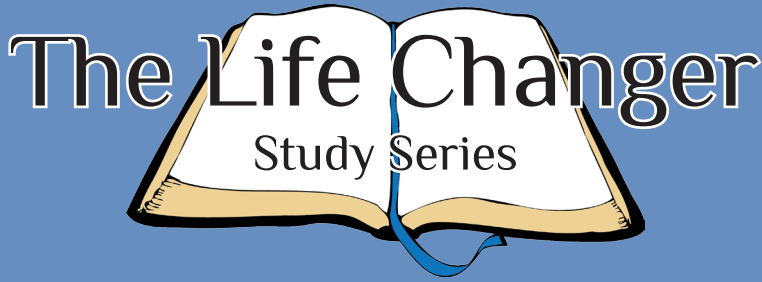


The Life Changer

Study Series



The Remnant Church

There is an eternal principle that we must all live by. You don't look to people for the truth, you look to God and what He has revealed through Jesus Christ to the prophets. Once you find the truth in God's word, you look for people who hold to the truth in its entirety. The Bible tells us about such a group that will live wholly for God at the end of time. This group has some distinctive characteristics so that we may be able to identify them. This group is referred to as the "remnant." Why are they called the remnant? They are called the remnant because they are what is left of a very unique and special group of people, those who have stood on God's side since the beginning of time. If you look



closely at the events of the Bible, you will see that those representatives served as God's witnesses. Just like a remnant of cloth is the last piece of the original, so too God's remnant is a small part of what once was. In this lesson we will look at some examples of those who represented God in the past and identify the characteristics that not only made them different, but will be present in God's remnant people in the end of time.

Lesson 27



Shining Stars Series (Philippians 2:14-16)



As the group gathered for the meeting, Fatma's heart was racing with excitement. She couldn't wait to share with them her most recent experience. She took a quick glance around the room and noticed that everyone had finally arrived, found seats, and gotten comfortable.

"Well it looks like we can get started. Let's start with a prayer. Mom, could you pray for us?"

"Of course!" she said.

The group got on their knees, bowed their heads, and prayed. When Türkan was finished, they all said, "Amen," sat back down, and waited for Fatma to start the study. But Fatma just sat there fiddling with her papers for about 30 seconds.

"Fatma, you must have a great lesson there. Do you plan on sharing with us?" Mehmet asked jokingly.

"Oh, sorry. I am just a little bit excited tonight. Thanks for "waking" me up Mehmet. Of course we are going to study, but before we do that I want to tell you something. You know that I got these Life Changer lessons from the same person who gave me the Fate changer lessons. Her name is Sevim. If you all remember, I told you that she lives a couple of hours away from here and occasionally comes to visit her mother. Well, a few weeks ago she came into my shop again and we had a great time catching up. She told me about her son and daughter. She said that her husband was still working teaching English. They weren't sure if..."

"Mom, we can learn all that later. What does she have to do with the lessons?" Mert interrupted.

"Sevim invited me and I have been to the Seventh-day Adventist Church." Fatma declared.

"You have?" Mert and Gül asked.

“Yes, I went last weekend.”

“But you told us you were going to visit a friend for the weekend,” the kids responded.

“You are right and I did. But, I didn’t tell you I was going to church because I wanted to check it out first.”

“Well tell us what happened?” everyone asked at the same time.

Fatma was smiling broadly and she said, “I will tell you after the lesson tonight.”

“How in the world are we going to concentrate on the lesson when you have put us in this much suspense?” Ekrem protested with a smile.

“Well, if we do the lesson you will see that I have a very important thing to comment about my visit. You won’t be able to understand the import of what I am saying without the lesson. Let’s do the study and then I will finish my story.” Fatma said.

Reluctantly, everyone opened their lesson and began to read. (To be continued)

? Q1. Why was Enoch taken up to God? Read Genesis 5:23, 24.

