

The International Prophetic Voice for the Endtimes

Midnight Call

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Super Clearance!



SHALOM CHAVERIM
ITEM #9084 • 50 min.
Vocal CD
~~\$15~~ \$5

Shalom Chaverim or “Peace Be With You” is a collection of popular Israeli songs, some based on Scripture, others originating with well-known composers;

plus, three are by Peter van Woerden, nephew of Corrie ten Boom.

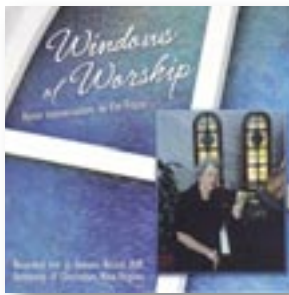
Govert Roos, a “natural musical talent,” is just a pleasure to listen to. The music was recorded live by our Romanian coworkers. Ghighi Iovin teams up with Govert Roos on tracks 7 and 10.



WITH LOVE TO ISRAEL
ITEM #9085 • 50 min.
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vivid expression of a closeness to the Jewish people. One of the major guidelines for his music is contained in the words of Psalm 137:5: “If I forget you, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its skill.” This is the main reason why he is wholeheartedly singing and playing for Israel and Jerusalem.



WINDOWS OF WORSHIP
ITEM #9062 • CD • 46 min.
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Come Into His Presence by Michael Shull will lead you through 28 of the most beloved Christian hymns, starting with *Sweet Hour of Prayer* and concluding with *God*

Be With You. This instrumental presentation (dulcimer) will touch your heart and lead you to worship Him, who is the Author and Finisher of our faith.

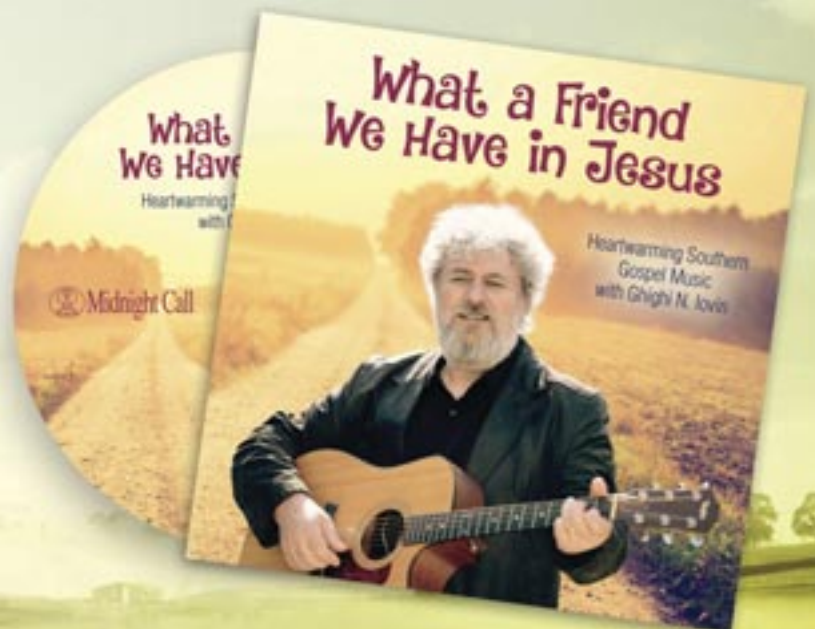
Heartwarming Southern Gospel Music

If you like Southern Gospel music, this CD is well worth the price. Ghighi Iovin sings with his rich, soft voice, well-known gospel songs. A captivating CD, which you will listen to with enthusiasm again and again. Songs include “I Stand Amazed in the Presence,” “Bringing in the Sheaves,” “Burdens Are Lifted at Calvary” and more!

WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS
ITEM #9087 • CD • 50 min.

~~\$11.99~~ \$5

Vocal Lead: Ghighi N. Iovin





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End Time Trinity

By Arno Froese

It is highly significant that after all the horrible events taking place on earth, the people do not mourn over the death and destruction; rather, their sole concern is that they can no longer sell their merchandise. That is the result of the battle of Armageddon. The end has finally come.

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“The Most Beautiful Month of the Year”



By Norbert Lieth

Director of Missions, Midnight Call International

The month of May is without a doubt one of the most beautiful of the year—and not only because it is my wife’s birthday month. New life is springing up everywhere: luxuriant colors dominate the landscape, fresh greenery in the forests and meadows. Animals can once again be seen on the pastures, the calves jumping about and birds chirping; everything is cheerfully coming back to life. It seems as though all of nature is thanking God for His gift of life!

