facing the cheering crowd, he threw a small ball of fire toward the sword with letters on its fretboard spelling TRUTH, turned around and walking into the doorway of the portal disappeared in a bright flash and a puff of smoke. When the music finished a misty apparition of his face appeared before the satisfied crowd where he had been standing with the help of some fog and a projected image. It was an apparition that would have made Houdini laugh out loud. Merlin then spoke his last words, which orbited around a surround sound system like a satellite and into the crowd's willing ears.

The End
of the Age

According to the book of Matthew, the Lord Yahshua has said,
"Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is

not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these *are* the beginning of sorrows. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come."

While the apparition was speaking, I quickly shed the Merlin disguise and returned to the keyboards. Claude grabbed his bass guitar again and Bob got back on the drums kicking off a relaxed drum roll leading into the show's final song by the Moody Blues titled "Have You Heard?" from their Threshold of a Dream album:

Now you know that you are free.
Show your friends that you and me
Belong to the same world
Turned on to the same word
Have you heard? Have you heard?
Have you heard? Have you heard?

As the people were enthusiastically talking and milling around, some walked up close to the stage and admired the shining Sword Excalibur guitar. As the chorus was repeated over and over one member of the group at a time put down their instrument and left the stage, but their music kept playing on. When all the members were finally off the stage, they visited with those standing close to the stage. Some easy listening instrumental music rounded off the show with an uplifting feeling of peace.



Merlin's Travelling Stage

Chapter 11 THE LAST MERLIN

The mystery of the sword and the stone could not be revealed until all the different aspects of biblical truth, historical truth and legend were merged into one final conclusion. Bible history and prophecy, the Arthurian legends, the story of Joseph of Arimathea and the Holy Grail, the legends of Jesus visiting the British Isles and establishing small churches along the river route leading to Glastonbury, the connection of the British Throne with the Throne of David and the identification of the lost ten tribes of Israel all come together to weave this colossal story. It is the story of an amazing truth hidden from the eyes of the masses for centuries. I have sought the truth diligently having been led to knowledge through experiences, the study of history, research of legends, prayer and study of the Holy Scriptures in the Bible. During this search, being always devoted to the discernment of truth from falsehood, I was continually drawn deeper into writings and teachings that had the ring of truth which led to understanding.

In the Arthurian legend, the stone represents England's Stone of Destiny which is also called Jacob's Pillar Stone and the Stone of Scone. The Hebrew Jacob whose name was changed by God to Israel anointed it with oil after his dream that the destiny of his seed was to rule as kings across the earth according to the scepter promise of God. The sword Excalibur or the sword of power represents the Spirit of Truth and the Sword of the Spirit, which Christ will use to defeat all nations that oppose him when he returns to claim the throne of David and rule the world with the truth and righteousness of God. The whole truth of God could only be drawn from the holy scriptures by one who was of the royal lineage of King David, and one who had total faith in God's word in the scriptures and as he heard it, and had the tremendous courage it would take to fulfill the scriptures in the law and the Prophets while on earth, and later taking his place on the throne as king of kings at His second coming. The woman Merlin loved who deceived him and used the magic she learned from him to seal him in a cave represents the Babylonian mystery religion that has deceived Christians and keeps them from the whole truth. The Holy Grail represents the uncorrupted Gospel of the Kingdom of God taught by Jesus, the Apostles and by Joseph of Arimathea to England. King Arthur and the "future king" represent King David and his descendant, the coming future King of Kings, Yahshua, Jesus Christ. The castle-city of Camelot represents Jerusalem. Sir Lancelot and Guinevere represent mankind's propensity to serve our selfish desires which lead us into sin, instead of following God's righteous ways. Merlin represents white magic, wizardry and sorcery which in the end always fails and corrupts the user because it is against God's will and against His way. It does not bear good fruit. Deut. 18 says **⁹When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. ¹⁰ There shall not be found among you *anyone* who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, *or one* who practices witchcraft, *or* a soothsayer, *or one* who interprets omens, *or* a sorcerer, ¹¹ *or one* who conjures spells, *or* a medium, *or* a spiritist, *or one* who calls up the dead. ¹² For all who do these things *are* an abomination to the LORD, and because of these**

abominations the LORD your God drives them out from before you. ¹³ You shall be blameless before the LORD your God.

