**The Metamorphosis**

By Arlen Chitwood

**Presently**

*And do not be conformed to this world* [age], *but be transformed by the renewing of your mind*, *that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God*.” (Romans 12:2)

In this verse there is a negative command followed by a positive command: “*do not be conformed* . . . *but be transformed* . . . .”

1) Do Not Be Conformed

The Greek word translated “*conformed*” is *sunschematizo*.This is a compound word with the preposition *sun* (with) prefixed to the verb form of the word *schema* (outline, diagram). The English word “scheme” is an Anglicized form of the Greek word *schema*.The word has to do with a schematic outline, and the thought inherent in this compound Greek word and the negative command is to not outline or diagram your life in accordance with the present age.

During the present age there is a world kingdom in which the Gentile nations rule the earth under the control and dominion of Satan, the “*god of this age*” (2 Corinthians 4:4).

Fallen man is ruling the earth, which is under a curse, directly under the one who has disqualified himself to rule (Satan, along with his angels — ruling from a heavenly sphere over the earth through the Gentile nations [*cf*. Ezekiel 28:14; Daniel 10:13-20; Luke 4:5-6; Ephesians 6:11-12]).

Everywhere one looks there’s something wrong with the structure of the present kingdom:

*Israel* is out of place.

*The Gentile nations* are out of place.

*Christ and His co-heirs* (those destined to occupy regal positions with Him in the kingdom) are out of place.

*Satan and his angels* are out of place.

These conditions have continued unchanged, in part, for the past 6,000 years (since the fall of Adam, which resulted in the entire creation coming under the curse produced by sin); and they have continued unchanged in their entirety for the past 2,600 years (since the beginning of the Times of the Gentiles, with Israel being scattered among the nations). And no change will occur until Christ returns and takes the kingdom.

*The rightful place for Israel* is dwelling in the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, within a theocracy, at the head of the nations.

*The rightful place for the Gentile nations* is dwelling in their respective lands, out from under the dominion and rule of Satan, in a position subservient to and blessed through Israel.

*The rightful place for Christ and His co-heirs* is ruling (from the heavens over the earth) in the stead of Satan and his angels.

*The rightful place for Satan and his angels* is in the abyss and ultimately in the lake of fire.

When Christ returns and takes the kingdom, He and His glorified followers, rather than Satan and his angels, will rule from the heavens over the earth.

Satan and his angels (cast out of the heavens slightly over three and one-half years prior to this time) will be chained and imprisoned in the abyss (awaiting consignment to the lake of fire 1,000 years later), the curse will be lifted, and Israel will be placed in her own land at the head of the nations.

And all the Gentile nations entering the kingdom will then occupy subservient positions to Israel and be under the dominion of Christ and those who rule as joint-heirs with Him.

Presently, “*the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one*” (1 John 5:19b).

The positional standing of the believer is “*in Christ*,” and the position occupied by the world is “*under the sway of the wicked one*.” These positions are diametrically opposed, one to the other. Scripture clearly commands the believer, “*Do not love the world or the things in the world* . . .” (1 John 2:15a). Why? Because the world lies “*under the sway of the wicked one*.”

The entire present system is under Satan’s control and sway; and, whether the world realizes it or not, the programs, aims, ambitions, and aspirations of the incumbent ruler are being carried out within the present system. All of this will one day reach an apex under the reign of the man of sin, during the coming Tribulation. And, from that apex, it will come to a sudden and climactic end.

Then, in conjunction with this end, Satan and his angels will, by force, be removed from their present position — that of ruling the earth through the Gentile nations.

Thus, it does not become Christians to involve themselves in the affairs of this present world system, during the present age. By so doing, they are, in effect, defiling their high calling “*in Christ*” by stepping down into an arena occupied by those “*under the sway of the wicked one*.”

Christ, rejected by the world, is in a place removed from the world. And Christians are to share this rejection by and separation from the world with Christ. *It is not possible* for Christians to involve themselves in the affairs of this present world system, during the present age, and, at the same time, share Christ’s rejection by and separation from the world.