A. _____

A distinct characteristic of God’s remnant people is that they walk with God. They follow Him wherever He may lead them (Revelation 14:4).

? Q2. Although the people around him were evil, what did Noah do that pleased God? Read Genesis 6:5-9. (Hint: He did the same thing Enoch did).

A. _____

Several hundred years later when the people of Israel were drowning in

apostasy, God called the prophet Elijah to rebuke the wicked rulers and lead the people back to the worship of the true God. In a moment of deep grief, Elijah reached the end of his rope. His life was in danger and all he wanted to do was die. It was at this moment that God reinvigorated him with some wonderful news.

① Q3. How did God speak to Elijah? Read 1 Kings 19:11-14.

A. _____

① Q4. Besides Elijah, how many people had not bowed before and worshipped the false god Baal? Read 1 Kings 19:18

A. _____

Elijah wasn't alone! In Elijah's lowest moment, God told him that he wasn't the only one who had remained loyal to God. There were 7000 other people, the remnant of Elijah's day.

A second characteristic of God's remnant is that they stand up for what is right and rebuke the wicked for not following God's laws. There will be times in your Christian walk that you may feel like giving up because things aren't going the way that you thought they would. In Elijah's story we see a very important truth, God has our back. He watches over us and He makes sure that there are others just like us that we can be encouraged by.

Let's fast forward hundreds of years and unlock the truth about God's faithful followers shortly after Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven (Read Revelation 12:1-5).

The first thing that we need to remember about the book of Revelation is that it is full of symbolism. Therefore, let's slowly work to explain the images we just read about. First, let's identify the three main characters in these verses.

① Q5. Who are the three main characters in verses 1-5?

A. _____

In very simple terms, we have a woman giving birth to a child who the great dragon wants to destroy. Let's first identify the great dragon.

① Q6. Who is the dragon? Read Revelation 12:9.

A. _____

The dragon is Satan and he obviously doesn't like this child because he wants to kill him. Now, let's figure out who the woman is. We will look at some symbolism from the Old Testament to help us out.

① Q7. What does God call His people? Read Isaiah 51:16.

A. _____

① Q8. What does God call the daughter of Zion? Read Jeremiah 6:2.

A. _____

So we see that God's people are called the daughter of Zion and likened to a pure and uncorrupted virgin.

① Q9. What does Paul want to present the Corinthian church as to Jesus? Read 2 Corinthians 11:2.

A. _____

When Paul wrote a letter to the Corinthian church, he also likened the believers to a pure virgin who is waiting to be united with her groom at the second coming of Jesus Christ.

To put the image of God's people as a pure virgin church into perspective, let's look at another type of woman in the book of Revelation. Instead of being pure and uncorrupted, this woman is referred to as a harlot (Read Revelation 17:1-5).

We don't have time in this lesson to explain all the symbolism, but we can easily identify what this woman's main characteristic is. She is a harlot, a term the Bible uses to describe those who do not follow God in spirit and in truth. In short, this is a false church or system of worship masquerading as the real thing. Let's look at a few verses to see that this isn't the first time that God likened apostatized people as prostitutes (Read Ezekiel 16:1, 2, 15, 20, 21, 26, 28, 31, and 32).

As harsh as these words are, the message is clear. When someone's allegiance to God is broken and he follows after other gods, or suppresses the truth of God to serve his own purposes, he is like a whore chasing after men. The prophet Jeremiah also used this imagery to distinguish between those who remain loyal to God and those who commit spiritual adultery (Read Jeremiah 3:1, 2).

In the book of Revelation, we have two types of churches: the pure, loyal one and the impure, disloyal one. We know from previous studies that the impure, disloyal church is the Catholic Church and any other church that joins with her politically, economically, or spiritually. Which one do you want to be a part of?

Now let's identify the last person in Revelation chapter 12, the child. There is one characteristic of the child that makes him easy to identify. The Bible says he will rule all nations with an iron rod and be taken up to the throne of God. This can only be one person.

