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Midnight Call

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“Forget Not His Benefits”

By Steve Keller

Technical Director, Midnight Call International

Many areas of our lives have changed radically in recent months. Yes, we can definitely say that the coronavirus situation has had a huge and mostly undesirable influence on every aspect of our lives. While we thought and hoped it would only be for a short time, it is slowly dawning on us that we have to get used to a “new normal”; that is, with many limitations and uncertainties.

External influences have also had a major impact on our work in the missions field. Though we are now again able to carry out quite a few of our events, in some cases the requirements are hardly feasible or too costly. In addition, we cannot with confidence plan for either immediate or long-term activities. These circumstances can place additional burdens on us privately, professionally and in ministry.

Some time ago, I saw a t-shirt with the following words printed on it: “I am too blessed to be stressed.” After a brief chuckle I went on, but the message of this statement stayed with me. I was reminded of Psalm 103; immediately, I asked myself this question: what do we focus on when circumstances weigh us down, as we are probably feeling at the present time? In

verse 2 of this Psalm it says: “Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.”

Yes, isn't it true: in good times we unfortunately often forget that the Lord is the source of our blessings. But in harder times, we are also apt to forget how much the Lord has blessed us.

I don't know under what circumstances David wrote this Psalm, but he takes the time to list the good things the Lord did for him. And, he doesn't stop there; he looks ahead and describes what other great blessings the Lord has in store. This confidence results in a testimony of the might and grace of our Lord. And this in turn shows why we are so blessed by the Lord and may expect further blessings.

Verse 19 states: “The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.” He is not subject to our circumstances; He is above them and reigns over them. This certainly is liberating and comforting, for our Lord is “the same yesterday and today and forever” (Heb. 13:8). Everything surrounding us may be uncertain, but He is our security.

In chapter 16 of the Acts of the Apostles, we find a wonderful example of this spiritual mindset of Psalm 103. Acts 16:23 reveals how Paul and Silas could not be

EDITOR'S NOTE

deterred from praising God despite their great distress. In the dark prison, their feet fastened in the stocks, they found no rest at midnight. Such a situation would certainly not elicit feelings of happiness, even within these men of God. Whining and complaining would have been an understandable reaction. However, they rejected that. Because external circumstances and their inner restlessness kept them from sleeping, they used the darkest hour of the night, in the darkest place of their captivity, to praise God. This was heard not only by the other prisoners, but also by God, who answered with an earthquake. As a result, the jailer and his whole family were saved and baptized.

If we focus on God's blessings despite stressful circumstances and give thanks for them, we can be a testimony like Paul and Silas. And, it is more than certain that the Lord will make us a blessing within our environment.

With this in mind, I pray you gain much strength and encouragement in reading this issue of *Midnight Call*. (MC)

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OUR TASK

Midnight Call Ministries is a nonprofit missionary organization,
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guide for the Christian faith.

The object of Midnight Call is to call people everywhere to Christ,
to proclaim the return of Christ, to prepare Christians for His com-
ing, and to uphold the faith and warn of false doctrines. *Midnight
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through radio, literature and missionaries is supported entirely by the
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STATEMENT OF FAITH

WE BELIEVE in the divine inspiration of the whole Bible and there-
with the infallibility of the Holy Scripture, which is God's Word, and
in the eternal Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

WE BELIEVE Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was conceived of the
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blood to save mankind. He died and arose bodily the third day and
later ascended into heaven.

WE BELIEVE that the Lord Jesus Christ died in the place of each
individual sinner and that all who believe in Him as their personal
Savior are justified through His shed blood and have become
children of God.

WE BELIEVE that Israel is God's chosen people, and that the
restoration of the Jews to their own land is the fulfillment of the
Word of God.

WE BELIEVE in the pre-tribulational appearance of Jesus Christ for
the Rapture of His Church (all born again believers).

WE BELIEVE in the immortality of our souls and the resurrection of our
bodies, and in the resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting
blessedness of the saved and the everlasting punishment of the lost.

Corona...and Then?



Thomas Lieth

The response to the coronavirus pandemic was global, and the consequences are far-reaching. What does all this mean in light of the prophetic Word of the Bible? A commentary.

By now, you've probably heard and read a lot about the coronavirus. And, its impact most likely hasn't left you unscathed. As with any crisis, there are winners and losers: those who benefit from it (at least in the short term), and those who are plunged into misfortune as a result. For many, the consequences won't simply disappear with the repeal of the ordinances: a face mask can be quickly disposed of, but some may have lost a loved one, a job, their livelihood, or even their trust in God. Further, lasting effects could include increasing restrictions on our personal freedoms, economic and political upheavals, and progressive digitization. All of these things have been going on for a long time, but after this global pandemic, they could proceed much more quickly than they had been. Yes, sometimes people have to be forced to do things "for their own good," similar to the dreadful climate hysteria, without which electric cars would never prevail.

However, this article isn't about showing who could benefit or draw a profit from the current circumstances. I'm also not concerned with speculations about the origin and spread of the virus. No, what both fascinates and frightens me about all this is that out of the blue, whole nations were shaken to the core, and all within just a few weeks. And not by a world war, emerging political tensions, any terrorist organization, or even by climate change, but by a completely inconspicuous virus. As if out of nowhere, borders were suddenly sealed off, curfews were imposed, stores were closed, assemblies were banned, cell phones were tracked, face masks mandated, toilet paper rationed, coronavirus jokes off-limits, disinfectants stolen, handshakes and hugs frowned upon; and, hardly to be believed, the infected are sorted into worthy and worthless life. These are scenarios that we'd previously only seen in science fiction movies or totalitarian states.

In any case, I sometimes had the feeling that I was in the wrong movie or that it was all a dream. Preventative measures are skyrocketing daily, almost hourly! Each news item that emerged intensified fears. It was very strange, exciting, and fascinating all at once. I had to think of the word from 1 Thessalonians 5:3: "While people are saying, 'There is peace and security,' then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape." This whole crisis has shown just how quickly we can be torn from our "perfect world," and how little it takes to create the circumstances that the Bible has been announcing for well over 2,000 years. For example, in Matthew 24:7-8, the Lord Jesus told His disciples in the End-Times Discourse: "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of the birth pains."

I'd like to emphasize that COVID-19 hasn't yet fulfilled the words of Jesus, but past and present pandemics give us an idea of what's coming in an unpunished world where judgment is inevitable. Yes, the apocalypse, as Revelation is also called, is approaching. Habakkuk 2:3 puts it, "For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay."

Let's look at another prophetic statement, the fulfillment of which is emerging before our very eyes and, step by step, could soon become a reality. Revelation 13:11-18 (excerpted) reads: "Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth...It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth...it deceives those who dwell on earth...And it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of

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“Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark...” (Revelation 13:16-17a).

the beast to be slain. Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark...”

These verses were completely incomprehensible for a long time, but by now a “talking picture” that can be seen and heard around the world in real time is absolutely conceivable in the age of the internet and social media. And, a mark on the hand and forehead is not only possible in the microchip era, but also has already been executed. What I’m getting at—due to the precipitating events of the past few months—is the idea that apparently, nobody can buy or sell anymore if somebody clearly knows how to prevent it. It’s already the case that those without internet access or a smartphone (or who don’t know how to use them) can’t access certain offers. At the moment this might not be so serious, so long as enough alternatives exist. But the noose, which is currently quite loose, is tightening more and more. The events surrounding the coronavirus have relentlessly disclosed this to us. What have we currently been experiencing? To protect against the spread of the virus, stores have asked customers to pay with cards instead of bills and coins. There were even stores that strictly refused to accept cash and, as a result, nothing could be purchased without a smartphone or credit card. Efforts to abolish cash have been going on for a long time, but the “incurably stupid” citizen is sometimes too attached to his paper money. Without coercive measures, it’ll take decades before cashless payments are accepted by the majority. In short, people must be forced to do what’s

good for them: finally switch to cards and digital currencies. And with the pandemic, acceptance for this has surely increased, since it’s for our own protection and that of others (or, at least that’s what’s being proclaimed).

In China and the Scandinavian countries in particular, cashless payments have gained tremendous acceptance in recent years. Sweden, for example, has set a national goal of completely eliminating bills and coins by 2030. Contactless payments with mobile phones are already the preferred method in Switzerland and elsewhere. The younger generation in particular is very open to this and will ask what’s so bad about it, since it’s so convenient and has so many advantages. But be vigilant—it’s ultimately another step toward incapacitating people, leaving the door open to total surveillance. Even if that’s not necessarily the primary goal of those who are so vehemently committed to abolishing cash, it will still happen. It already has in most of China, and is even approved of by most Chinese.

The Chinese people are at the mercy of a capricious state because of cashless payments. For those who toe the line, there are bonus points and corresponding rewards. But for those who aren’t as loyal to the state as it demands, their airplane ticket purchase may be denied due to a negative item in their record. Greta Thunberg should be pleased. China is the unscrupulous pioneer in this area (and doesn’t believe in human rights anyway), but the US and Europe are also working on the introduction of so-called cryptocurrencies (digital currencies), which could eventually replace traditional banknotes.

It's already the case that those without internet access or a smartphone (or who don't know how to use them) can't access certain offers.

As I said, this isn't necessarily a bad thing. But it's ultimately a steppingstone to what Revelation already predicted 2,000 years ago, which will be abused by the Antichrist. Anonymous transactions—which are still possible with cash—will not only become increasingly difficult, but will be impossible in the future. A system designed to prevent money laundering, curb tax evasion, and combat illegal payments will also affect honest, ordinary citizens. What you consider to be your property today can be quickly expropriated by the state. The money under the mattress and banknotes in the pillowcase won't have value when cash is abolished, and citizens will be made completely dependent on the benevolence of the banks and the valid state. The valid criticism of this development is that people don't have any alternative. Anyone who is in favor of digitization should by all means participate. But those who, for whatever reason, don't want to or perhaps can't, won't have any other options if they want to buy and sell. The following quote from a chairwoman of Deutsche Interim AG fits with this concept: "When the last teller is closed, even the biggest digital holdout won't be able to avoid online banking."

I've said it before: people have to be forced to do things "for their own good." Yes, we're living in an exciting time, in which the puzzle of biblical prophecy is taking shape. But, it won't be long until the time when you can no longer buy and sell against the will of the state. China and freedom send their regards; that was so two days ago! Incidentally, this is the flip side of the popular and much-touted digitization, which undoubtedly has its advantages, but which increasingly deprives citizens of their individual freedoms and self-determination, making them easier to



control. The more digitization advances, the more transparent people will become—and they'll accept it, because the pros outweigh the cons and they benefit from it. At least that's the perception; time will tell as to whether that's actually the case. Here a quote from a management consultant: "The more benefits an innovation promises, the more data and privacy protection concerns will take a back seat. People function according to the pleasure principle."

We Christians should be sober concerning this matter. We don't have to speak out against every advance (although they can also set us back!) or refuse to make any changes. By no means: we may very well use these things (as many ministries have moved their activities to online because of the pandemic). But, we should be vigilant and keep ourselves from getting caught up in all this. We live in the world, and many things will be unavoidable. But, we should and must show people where the Bible says everything will lead: that it will come to a terrible end for those who

Corona...and Then?