(The preceding is dealt with at length in the books of 1, 2 Samuel, in the typology surrounding Saul and David. Refer to the author’s book, [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Judgment Seat of Christ, Ch. 12](http://bibleone.net/JSC12.htm), “Crowned Rulers,” for a discussion of this type in the light of the antitype.)

2) But Be Transformed

Following the command, “*Do not conformed to this age*,” the Christian is commanded to be “*transformed by the renewing of your mind*.” The Greek word translated “transformed” is *metamorphoo*.This is the word from which the English word “metamorphosis” is derived. This word refers to *an inward change* brought about completely apart from the power of the individual himself. The individual Christian is powerless to bring about this *metamorphosis*.

In 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, Satan “*transforms himself into an angel of light*” and his ministers “*also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness*.” In the Greek text the word “transformed” is not the same in 2 Corinthians 11:13-15 as it is in Romans 12:2. The word used in 2 Corinthians 11:13-15 is *metaschematizo*,referring to *an outward change*; and, textually (2 Corinthians 11:13), this change is brought about *through an individual*’*s own power*.

Satan, thus, seeks to counterfeit the work of the Spirit by substituting *an outward change in place of the inward change*. And the nature and source of this pseudo change often go unrecognized.

Christians who *themselves* seek to bring about the change of Romans 12:2 will always effect *a metaschema* (outward change) rather than *a metamorphosis* (inward change). At the time of the birth from above the Spirit of God began a work *in* the Christian that He will continue “*until the day of Jesus Christ*” (Philippians 1:6). No effort on the part of Christians can help the Spirit of God effect this change.

Man’s way finds man actively involved, seeking spirituality through either quitting certain things or doing certain things, subsequently producing *a metaschema*. But God’s way finds man passive, and God performs a work in the individual, ultimately producing *the metamorphosis*.

The endless list of do’s, do not’s, and taboos formed by Christian groups invariably have to do with *a metaschema*, not *a metamorphosis*. Any effort on the part of Christians to help the Spirit of God bring about the transformation of Romans 12:2 will always result in a pseudo-spirituality. God’s way is *an inward change* wrought through the power of the Spirit, not *an outward change* wrought through the power of the individual.

3) The Renewing of Your Mind

Note according to the text how this inward change, *the metamorphosis,* takes place:

“. . . *be transformed by the renewing of your mind*.”

The word “renewing” is a translation of the Greek word *anakainosis*; and the action of the preceding verb (“transformed”) directs attention to a continuous renewing process, one which is to keep on taking place. In 2 Corinthians 4:16 we are told “*the inward man is being renewed day by day*.” This renewing process is to keep on taking place day in and day out for the entire duration of the pilgrim walk here on earth.

Then, Colossians 3:10 reveals how the renewing of the mind is accomplished:

*and have put on the new man who is renewed* [lit.,‘is being renewed’] *in knowledge after the image of Him who created him*.

Note the word “knowledge” in this verse. The regular Greek word for “knowledge” is *gnosis*,but the word used in Colossians 3:10 is *epignosis*.This is the word *gnosis* (knowledge) with the prefix *epi* (upon). *Epignosis*,thus, means “knowledge upon knowledge,” i.e.,“a mature knowledge.” The word translated “renewed” is a past participle of *anakainoo* (the same word used in Romans 12:2 and 2 Corinthians 4:16) and could be better translated, “being renewed.” The only way a Christian can acquire this mature knowledge, which allows the Spirit of God to work *the metamorphosis* in his life, is through receiving the living Word of God into his saved human spirit.

Christians *must* allow God to continue “breathing in” life. The living, God-breathed Word *must* be allowed to flow into man’s saved human spirit or there can be no *metamorphosis*.The renewing of the inward man “*day by day*,” by receiving “*the implanted Word*,” producing *the metamorphosis* in one’s life, is the manner in which the salvation of the soul is presently being effected.