① Q10. What is his name and who is he? Read Revelation 19:11-16 and John 1:14-17.

A. _____

Jesus is the Word of God in human flesh (John 1:1-17), and He will rule the nations with an iron rod when He comes at the end of time. Therefore, Jesus is the child born to the woman, who represents both Mary (physically) and the true followers of God (spiritually).

Do you remember what the Jews' responsibility was in preparation for the coming Messiah (Daniel 9)? They were to prepare a society based on justice, forgiveness, and the holiness of God's law. Symbolically, the people were preparing for the birth and subsequent ministry of the Messiah. Satan knew that the Messiah was coming to break his reign, through sin, over the whole world. This is why he used King Herod in an attempt to kill baby Jesus (Matthew 2:13) and the Roman Empire later on (John 19). But all of Satan's plans were foiled and even though Jesus died, He came back to life and ascended to heaven.

Let's see what happened as a result of Jesus' death on the cross and subsequent ascension to heaven.

① Q11. Who fought in heaven? Read Revelation 12:7-10.

A. _____

② Q12. Who won and what happened to the devil and his angels?

A. _____

If we read our Bibles closely, we know that Satan was thrown out of heaven after he sinned. This is why he was in the Garden of Eden. We later read in the book of Job that Satan still had access to heaven because he attended a gathering before the Lord there. This shows us that although his permanent home was the earth, he was still allowed to enter heaven with God's permission. However, in the book of Revelation, we learn that Satan was thrown out of heaven forever.

③ Q13. What caused Satan to be permanently cast out of heaven?

(Hint: It has to do with Jesus' life and death).

A. _____

When we read verse 10 and 11 closely, we see that Satan's final fall is mentioned in the context of salvation and Jesus' power over death. In

short, Satan had no right to the heavenly courts after being personally involved in the death of Jesus Christ. The ultimate price of his original sin, and every sin that he instigated in the human race, was on full display when Jesus, the Son of God, gave His life on the cross. Jesus' victory assured that every child of Adam might be set free from the bondage to sin and transgression and Satan. Sin caused the death of the Son of God. Do you think Satan was remorseful for what he had done? Absolutely not, in fact he became even angrier and focused his attacks on God's people.

① Q14. Who did Satan attack? Read Revelation 12:13.

A. _____

A brief review of the early church reveals a startling picture. Except for John, all the disciples of Jesus died violently. Peter was crucified upside down. His brother, Andrew, was scourged and tied to an X shaped cross until he died. Matthew was killed with an ax. Thomas was speared. Paul was beheaded. The Romans threw Christians into arenas to be killed by gladiators and eaten by lions. The list goes on and on. Why were these early Christians killed? Were they being killed for not believing in Jesus? Did they raise up armies to conquer other lands? No! They died because they believed what Jesus taught and chose to follow Him instead of the devil's twisted alternatives. Unfortunately, the first 300 years of the early Christian church's history is not pretty. But they prevailed as prophesied in the book of Revelation.

① Q15. What did the followers of Jesus overcome Satan with? Read Revelation 12:11.

A. _____

① Q16. What did they give up so that they would remain loyal to God?

A. _____

Friend, the early church paid a high price so that we could have the Bible we are now reading. Satan thought that if he could kill Christians, he could defeat God's purposes. But in spite of all those deaths, the church grew and prevailed. This reminds us of another characteristic of the God's people: they are persecuted.

When he saw that outright violence wasn't stopping the spread of the gospel, Satan changed his tactics. He decided to infiltrate the church with pagan beliefs and practices to corrupt God's truth. The process started when the Roman Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity and was continued under the leadership of the Roman bishops. The result of all these efforts produced the Roman Catholic Papal system. It was under its reign that the woman, God's people, were forced to flee into the wilderness.

① Q17. How many years does the woman stay in the desert? Read Revelation 12:14.