The April of crucifixion and death is behind us; Pentecost and newly awakened life is before us! “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you” (1 Peter 1:3-4).

His church of believers from all nations shall be formed—people from all parts of the world, redeemed and imbued with new, everlasting life. “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever” (v. 23).

May also makes us remember the founding of the State of Israel. In Tel Aviv on 14 May 1948, Ben-Gurion proclaimed the revival of a Jewish State:

“We have waited for this hour for 2000 years. Now it has happened. When the appointed time has come, nothing can withstand God.”

It is interesting to look at the name Tel Aviv: “Tel” means hill, often an old, archaeological hill. “Aviv” means Spring, pointing to something new, emerging, and growing. Putting the two parts together, the name Tel Aviv then means “old new ground.” The Jewish nation existed centuries ago, but it perished in the Jewish wars and its people were scattered across the world. Then, in the 20th century, they began to return and something new emerged. The formerly withered fig tree is back (Mark 11:13; 13:28), albeit still in its dry condition.

In the coming time of the Apocalypse, according to my understanding, its branches will soften and leaves begin to sprout. Many in Israel will find faith in the Messiah, which is symbolized by the softening of branches and growth of leaves. Chapter 7 of Revelation tells us about 144,000 Jews being sealed, 12,000 from each tribe, who are called the “first fruits” and will draw others to follow the Messiah (cf. 14:4). Two witnesses appear in Jerusalem, proclaiming God’s message for 3½ years. Through the amazing events of that time, many more people will turn to the Lord (11:3-13). The coming Messianic kingdom is then about to dawn (v. 15). Many of the new believers in the Messiah will be ready to lay down their lives for Yeshua (12:11). A believing part of Israel

EDITOR'S NOTE

will find refuge from the Dragon in the wilderness (vv. 13-14). An eternal Gospel will be preached (14:6), and the generation that experiences these beginnings of the sprouting fig tree, will also be the one to witness the Lord's return.

A wonderful Old Testament parallel points to that time: "But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown: And I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded ... A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 36:8-10, 26). The main points of these verses are:

- Israel is to become fruitful again (v. 8).
- This is related to the Messiah's return (v. 9).
- Before that, the land will be built up and the cities inhabited again (v. 10).
- Finally, the people will be born anew (v. 26).

May is really a beautiful month; it revives memories of old events, as well as the anticipation of future ones. God says it Himself: "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev 21:5). (MC)

In light of the times, *News From Israel* is a necessary monthly magazine that will keep you updated on breaking developments throughout the Middle East. *News From Israel* uncovers hidden information the news media leaves out!



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Physical Location:

4694 Platt Springs Road

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Founder — Dr. Wim Malgo (1922–92)

International Editor — René Malgo

Executive Editor — Arno Froese

Contributing Authors — Norbert Lieth,

Wilfred Hahn, Dr. Ron J. Bigalke,

Johannes Pflaum, Samuel

Rindlisbacher, René Malgo,

Stephan Beitzke and Thomas Lieth

Layout Designer: Michelle Kim • *Text Typists:* Joel Froese and Susi Steiger

• *Copy Editor:* Kimberly Farmer • *Customer Service:* Andrea

Giles, Kimberly Farmer, Debbie Hale

• *General Manager:* Simon Froese • *Production Manager:* Brian Corbett

• *Pre-Press:* Alec Rucker • *Pressroom:* James D. Bond, Jeff Bowers

and Chad Vining • *Post Press:* Teresa Vining, Melissa Martin, Andrea

Giles, Cyndal Sweet, Stone Hughes and Debbie Hale

• *Special Order:* Andrea Giles • *German-English Translators:* Barbara

Lavery, Melanie Makin and Helga Tirrell

• *Webmasters:* Ricardo Rempel and Matias Steiger

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USA and Canada:

PO Box 84309

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PHONE

Toll free phone: 1-800-845-2420

Local and International: +1 (803) 755-0733

WEBSITE

midnightcall.com

INTERNATIONAL EDITIONS

"Mitternachtsruf" (German) Ringwiesenstrasse 12a, 8600 Dübendorf, Switzerland; "Middernachtsroep" (Dutch) Postbus 193, 3940 AD Doorn, Netherlands; "L'Appel de Minuit" (French) Ringwiesenstrasse 12a, 8600 Dübendorf, Switzerland; "Chamada de Meia Noite" (Portuguese) Obra Missionaria Chamada de Meia Noite, Caixa Postal 1688, 90001-970 Porto Alegre RS, Brazil; "Llamada de Medianoche" (Spanish) PO Box 84309, Lexington, SC 29073; "CDM Italia" (Italian) Via Monte Rosa 88 D, IT 10155 Torino TO; "Ejfele Kialtas" (Hungarian) HU 1135 Budapest, Pálóc utca 2; "Miezul Noptii" (Romanian) O.P. 3, CP. 136, 310540 Arad, Romania

OUR TASK

Midnight Call Ministries is a nonprofit missionary organization, dedicated to proclaiming the entire Bible as the unfailing and eternal written Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and the unerring 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 coming, and to uphold the faith and warn of false doctrines. *Midnight Call* magazine is available in twelve languages. All work done through radio, literature and missionaries is supported entirely by the gifts and free will offerings of God's people.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

WE BELIEVE in the divine inspiration of the whole Bible and therefore 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 Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, lived a sinless life, and shed His blood to save mankind. He died and arose bodily the third day, was seen by over 500, 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 imminent, 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.

End Time Trinity

Material,
Manufacturing,
Merchandise

Arno Froese



“For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High” (Isaiah 14:13-14).

Five times we read the words “I will.” These statements are ascribed to Lucifer. The Hebrew-English translation reads, “O shining one, son of dawn.” Luther says, “Thou beautiful morning star.” The NIV, “O morning star, son of the dawn!” (Isaiah 14:12). It is quite clear he was the leader who rebelled against God. Revelation 12:9 states: “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan.” This fourfold name identifies the same created being, “O Lucifer, son of the morning.”

His fivefold desire is:

1. “I will ascend into heaven”; 2. “I will exalt my throne above the stars of God”; 3. “I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north”; 4. “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds”; 5. “I will be like the most High.”

The late Dr. Ed Vallowe calls attention to the number five by dividing John 3:16:

1. “For God so loved the world,” 2. “that he gave his only begotten Son,” 3. “that whosoever believeth in him,” 4. “should not perish, but,” 5. “have everlasting life.”

Vallowe further comments: “There were five offerings upon the altar of sacrifice:

1. The burnt offering, 2. The peace offering, 3. The sin offering, 4. The trespass offering, 5. The meat offering.”

What is Satan’s plan? To replace God; to produce a counterfeit, thus Antichrist. He has already deceived the world except for the Church. The battle between lies and truth, darkness and light, continues until this day.

Jesus made this prophecy while addressing the Jews: “I am come in my Father’s name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive” (John 5:43). That simply means an imposter will come, and Israel will believe him.

Abraham’s Faith

The key word found throughout Scripture is “faith.” Adam and Eve believed the lie of Satan more than they believed the Word of God; thus, humanity became polluted and was cast out of Paradise, with certain curses declared upon Adam, Eve, and the serpent.

What did God do? He chose one man, Abraham, who received specific promises:

1. His descendants would inherit the land of Canaan from the River of Egypt to the River of Euphrates.

2. The Bible says, “he [Abraham] believed in the Lord; and he [God] counted it to him for righteousness” (Genesis 15:6). He was the first one saved by faith.

3. Unlimited global blessing: “And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

End Time Trinity

Notice “idols” are made from gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood. Those are created materials. Thus, materialism is the key to end time idol worship.

because thou hast obeyed my voice” (Genesis 22:18).

Seeing Is NOT Believing

Bible readers know the story of Israel. They experienced supernatural revelations. God interfered on behalf of Israel by parting the Reed (Red) Sea. They were protected by the pillar of fire at night and cloud by day. Later, they crossed the Jordan River as if on dry ground. But all these visible manifestations of God did not save Israel, did not produce faith.

Real Faith

What is faith? “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). Romans 1:20 further testifies: “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.” Creation itself reveals the invisible God; it is all but impossible to deny God when one studies biology, anthropology, astronomy, or geology. There is a clear pattern revealing the invisible Creator.

Moses was a man of faith. The distinction between the people and him and is declared in Psalm 103:7: “He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.” In Psalm 106:7, we read of Israel’s lack of faith: “Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of

thy mercies; but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea.”

Idolatry

To summarize the entire Old Testament, particularly relating to Israel, we could use one word: idolatry.