As previously seen, receiving “*the implanted Word*” in James 1:21 and 1 Peter 2:2 is preceded by “*laying aside*” everything opposed to purity (ref. Chapter 3 of this book). It is the same with *the metamorphosis* in Romans 12:2. The words, “*be not conformed to this age* [lit.,‘stop being conformed to this age’],” appear prior to the words, “*be transformed by the renewing of your mind*.” Those “*in Christ*” are commanded to remove themselves from that which lies “*under the sway of the wicked one*” prior to receiving “*the implanted Word*,” which will affect *the metamorphosis* in their lives*.*

Thus, Romans 12:2; James 1:21; and 1 Peter 2:2 all teach the same thing relative to laying aside everything opposed to purity prior to receiving “*the implanted Word*, *which is able to save your souls*.”

**Future**

*Assuredly*, *I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom*.

*Now after six days Jesus took Peter*, *James*, *and John his brother*, *led them up on a high mountain by themselves*;

*and He was transfigured before them*. *His face shone like the sun*, *and His clothes became as white as the light*.

*And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them*, *talking with Him*.

*Then Peter answered and said to Jesus*, “*Lord*, *it is good for us to be here*; *if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles*: *one for You*, *one for Moses*, *and one for Elijah*.”

*While he was still speaking*, *behold*, *a bright cloud overshadowed them*; *and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud*, *saying*, “*This is My beloved Son*, *in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him*!” (Matthew 16:28-17:5)

The change presently taking place in the lives of Christians is *inward*.But within the culmination of the work of the Spirit in that future day of Jesus Christ, the change will include *the outward* also. *The metamorphosis* actually cannot be completed apart from this culminating, outward change. The Spirit of God “*who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ*” (Philippians 1:6).

The day will come when we will put off “*this body of this death*” (Romans 7:24). That will be the day when He will “*fashion anew the body of our humiliation*, *that it may be conformed to the body of His glory*” (Philippians 3:21a, ASV). The work of the Spirit in this part of *the metamorphosis* is set forth in Matthew 17.

That which occurred on the Mount, when Jesus was transfigured, is a foreview of things that are yet to occur. The same Greek word translated “*transformed*” in Romans 12:2 (*metamorphoo*) is translated “*transfigured*” in Matthew 17:2. As Peter, James, and John appeared with Jesus on the Mount, Jesus was transfigured before them; and Moses and Elijah appeared and stood in His presence.

In Matthew 16:28, Christ had revealed that certain disciples would not die until they had seen “*the Son of Man coming in His kingdom*.” Then, in Matthew 17:1-5, after six days, on the seventh day, certain disciples (Peter, James, and John) saw “*the Son of Man coming in His kingdom*.”

Peter, as he wrote years later concerning this experience, said:

*For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the* *power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*, *but were eyewitnesses of His majesty* [His greatest regal magnificence — a superlative in the Greek text]. (2 Peter 1:16)

Peter then went on to state that the time this eyewitness account occurred was “*when we were with Him on the holy mountain*” (2 Peter 1:18). Biblical revelation leaves no room to question or wonder exactly what is being foreshadowed by the events on the Mountain, recorded in Matthew 17:1-5.

The “six days” (Matthew 17:1) foreshadow the entire time comprising Man’s Day. “Six” is *man*’*s number*.These six days extend from the creation of Adam to the beginning of the Messianic Kingdom. Each one of these days is 1,000 years in length (2 Peter 3:1-8).

This 6,000-year period comprises Man’s Day, and at the end of Man’s Day the Lord’s Day will begin.

The seventh 1,000-year period dating from the creation of Adam comprises the Lord’s Day. “Seven” is *God’s number*. It will be “after six days” — after 6,000 years, at the end of Man’s Day — that the Son of Man will be seen “*coming in His kingdom*,” beginning the Lord’s Day on the earth.

The “high mountain” (*Matthew 17:1*) foreshadows *the coming kingdom*. A “mountain” in Scripture, when used in this sense, refers to *a kingdom* (*cf*.Psalm 2:6; Ezekiel 28:14; Daniel 2:35). And, in this section of Scripture, the coming kingdom of our Lord is not referred to by just any mountain, but by “*a high mountain*.”