The Chinese people are at the mercy of a capricious state because of cashless payments. For those who toe the line, there are bonus points and corresponding rewards.




don't believe in Jesus Christ, and who allow themselves to be seduced by the world's temptations. Both digitization and globalization can be a blessing for the spread of the Gospel, but they will also prove to be a great curse when the anti-Christian forces are fully revealed.

Additionally, the measures taken because of COVID-19 have revealed global surveillance, which has sometimes been wanted and even approved of for protection of citizens. The Federal Minister of Health in Germany has proposed tracking mobile phone location data (for example, to monitor quarantine and travel restriction compliance). Interestingly, there was little resistance, whereas when it comes to preventing potential crimes, personal rights and data protection are reflexively demanded. Above all, people are vehemently drawn to the concept that no one should be pre-judged and put under general suspicion. In short: under normal jurisprudence, no one can be monitored without plausible suspicion, although this can make

police work more difficult when investigating possible terrorists or criminals. But since the coronavirus pandemic, it's generally accepted that John Smith's phone can be tracked to be sure that he doesn't meet up with friends over coffee.

I'm not concerned with evaluating what's legitimate and sensible to prevent the spread of a virus during a pandemic. I'm simply amazed at what's possible, very quickly accepted, and even approved of by the general public. The demand for unlimited freedom currently has its own limits when someone is displeased by another's freedom. Yes, if a person can personally benefit from all these restrictions, he doesn't care about freedoms and individual rights (especially someone else's). It's also interesting that, on the one hand, globalization has led to numerous difficulties; while, on the other hand, it's precisely this same globalization that's advancing because it's intended to collectively tackle the world's problems. It gives the sense that



Both digitization and globalization can be a blessing for the spread of the Gospel, but they will also prove to be a great curse when the anti-Christian forces are fully revealed.

and the EU may have to reorganize. What will happen in Israel? Over the next year, perhaps nothing will come of everything that we're afraid of today. But thanks to the coronavirus, I was given a fresh look

we're robbing Peter to pay Paul. Both climate rescue and pandemic control are global tasks that will force individual nation states to give up their national independence. For example, former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown called for a temporary form of global government, because the coronavirus pandemic "is not something that can be dealt with in one country. There has to be a coordinated global response."

These developments and the demand for a "world government" aren't anything new, but the flames are being rekindled, setting the stage for the coming anti-Christian world ruler.

Let me conclude by stressing that I can't by any stretch of the imagination estimate when, what, where, and how groundbreaking and historically relevant things will occur in the coming years. Cash may remain with us for a while longer, and the first attempts at making digital currency socially acceptable may fail. The nation states will be able to hold their own for some time,

at how quickly things can develop that we couldn't ever have imagined. Who knows what will shake the world next? Yet I know one thing for sure: the Bible will always be right, because "heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away" (Matt 24:35). In all of this, we who believe in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, can look confidently and assuredly into the future with a joyful heart, because God is approaching the goal, and we are with Him as well: "...In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). "For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4-5). "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me...He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming soon.' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev 22:12, 20-21).

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THE RAPTURE CHRONICLES – PART 2: WHAT THE MARTYRS PROVE



We continue with the proofs that the martyrs of the Tribulation period tell us. In Part I, we concluded that ALL who become Christians during the Tribulation will die. It is a key view. Why? There are two streams of Christians—those who are raptured, and those who become believers in the Tribulation. The question of the fate of the Tribulation Christians critically affects some versions of the Rapture debate, as we will show.

By Wilfred Hahn

Were it proven that ALL who become Christians in the Tribulation become martyrs, it makes a serious dent in the case for a Rapture occurring at any other time than before the Tribulation. For example, were there no Christians alive on earth as of the early stages of the second half of the Tribulation, there could be no Mid- or Post-Tribulational Rapture. It wouldn't be logical. The Great Multitude (see Revelation 7:9, these all martyrs) are shown to be already in front of the heavenly altar at the time of the fifth and sixth seals.

If ALL Christians are indeed martyred by the mid-point of the Tribulation, who would be left to be raptured either at the midpoint, the end of the Tribulation, or the beginning of the Millennium? There would be no point, as there would be no living humans on earth who would be eligible at that time.

As the case may be, Tribulational martyrs are expressly promised to participate in the First Resurrection—in their case, this occurring at the beginning of the Millennium. For a Rapture to occur at any other time than before the Tribulation would not align with Scripture, the proofs of the Tribulational martyrs, or the character of God.

But what of the view of Rapture naysayers, who say that there is no Rapture to be expected at all? To take this position means that ALL Christians will go into the Tribulation period. More Christians would then be added to their number through conversions during the earlier stages of the Tribulation. The question arises: Why would God allow that ALL Christians ("holy ones") in the world be killed during the Tribulation? As we have shown and will further prove in this article, all Tribulational Christians will be martyred.

First Thessalonians 5:9 states that "God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to re-

If ALL Christians are indeed martyred by the mid-point of the Tribulation, who would be left to be raptured either at the midpoint, the end of the Tribulation, or the beginning of the Millennium?

ceive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Therefore, if ALL Christians (from the time of before and during the Tribulation) will be annihilated on earth, this is a “wrath” of a different gospel. This is not congruous with the character of what God has said.

A naysayer’s view must endorse a very non-sensical sequence of events. ALL “Church Age” Christians must go into the Tribulation, so that ALL will be slain, so that they ALL can be given a resurrected physical body (first resurrection), so ALL will come back to life in the Millennium.

This sequence of events seems unnecessarily cruel ... and inefficient. Could these be the actions of our Lord? It seems not. The Rapture is therefore compelling. He says: “My reward is with me” (Revelation 22:12). What about the saints that have died before the Tribulation period? The Rapture naysayer must take the position that these saints of the Church Age need to wait another thousand years for the Second Resurrection, as they will not be eligible for the First Resurrection, nor will be able to celebrate the Lamb’s Supper.

Scripture doesn’t support these confused perspectives. Rather, it expressly says that “the dead in Christ will rise first” (1 Thessalonians 4:16b). To be sure, the “dead in Christ” will rise first, and those who are living thereafter. A Pre-Tribulational Rapture is the clearest, most sensible and most Scriptural view.

More Arguments from the Dead

Our understanding—that ALL Tribulational Christians will be martyred—is such a critical factor in the Rapture debate that

we want to further prove the veracity of this position. There are other additional proofs and deductions from the Bible for this case. We next present five of these arguments.

1. The Meaning of “All.” The Second Beast shown in Revelation 13 only offers two options—a binary choice ... one or the other. Worship the image of the First Beast or die. No other option is given. There is no allowance for exceptions. “All who refused to worship the image [are] to be killed” (Revelation 13:15; again, see Revelation 20:4). All means all ... not some. The Bible also says this about these Tribulation saints: “They triumphed over him [the Dragon] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death” (Revelation 12:11).

What happens to those that do worship the image? Could they change their minds at some later date? Revelation 14:9-11 is clear: “If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives its mark on their forehead or on their hand, they, too, will drink the wine of God’s fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. They will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever. There will be no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of its name.”

Once having made the election to worship the image of the Beast and to take the mark, there is no recourse nor recanting. To believe otherwise would be inconsistent with the character of God. Once He un-



With no transactional access to the financial system, a Christian will die of starvation if not first persecuted and martyred.



leashes His wrath, it is too late to repent. After all, His wrath only comes after repeated entreaties and warnings. Then comes the point of no return ... of no further grace. His patience is not endless.

As the case may be, just before the curtain goes down at the time of the sixth seal being removed, multiple worldwide evangelistic efforts are initiated. The 144,000 servants are sealed and an “[...] angel flying in midair [...] had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people” (Revelation 14:6).

Stark as our determination may be, we must conclude that ALL who refuse to worship the image will die. This is in line with the pronouncement of Daniel that the “holy ones” will be destroyed—not just one or more, but all of them. Said again: It is a binary outcome ... one or the other.

2. No Survival Outside the “Buy-Sell” System. Despite the clear message of Revelation 13, some still imagine that Christians could survive the Tribulation period. If only they would buy the right survival goods and

pursue cunning evasive strategies, they would stand a chance, they reason. However, they ignore this perspective: Outside the “buy-sell system” in that future tribulational world, it will not be possible to live without the “mark.” If one is not able to “buy or sell” at a time of a pervasive global economic crisis and a closed worldwide financial system, one cannot obtain food or shelter. With no transactional access to the financial system, a Christian will die of starvation if not first persecuted and martyred.

A recognition of the limits of a closed financial system should lay to rest any notion that all who refuse to worship the image will not be martyred.

3. A Deduced Absence. At the fifth trumpet blow (first Woe, Revelation 9:1-6: this event occurring perhaps midway into the second half of the Tribulation), “[...] out of the smoke locusts came down on the earth and were given power like that of scorpions of the earth [...] They were not allowed to kill them but only to torture them for five months. And the agony they suffered was like that of the sting of a scorpion when it strikes.”

Only those that did not have the seal of God were allowed to be tormented. The only group that has a seal placed upon them at this point are the 144,000 servants. As such, were Christians still on earth at the time of this judgment, they must expressly be allowed by God to be tortured.

Any Christians on earth during this Woe would be selected to face God’s wrath. Shown here is that God can and does exclude one group to be protected from His

Could Christians be counted in this number of survivors? Not if ALL of the survivors are said to “curse God,” “refuse to repent,” and keep “worshiping demons and idols.”

wrath (namely, the 144,000). Then, why would He choose not to do so with His children? “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for [...] an egg, will give him a scorpion?” (Luke 11:11-12).

Thus, we can draw one of two conclusions. That there are no Christians on earth at the time of the first Woe; or, if yes, then God must expressly choose to torment them. Only the former perspective aligns with the character of God and Scripture.

4. Can Christians Curse God? At the call of the sixth trumpet, says the Bible, one third of the world’s population is wiped out; two-thirds remain, who then ALL curse God. Says Revelation 9:20-21: “The rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols [...] Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts.”

Could Christians be counted in this number of survivors? Not if ALL of the survivors are said to “curse God,” “refuse to repent,” and keep “worshiping demons and idols.” True Christians would not do this. Clearly, then, there can be no Christian survivors at this point upon earth. (We maintain that they have been martyred already some time before.) After all, salvation is impossible without repentance. Conclusion? Either no Christians are upon earth at the time of this Woe, or God expressly made sure that when one-third of the earth’s population dies, ALL Christians would die at this time.

But, again, it would be absurd to believe that God in His wrath would wipe out ALL

remaining Christians at the juncture of the sixth seal, favoring instead other godless earthdwellers. We can reasonably deduce that no Christians exist upon earth at the time of the fifth and sixth trumpet judgments.

5. Appearances of Christians Throughout the Tribulation. Following the sixth seal (that being the time point that we are shown the great multitude of martyred Christians in front of the heavenly altar), the topics of “holy ones,” “saints,” “servants,” “Christians,” or “multitudes” are never mentioned again in the Tribulation timeline. Only once the Millennium begins, do we again encounter “servants” and the “holy.”