Isaiah 40:18-20 declares: “To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him? The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains. He that is so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree that will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, that shall not be moved.”

Materialism

Usually, we associate idols with objects made by man, considered to be divine in various religions. That, of course, is true, but it’s an easy way out. The New Testament reads: “And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk” (Revelation 9:20).

Notice “idols” are made from gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood. Those are created materials. Thus, materialism is the key to end time idol worship. Whatever is manufactured today—while it may be fascinating and amaz-

Why do people pay rent to hold stuff that they don't need in storage? Although there are exceptions, in most cases it's simply idolizing the merchandise they acquired.

ing, such as a mobile phone, for example—is manufactured from materials created by God.

Technology's Progress

Quite often, when in fellowship with friends and family, one quickly observes that particularly the younger generation is not fully participating in the gathering, but rather immersed in a mobile phone, tablet, laptop, etc.

Take, for example, the weather. That was one of the first questions one would ask when making a long-distance call. Today, it's totally unnecessary; at any time, with just one tap on our mobile phones, we can see the current weather and forecast for any place in the world.

During Biblical times, Jesus made this statement: "When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red" (Matthew 16:2). That was the general way to forecast weather during the time of this writer. Today, it's the manufactured electronic devices that enable one to see the weather patterns—not just locally, but globally.

This confirms our increasing dependence on manufactured merchandise.

But there is more: today, there is much talk about artificial intelligence (AI). What can it do? What will it do? In simple terms, make predictions—not only about the weather, but also concerning traffic patterns, investment opportunities, etc., while providing innumerable other helpful suggestions, instructions, and statements about virtually any subject—all in



an instant. But one thing is missing: namely, the most important—acknowledging the Creator.

Modern Idols

In simple terms, an idol is anything you desire to have but you don't need. This became very evident some years ago, when I visited one of my sons in a settlement (subdivision in the US) on our walk one Saturday evening. Taking careful notice of garages that were open, we observed that 7 out of 10 were filled with merchandise, providing no room for the intended purpose: parking one's car.

Driving around town, one notices a new type of business: self-storage. Here is what storable.com writes:

At each of these self-storage facilities, people pay rent—usually by the month—to store their stuff in units of various sizes. They could be stashing furniture, art, appliances, TVs, documents, holiday decorations, wine, vehicles, boats or RVs.

End Time Trinity

What is an idol? Something I don't need—in reality, useless. So, the question: why do we buy things we don't need? Because we pay heed to the merchandizers' promotions and marketing, convincing us that we actually must have their merchandise.

Why do people pay rent to hold stuff that they don't need in storage? Although there are exceptions, in most cases it's simply idolizing the merchandise they acquired.

The article then adds: “By one estimate, the typical profit margin of a self-storage business in the U.S. is 11%. ... the typical profit margin of a restaurant ranges from 3% to 5%.” Apparently, these facilities are quite profitable for the business owner. The person who becomes a customer of the self-storage facility, had no space in their home or garage to store the merchandise they bought but don't need. Most are not willing to part with it, because it has become an idol—a product that cannot speak, hear, walk, advise you, or give you help in times of need. Welcome to modern idolatry.

Celebrities

We could also analyze celebrities, whether in entertainment or sports, who have become idols to vast numbers of the world's population.

Take actors, for example. What is he or she? A person who mimics being somebody else. They have to act in such a fashion that the actor almost becomes the character they are portraying. But in reality, it's fake; presenting a lie. Ancient Roman writings reveal that actors were categorized on the same level as prostitutes. *Webster's New World College Dictionary* states:

“a person, as a writer, artist, etc. who sells his or her service”—clearly indicating the substitute for something real.

Checking the internet, there are dozens of firms that specialize in collecting and selling everything from headwear to socks: clothing worn by stars (idols) to be resold at an exorbitant price. A pair of socks from a top US idol would fetch over \$100,000.

Whenever faith in the living Creator has been displaced by merchandise, idolatry is the natural result.

What is an idol? Something I don't need—in reality, useless. So, the question: why do we buy things we don't need? Because we pay heed to the merchandizers' promotions and marketing, convincing us that we actually must have their merchandise. We believe it; we buy it; we store it. But we really don't need it.

Wrong Faith

Our original parents, Adam and Eve, believed the words of the serpent more than they believed the Word of God. Later, the dispensation of the Law came to Moses. But, we can say with assurance, the chosen nation Israel failed. Why? No faith. What was the result? “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh” (Romans 8:3).