Jesus appeared in a transfigured body. Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus, also in transfigured bodies. Moses had died, and had been raised from the dead. Elijah had never died, but had been removed from the earth alive. Peter, James, and John, out from the nation of Israel, appeared in natural bodies and were elevated above all those at the foot of the mount. And “*a bright cloud*,” *the Glory of God* (*cf*. Luke 9:31-32), overshadowed them all.

In the coming kingdom, Jesus will appear in this same transfigured body. Just as Moses (who was raised from the dead) and Elijah (who was removed from the earth without dying) appeared with Christ in transfigured bodies, so will Christians in that future day appear with Christ in transfigured bodies like the body of Christ.

When the Lord Himself descends from heaven to take His Church out of the world,

“. . . *the dead in Christ will rise first*. *Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air* . . . .” (1 Thessalonians 4:16b-17a).

Christians associated with Christ in the kingdom will possess bodies like the body of Christ (*a spiritual body* — a body of flesh and bone, with the life-giving, animating principle being the Spirit of God). These Christians will be comprised of resurrected believers (typified by Moses) and believers who have never died (typified by Elijah). And these Christians will rule from the heavens over the earth as co-heirs with Christ.

Then, the nation of Israel (typified by Peter, James, and John) will be here on earth. And the individuals comprising this nation will be present in natural bodies (*soulical bodies* — bodies of flesh, blood, and bone, with the life-giving, animating principle being the blood [*cf*.Leviticus 17:11]). As Peter, James, and John were elevated above all those at the foot of the mount, the nation of Israel will be elevated above all other nations. And *the Glory of God*,the “*bright cloud*” which overshadowed those on the mount (*cf*. Matthew 17:5; Luke 9:32), will be restored to Israel (*cf*. Isaiah 2:1-4; 6:1-10; Joel 2:27-32).

One day when the Lord returns for His Church, the Holy Spirit will complete *the metamorphosis*.Christians will be delivered from “*the body of this death*” and will receive bodies that will possess an entirely different life-giving, animating principle than the bodies that Christians possess today. The *Neshamah* of God — the Holy Spirit Himself — will provide this life in the completion of *the metamorphosis* (1 Corinthians 15:40-45).

All Christians will be changed in the outward manifestation of *the metamorphosis*, for the resurrection and rapture, with the accompanying change of the body, are not contingent upon the inward change during the present time. The outward change is conditioned upon one’s positional standing (“*in Christ*”) alone.

But Christians experiencing the outward change apart from the prior inward change will realize the loss of their souls/lives. They will enter into the presence of the Lord with redeemed spirits, changed bodies, but forfeited lives. Consequently, they will occupy no position among the many sons who will be brought to glory.

(At the end of the present dispensation, all Christians will be resurrected, or removed from the earth without dying, in the same type of body in which Christ was raised from the dead. Christ was raised in a spiritual body rather than a natural [soulical] body [*cf*. 1 Corinthians 15:42-44]. He was raised in a body of flesh and bones, with the life-giving, animating principle of the body being the Spirit of God rather than the blood [which He had previously “*poured out*” (Isaiah 53:12)].

Christ though was not raised in a glorified body. He was raised in a type of body that possessed capabilities outside the scope possessed by a natural [soulical] body [e.g., He could appear at a certain place and disappear from that place, moving to another place, at will (Luke 24:31, 36)]. But there was no Glory connected with His resurrection body until “*a cloud*” received Him out of the disciples’ sight at the end of His forty-day post-resurrection ministry, when He was “*received up into glory*” [Acts 1:9; 1 Timothy 3:16].