Crucially, no mention or picture is made of any more Christians having arrived in front of the heavenly altar during the Tribulation period, for any other reason than of being slain by anti-Christian forces. Any reference to “souls” that did not “worship the image” refers back to its occurrence which, in our view, is at a time near to the sixth seal. As such, this would be consistent with the view that all Christians will be martyred in the Tribulation period—in the first half.

We believe the above arguments (as well as others) conclusively prove that no Christians will survive the Tribulation period ... all becoming martyrs (most likely by its mid-point). Daniel 7:25 says that “The ‘holy ones’ will be delivered into his [Antichrist’s] hands for a time, times and half a time” (see also Daniel 12:7). We see this three-and-a-half-year period coinciding with the first half of the Tribulation.



The Pre-Tribulation Rapture view, as we have shown, is the most consistent with Scripture. There is no incentive for Christians to survive the Tribulation. In any case, since all will be killed in the first half, all are then resurrected at the start of the Millennium.



Thoughts to Ponder: Great Rewards to All Saints

Glorious is the fact that raptured Christians who are on earth are spared the First and Second Death. They are also spared “the hour of trial” (Revelation 3:10) and will be in heaven with the Lord while the Tribulation takes place upon earth. A room has been prepared for us (John 14:2-3), and the door is shut for a brief time. “Go, my people, enter your rooms and shut the doors behind you; hide yourselves for a little while until his wrath has passed by” (Isaiah 26:20).

Raptured saints “will be with the Lord forever” (1 Thessalonians 4:17) in their translated, resurrected, incorruptible bodies. Whether on earth or in heaven, wherever Jesus is, that is where the raptured Christians will be. They “will be with the Lord forever.”

Surely, the Tribulation is a terrible period ... as none ever before in mankind’s history. Nevertheless, there is good news to celebrate: For ALL Christians (whatever their sojourn), there will be no Second Death. All will be given eternal life.

Wonderfully, after the Tribulation, the Lord “will wipe every tear from their eyes.

There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away” (Revelation 21:4).

The Pre-Tribulation Rapture view, as we have shown, is the most consistent with Scripture. There is no incentive for Christians to survive the Tribulation. In any case, since all will be killed in the first half, all are then resurrected at the start of the Millennium. Why prolong physical suffering, if one can look forward to the First Resurrection after the Tribulation?

Therefore, whether among the raptured or those saved during the Tribulation, there are no physical preparations to be made ... nothing to buy ... or escape. There is no need to pay for survival supplies, nor to build an underground bunker.

For now, given that the Rapture still lies ahead, may we remain part of the generation that “continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming” (1 John 2:28).

“Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done” (Revelation 22:12).

Maranatha! (MC)



What Is God Doing with the Coronavirus?

Your initial response may be, how can anyone claim to know what God is doing, when Romans 11 says God's ways are inscrutable (meaning unable to be known)?

Dr. Ron J. Bigalke

So, how can anyone claim to know what God is doing? While admitting the need for caution, it is also important to recognize that God is not silent regarding His purposes in the world.

One of the primary reasons that God revealed Himself to humanity through the Holy Bible is to help us understand His purposes. For instance, Ephesians 3:9 says that by reading the Bible, it is possible to gain insight into “the mystery” of what God is doing. One may not know precisely what He is doing in every aspect of life, yet it is possible to know the general manner of how God works. In that regard, Jesus criticized the religious leaders of His day for being hypocrites, who knew how to analyze the appearance of the earth and the sky, yet did not analyze the present time (Luke 12:54-56). So, what is God doing with the coronavirus? Consider a fivefold purpose.

God Is Manifesting the Horrors of Sin

In the coronavirus, God is letting humanity witness the horror of sin. All misery and suffering is the re-

sult of sin in the world. When God created the world and all that is in it, He declared “that it was good.” Human sin is what brought the curse of disease and death into the world. Romans 5 reveals that because of sin, “death spread to all” humanity. Romans 8 (v. 20) says, “creation was subjected to futility,” so that humanity groans awaiting God’s redemption. Futility and groaning are images of global desolation, which came because of humanity’s rebellion. Sin against God is a somber reality, and physical suffering is a reminder of that. C. S. Lewis once said, “Pain is God’s megaphone to rouse a deaf world.” Misery, pain, and suffering indicate that something is dreadfully wrong in the world. The coronavirus lets the world know that the present world is both temporary and incapable of sustaining humanity.

God Is Preparing Humanity for His Return

God intends for the coronavirus to prepare humanity for His return. History is, of course, replete with false

What Is God Doing with the Coronavirus?

Suffering frequently emphasizes what is most important. Jesus healed the man born blind, “so that the works of God might be displayed in him” (John 9:3).

predications regarding the end of the world. Certainly, most people are familiar with false predictions. Nevertheless, Jesus will return, and Scripture declares that it could be at any moment. For instance, Scripture refers to believers “awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 1:7; cf. Phil 3:20; 1 Thess 1:10). The normal attitude of the Christian is eager anticipation of the Lord’s return. The expectation of the Lord’s return should motivate believers to live holy and pure lives, “so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming” (1 John 2:28). The expectation of the Lord’s return as imminent and personal is cause for great joy and hope. Through the coronavirus, Jesus is saying, “Be ready for My return, because the present world is not going to endure forever.” Everyone needs to prepare themselves for the Lord’s return. Pandemics are symptoms of a fallen world that groans for the coming Savior.

God Is Stimulating Revival

The coronavirus should stimulate all to revive their relationship with God. In Luke 13, messengers from Jerusalem reported to Jesus “about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices.” Many of the Jews believed the tragedy was the direct result of some personal sin (cf. John 9:1-3). Apparently, their conclusion was the Galileans perished because they were great sinners (v. 2). Jesus refuted the idea by referring to a tower collapsing on a crowd of people, killing eighteen. Some may have thought they died because God was angry with them. Jesus responded, “I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish” (v. 5). Jesus asserted that people who experience tragedy are not necessarily greater sinners than all others. What is important to know is that all people will experience divine judgment unless they repent.

Disasters like the collapse of the tower, killing eighteen people, are not typically God’s specific judgment upon someone; however, they do serve as reminders for all people to repent. Disasters can be a



gracious prod from God to repent and be saved while there is still opportunity. Ask yourself, “How can this coronavirus stimulate me to be more serious in my relationship with God (specifically, loving Him with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength)?”

God Is Demonstrating Generosity

God uses distressing times to demonstrate the generosity of His people, in addition to the gospel message of God’s grace received through faith in Jesus Christ. In Matthew 5, Jesus said, “Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you ... Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great ... You are the salt of the earth ... You are the light of the world.” Jesus referred to persecution, not disease, yet the application of His words to life in the present is the same. Generosity motivated by God’s grace exceeds that of normal human goodness. Many people are generous in times of plenty, yet truly reflect the gospel when that generosity is sacrificial, because it serves as a reminder of the Savior, who gave His life voluntarily for sinners. The gospel message necessitates living sacrificially in the midst of crisis. The church has the unprecedented opportunity to live redemptively in times of crisis and fear.

God Is Spreading the Gospel Message

Lastly, the coronavirus should lead the church to reach those who do not know Jesus as Lord and Savior. In Acts 7, God used a religious persecution that began with the stoning of Stephen, to bring a tremen-

What is your response to present times? Have you lost hope for positive change? Do not waste time during this present crisis! Ask yourself how your life aligns with the purposes of God during this pandemic.

dous worldwide expansion of the gospel message. No one expected it or was prepared for it. Satan was the reason for the persecution—though which he intended to discourage God’s people—yet the Lord used it instead for a remarkable worldwide expansion of the gospel message.

Suffering frequently emphasizes what is most important. Jesus healed the man born blind, “so that the works of God might be displayed in him” (John 9:3). The physical healing resulted in the man understanding that Jesus was truly God’s Son, which then resulted in spiritual healing. Suffering brought the man to God. In a similar manner, the current pandemic can be a means for many to be healed spiritually through faith in Jesus Christ. Pandemics are an opportunity to demonstrate the love of God in Christ Jesus through loving one’s neighbor (Mark 12:31; Jas 2:14-17).

Conclusion

Winston Churchill once remarked, “An optimist sees an opportunity in every calamity; a pessimist sees a calamity in every opportunity.” The following anecdote will help illustrate what Churchill meant. The story is told of two researchers who were dispatched by a large shoe manufacturer to one of the world’s least developed countries. The purpose for the venture was to assess the business potential within that country. The first investigator reported that no one wore shoes, so there was not a market for the manufacturer. The second researcher announced a tremendous potential for the company, since no one wore shoes. Both researchers were dispatched to the same country to explore identical circumstances, yet they viewed the potential opportunity quite differently.

Would you describe yourself as an optimist or a realist? The first researcher would likely consider himself both, yet his focus was limited; thus, he could not see the potential before him (and in doing so, he was neither an optimist nor a realist). The second individual witnessed the obvious yet sought the possibilities in the

circumstances, and focused upon the opportunity (and, in doing so, he was an optimist and a realist).

God desires for His church to be both optimistic and realistic, through a resolute faith and complete dependence upon Him. Psalms 112:6-7 declares, “For he will never be shaken; the righteous will be remembered forever. He will not fear evil tidings; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD.” What helps in the current pandemic is to “know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose” (Rom 8:28). The sovereign Lord is working for His eternal glory in the midst of worldwide turmoil. Every opportunity, joy, and success that a believer may experience—in addition to trials—is God’s work in the lives of His people. Yet, they can still praise God during those difficulties (Ps 23:4). Christians need to learn the lessons that God intends for His church. While not necessarily grateful for the coronavirus pandemic, nevertheless, we should “in everything give thanks” (1 Thess 5:18).

James 1:3 exhorts believers to consider how various trials produce endurance. God intends for life difficulties to refine the faith of His people (cf. 1 Pet 1:6-7). The intent of James 1:3 is not that the Lord is confirming the reality of faith; rather, He is testing a faith that is already present and making it resolute. Some aspects of our character would be undeveloped without trials that purge and remove defects from immature faith. Those who endure trials with faith in God can become more like Jesus (cf. Rom 5:3-4; 8:29; 2 Thess 1:4).

What is your response to present times? Have you lost hope for positive change? Do not waste time during this present crisis! Ask yourself how your life aligns with the purposes of God during this pandemic. Of the fivefold purpose of what God is doing with the coronavirus, which best indicates what God is doing in your life? Share that with your family and with someone else.

(1098)



Christians and Coronavirus

“For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office” (Romans 12:4).

Arno Froese

The body of Christ consists exclusively of born-again believers. They are to be found on all continents and in every country. They do not have a visible collective manifestation, a country, flag, or language; they are truly international. That group, Jesus encourages: “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32).

The apostle Paul identifies the Church, not consisting of “many wise men...many

noble.” “But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world...and God hath chosen the weak things of the world...and things which are despised” (1 Corinthians 1:26-28). That is the true Church, the one of which Jesus said, “I will build my church.”

No government, no culture, no political philosophy, not even the gates of hell can prevail against that Church. Incidentally, it is our sincere prayer that this Church will soon be completed and raptured into the presence of the Lord.