With the advances of the Industrial Revolution, the development of food production increased with almost unbelievable speed. In olden days, over 95% of the working population was involved in producing food.

Church Age

From Acts 2, we learn of the birth of the Church in Jerusalem: “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls” (Acts 2:41). They believed; they received the Word. From that point on, the Church went through various stages of prosperity and persecution. This is documented for us in the first three chapters of the book of Revelation. Yet, the Church continues to grow to this day.

The Old Hymns

In the history of the Church, there are hundreds of thousands of ancient hymns, which all had one thing in common; namely, trust in the accomplished work of Christ—worshipping Him and Him alone. When reading some of the old hymns dating back to the 14th century, we notice the authors’ reliance on God: deeply humbling oneself, depending on God’s mercy and grace.

Reliance on God was emphasized in the agricultural industry, since over 95% of the population would be working from dawn to dusk for food, clothing, and shelter.

Back in 1529, Martin Luther prayed: “A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing; our helper he, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.” That was essential; protection from danger was placed in the hands of God.

Depending on God

Prayers and supplication to God clearly revealed their dependence upon Him. Without rain or sunshine, there would be no crop; people would starve. To work 6 days a week, 12 to 18 hours a day, just to make ends meet, was not something unusual but the order of the day. We may summarize the condition of the people before the Industrial Revolution with the prayer of the publican (tax collector), “God be merciful to me a sinner” (Luke 18:13b).

This writer still remembers his father opening the old, yellowed prayer book, wherein was repeated the supplication, “Save us from war, from flood, fire, drought, pestilence and starvation.” Incidentally, war was a nearly continuous condition throughout the European continent; that is well-documented in history.

Industrial Revolution

With the advances of the Industrial Revolution, the development of food production increased with almost unbelievable speed. In olden days, over 95% of the working population was involved in producing food. But today, mechanized agriculture employs less than 2% of the workforce in the industrialized world, producing an over-abundance of food.

While farmers 200-300 years ago prayed that the crop would grow and the animals would increase, the target of prayer has moved

End Time Trinity

Actually, assembly lines are more and more being dominated by robots. They are working faster, more precisely, and in a more reliable manner; not getting tired, not getting sick, and producing high-quality products in great abundance the world over.



from God to the equipment—may it last longer, may it not break down.

Here we must recall that everything—even the most primitive plow, pitchfork, or steam engine—was built from created materials: iron, coal, oil, copper, silver, gold, etc.

Someone recently said the following: “The devil, with a clump of clay in his hands, approached God and said, ‘I too can create man out of this,’ to which God answered, ‘Get your own clay.’”

Dependence on Material

While the Industrial Revolution was limited to Europe in its early stages, it later spread to the European colonies around the world. Machines, built from created material, became so sophisticated that the average farmer could no longer repair broken equipment, much less properly operate it without a trained technician instructing the farmer. Welcome to computer-guided technology!

Not many people in the industrialized world pray to God for sunshine and rain to make the crops grow, and ask God to increase their flocks and herds. That’s old-fashioned. Modern agriculture produces an over-abundance of high-quality food, so that almost 46% is wasted.

Hungry? Just drive to the nearest supermarket. You will find the shelves loaded with a variety of products our parents and grandparents would have been startled to see. Not to mention the fact that we do not have to go to the horse stable and attach the carriage to drive to the grocery store. We sit in an air-conditioned, comfortable vehicle, with all the amenities that kings and queens could not have even dreamed of a few centuries ago.

Where does this lead us? Very simply, away from God and toward dependence on technology, manufactured from created materials.

Manufacturers

Manufacturers have developed assembly lines, producing merchandise 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Each year, products are of higher quality than the previous year.

Actually, assembly lines are more and more being dominated by robots. They are working faster, more precisely, and in a more reliable manner; not getting tired, not getting sick, and producing high-quality products in great abundance the world over.

Today, merchandizers are the largest employers in the world; for example, Walmart has 2.2 million employees; China Railway, 2 million; McDonald's, 1.9 million; China National Petroleum Corporation, 1.6 million; Amazon, 1.5 million. These companies are not producing merchandise, they are the merchandizers—they buy and they sell.

It's no longer just food, clothing, and shelter; that's a given. Today, the world's nations are in competition with each other to manufacture high-quality products at low cost. We must add, many of the products we purchase are not essential: we just want it! Overfilled dumping grounds testify to that fact.