This can be easily seen, for example, by noting the differences in two of Christ’s post-resurrection appearances. He appeared to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus later on the same day that He was raised from the dead [appearing apart from His Glory (Luke 24:13-31)], and He appeared a few years later to Paul on the road to Damascus [in connection with His Glory (Acts 9:1-5; 26:12-15)]. At Christ’s former appearance, it is apparent that there was nothing visibly different about His overall appearance that distinguished him from any other man. However, at His latter appearance, there was a major difference in this respect. There was a brightness surrounding His appearance that was above that of the noon-day sun [Acts 26:13; cf. Revelation 1:16].

When Christians are removed from the earth at the end of the present dispensation, they will receive bodies like Christ’s body at the time of His resurrection — a spiritual body of flesh and bones, apart from the Glory. The “*redemption*” *of the body* will then occur at a later time, synonymous with “*the adoption*” [Romans 8:23], not in connection with the removal of Christians from the earth at the end of the present dispensation.

[The manner in which the Greek text is worded in Romans 8:23, *the redemption of the body* and *the adoption* are synonymous. One is simply another way of saying the same thing as the other.

“…waiting out adoption, (namely) the ransoming of our body” (Lenski).

“Patiently awaiting son-placing, the redemption of our body” (Wuest).]

The adoption of Christians can occur *only following events surrounding the judgment seat of Christ*, for the adoption has to do with *sons occupying the position of* “*firstborn*”[*firstborn sons*] — something that cannot occur preceding a separation of Christians [the overcomers from the non-overcomers], based on decisions and determinations rendered at the judgment seat. Christians having been shown faithful at the judgment seat, realizing the salvation of their souls/lives, will be adopted as firstborn sons. But such will not be, for it cannot be, the case for unfaithful Christians, those having forfeited their souls/lives.

According to Romans 8:18-23, adoption as firstborn sons is in connection with *rulership* [in the human realm, *only firstborn sons can rule in this manner within the theocracy*]. And the unfaithful, though possessing spiritual bodies of flesh and bones, will be in no position to rule and cannot be adopted into a firstborn status. They can only appear as the ones seen in Hebrews 12:8 — as individuals who had previously rejected God’s child-training [Hebrews 12:5-7] and cannot now be His sons [the sons seen in Romans 8:19, adopted into a firstborn status in Romans 8:23].

[The word “chastisement” (KJV) in Hebrews 12:5-8 KJV is from noun and verb forms (*paideia*, *paideuo*) of a Greek word that means “child-training.” Then, the word translated “bastard” (KJV) in Hebrews 12:8 KJV is *nothos* in the Greek text. The word, contextually refers *to those who reject God*’*s child-training and cannot be His sons*.

“Sonship,” with a view to *rulership,* is in view. And only those capable of spiritual perception, only those born from above, would be in a position to reject God’s child-training. Thus, the unsaved cannot be in view; nor is eternal salvation even the subject at hand.]

Only following the adoption can the Glory be connected with the body, with man brought back into a full realization of that which Adam forfeited at the time of the fall [at the end of six days, at the end of 6,000 years]. Man, following the adoption and the corresponding restoration of the Glory will once again be enswathed in a covering of Glory and in a position to be further clothed in regal garments [refer to the text in parenthesis on page 6 in Chapter 1 of this book, [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Salvation of the Soul, Ch. 1](http://bibleone.net/SOS_01.htm) for additional information in this realm].

Thus, the redemption of the body in Romans 8:23 can have nothing to do with the change in the body that will occur when Christians are removed from the earth at the end of the dispensation. As shown by the context, the redemption of the body in this verse can only be a reference to that future time when “*the glory* . . . *shall be revealed in us*,” *in Christians*; it can only be a reference to that future time when “*the sons of God*,” a new order of Sons — Christ with His co-heirs [overcoming Christians, adopted and properly arrayed] — will be manifested for all to behold [Romans 8:18-19].

[For additional information on the preceding subject, refer to the appendix — “Adoption, Redemption of the Body” — in the author’s book, [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's God's Firstborn Sons, Appendix](http://bibleone.net/GFS_A.htm)].)

Excerpts from [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Salvation of the Soul, Ch. 4](http://bibleone.net/SOS_04.htm).