Defense, education and health are issues in all civilized countries. Our responsibility is to follow the instructions given.

In the meantime, we live on earth. We are in this world, but not of this world. In most countries, believers gather at certain prescribed times and places to break the bread of life, hear the Word of God, pray for the Church, and thereby glorify God.

Government Authorization

However, these believers need a place to gather. That place is normally a building with four walls, which unfortunately we often call “the church.” To have such a church, one must present a petition to the government, fill out certain forms, provide the by-laws and articles of incorporation, and state the purpose of operation. If approved, the government grants the church the privilege to be tax-exempt. Subsequently, the church becomes a semi-governmental organization. The granting of this tax-exempt status requires the church to adhere to government regulations, such as the prohibition against political activity. Having received the government’s authorization, the church may teach its religion in any way, shape, or form; it’s a matter of faith.

However, as customary, churches invite the public; thus, the church becomes subject to rules and regulations of the prevailing government. For example, fire safety, required insurance coverage, and health regulation and inspection.

The first church, founded on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem, presented a fantastic testimony: “And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart” (Acts 2:46). What was the result? “Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added

to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47).

Coronavirus

Although most religious organizations, churches, ministries, etc. comply with the government’s requirements, some don’t. Why? The reason repeatedly given is Hebrews 10:25a: “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is.” The local church this writer attends followed the instructions of the government, and church services were held in the parking lot, with each family in their own vehicle. Later, the restrictions were somewhat relaxed, and we met in the church building, carefully implementing all required regulations relating to COVID-19.

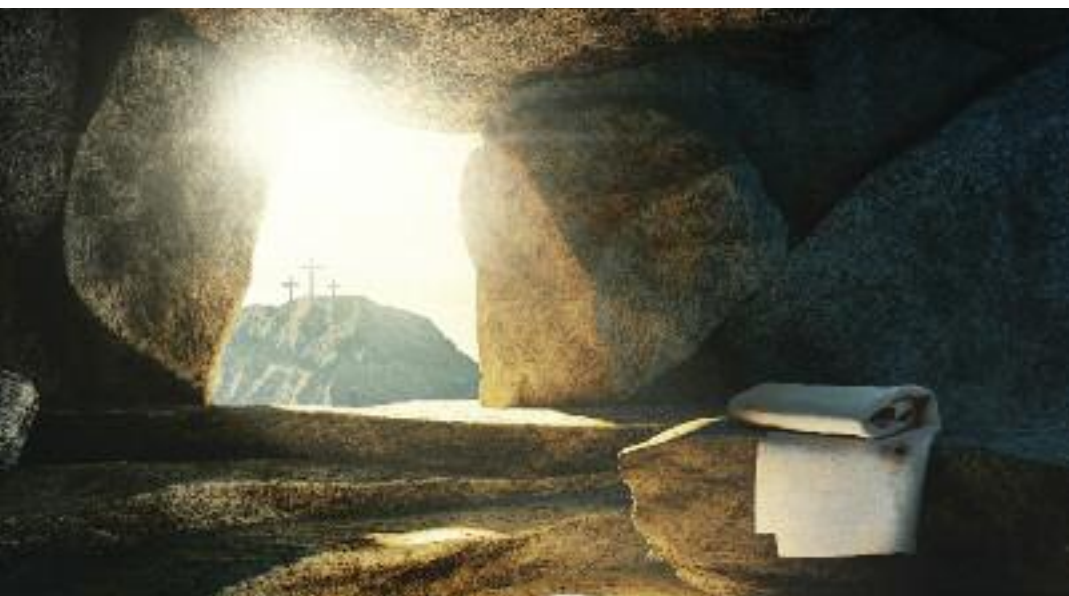
Because of several articles in *Midnight Call* magazine, readers protested, some vehemently, quoting Acts 5:29b: “We ought to obey God rather than men.” That Scripture, however, does not apply to the government, but the religious authority, “...the high priest asked them, Saying, Did not we straightly command you that ye should not teach in this name?” (Acts 5:27b-28a).

Most governments in the world were established on Roman principles: of the people, by the people, for the people. That government is responsible for the security of its citizens. Thus, they have a defense force, although for most countries in the world, there is little to no need for it. Yet, it is the government’s responsibility to provide for defense.

Defense, education and health are issues in all civilized countries. Our responsibility is to follow the instructions given. Some countries have compulsory military service, and education is also compulsory in virtually all countries. Healthcare is of major importance, because it can affect everyone.

Christians and Coronavirus

The Church does not depend on the existence of local church buildings, seminaries, radio, ministry publications, TV etc., but upon the Lord Jesus Christ, who said “I will build my church.”



This mysterious virus, COVID-19 has not been fully analyzed by medical science. Subsequently, there is no surefire cure. For that reason, governments implemented strict regulations. Failure to wear face masks outside one's residence in Israel costs NIS 200 (\$60). Violating quarantine call for a NIS 5,000 (\$1,500) fine. What is the result when compared to other countries? The United Kingdom registered 62.47 deaths per 100,000 in population, USA 54.55, Israel only 9.67. Japan, another country with strict enforcement, registers only 0.96. What did these and other governments do to protect their citizens? Enforcement of restrictions prohibiting assemblies of certain numbers of people.

This extremely contagious virus was discovered in several churches in Germany, South Korea and other countries, where the leadership of those groups ignored government instructions.

In Israel, the hotbed of COVID-19 was the Ultra-Orthodox groups, many coming from the US

to Israel; thus, spreading the virus.

Example: if my children have head lice, it would be irresponsible for me to send them to school. That also goes for a cold. Lice, as we know, quickly multiply, and transfer rather easily. There are a number of inoculations that are required for all children who enter kindergarten or other schooling. Most require that the child has received doses of DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, and

whooping cough [pertussis]), also varicella for chicken pox, polio, and measles, mumps, and rubella. Those inoculations are doing a fantastic job. In the year 1900, the average life expectancy in the USA was only 43 years; today, it's almost 80. The government's goal is to protect other people from infectious diseases; that is as simple as one can describe it.

The Church does not depend on the existence of local church buildings, seminaries, radio, ministry publications, TV etc., but upon the Lord Jesus Christ, who said “I will build my church.”

In the meantime, we adhere to the instructions of our respective governments. It is not the government that encroaches on the church, but the opposite is true: the church that opposes ordinances is encroaching into government business. “Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation” (Romans 13:2). (MC)

Lockdown and the Most Important Thing in Life



Reinhold Federolf

As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, completely new or long-forgotten questions have emerged. What's essential, what's incidental, and what's the most important thing in life?

When the famed Apostle Paul began to promote Christianity among the educated speakers and philosophers of advanced Greek culture in Athens, he argued as follows: “And he [God] made from one man [Adam] every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us” (Acts 17:26-27).

God has a clear purpose for all people!

Everything in human life is designed in such a way that leads us to seek God and find Him. This claim has such immense implications that we should really let it impact us. We encounter a related orientation in Ecclesiastes 3:11: “He [God] has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man’s heart...” In other words, we are “preprogrammed” with a predisposition (that is, a predetermined receptivity) to thoughts about God, the meaning of life, death, the possibility of life after death, of being lost or saved. We should seek and find God!

Lockdown and the Most Important Thing in Life

Everything in human life is designed in such a way that leads us to seek God and find Him.



Even internationally-known wrestling champion Hulk Hogan (real name Terry Eugene Bollea) described this time as one of the most powerful gifts to our human race: “In three short months, just like He did with the plagues of Egypt, God has taken away everything we worship. God said, ‘You want to worship athletes, I will shut down the stadiums. You want to worship musicians, I will shut down civic centers. You want to worship actors, I will shut down theaters. You want to worship money, I will shut down the economy and collapse the stock market. You don’t want to go to church and worship Me, I will make it where you can’t go to church.’ If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.’ Maybe we don’t need a vaccine, Maybe we need to take this time of isolation from the distractions of the world and have a personal revival where we focus on the ONLY thing in the world that really matters. Jesus.”

When the great king Solomon prayed at the inauguration of the temple in Jerusalem, God Himself replied: “When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the

land, or send pestilence [contagious disease] among my people, if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land” (2 Chr 7:13-14).—God hears, God forgives, and God heals.

In Deuteronomy, God warned His people Israel of dreadful judgments He would employ as leverage against idolatry, immorality, and injustice: “The LORD will make the pestilence stick to you [...] The LORD will strike you with wasting disease and with fever, inflammation and fiery heat, and with drought and with blight and with mildew” (Deut 28:21-22). Luther translates “blight” as “toxic air.” We could think of pollution or disease transmission today.

These quoted verses reveal that God can definitely shake and sway people through natural disasters—including dangerous and contagious epidemics—so that we become aware of our own transience and impotence and run to God. “Wicked ways,” “sin,” and “repentance” are clearly defined terms. That’s why God is increasing the external pressure: to provoke reactions, so that we can deal with the important question about Him. God is concerned with eternal salvation or eternal loss. The elephant standing in the room is: will America, as well as the whole world, get closer to God, or move further away from Him? Let’s pray that at least some people wake up, pay attention, examine themselves, repent, and become one with Jesus; to walk a path that is pleasing to Him.

Related to the judgment upon an overpowering military invasion of modern Israel, we read: “And I will send a fire on Magog, and on them that dwell confidently

“It seems like God is saying, ‘You want to worship athletes, I will shut down the stadiums. You want to worship musicians, I will shut down civic centers. You want to worship actors, I will shut down theaters.’”



in the islands: and they shall know that I am the LORD” (Ezek 39:6). Whole continents could be meant by these “islands” (of pagans). But the people certainly aren’t living carefree lives (Matt 6:31-32). God warns of carelessness toward Himself and our eternal salvation. This carelessness means that, like in the days before the Flood, God is completely ignored and people do what they want.

The Apostle Paul uses an interesting expression to describe our world: “the creation itself will be set free from its bondage [enslavement] to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (Rom 8:21). This Greek word *phthora* (corruption) has characterized our world since the Fall: destruction, decay, decadence, loss, decline, annihilation, dissolution, transience, and ruin. It means we’re living in a dying world.

Before the terrible judgment of the Flood, people’s behavior was described in this way: “The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his

heart was only evil continually” (Gen 6:5). God was being completely ignored, and the godly were laughed at and ridiculed. Don’t we see parallels to today?

Seeking and finding God is the top priority, because in the West—as far as proper faith that aligns with Scripture is concerned—more and more people are saying, “We’re sinking!” Let us not allow this longing for God to be satisfied only superficially, by mere religion and empty rituals.

The crippling coronavirus lockdown was, and is, without a doubt God’s knocking: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me” (Rev 3:20).

It’s fair to assume that this global pandemic will bring about tremendous changes in the economy, politics, and security, and that the apocalyptic world stage will be further set.

Jesus is coming soon. Are you ready?


(MR0820/1094)

WORLD FOCUS

RUSSIA

Four COVID-19 Vaccines Proven Safe

“Four vaccines today have proven to be safe,” according to Rospotrebnadzor [Federal Service for Surveillance on Consumer Rights Protection and Human Wellbeing] and clinical trials on two others are at their final stage.