God's truth is the actual, absolute truth of all that exists without deception or lies, regardless of what anyone may think or believe to be true about anything that exists or has occurred. The truth of God given to us regarding our spiritual fall is that sin, which is breaking the spiritual law of God contained in His ten commandments, separates us from His presence and leads us down the path of destruction and death. The truth of God given to us concerning man's spiritual salvation from sin and death is that Yahshua, known to us in English as Jesus, is the prophesied Messiah and Christ of the Holy Scriptures who was without sin and was slain as the unblemished sacrificial Lamb of God to pay the ransom for man who was spiritually abducted and enslaved by Satan, the fallen angel Lucifer, into his rebellious way of sin, through his lies and deceit. Anyone who believes these truths and has genuine life changing remorse for their transgressions of God's spiritual law and chooses to learn and follow His way of life is considered righteous in Christ and forgiven by God, the eternal creator of universal existence, in His coming judgment, thus absolving them from His righteous judgment of death for their transgressions or sins according to His perfect spiritual justice. This freely offered divine forgiveness was portrayed in the Hebrew Passover showing that if the Israelites who were enslaved in Egypt smeared the blood of a slain spotless lamb on their doors, their first-born (traditional inheritors) would be spared God's judgment by the angel of death against the inhabitants of Egypt for their idolatry, cruelty to the enslaved Hebrew people, and Pharaoh's rejection of God's will. to let them go. Eternal life in a resurrected spiritual body is a gift from God to mankind requiring only true life-changing repentance of sin and acceptance of Yahshua as the Messiah of the Holy Scriptures and His way of life. The penalty for rejecting Christ and His way is death or eternal destruction. The choice is ours and we must choose our own outcome of eternal life or eternal death.

I am the last and final Merlin, and as such, I renounce and cease from the practice of all forms of magic, sorcery, and paganism forbidden in the Holy Scriptures, for I now understand their destructive nature and their harmful results whether intended for good or evil. The crown of antlers passed down in dreams through many ages is now retired forever with the hope of receiving the crown of life from Yahshua, the Christ who is the true High King and High Priest of God. I will use the knowledge and understanding gained on my quest for truth to help my brothers and sisters in America and Britain and the world who humble themselves and love truth, to find true spiritual freedom, which is freedom from slavery to our sins and to religious deception, during the darkest days in the history of the world.

For without true nationwide repentance and turning from their rebelliousness against God's laws, the spiritual and political fall of the United States and Britain is imminent. The allies of these two ancient brothers will quickly follow. A vacuum of power from their fall will cause the rise in power of a ten-headed beast union of European countries that will be feared by all nations. The brilliant but evil political leader of the beast will speak boldly against Yahweh God. Then the leader of the great false universal church

resembling the lamb of God, Christ, will rise and cause all the people to put their faith in and give their allegiance to the ten-headed beast government and its leader instead of to God. Using deceit and apparent miracles, that false prophet will convince the people to worship a man-made image of the Roman beast government which will speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

The true power behind the beast and this false religion called Mystery Babylon, Mother of Harlots in the biblical book of Revelation will be Satan, that old serpent, a fallen angelic being who was originally named Lucifer and whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, which means destruction. The daughters of Mystery Babylon are all the Christian churches that continue clinging to her pagan traditions of men and have been deceived into not keeping all ten commandments of God.

Since the first century AD when the church was led by the apostles, Mystery Babylon has used some difficult to understand passages in Paul's teaching to twist the scriptures to their own destruction just as it is written in the book of 2 Peter 3:14-16: “

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; ¹⁵and consider *that* the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, ¹⁶as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable *people* twist to their own destruction, as *they* do also the rest of the Scriptures”.

To avoid having to keep God's Seventh Day Sabbath Holy, the annual feasts and His Holy Day Sabbaths depicting God's whole plan of salvation, and eating pork, lobster and shrimp with a clear conscience, certain passages in Paul's teaching about God's laws and His grace have been taken out of context and twisted causing sincere seekers of God's way to incorrectly believe it is not necessary to be obedient in keeping God's laws including all of the Ten Commandments because we are not under the law. Paul taught that we are not under the law's penalty of death if we have repented of our sin due to a life changing remorsefulness, asked God for forgiveness and accepted Christ as our Lord and Savior. Then we are under God's Grace, which is the unmerited forgiveness of God, absolving us from the law's penalty for sin which is death. The New Testament biblical definition of sin in 1 John 3:4 is:

“⁴Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” And Romans 6:23 states **²³For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.** This verse speaks of the second death, or the death of the spirit consumed by the lake of fire in the book of Revelation and freedom from the penalty of that death through Jesus Christ.