Merchandizers

Studies show that merchandise has become a major contributor in avoiding military conflict. It is all but impossible to imagine France attacking Germany or England the USA.

It is noteworthy that today, armed conflict is mostly found between countries not fully industrialized. The whole world has become a giant, interconnected factory, with nations running assembly lines virtually nonstop to produce merchandise; often, making things that are non-essential—in fact, idols.

Today, merchandizers are the largest employers in the world; for example, Walmart has 2.2 million employees; China Railway, 2 million; McDonald's, 1.9 million; China National Petroleum Corporation, 1.6 million; Amazon, 1.5 million. These companies are not producing merchandise, they are the merchandizers—they buy and they sell.

For instance, the UK has a population of 60 million and a workforce of 30 million; only 1%

is employed in agriculture, with 25% in industry, and 74% in services.

With the explosion of high-tech industry, dependence on God has substantially decreased. Merchandise has become the god of the end times!

Revelation

With this statement, we come to the very end of civilization as recorded in the book of Revelation. This book is relatively small—only 11,950 words, and it can be read in about 3 hours.

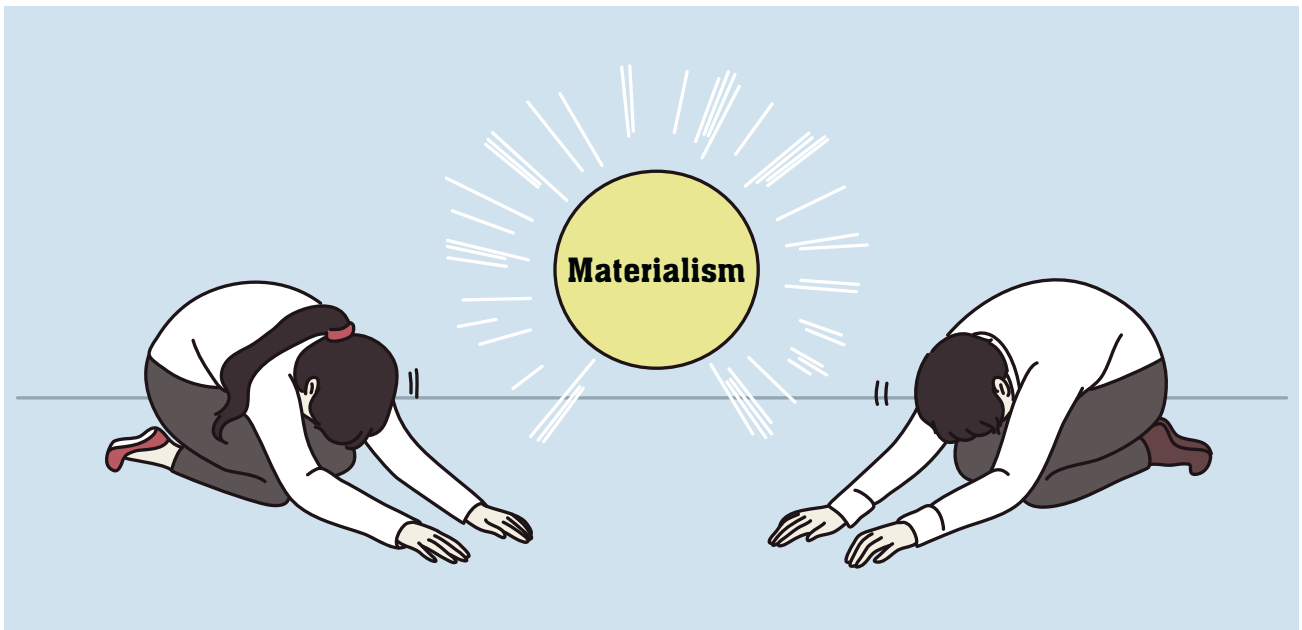
Revelation 18:3 states: “For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.”

Interestingly, the merchants are not of a certain country, but “of the earth”—that is global.

It is highly significant that after all the horrible events taking place on earth, the people do not mourn over the death and destruction; rather, as verse 11 testifies: “And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more.” Their sole concern is that they can no longer sell their merchandise. That is the result of the battle of Armageddon. It is the total disintegration of the global economy; the end has finally come.

End Time Trinity

The people of the world are not repenting or asking for forgiveness, but praying to “the rocks of the mountains.” That’s the very place from which they have taken the material to manufacture their merchandise. Now they pray to God-created material for help; they worship materialism.