 This is the Gamaleya Center and the Defense Ministry. Two [facilities] are also preparing to start trials, these are Vector and the Scientific Research Institute of Vaccines and Serums.

According to Mishustin, Russia’s health-care system during the coronavirus pandemic proved that it was ready for challenges. “When I see how doctors and the heads of medical institutions are working, I want to say that it is ready and there is some reserve,” the prime minister said.

To date, [976,000] coronavirus cases have been confirmed in Russia, with [793,000] pa-

© Alexander Ryumin/TASS



tients having recovered from the disease. Russia’s latest data indicates [16,804] fatalities nationwide. Earlier, the Russian government set up an Internet hotline to keep the public updated on the coronavirus situation.

-tass.com, 22 July 2020

Commentary: While a dozen or more countries have tested various types of vaccines against COVID-19, none so far could claim indisputable success. Another article states, “Scientists in [...] other countries sounded an alarm, saying that rushing to offer the vaccine before final-stage testing could backfire. What’s called a Phase 3 trial—which involves tens of thousands of people and can take

months—is the only way to prove if an experimental vaccine is safe and really works.” Obviously, only time will tell the extent of success or failure of the various vaccines being developed at this very moment.

During Biblical times, it was the Psalmist who proclaimed the absolute security: “I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust” (Psalm 91:2). Verse 6 reads: “Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.”

Coronavirus, at this point in time, can still be considered a pestilence that “walketh in darkness,” meaning not fully known. Subsequently, medical science has not yet developed the treatment providing absolute success.

7326

(See *Messianic Psalms*, Item #1074, \$14.95.)



SCOTLAND

Contact-Tracing App Being Developed

Scotland is developing its own coronavirus contact-tracing app, which it hopes to have ready for use in the autumn.



It follows the failure of an NHS-branded app in England, which was trialed on the Isle of Wight.

Contact-tracing apps are designed to help prevent a second wave of the coronavirus.

They work by logging when two people have been in close proximity to each other for a substantial period of time.

If one of the users is later diagnosed as having the disease, an alert can be sent to others they have recently been close to, telling them that they should also get tested and/or self-isolate.

Since Scotland is adapting the Republic of Ireland app, which uses the Apple-Google framework, it will also be compatible with the apps used in Northern Ireland and Gibraltar.

Scotland’s Health Secretary Jeane Freeman said existing manual contact tracing would continue to be used alongside the app.

“We also know that not everyone uses a mobile phone or will be able to access the app, which is why this software is very much there to complement existing contact-tracing methods,” she said.

(continued next page)

TURKEY

The Super-Rich Sail East

With some European countries reimposing restrictions to avoid another Covid-19 flareup, the ultra-rich are abandoning some of their traditional mooring spots.



At least 63 mega-yachts are now sailing off Turkey, the most since 2017 and up from 26 at this time last year, according to tracking data compiled by Bloomberg. That's good news for a country whose currency plunged to a record [low] amid a surge in foreign capital outflows.

The 459-foot *Scheherazade* sailed into Turkey. The 325-foot *Madame Gu*, reportedly owned by Andrey Skoch, and the 280-foot *Pacific* of Russia's second-richest man, Leonid Mikhelson, are among the other ships dropping anchor off the country's coast.

Turkey has long been a favorite for Russian vacationers. When Russia lifted a travel ban, 80 flights carrying 23,000 revelers arrived in Antalya in just one day, *Daily Sabah* reported.



***Scheherazade* anchors in Bodrum district of Mugla, Turkey.**

Photographer: Osman Uras/
Anadolu Agency via Getty Images

During the early stages of the health crisis, Turkey was seen as a Covid-19 safe haven among wealthy individuals, which was reflected in an increase in July's yacht numbers.

Croatia and Greece are attracting more super-yachts too, with their numbers also at three-year highs. The largest vessels in Croatia are Roman Abramovich's 533-foot *Eclipse*, the fourth-longest yacht in the world, and the 381-foot *Ulysses*, owned by New Zealand's richest man, Graeme Hart. The newly deliv-

ered 312-foot *O'Pari* and the 361-foot *Radiant* are among those spotted in Greece.

-www.bloomberg.com, 17 August 2020

Commentary: This shows the other side of the much-publicized COVID-19 pandemic. For the super-rich, there are no borders, and often no visas required; money speaks its own language. Here again we must quote James 5:5: "Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter."

What is the advice for believers? "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the



early and latter rain.

Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (James 5:7-8). 7325

(See *The Day Approaching*, Item #2362, \$15.99.)

Contact-Tracing (continued from page 26)

Scotland's app will be developed by Near-form, which worked on the Republic of Ireland's contact-tracing app.

-www.bbc.com, 31 July 2020

Commentary: While trials have been going on for some time with the much discussed contact-tracing app, security of data collected is one issue many nations are concerned with.

The Jerusalem Post reports:

"I think digital contact tracing is unproven, unreliable, and in all likelihood, a dangerous distraction from manual contact tracing and other evidence-based public health tools," said Albert Cahn, the executive director of the Surveillance Technology Oversight Project.

-www.jpost.com, 31 July 2020

Yet, it becomes increasingly evident that this type of contact-tracing app will become necessary; if not now, then in the not-too-distant future.

One thing the world has learned is that coronavirus is real, although preventing the spread of the virus has become an issue of extremely diverse opinions. In many countries, there are protests against the various lockdowns and government instructions.

Particularly churches in some cases, vehemently oppose the various restrictions by quoting Hebrews 10:25: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is..." However, one must realize that the government is responsible for the security of its citizens. For example, the US would be greatly upset if Canada were to poison

streams flowing into the US, or vice-versa; that threatens public health. Such is the case with a heretofore not fully known coronavirus. A number of cases have been registered where synagogues, mosques, and churches were proven to be an incubator for spreading the virus. Subsequently, the government takes precautionary measures, as they are responsible for public health. Religious meetings that have been proven to spread the virus continue to do so beyond the walls of their facility. Members go to places such as supermarkets, thus becoming a danger to the general public. Whenever, whoever, and wherever meetings are open to the public, they must subject themselves to the government's authority and regulations.


7327

(See *Misquoted*, Item #2360, **SALE \$10.**)

DENMARK

Early Retirement Funded by the Wealthy

Denmark will levy the equivalent of \$480 million in new taxes on banks and wealthy investors to fund early retirement for some workers, Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said.

 The early retirement fund for workers with particularly difficult jobs was a central campaign plank for Frederiksen's Social Democrats party, and Frederiksen is seeking to use some of the political capital from her handling of the coronavirus to pass the measure through Parliament, according to Bloomberg.

"I can't imagine that this won't get a majority in Parliament," she said. If successfully passed, the taxes would take effect in 2023. Government projections estimate about 38,000 workers would take early retirement under the plan.

Provisions in the plan include a notional gain tax on business property investments and a cap on tax deductions for salaries above 10 million Danish kroner, or about \$1.6 million. It would also impose a 1.5 billion kroner (\$240.4

million) corporate tax on the financial industry and increase the tax on stock market returns to 650 million kroner (\$104.2 million) by 2025.

-thehill.com, 18 August 2020

Commentary: This country of barely 6 million people, maintains a life expectancy of 81.2 years, with excellent healthcare and six weeks of paid vacation. They have a per capita GDP of \$50,100. Denmark follows in the footsteps of all successful countries, where exports stands at \$113.6 billion, and imports only \$94.9 billion. The people are well compensated and well rested; thus, quite obviously, produce products other nations want.

The five extremely successful Scandinavian countries include Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. Although Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are also on the Baltic Sea, these former Soviet nations have not attained the level of their neighbors. According to WebForum.org, four of the Baltic countries are the most generous when it comes to foreign aid, measured by percentage of gross national income: Sweden 1.41%, Norway 1.05%, Denmark 0.85%, Finland 0.59% (USA 0.15%).

Now the workers of Denmark want more. One of their requests is early retirement. Next in line comes guaranteed income for all. Although this proposal was rejected in a national referendum in Switzerland, in the end, the spirit of equality will have the upper hand. Since Europe is the most prosperous, peaceful, and secure continent, these virtually unbelievable benefits will continue and increase.

Here we think of 1 Thessalonians 5:3: "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." Regardless of which country on planet earth, rich or poor, bond or free, successful or failure, that verse will be fulfilled one day. What is needed for every person is written in 2

Thessalonians 3:16: "Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all."

7324

(See *Waiting on God*, Item #2311, SALE \$13.)




SINGAPORE



Seafarers who have spent the past months working onboard vessels arrive at the Changi Airport to board their flight back home to India during a crew change amid the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak in Singapore. REUTERS/Edgar Su

Electronic Tags to Enforce Quarantine

Singapore will make some incoming travelers wear an electronic monitoring device to ensure that they comply with coronavirus quarantines as the city-state gradually reopens its borders, authorities said.

 Similar measures using electronic wristbands to track peoples' movements during quarantine have been used in Hong Kong and South Korea.

Travelers to Singapore are required to activate the device, which uses GPS and Bluetooth signals, upon reaching their home and

will receive notifications on the device which they must acknowledge.

Any attempt to leave home or tamper with the device will trigger an alert to the authorities.

Singapore, which has not given details on what the device will look like, said in a statement that it will not store any personal data and does not have any voice or video recording function.

Under the Infectious Diseases Act, punishments can be fines of up to \$10,000 (\$7,272) or imprisonment of up to six months, or both. It has also revoked the work passes of foreigners who flouted the rules.

Singapore has reported 52,825 coronavirus infections, mostly due to mass outbreaks in

(continued next page)



ISRAEL

Arrow-2 Interception Test Successful

The advanced system is designed to intercept long-range missiles. It successfully intercepted a Sparrow simulated long-range, surface-to-surface missile, which could one day be fired at Israel by Iran, such as the Shahab 3 medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM) with an explosive warhead.



The interception was conducted by IAF service members together with engineers from the institutions involved in the system's development. The various layers of Israel's air-defense mechanism were employed in this test to ensure their readiness and efficacy in operational scenarios.

"The test was just perfect; all the systems worked as anticipated," Boaz Levi, IAI's executive vice president and general manager of Systems, Missiles and Space Group, told reporters.



A flight test of the Arrow-2 Weapons System. (Credit: Defense Ministry)

"We have once again proven that the State of Israel has the strongest and most advanced defense and attack capabilities in the world," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said.

"I would like to express our deep appreciation to our US ally for the mutual advancement of our security," he said. "Our enemies and those who seek our evil know that the State of Israel is prepared against any threat."

The Arrow 2 forms a key layer of Israel's multilayered defense system along with the Arrow 3, David's Sling and Iron Dome. The systems provide Israel with a protective umbrella able to counter threats posed by both

short- and mid-range missiles used by terrorist groups in Gaza and Hezbollah, as well as the threat posed by long-range Iranian ballistic missiles.

-www.jpost.com, 13 August 2020

Commentary: Israel is one, if not the only, country in the world that urgently needs a missile defense system of the caliber of Arrow-2. That, however, is not the end; hundreds, if not thousands of highly trained engineers and scientists are feverishly at work to develop even more accurate defense systems, to assure Israel's safety and survival.