A. _____

It is important to remember two things about these 3.5 years. First, the Jews follow a lunar calendar consisting of 12 months, with 30 days in each month. If you calculate the total number of days in 3.5 years ($(360 \times 3) + 180$), you will come to 1260 days (Revelation 12:6).

Second, these days are prophetic not literal. Just as we applied the day for a year principle in our studies of Daniel chapter 7, 8, and 9, we must also apply the same principle here. Therefore, God nourished the church in a special way and place for 1260 years. (Note: This time period of 1260 years is mentioned in Daniel chapter 7 as a time, times and half a time in relation to the reign of the little horn power previously identified as the Papal system.)

God will go to any length to protect His people and His plan. It is for this reason that God provided places of refuge for Christians to worship Him in spirit and truth during the 1260 years of Papal persecution.

① Q18. How did Satan try to destroy the woman, the church? Read Revelation 12:15.

A. _____

The Bible says that Satan sent a flood. Let's look at a couple of verses to determine what the flood was.

① Q19. What did God liken the Egyptian armies to? Read Jeremiah 47:1-3 and 46:7, 8.

A. _____

Thus, Satan sent forth the Papal armies in an attempt to destroy God's people. Two of the groups of non-Catholic Christians that suffered at the hands of the papal armies were the Huguenots and Waldensians, both of whom believed that the Bible was the sole source of God's truth. Forced to flee their homelands, they hid in the mountains so that they could practice their faith freely. Although they experienced great losses, God was faithful in ensuring that their blood wasn't spilled in vain. It is because of their sacrifices that the remnant church is where it is today.

In the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries the Holy Bible began to be translated in local languages and the Protestant Reformation began. As papal persecutions arose to crush the Reformation, Ottoman incursions into Europe saved it. In the late 1700's and 1800's, at the end of the 1260 years of papal dominance, Protestant Christians began to rediscover the truths of the Bible that had been hidden for hundreds of years by the Catholic Church. Among the things they discovered in the Bible were the truth about the state of the dead, the second coming of Jesus, the identity of the little horn power, the Sabbath day, and the heavenly sanctuary. These truths were discovered by God's last day church, or we might say, remnant church.

① Q20. What three characteristics does the remnant church have? Read Revelation 12:17.

A. _____

They are at war with Satan, keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus. We already know what the commandments of God are (Exodus 20). What is the testimony of Jesus?

① Q21. What is the testimony of Jesus? Read Revelation 19:10 and John 5:39.

A. _____

The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. In our study about spiritual gifts, we learned that God endows all believers with special gifts to aid the church in spiritual growth. We learned that one of the most important ones was the gift of prophecy. The gift of prophecy is extremely important in our battle against apostasy and deception (1 Corinthians 14:3).

Let's look at one more characteristic of God's remnant church. In the last days, the remnant church proclaims a very special and important series of messages.

① Q22. What does the first angel declare? Read Revelation 14:6-11.

A. _____

① Q23. What does the second angel declare?

A. _____

① Q24. What does the third angel declare?

A. _____

As we saw in our lesson on the three angels' message, God the Father gives the message to Jesus, Jesus gives it to the angels, and angels give

it to the prophets, who give it to people.¹ People then give the message to the world. It is a serious work that takes time and great effort. It also takes patience (Read Revelation 14:12). It is very important for us to understand a vital truth. Although the Bible says that angels are declaring these messages, in reality it is the remnant church that is declaring them.

② Q25. Did you notice that the deliverers of three angel's message are described the same way as the remnant? How are they described? Compare Revelation 12:17 and 14:12.

A. _____

Very quickly let's list the characteristics of God's remnant church for these last days:

1. They walk with God by having a living, daily experience of Bible study, Christian fellowship, and prayer.
2. They are persecuted, and yet victorious.
3. They are at war with Satan and the evil angels.
4. They keep all the commandments of God, including the fourth commandment to keep the Sabbath day holy.
5. They have the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy.
6. They follow the teachings of the Bible in its entirety.
7. They proclaim the Three Angels' Message to a dying and deceived world.