Hiding Behind Created Material

One more item to conclude the message: “And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; 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” (Revelation 6:15-16).

The people of the world are not repenting or asking for forgiveness, but praying to “the rocks of the mountains.” That’s the very place from which they have taken the material to manufacture their merchandise. Now they pray to God-created material for help; they worship materialism.

It is of interest how the founders of communism viewed material:

For Marx and Engels, materialism meant that the material world, perceptible to the senses, has objective reality independent of mind or spirit. They did not deny the reality of mental or spiritual processes but affirmed that ideas could arise, therefore, only as products and reflections of material conditions.

-www.britannica.com

Finally, they see the created material from which they manufactured merchandise, being exposed by the wrath of the Lamb. But too late. Praying to the material, “the mountains and rocks,” is in vain, and that for all eternity. (MC)



WORLD ECONOMIC CONTROL PROPHESED: ARE WE THERE YET? PART 1



Vladimir Lenin, the one-time head of Soviet Russia, was quoted as saying: "There are decades where nothing happens, and there are weeks where decades happen." Breathtakingly, an acceleration of that magnitude appears to have unfolded in the early months of 2020.

By Wilfred Hahn

No sooner did the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the globe, that a new future for the world seemed to have already been well pre-planned. One cannot be blamed for thinking that a cadre of policymakers around the world had been waiting for the next crisis.

Crises, whatever their kind, act as catalysts in human affairs. Panicked fears and societal uncertainties serve as an impetus for new and unorthodox policy decisions by political leaders and policymakers. Of course, many of these are well-meaning, but also may have deleterious consequences.

However, one does not need to invoke far-fetched conspiracy theories to explain why crises come about ... how they are triggered, and how they prey upon common and predictable human behaviors. In this respect, crises

are a normal feature of mankind's societies; they have been the constant companion of human existence.

Crucially, however, there is one conspiracy of cosmological dimensions that has been playing out over many generations of humans. It is a conspiracy that requires no speculation, being clearly mentioned in the Bible.

"A master of intrigue will arise" (Daniel 8:23). He will "[...] take his stand against the Prince of princes" (verse 25). The power behind him is Satan himself. Also, Psalm 2:1-2 reveals that all the world's rulers will take a stand against God at that time. A hierarchy of evil and dark forces work in unison and coordination to that goal (Ephesians 6:12).

Conveniently, crises can serve as a clandestine cover under which to push forward a long-term agenda against God. For example,



We live in an age where globalization has progressed rapidly (though possibly experiencing an ebb for a while); a global brotherhood of man through the common interests of commerce, speaking as if with one language and objective.



never to be reversed or lost. It is similar with policymaking in respect to human rights, centralization of power, globalism, censorship, central banking, etc. These humanist advances are often one-way developments: give an inch, and when a facilitating crisis arrives, then take a mile.

An undeniable trait of history is that a genuine crisis—whether health-related, economic, of public safety and/or civic order—always and every-

mankind is very vulnerable to fear and greed. Satan knows this very well. He therefore surely loves hyperactive financial markets around the world. He ruthlessly uses these human penchants and weaknesses to his advantage.

It is therefore reasonable to accept that crises and their attendant human responses of fear and panic, do play into the glove of those who have an agenda to advance. They can seize the opportunity of a populace that is willing to compromise or accept a loss of freedom for the sake of security and prosperity.

These trade-offs lead down a very treacherous road ... one that is well-documented throughout history, and also in the Bible, as we will show. Why? Because such changes and trends borne of crises are usually cumulative and not easily reversed.

Consider the advances of science and technology. These are always a step leading forward,

where enhances the powers of top-down, authoritarian leadership.

Without a doubt, these types of nefarious shifts are being witnessed in bright lights around the world today. In fact, this writer would even state that these “ripening” trends have accelerated as perhaps never before in recent years ... now kicked into supersonic speed following the latest global crises.

Consider that Freedom House, even before 2020 ever arrived, had already counted 14 consecutive years of declining freedom worldwide.¹ Looking ahead, it would not be surprising to observe this trend to be in further freefall.

We live in an age where globalization has progressed rapidly (though possibly experiencing an ebb for a while); a global brotherhood of man through the common interests of commerce, speaking as if with one language and objective.

The rebellious unification of world rulers and elites against God and His Son Jesus Christ is already far advanced.