Above and beyond that, Holy Scripture makes it clear that Israel will be victorious in any and all circumstances. Why? Because prophecy must be fulfilled. "So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me" (Ezekiel 33:7).

7322

(See *Israel on High Alert*, Item #2343, \$15.99.)

Electronic Tags (continued from page 28)

cramped migrant workers dormitories, but imported cases have been creeping up in recent days.

-nypost.com, 3 August 2020

Commentary: Singapore is a virtual miracle country. The population stands at 6.2 million, of which 74% are Chinese, 13.4% Malay, and 9% Indian. Religiously, it is divided into 33.2% Buddhist, 18.8% Christian, 14% Muslim. Most amazingly, life expectancy is 86 years, and the people are super rich; per capita GDP stands at \$94,100 (2017). This relatively small city-state also presents a favorable balance sheet: exports \$396 billion, imports \$312 billion.

Coronavirus deaths per 100,000 in population are at 0.48, just below South Korea with 0.61.

What does it all mean? Summed up in two words: total control. Disobeying government rules invites hefty fines up to \$10,000 (\$7,272 US).

Slowly but surely, we see the southeast Asian countries rising to significance. Also important to emphasize is the diversity of the citizens' origin and religion. Apparently, the more diverse the mixture, the more successful. That, incidentally, can also be said about Israel, where Jews have returned from virtually the entire world. Thus, globalization seems to work.

Singapore's rise is primarily due to government enforcement of law. Back in the 1960s, Singapore was a lawless place with an exceedingly high crime rate and much drug addiction. Then, on 9 August 1965, Singapore became independent of the Malaysian Federation. Their legal system is based on English common law.

The Church in Singapore is growing remarkably and increased from 12.7% in 1990 to 14.6% in the year 2000; today, it's 18.8%.

Enforcement regarding coronavirus is also taken seriously. Travel plans must be declared in detail. Temperature must be taken before worship services. Gatherings of vulnerable groups are suspended. For communion, alternatives such as packaged bread and wine are used. One important Christian leader, Ian Toh, declared: "The first responsibility of the leader is to remain calm. Panic causes tunnel-vision, which is terrible for decision making. Strong leadership reminds people that God is in control of every situation, and there is never a reason to panic."

7316

(Listen to *Coronavirus Prophetically*, Item #3338, \$7.)





Gene Editing Now a Looming Reality

Ask any expectant couple what they hope their baby will be, and one answer is likely to be “healthy.”

But one gene gone awry can imperil a child’s health, causing serious disease or a disability that leaves one more susceptible to health issues. With advances in gene-editing technology, though, biomedicine is entering an uncharted era in which a genetic mutation can be reversed, not only for one person but also for subsequent generations.

While still highly theoretical when it comes to eliminating disabilities, gene editing has drawn the attention of the disability community. The prospect of erasing some disabilities and perceived deficiencies hovers at the margins of what people consider ethically acceptable.

“There absolutely must be broad public discussions about whether we’re ready to use



something that has an unprecedented capability of making changes that have the potential to be passed on to subsequent generations,” said Dana Carroll, a biochemistry professor at the University of Utah who is interim director of the Public Impact Program at the Innovative Genomics Institute at the University of California, Berkeley.

The debate grew more heated in 2018, after a scientist in China announced the birth of the world’s first gene-edited babies—twin girls—using CRISPR to give them immunity to H.I.V. The announcement generated outrage around the world. In December 2019, a court in China sentenced the scientist to three years in prison for carrying out “illegal medical practices.”

Professor Meghan Halley, a bioethics researcher at Stanford University, acknowledged the inherent tension between the huge benefits that gene-editing technology could bring in preventing serious diseases and disabilities for which there is no treatment, and

what she calls the “potential risk of going down a road that feels uncomfortably close to eugenics.”

Less ethically freighted are therapies to cure serious diseases in people who are already living with them. “I think that there are opportunities to use gene-editing technologies to treat genetic diseases that don’t raise the societal implications of altering permanently patterns of human inheritance,” said Dr. Alex Marson, director of the Gladstone-UCSF Institute of Genomic Immunology in San Francisco.

-dnyuz.com, 22 July 2020

Commentary: The debate is endless, pro and con. But the unknown consequences are quite frightening.

Quite interestingly, communist China sentenced the scientist who created “the world’s first gene-edited babies” to three years in jail for illegal medical practices.

Indeed, the old-fashioned answer is still valid today; when the parents are asked what they hope the baby will be, it’s one word: healthy. That is in the hands of God, and that’s where we ought to leave it. 7314

(See *As It Was in the Days of Noah*, Item #2286, \$11.99.)



Foreign Workers Exploited

“I will never go back to Germany, not even for a holiday,” Mariana Costea, a seasonal worker from Romania, told DW. She spent two months toiling away on a Bavarian farm until she decided that was all she could take. Mariana was forced to work unpaid overtime, had to sleep in filthy dorms, and was at risk of contracting the coronavirus—as no safety precautions were in place.

Costea is one of many Eastern Europeans seasonal workers who have recently spoken out about the catastrophic working and living conditions they have en-



Precarious housing conditions for seasonal workers in North-Rhine Westphalia.

dured in Germany. They have recounted harrowing experiences as meat processing plant workers, delivery men and women, caregivers, construction workers and seasonal farmhands. Yet much of this has been known



COVID-19 infections broke out in the Lower Bavarian town of Mamming.

for years, as German Labor Minister Hubertus Heil openly acknowledged at a recent press conference in Berlin. The difference, however, is that the pandemic has made it impossible to ignore this situation.

(continued next page)

Foreign Workers (continued from page 30)

Alex, whose name has been changed to protect his identity, told DW about his experience of spending two years working for Tönies, Germany's biggest meat producer. He fears he could face serious consequences if anyone learns his identity. "They made us work between 10 and 13 hours a day, instead of 8 hours with a 45-minute break," he told DW. "It was exhausting, and psychologically draining."

Federal prosecutors are now taking legal action against the company and numerous subcontractors accused of violating Germany's law on the prevention and control of infectious diseases.

There are many subcontractors and recruitments agencies that supply laborers to German companies. Keeping tabs on how they treat the workers and house them, however, is difficult.

After news broke of soaring coronavirus infections at German farms and meat processing plants due to dismal working and housing conditions, German lawmakers were forced to act. They plan to outlaw the practice of subcontracted laborers in the meat industry by January 1, 2021. From then on, companies will have to directly employ all their workers.

Labor Minister Hubertus Heil has tabled a bill that will be debated and, potentially, adopted after parliament's summer recess. It is unclear, however, why this measure will only be applied to Germany's meat industry.

Heil told DW: "There are areas where labor standards need to be monitored; we will raise the standards so we have more influence on crucial sectors."

"There are other areas in which it is about workplace safety inspections. Those (inspections) will be increased mandatorily so that we can go into vulnerable areas more frequently."

-www.dw.com/en, 29 July 2020

Commentary: Germany, which prides itself on having the highest level of workers' rights, compensation, and fairness for all, is now exposed by its practice of subcontracting jobs to avoid direct responsibility.

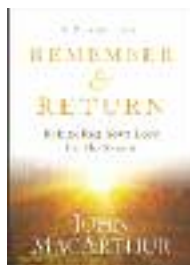
Minimum holiday/vacation entitlement for standard workers is 24 working days per year. This entitlement starts when an employee has been on the job for at least 6 months.

German law requires that employees be paid 100% of their salary or wages by their employer during the first 6 weeks of sickness. These laws are quite amazing, guaranteeing 6-week sick pay and almost 5 weeks of holiday. Yet, quite apparently, this has not been implemented where foreign workers are concerned.

Here James 5:4-5 is applicable: "Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Ye have

lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter." 7310

(See Remember and Return, Item #2317, \$14.99.)



SWEDEN

Female Priests Outnumber Male Counterparts

For the first time in history, Swedish female priests outnumber their male counterparts, sixty years after they were first allowed to don the clerical collar, the Church of Sweden said.



Of the 3,060 priests currently serving in Sweden, 1,533 are female, or 50.1 percent, according to Cristina Grenholm, secretary for the Church of Sweden.

In Sweden, ministers in the Church of Sweden have the title of priest, while those serving in parishes outside the former State Church are referred to as pastors.

-www.france24.com/en, 22 July 2020

Commentary: The Church of Sweden Lutheran Confession is listed as representing 60.2% of Sweden's population; another 8.5% is made up of Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Baptist, Muslim, Jewish, and Buddhist. A large percentage, 31.3%, is specified as non-religious.

Sweden is one of the super-liberal nations in the world. Their life expectancy stands at 82.4 years, with a very low rate of infant mortality, at 2.6 per 1,000 live births, which testifies to an excellent healthcare system. The per capita GDP for 2017 is listed at \$51,200. Exports stand at \$165.6 billion, with imports \$153.2 billion.

It is of interest that we read in Galatians 3:28: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." However, the office of church leadership is reserved for the male, according to 1 Timothy 3:1-2: "This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach." 7313

(See The Church Subtly Deceived, Item #2091, \$9.99.)

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Action for Israel



MIDNIGHT CALL

“Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the
fire may devour thy cedars”
(Zechariah 11:1).

BY ARNO FROESE

Not so long ago, Lebanon was called the Switzerland of the Middle East. Why? Because it was peaceful, very rich, and very secure.

It was in 1985 when Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah, a Shia Muslim, founded Hezbollah (“Party of God”). One of its ideologies was anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism. The party grew so strong it virtually became an independent state within the country of Lebanon. Presently, the Hezbollah organization is recognized as a terrorist group by 18 different nations, as well as the Arab League and the European Union.

Lebanon is a country with a population of 5.5 million, of which 61.1% are Muslim, and about 33.7% followers of the Christian religion. Life expectancy is listed at 78.3 years. Per capita GDP stands at \$19,600. The economy looks bleak; as all countries not functioning at 100%, exports stand at \$3.5 billion, with imports \$18.3 billion (2017).

There is an abundance of information available online about the country of Lebanon. But, in none of the reports is the real reason for the chaos Lebanon is experiencing today; namely, Lebanon’s occupation of Israeli territory.

The same can be said about Syria. Much of the country is also Syrian-occupied Israeli territory. Thus, conflicts rage. The nation has

been suffering immensely under a civil war since 2011. Millions have fled the country; some 3.6 million refugees were registered in Turkey, with almost another million in Lebanon, 656,000 in Jordan, plus 770,000 in Germany, according to Wikipedia.

While Lebanon and Syria are virtually powerless against the Israeli air force, Hezbollah and other terrorist groups connected to Iran, continue to plot as much harm as possible against Israel.

The prophet Habakkuk in chapter 2, verse 17 states: “For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee, and the spoil of beasts, which made them afraid, because of men’s blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.”

At the beginning of August, the world press reported of an unprecedented explosion in the city of Beirut. More than 200 were killed and thousands injured, as well as great damage being reported even several miles away from the site of the disaster.

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres had this to say:

UN Secretary-General António Guterres called on the Lebanese government to disarm the militant group Hezbollah in a report he intends to present to the United Nations Security Council.