Friend, there is only one church that has all these characteristics. We have already studied in detail the history of the early church, the great controversy, the heresies that have been perpetuated by Satan and the

¹ Revelation 1:1.

truths that the Bible reveals, as well as the work of the Holy Spirit. The Bible has always been the source of our learning and now we have come to this point. The Seventh-day Adventist church is the only religious movement or people that is teaching all of the things we have learned thus far.

 *Shining Stars Series (Philippians 2:14-16)* 

With the close of the lesson, all eyes were once again on Fatma. There eyes seemed to say, “O.K., what happened at the church?” but no one said anything. They just waited.

Fatma began, “I went to visit Sevim and Martin. I didn’t say anything to you all because I was really concerned that it might be really strange or even dangerous. I started this group and I feel a serious responsibility to you all. I don’t want to take you somewhere until I know what that place is all about. It turns out that my concerns were in vain. It was a wonderful experience. We sang songs, prayed together, and a man, which they called an elder, gave a sermon. The people were so kind! Guess what Yusuf?”

“What?” Yusuf asked.

“I felt the unity and love there that you felt with us. But I decided before going that I wasn’t going to let the local group’s warmth or coolness affect my evaluation of the total experience. What I was most interested in was their teaching. After visiting, listening and observing, I am fully convinced that the Seventh-day Adventist church is the remnant church of Bible prophecy.” Fatma insisted.

“How can we be sure? I need to see this for myself.” Mehmet said.

“Mehmet, you can go. In fact, I think we should all go together. Maybe we can take the train or a bus. Sevim said that we could split up and stay with several church members. I will tell you this, the church isn’t

that big. But it is the remnant! Let's read the criteria again."

- *They walk with God by having a living, daily experience of Bible study, Christian fellowship, and prayer.*
- *They are persecuted, and yet victorious.*
- *They are at war with Satan and the evil angels.*
- *They keep all the commandments of God, including the fourth commandment to keep the Sabbath day holy.*
- *They have the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy.*
- *They follow the teachings of the Bible in its entirety.*
- *They proclaim the Three Angels' Message to a dying and deceived world.*

"Considering the fact that we have done studies on almost all of these subjects and that the Fate Changer lessons taught us all about the Bible, we shouldn't have any doubts as to the Seventh-day Adventist church's identity as described by the Bible," Fatma proclaimed.

"Well you seem confident Fatma. When can we go?" Mehmet asked.

Gül looked up, "Well, if we believe all these things, then really we are already a Seventh-day Adventist church. We are the remnant, meeting in our home!"

Everyone was silent for a moment as they recognized the truth in this statement.

Mehmet affirmed Gül's comment, "Yes, Gül, you are right. God's church isn't a building, but a people, a people linked by a common love for Christ and truth. So I suppose this venture to go to this church is simply an expedition to meet new family members whom we have

never met before."

Filiz added, "I suppose, though, we really should be baptized first!"

Everyone laughed and began to share their excitement about this first encounter with their global family.

Afife added, "I still would like to understand what this thing is about the spirit of prophecy. Is that really present in the Seventh-day Adventist church?"

Fatma said, "We will learn about that in our next lesson."

Up to this point, you too have chosen to be a part of God's remnant church. In light of what we have just learned and the immense responsibility that we carry as a people, are you committed to the mission that God has laid before you?

There is a war being waged and we are right in the middle of it. Let us heed God's warnings and stand firm with faith against the deceptions of the devil. Ellen White, one of the founding members of the Seventh-day Church, wrote the following:

"Since 1845 the dangers of the people of God have from time to time been laid open before me, and I have been shown the perils that would thicken about the remnant in the last days. These perils have been revealed to me down to the present time. Great scenes are soon to open before us. The Lord is coming with power and great glory. And Satan knows that his usurped authority will soon be forever at an end. His last opportunity to gain control of the world is now before him, and he will make most decided efforts to accomplish the destruction of the inhabitants of the earth. Those who believe the truth must be as faithful sentinels on the watchtower, or Satan will suggest specious reasonings to them, and they will give utterance to opinions that will betray sacred, holy trusts. The enmity of Satan against good, will be manifested more and more, as he brings his forces into activity in his last work

of rebellion, and every soul that is not fully surrendered to God, and kept by divine power, will form an alliance with Satan against heaven, and join in battle against the Ruler of the Universe.” – *Pamphlet 133* paragraph 7.1.

