

WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91123

HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG
PASTOR GENERAL

September 12, 1985

Dear Brethren and Co-Workers with Christ:

Since last December I have been working diligently on the largest and most important book of my life. In real fact I feel I myself did not write it. Rather, I believe God used me in writing it. I candidly feel it may be the most important book since the Bible.

It is named **MYSTERY OF THE AGES**. Actually it might be called a synopsis of the Bible in the most plain and understandable language.

But first, before I tell you more about it, let me say I am overjoyed to be able to send you one of the very first copies off the press, hardbound—the same beautiful copy that will be sold in bookstores all over the United States—in gratitude for your cooperation and financial support of this wonderful work of the great God.

All baptized members will be given the book, one copy to a family, at the coming annual Feast of Tabernacles. All nonmember co-workers are being mailed your copies, but allow a few weeks for delivery, for this kind of mail goes much slower than this letter.

We want to reach the largest audience possible with this book. I know you will feel the same way when you read it. There is a very large audience which would never request this book if offered free—who would never send their name and address to us—but would gladly buy a copy in a bookstore. By putting it in the bookstores we will reach a very great audience that we can reach in no other way. We will not sell the book ourselves, but it cannot be made available to this large audience of book buyers unless the bookstores do put a price on it.

Now let me tell you something about this new book.

The Holy Bible is the world's best-selling book, but not the most read, and certainly just about the least understood. Why should this be? Several reasons.

First, God did not intend it to be understood until now, in these last days before the return of Christ and the setting up of the kingdom of God to rule all nations and usher in world peace. For example, in Daniel 12, Daniel wrote that he heard what the angel was telling him to write, but he did not understand. The angel told him to write the words anyway—that their meaning was closed and sealed from understanding until the time of the end of this present world.

Secondly, when the first man, Adam, rejected the tree of life—rejecting God and reliance on God, taking to himself the knowledge of good and evil, relying on

himself instead of God—God closed the tree of life until the coming of Christ, the second Adam. And even then the gifts of the Holy Spirit and eternal life were still closed to all except those whom God the Father would draw to him through Jesus Christ (John 6:44). The natural mind of man cannot understand the Word of God except by and through the Holy Spirit dwelling within. We read in I Corinthians 2:9 that the human eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, nor has it entered into the human mind, the spiritual things of God. But, verse 10 says God does reveal those things to us through, and only through, the Holy Spirit dwelling in us. No matter how great the human mind—no matter how many PhDs or high degrees one may have after his name, he cannot understand what God has put in his Word—the Holy Bible—without the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes [mentally, educationally]" (Matt. 11:25). No others can understand the Bible, which is the Word of God.

Thirdly, the Bible has not been written like the books written by natural-minded humans. It is a coded book, like a jigsaw puzzle divided into thousands of parts, and cannot be understood except these many different parts are properly put together. And they will fit together in only one way. They must be put together "here a little, and there a little" (Isa. 28:10).

I feel like shouting "Glory, hallelujah" and "Praise God" that he has revealed his Word to his one true church through the Holy Spirit which he has given to us. Daniel 12 continues to say that in these last days the wise would understand but all others would not. The Bible says the fear of the Lord is the beginning of understanding, and a good understanding have they who do his commandments.

We of God's true church do keep God's commandments. But the churches of this world say the commandments were done away. Therefore their eyes, even though they do not realize it, are blinded to the truth as revealed in the Bible. That is why the churches of "traditional Christianity" do not and cannot understand the Bible.

This new book MYSTERY OF THE AGES does put the many "pieces of the jigsaw puzzle" properly together. Because the world has been unable to do this, the Bible and the things in the Bible have certainly been a mystery.

The Bible itself is a mystery to nearly all people. God and the nature of God—what God is like—God's purpose—have been a mystery. No religion on earth has ever truly understood just who and what God really is. Many people, and even different religions, have had some vague ideas about the unseen spirit world. Yet it has been a total mystery to them.

Even the appearance of mankind on the earth and any purpose for human existence are a mystery people have never understood. Human civilization as it has developed is a mystery people simply do not understand. They cannot understand why 20th century progress has made such phenomenal strides and yet its troubles and evils have escalated and multiplied.

Even the existence of the church is a mystery. Why should there be such an institution as the church? The very gospel that Jesus Christ brought from God the Father—the good news of the coming world-ruling kingdom of God—has never been understood. It, too, has been cloaked in mystery.

This new book **MYSTERY OF THE AGES** unveils all these mysteries. It puts the many different parts of the "jigsaw puzzle" together. It is, in fact, a synopsis of the entire Bible. It is my prayer that you will read it along with your Bible—that it will make your Bible come alive and understandable. And with God's Holy Spirit dwelling in you, I feel sure that it will. I am now in my 94th year and I feel that this book is the most valuable gift I could possibly give to you. This book is a partial expression of my thanks and gratitude to you for being a co-laborer with me and with Jesus Christ. With all my heart, I do appreciate and thank God for your part with me in the wonderful work in these closing days.

With deep love, in Jesus' name,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Herbert Armstrong". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "H" and a long, horizontal flourish at the end.