“The maintenance of unauthorized weapons outside State control by Hezbollah and other

non-State armed groups represents a persistent violation of resolution 1701 (2006) and is of serious concern," wrote Guterres in a report that was posted on the UN website, prior to the Beirut explosion.

"I call upon the Government of Lebanon to take all actions necessary to ensure the full implementation of the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords and of resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1680 (2006), which require the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon so that there will be no weapons or authority in Lebanon other than those of the Lebanese State," Guterres said.

The document is one of three reports that Guterres sends annually to the UNSC on UNIFIL. This one comes in advance of the anticipate annual vote to renew the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

"I urge the Government of Lebanon to expeditiously undertake and conclude all necessary investigations regarding the tunnels on the Lebanese side and to take preventive measures against similar occurrences in the future," he added.

-www.jpost.com, 5 August 2020

While apnews.com reports that 2,700 tons of ammonium nitrate—a component of fer-

tilizer that is potentially explosive—had been stored at the port since it was confiscated from a ship in 2013, what becomes increasingly clear is that unauthorized weapons storage facilities existed in the vicinity of the explosion.

An Associated Press article states: "Estimates suggest that 85% of the country's grain was stored at the now wrecked silos."

Yes, Lebanon is suffering, and so is Syria. We feel for the loss of life, whether they are Lebanese, Syrian, or any other nationality. But our prayer is specifically directed to the Christians who live in the midst of these countries, dominated by turmoil. For those who believe in Christ, there is hope. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39). And for Israel, God proclaims by His prophet Haggai: "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." (MC)

Action for Israel



MIDNIGHT CALL

"I will bless them that
bless thee..."
(Genesis 12:3).

Mail to: Midnight Call Ministries, PO Box 84309, Lexington, SC 29073

MC1020

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URUGUAY



God's Word Doesn't Recognize "Lockdown"

Retrospective and current news from Midnight Call's media work in Uruguay.

BY JAN AND ISABELLE EISSES



One of the highlights of our work last year was the September gathering celebrating 40 years of Midnight Call in Uruguay. We were enormously encouraged by the participation of Midnight Call Switzerland, the enthusiasm of the Uruguayan brothers and sisters, and the visit from Norbert Lieth, Jonathan Malgo, and Walter Mosimann. Since then, the motto from Romans



“Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other” (Isaiah 45:22).



▲ Rodrigo and Silvia Rincon (administration), with their three children Ezequiel, Mical, and Elizabeth



▲ Ricardo and Mayka Windmoller with their little Gabriel

13:11 has proven to be especially relevant during this time: “the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.”

The work continued in 2020: radio broadcasts and the internet weren't subject to the coronavirus lockdown. Quite the contrary: feelings of fear and insecurity have caused people to increasingly seek answers. The number of visitors to our YouTube videos about the coronavirus has increased. During the state of medical emergency, only Rodrigo, Vito, and Jan were working in the studio; the other employees were working from home. Robert, who lives on the premises, was also unable to make it to the studio due to a severe herniated disc. Although he could hardly endure the pain, he

couldn't receive treatment right away because of the virus. In the meantime, however, he was successfully operated on and the nerve was saved.

All public gatherings were prohibited in Uruguay as well. From the beginning of March onward, we listened to messages on YouTube as a church and tried to keep in touch with everyone by phone. The youth made live broadcasts on Facebook every week and met via Zoom. Twenty-two families from our church who had lost some or all of their income due to the crisis were provided with groceries. In some places, these packages were received with tears. Uruguay has been spared the worst so far, as the government took proper action. Borders were closed, and scheduled flights discontinued. So, Isabelle's flight was can-



▲ Robert and Sandra Brasil (graphic design for the website)



▲ From Left: Norbert Lieth, Victoria San Martin (New Hope Radio program manager), Walter Mosimann, and Jonathan Malgo

celebrated in mid-March. She had wanted to visit her parents because her mother (Simone Ramseyer) had suddenly begun to decline rapidly, and was ultimately called home. We will see her again when the Lord Jesus comes.

And that can happen at any moment. All of these world events are perhaps God's final warning: "Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth!" (Isaiah 45:22a).

(MR0720)



"To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever" (Jude 25).

Mail to: Midnight Call Ministries, PO Box 84309, Lexington, SC 29073

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▲ Work in progress



Celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles

By **David Phillips** *Project Manager*

You will read this article while we are celebrating the last days of Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles: Lev. 23:34) here in Israel. The whole COVID-19 situation has brought a substantial change in all our lives, but rather than

complaining, we should say, “Thank you Lord, for work, health, and the increasing opportunities to share His Word!” More than ever, people’s hearts are softening toward the good news we have in Messiah Yeshua.



The planning of the renovation project of the Ebenezer Home has slowed down some because of the circumstances, but we have used this time to speed up renovating one of the Ebenezer Home's external flats (apartments). We had planned on doing this project in 2021, but since the roof began leaking, along with some electrical issues, we decided it was time.

This task reminds us of the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot), as our earthly dwelling place is just a temporary residence. One day—prayerfully soon—we will be with our Messiah Yeshua, enjoying the place which He has prepared for us. What a day that will be!

Celebrating Sukkot is extremely special. The joyful hope of these future events fills our hearts with the desire to share it. The longer this coronavirus situation lasts, the more people ask, “How long...?” This could be the time that we witness His soon return. But for now, He calls each of us to work and labor for the kingdom; and in our case, to continually strive to serve these precious seniors living at the Ebenezer Home to the best of our ability.

A special thank you to all who continue to help us raise the needed funds for the new Ebenezer van! We are making significant progress and have created a special page on our website—www.ebenezer.co.il—where you can watch the exciting progress being made! We post updates at the beginning of each month, and all donations collected will go toward the new van ... be sure to go check it out!

The Ebenezer Family sends you warm greetings and wishes you a blessed fall. Kind regards from all the residents, who keep asking me about the people behind the prayers and gifts, which you have so faithfully continued to provide. Thank you for being a part of the Ebenezer Family and for touching so many hearts and lives; we appreciate and love you all! We want you to know that there are staff and residents **praying for you, too.**

As we pray in Israel during this season, and at the Feast of Tabernacles, “May it be a rainy year, and may the Lord bless us with an abundance of water (both physically and spiritually)!”



MIDNIGHT CALL

Note: Donations for the project by check/money order should be made out to Midnight Call, and specify Ebenezer Home in the memo line.

Mail to: Midnight Call Ministries, PO Box 84309, Lexington, SC 29073

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Note: All letters will be answered by the Executive Editor, Arno Froese.

OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN... THE SEALS OF REVELATION... SPIRITUAL JEW?

Obey God Rather Than Men

Dear Mr. Froese,

We are writing to register our disappointment with your article by the above title, in the July 2020 *Midnight Call*. We have always enjoyed the magazine, even though we do not always agree with the opinions put forth.

First, we must establish with research that this “Covid-19” nonsense is more political than medical. The virus is real, but the response is purely political. We understood this to be true within three weeks of the declared “pandemic.” The cruise ships of January through March proved that this “pandemic” was not what it was portrayed to be by the media, governments, and “health officials.” If it were as deadly as declared, *thousands* of ship passengers would have DIED.

We can safely assume that you and Midnight Call Ministries are perfectly comfortable bowing to the dictates (which are not even laws) of government officials, simply because churches receive non-profit status from the various tax authorities? A tax status does not give the government a mandate to order the manner in which a Christian worships the Living God. What other infringement upon religious liberty will be issued next? Only God knows. But, it is

obvious Covid-19 has been employed to curtail religious freedom wherever possible.

Hiding behind Romans 13, as an excuse to cower before evil forces that are determined to destroy the religious liberty afforded to Americans—purchased through the blood of many—is despicable.

Your stance on Romans 13 only serves to bolster effeminate and cowardly responses to religious freedom infringements.

We would implore you to reassess your naïve position that government authorities always put the Christian’s best interest at the forefront of all their decision-making.

-W. Reeve, ID

Answer: “We ought to obey God rather than men” relates to religious authority, not government.

In the August issue of *Midnight Call*, the news article and my commentary on page 26 mention the disobedience of churches in Germany, Korea and other places, resulting in a horrible testimony of blatant rebellion against God-instituted authority.

The full capacity of the coronavirus is still unknown; thus, the alarm and the necessary ordinances. Sweden, for example, ignored medical science, which resulted in 56.66 deaths per 100,000 in population [UK 70.10; US 50.29; Germany 11.10].



Your usage of words, “hiding behind Romans 13...effeminate...cowardly... naïve position” points to some spiritual inconsistency in your faith.

The Seals of Revelation

Greetings,

Thank you so much for your ministry. I am a regular reader and supporter.

As I read and re-read Revelation chapter 6, I cannot help but wonder if the Lamb has begun to open the seals. The white horse representing world wars, the red horse this constant tension among the major world powers, the black horse a global economy, the pale horse the power of nuclear weapons capability. The fifth seal we cannot see as earthly beings, because it would be happening in heaven. Which puts us today possibly right before the sixth seal of Revelation 6:12.

Is it not also possible that Revelation 4:1-2 really does not represent the moment of rapture, as some assert? After all, shouldn't we read the Scripture text and accept it exactly for what it says? Is it possible the tribulation really starts, in full gear, at the sixth seal? And, is it not possible that Revelation 7:9-14 is actually the Pre-Tribulation Rapture happening in the twinkling of an eye, in a moment almost simultaneous with the sixth seal?

I understand we must never take the Word of God lightly, nor interpret it so that it fits into our time. I pray that I allow the Word to speak to my heart, so I can understand correctly. For this reason, I do not throw these thoughts out dogmatically, or consider my words to be inspired. I do seek your thoughts with an open mind—a Berean mindset I hope—and therefore appreciate your views on what I am thinking.

-T. Geglio, MI

Answer: When it comes to the seven seals, trumpets, and bowls, we note that these are judgments unto destruction. This can be recognized by the reaction of the people; for example, Revelation 6:16: “And said to the

mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.” After the sixth trumpet judgment is sounded, a demonic revival starts in Revelation 9:20. Then, verse 21 reports: “Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.” Later, when the seventh angel pours out the vial of wrath, we read in verse 21 of chapter 16: “And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great” (see also verse 9). Thus, the people on earth know the source of this judgment; it comes out of heaven from God. It is judgment unto destruction, and reminds us of 2 Thessalonians 2:11: “And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.”

The four horsemen of the apocalypse are not in the future alone, but are of the past, the present, *and* the future—particularly the second horse, the red one. It “[takes] peace from the earth [...] that they should kill one another.” That began when Adam and Eve were cast out of Paradise, and the first son killed his brother. From that point on, wars have continued to this day.

In summary, at the epitome of this glorious, global kingdom of Antichrist, the lights will go out. The Church, the light and salt of the earth, is removed. Then, utter darkness will prevail.

Thus, our task is exclusively the building of the Church. When the last “lively stone” is added to that building, it will be perfected.

Spiritual Jew?

Dear Midnight Call,

Various writers have written that the land of Israel is wholly Jewish in the physical sense. For the most part, it started out that way, but even then, a group of peoples, a mixed multitude, came out of Egypt. Also consider that Abraham was a Gentile, as well as Ruth the Moabite, who is in the lineage of Messiah. Also, the prostitute of Jericho, and the fact that Joseph's sons are half-Egyptian.