As God’s remnant, let’s join together to resist the attacks of the devil and preach a message of peace and reconciliation to a lost and dying world.

Call to commitment through prayer.

Suggested promises for encouragement: John 4:23 and Colossians 3:15, 16.



EN ZENGİN MAĞARA ADAMI

Milyoner bir baba ile gösteri dünyasında çalışan bir annenin oğulları olan genç Doug Batchelor, paranın satın alabileceği her şeye sahipti. Mutluluk hariç her şey. Uyuşturucu kullandı, okulda kavgalar çıkardı ve intihar düşüncesiyle hayaller kurdu. Kendinden tiksinen ve hayatın hiçbir amacı olmadığına inanan Doug, yaşayabileceği tüm eğlence ve heyecanları yaşamayı kafasına koydu.

Arayışı sona ermeden önce dağlarda bulunan bir mağara, evi oldu. Babasının sahip olduğu yata, jete ve havayolu firmasına rağmen, Doug kendini çöp tenekelerinde yiyecek ararken buldu.

Doug'un aradığı mutluluk sürekli kendisinden kaçıyor, ta ki bir "arayışçı" dostun mağarasında bıraktığı tozlu bir kitabı bulup okuyana dek. Bundan sonra olanlar ancak mucize olarak açıklanabilir.

BİNLERCESİ KIRILACAK

Franz Hasel, 40 yaşındaki bir pasifist, ön cephelerde köprüler kuran Hitler'in seçkin birliği 699. İstihkâm Bölüğüne atanmıştı. Dinî inancı üstleri tarafından pek hoş karşılanmamıştı. Kendisiyle "havuç yiyen" ve "İncil okuyan" diye alay edilmesine rağmen sonunda birliğinin saygısını kazanmıştı.

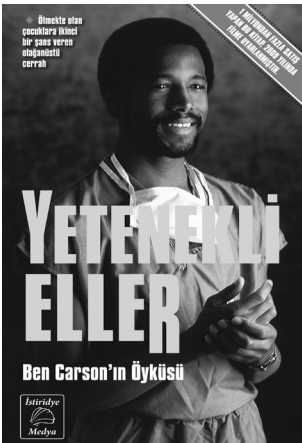
Çevrelerindeki binlerce insan savaşın dehşetine kurban giderken onlar meleklerin kanatları altındaydılar, hatta bazen gerçek anlamda. Bu, ne pahasına olursa olsun imanlı kalmayı seçen ve yüce Tanrı'nın gölgesinde sığınmak bulan çaresiz bir ailenin yürek parçalayan gerçek öyküsüdür.