Speaking of the commandments of God, in John 1:5 we are told **¹Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. ²By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. ³For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His**

commandments are not burdensome. ⁴For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. ⁵Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? So, if we love God we will keep and love His commandments but our victory over the world and sin leading to our salvation is through our faith and belief in Jesus Christ, the son of the living God.

God's laws were given to teach mankind His ways and to reveal to us His righteous character. 1 John 2:6 NKJV speaking of Jesus states: **⁶He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.** As we learn what is sinful to God we must repent and turn from that way, becoming obedient to Him in that aspect of living. With God's spirit in us and guiding us into all truth, (John 16:13) and turning away from sin, we will continue developing a character that is more like Christ. Our salvation from death is by faith in Jesus Christ alone and not in good works or keeping the law. However, that faith includes believing what he taught and doing His will. In the NKJV of Matthew Jesus said ²¹**"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²²Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' ²³And then I will declare to them, I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!"** Of course, He was speaking of God's spiritual laws and not man's laws.

If we continue to sin or transgress God's laws because of God's grace, without a drastic change of heart and mind, then we are not under Grace but under the law, and still subject to its penalty of death until we truly repent and change to God's way. This attitude is serious because Hebrews 10:26 says: **²⁶For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.** Forgiveness by God is still available, but there must be true repentance and a genuine change of heart. But each sin will lead to more sin as we are taught in the annual Feast of Unleavened Bread in which leaven represents sin. In 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 Paul speaking of blatant sexual immorality in the church proclaims: **Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? ⁷Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. ⁸Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.**

Satan has used the oldest magic trick in the book, **MISDIRECTION**, to turn away our focus from God the Creator and onto His creation, the sun. Practically all of Christianity has been deceived by the great deceiver Satan that old dragon into turning away from worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth, to unknowingly worshipping Him in religious syncretism by including aspects of the pagan idolatrous traditions of sun worship. This polluted worship of God includes the pagan traditions of Sunday, "the venerable day of the sun" instituted by the pagan Roman Emperor Constantine, but according to the Holy Scriptures, the

early church of God kept the Seventh Day Sabbath. It also includes Easter with the pagan goddess Ishtar's fertility traditions of Easter egg hunts, chicks, and bunny rabbits and sunrise services, but according to the Holy Scriptures, the early Apostolic church kept Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread. And unknown to millions, Christian syncretism includes Christmas day, claiming December 25 was Jesus's birthday when it was not even in the winter, however, it is the birthday of Mithras the Roman sun god, and includes the pagan traditions of Saturnalia, Yule Tide and winter solstice worship of the returning sun. The Israelites worshipped God with religious syncretism shortly after coming out of Egypt when Moses was receiving the Ten Commandments in Exodus 32:3-6. KJV ³ **And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears and brought them unto Aaron.** ⁴ **And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: AND THEY SAID, THESE BE THY GODS, O ISRAEL, WHICH BROUGHT THEE UP OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT.**

⁵ **And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD.**

⁶ **And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play.**

After Israel's civil war, this religious syncretism is what paranoid king Jeroboam of the Northern Kingdom of Israel introduced to his people by setting up golden calves to worship Yahweh God and changing the Holy Festival times so the people would not return to Jerusalem in the Southern Kingdom of Judah, to worship God in spirit and in God's true way. 1 Kings 12:26-30 NIV ²⁶ **Jeroboam thought to himself, "The kingdom will now likely revert to the house of David. ²⁷ If these people go up to offer sacrifices at the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem, they will again give their allegiance to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah. They will kill me and return to King Rehoboam."** ²⁸ **After seeking advice, the king made two golden calves. He said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. HERE ARE YOUR GODS, ISRAEL, WHO BROUGHT YOU UP OUT OF EGYPT."** ²⁹ **One he set up in Bethel, and the other in Dan.** ³⁰ **And this thing became a sin; the people came to worship the one at Bethel and went as far as Dan to worship the other.**

The grand deception of Satan began in the Garden of Eden when he told Eve that she and Adam would not die if they ate the fruit (knowledge of good and evil) forbidden by God, but they would become like God who is eternal. So, they chose Satan's way of knowing or determining good and evil on their own and rejecting God's way of learning through His Holy Spirit, the tree of eternal life. They were banned from the Garden of Eden to keep them from having access to eternal life which from that point on, because of their choice to believe Satan, would include sin or evil, until God sent His Messiah to save mankind from their sin for all who would truly repent and accept His son as their king, lord and savior.

The deception gained momentum after the great flood when Nimrod, the warrior king of Babylon was killed and his widow, Semiramis established the new Mystery Babylon religion. She became known as the Queen of Heaven when she claimed her son, Tammuz was the reincarnated god Nimrod, making her a

goddess. Then she created a polluted religion of idolatry and sexual perversion, completely rejecting the teaching of the one true God which was handed down by Noah to his son Shem.