After Messiah's sacrifice, there was a change from physical to spiritual concerning rules, the temple and priesthood. Messiah was a Jew, and those born of Him are also Jews—like father, like son. They have the same inheritance, promises and citizenship, as the Bible teaches. The mystery that Paul taught in the gospel—which is the Word, the *logos*, Yeshua—is the Spirit, prophecy, and eternal life. That's the standard for holiness we will be judged by, so states the Bible. The mystery was that the Gentiles were being included—grafted into the same tree, starting with Cornelius—and counted as Abraham's seed. Counted by faith, not by physical lineage. Moreover, that was Elohim's plan from the beginning.

The house of Israel—the Kingdom of Yahweh being built—is a spiritual house, where only the holy have access. That's who inhabits Jerusalem and Israel in the soon future. Without Messiah's Spirit, we don't belong to Him, nor are we Israel. A spiritual birth makes one a Jew!

-L. Tiller, ON, Canada

Answer: Your last sentence is incorrect: "A spiritual birth makes one a Jew." Galatians 3:28 speaks of the perfect unity in Christ Jesus: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Yet, a male continues to be a male and a female continues to be a female. Thus it is with the Jew; he remains a Jew, and a "Greek" (Gentile) remains a Gentile. A Gentile does not become a Jew by the rebirth.

Preeminent Catholic Church?

Dear Mr. Froese,

I am a Catholic, but I do enjoy your wise stories profoundly, especially "World Focus" and this section.

Thank you for not being too offensive or crude to my religion. I do respect yours too.

I enjoy greatly and appreciate your answers and/or stories on Freemasonry, secret societies and the New World Order. Not many publica-

tions nowadays are 100 percent independent and unbiased; some are even under the influence of our common enemy.

(But) I am very proud of two things: my church (aside from the Jewish faith) is the only one founded by Christ. The rest were founded by men.

Secondly, when you visit the Vatican Museum, you can't walk out without a sense of respect and admiration for how long the Catholic Church defended the Old World against the hordes of non-religious or Muslim invasions. We defended your and my culture, language and customs.

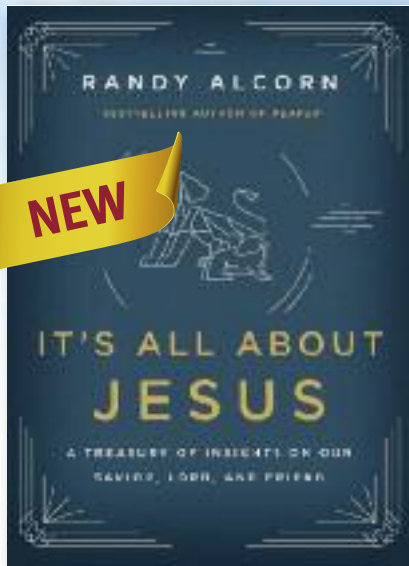
If not for the Catholic Church and the pope, we all could easily by now be speaking a completely different language and lifestyle.

-H. Tejada, AZ

Answer: Acts 2 describes the birth of the Church in Jerusalem; from there it spread throughout Asia, Europe and the rest of the world. Earthly institutions by whatever name are a different identity, often with no relationship to the real Church—the invisible one, the body of Christ, the spiritual temple, which has been in the building process for 2,000 years. One day it will be completed, totally independent of earthly denominations. The real Church is the one of which Jesus declared: "I will build my church."

It is dangerous to confuse earthly institutions, by whatever name, with the spiritual one. To be a member of that Church, a person must be born again. It is the only holy nation and is found on all continents and in every country on planet earth. First Peter 2:9 defines this spiritual entity, which has no relationship to any country, church denomination, or missionary organization. When the last one from among the Gentiles is added to this spiritual temple, this habitation of God—the Church—it will be removed into the presence of the Lord, as documented in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18. Your church and all others were established by man, authorized by the prevailing law of the land and, in most cases, subsidized by the government. (MC)

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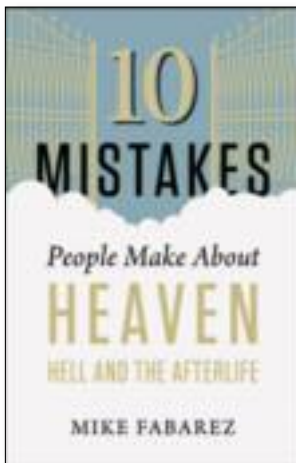
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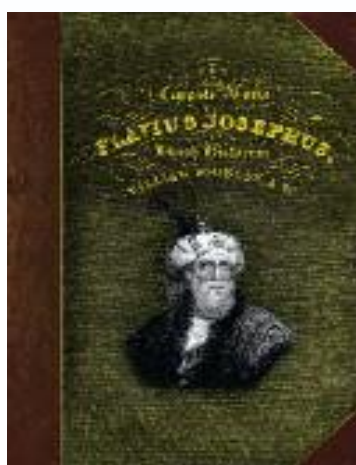
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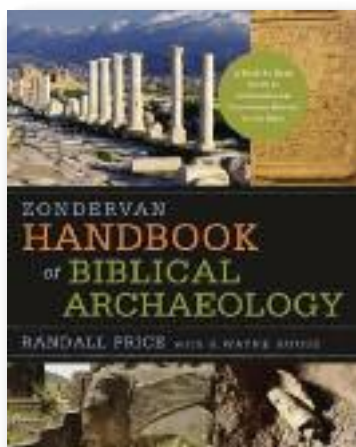
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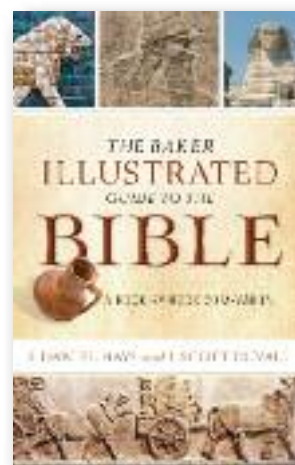


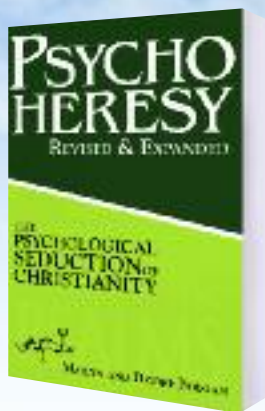
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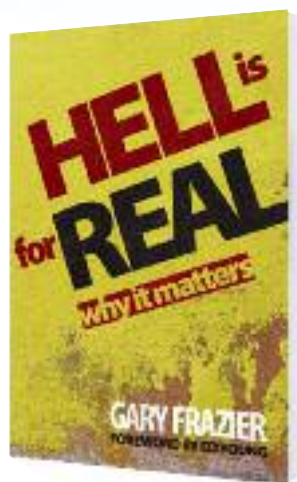
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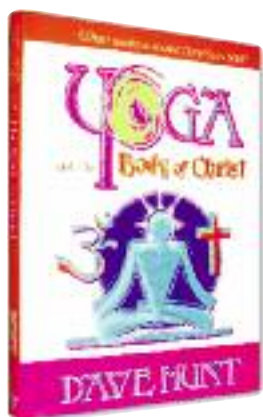
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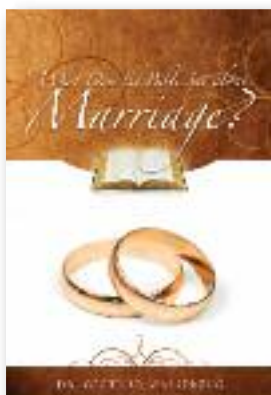
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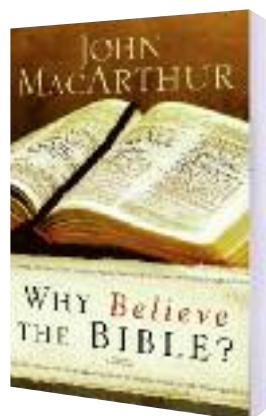
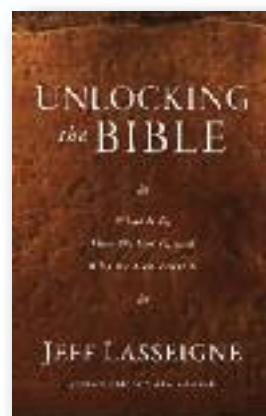
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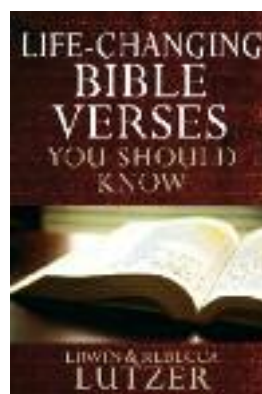
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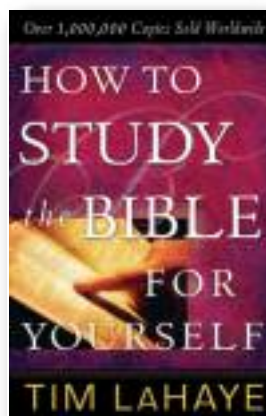
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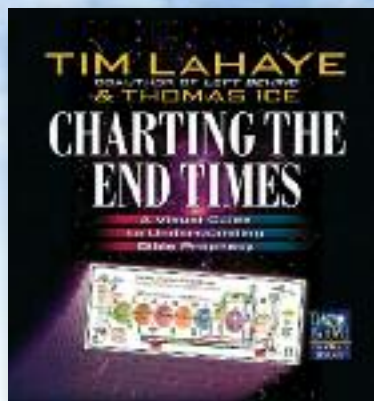
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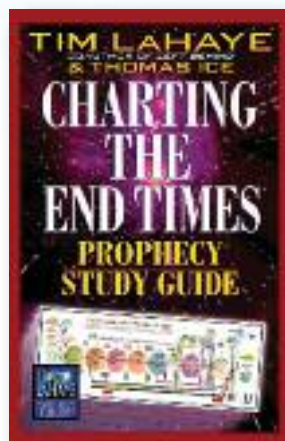
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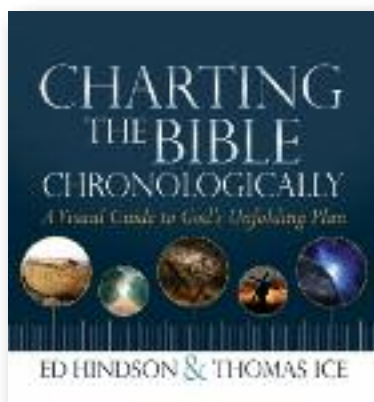
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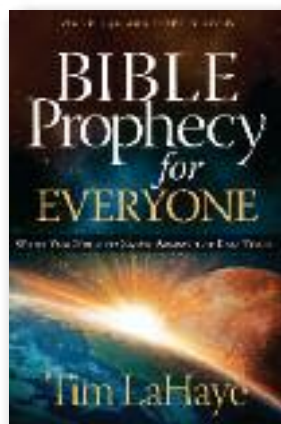
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