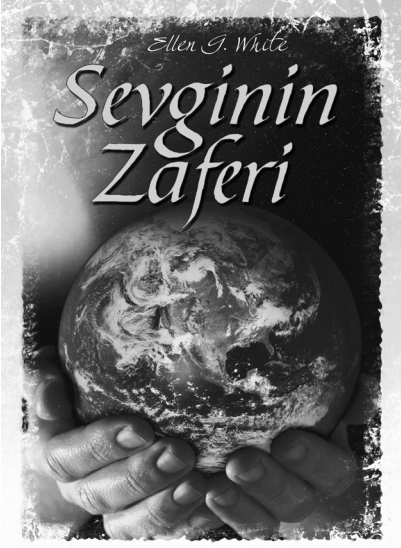
YETENEKLİ ELLER

Dr. Ben Carson, beyin cerrahisindeki umut olmayan yere umut getiren yeniliklerle tüm dünyada tanınmaktadır. Yetenekli Eller'de, Detroit'in kenar mahallelerindeki çocukluğundan başlayarak, otuz üç yaşında Johns Hopkins Sağlık Kurumları'nda pediatrik beyin cerrahisi şefliğine uzanan ilham verici macerası anlatılıyor. Sizi, sayısız hayat kurtardığı ameliyathaneye götüren Ben Carson, görünürde imkânsız olanı başarmaya çalışan herkese örnek oluyor.

Etkileyici vaka tarihçeleriyle dolu olan bu çoksatar kitap, Ben Carson'un zorlukların üstesinden gelme çabasının ve onu günümüzün en büyük hayat kurtarıcılarında biri yapan iman ile dehanın dramatik ve ayrıntılı öyküsünü anlatıyor.



SEVGİNİN ZAFERİ



Kötülüğün kaynağı, henüz çözülememiş bir sırdır. Neden kötülük var? Nereden geliyor? Kötülüğün bir sonu olacak mı? Bunlar yanıtlanması gereken çok önemli sorulardır.

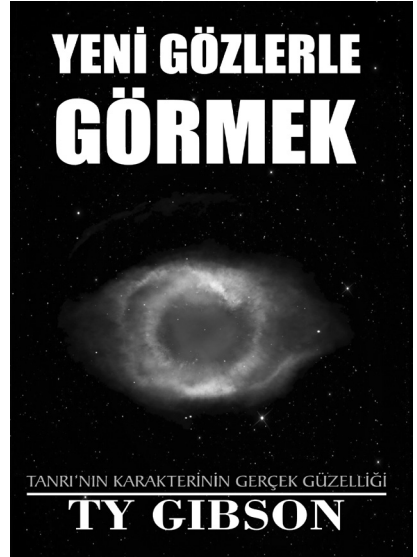
Büyük mücadele, görünen dünyayı, görünmeyen dünyadan ayıran perdeyi aralamakta ve bu dünyanın tüm sakinlerinin dahil olduğu doğüstü savaşı gözler önüne ermektedir.

Kitap, uğruna savaştıkları şey için çok önemli olan iki tarafın, iyinin ve kötünün arasında geçen evrensel savaşın nasıl başladığından ve nasıl sonlandırılacağından bahsetmektedir. Geçmişten, şimdiki zamandan ve gelecekte söz etmekte, çok dokunaklı bir ricayla ve ciddi bir uyarıyla sona ermektedir. Bu kitabı okurken, sanki Tanrı ile röportaj yapıyormuş hissine kapılacaksınız.

Güzel olduğu kadar şok edici bir yolculuğa çıkmaya hazırlanın. Okuduktan sonra artık aynı kişi olmayacaksınız.

YENİ GÖZLERLE GÖRMEK

Pek çok şeyi görebilmek için, kişinin gözleri açık olmalıdır. Fakat Allah ile öyle değil. Gözlerinizi çok fazla açarsanız ya da çok fazla yakından bakarsanız, O'nu gördüğünüzü düşünürken aslında O'nu gözden kaçırabilirsiniz. Pek çoğumuz tam da bu hatayı yaparız. Allah'ı görmeyi umarak insanlara bakarız. Dinlere bakarız. Hatta aynaya bakarız. Kaçınılmaz olarak da hayal kırıklığına uğrarız, zira İlahî Kişi'nin daha güzel bir resmini ummuştuk. Sayısız insan Allah'tan dönmüştür, çünkü O'nu bir kişide ya da bir toplulukta gördüklerini sanmışlardır... ve açıkçası gördüklerinden hoşlanmamışlardır. Elinizde tuttuğunuz kitap Allah hakkındadır.





Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 2:1-5)



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This study series is a continuation of the Fate Changer series
and a product of Iştiridye Medya.