Then it raised its ugly head again when Simon the Sorcerer, a leader of the Mystery Babylon religion in Samaria at the time of Christ and the apostles, a person mentioned in the book of Acts in chapter 8, who was rejected by the Apostles for offering to purchase the power of giving the Holy Spirit by touching hands as if it was another magical power he could add to his collection. After his rejection he appropriated the name of Christ and some Christian observances to proselytize many people into his Babylonian religion calling it Christian while including pagan gods and idols with new Christian names to win more converts from the pagan world of that time.

Finally, it will rise one last time shortly before Christ returns when the Roman beast government and its new Holy Roman Leader rise to power. However, two prophets from God will also arise to bring spiritual truth to a world stuck in the quagmire of religious deception, chaos and division from failed human morality, anger, greed, selfishness and hatred. They will reveal the true Gospel of the Kingdom of God that Jesus taught and all the fulfilled prophecies in the Holy Bible. They will also reveal to the world the will of God for all of mankind to keep His commandments including His seventh day Sabbath commandment and His annual Holy days depicting events in God's plan of Salvation for fallen mankind. They will have the power to withhold rain to make their point and prove their authority. Of course, the harlot, Mystery Babylon, and the Roman Beast government along with most of the people in the world will hate the two prophets with a demonic passion. It will be a time when everyone on the earth will hear the truth and will have to choose who they will follow and what they will believe. Before their forty-two-month ministry on earth begins, God will lead His true followers to a place of safety. However, the two prophets will be martyred as the world rejoices when the Roman beast government overcomes and kills them, and many Christians who refuse the Babylonian pagan form of worship will also be martyred.

The alliance of ten European nations and their leader, the beast, will be the seventh and final revival of the Holy Roman Empire and it will oppose and subjugate the two ancient brothers' survivors, Ephraim and Manasseh or Britain and the United States of America, and their allies' survivors. The ten-nation alliance will hate the Harlot which is the Babylonian Christian church system based in the Vatican and will destroy the Babylonian false religion. The unholy ambition of the beast and the fearful indignation of an alliance of Asian nations will compete for domination of the world. This struggle will bring all their armies together at Armageddon, but Jesus Christ will return with the resurrected true believers and the armies of heaven, and all the armies of the world will oppose Christ at His return in Jerusalem for the final battle of this age. With the Sword of the Spirit, Christ will defeat all the assembled world powers that oppose Him. When the final battle is finished two thirds of the people of the earth will have been killed by wars and other disasters.

However, those who love God and love His truth will rejoice and be glad because these events will end the rule of man's

governments and usher in a new earth ruled by Christ with God's righteousness, God's truth and God's justice. All nations will succumb to His rule, and He will begin to build a paradise on the earth for mankind to live in peace and grow in understanding and knowledge of God's laws and His ways. Christ and the resurrected true believers will be the Kingdom of God that Christians have been praying to come for centuries. Christ's reign will last for one thousand years, and God's righteous government will never end.

Two thousand years ago, before Jesus of Nazareth whose lineage was of King David, overcame the human temptations offered by Satan in the wilderness, God declared His love and approval of Jesus, His only begotten Son. And with unlimited wisdom, faith and courage Jesus symbolically drew the sword of truth in the Holy Scriptures about His existence, mission and purpose on earth from the Coronation Witness Stone of Judah's royal scepter kingship heritage. Then for our benefit and regardless of what the consequences would be for carrying out that truth while being in human form, He established a new covenant uniting Jewish and Gentile believers in Himself and with God and completed His first advent mission in God's plan of salvation for fallen mankind.

In His short time on earth, Jesus Christ was able to conquer death by His resurrection, because He was without sin. That victory extends to all who would become one with Him by truly repenting, believing in His Gospel of Salvation through faith resulting in good works (see James 2: 14-26) and turning to God's way of life by letting God write His law on their hearts, which means agreeing with all His commandments and having a genuine love for all of them. And Christ became the cornerstone of the Church of God who are His true followers that have the testimony of Jesus and keep the commandments of God. (see Revelation 12:17) Now let us all remove the blinders of fear that have kept us in the darkness of religious deception and seek His courage, wisdom and righteousness to draw the eternal sword of truth from the Holy Scriptures so we can store up for ourselves a crown of life in the coming Kingdom of God on earth.

The End
Or The Beginning
Choose Wisely