Essential to this agenda is a final financial entrapment of all mankind, to force all to worship the Antichrist. Economic captivity therefore plays a key role in the last days. A diabolical trapper has been setting in place an endtime money snare.

How did the world get to this late date ... this rendezvous with History? It required a lot of planning and plotting ... forward steps followed by backward steps, then again forward.

The end goal is to entirely entrap humanity, allowing him fewer and fewer options. Ultimately, a stern world ruler (Daniel 8:23) will be revealed, forcing humanity to comply with his agenda of rebellion.

As already mentioned, it is a plot to which the Bible testifies. In fact, right from the first Book of Genesis, an endtime program of enslavement of mankind is foreshadowed.

In the Beginning a Blueprint

Bible scholars say that the entirety of Scripture is enfolded in its first book. As such, one will also discover that much prophecy is foreshadowed in the Book of Genesis.

Consider the Biblical account of Joseph, seen as a wondrous story. However, in our interpretation, it provides a surprising endtime conspiratorial blueprint, which is urgently germane to our day.

Readers will surely be shocked to learn that the story of Joseph would offer just such a perspective. After all, wasn't the story of Joseph about the remarkable rise of a young man, who

had been sold by his brothers to Midianite traders traveling to Egypt? Starting out as a slave, he eventually rose to the very top of that era's geopolitical echelon, as a chief regent of Pharaoh. Egypt at that time was the most powerful country in the world.

How did Joseph come to this position?

While Joseph was in prison in Egypt (after being falsely accused by Potiphar's wife), Pharaoh experienced a vision of seven "fat and sleek" cows coming out of the Nile. These were followed by seven ugly and lean cows, who then ate up the seven fat cows. He was perplexed. He then saw a second vision, which repeated the message of the first. Only this time, it was seven full heads of seeds, followed by seven heads that had been withered and scorched.

However, Pharaoh and his entourage were not able to decipher the meaning of these dreams. And so, Joseph was called out of prison to interpret the meaning of the vision, as he had done before for his two jail-cell companions. He told Pharaoh that the visions revealed God's plan to allow seven years of abundance in Egypt, to be followed by seven years of famine.

God had enabled Joseph to interpret Pharaoh's dream, as well as recommend a public works program. In response, Pharaoh appointed Joseph to prepare the nation for a seven-year drought. He was put in charge of the entire kingdom.

Just as Joseph had said, seven years of abundance did occur, which were followed by seven years of famine. While other lands had no grain, in the whole land of Egypt there was plenty of food.

It then becomes a very heart-rending story. It reveals what humanity will do in order to



Consider the Biblical account of Joseph, seen as a wondrous story. However, in our interpretation, it provides a surprising endtime conspiratorial blueprint, which is urgently germane to our day.

quell the pangs of hunger ... to be saved from a crisis of whatever kind. In desperate times, having little choice, people will strike bad deals ... ceding freedoms and increasing their vulnerability to rich despots and totalitarian regimes.

Fourteen years later, the entire commercial and societal structure of the known world at that time, as well as almost all the land in Egypt, came under the control of one man—Pharaoh—due to Joseph’s management. Pharaoh ended up becoming an all-powerful, economic potentate. Such was the case in Egypt almost 4,000 years ago, when Joseph reigned as vice-regent.

How did this happen? A more detailed examination of this account reveals many levels of prophetic foreshadowing: these serving to provide endtime warnings for the world and Christians living today.

A Sometime Misinterpreted Story?

The Bible story of Joseph, one of the 12 sons of Jacob, is a popular favorite of children and adults alike. Not only does it celebrate the ultimate blessings that accrued to a righteous man, but it also shows how God can miraculously enter into the seemingly unfortunate occurrences of our lives, and ultimately work them out for good (Romans 8:28).

However, now with new eyes, the account of Joseph’s deeds raises many questions.

Joseph began the operation of stockpiling the harvested grain of the seven fat years. According to the original edict (Genesis 41:34-35), Joseph

and his commissioners were to take one-fifth of the harvest and store the grain inside the cities. Joseph did not pay for the excess grain; he collected one-fifth as a tax.

During the seven bountiful years, the stockpiles eventually became so large that he was no longer able to keep an account of their size (v. 49).

Then, as was prophesied, “The seven years of abundance in Egypt came to an end” (v. 53).

When Egypt and other lands “began to feel the famine, the people cried to Pharaoh for food. Then Pharaoh told all the Egyptians, ‘Go to Joseph and do what he tells you’” (v. 55). And they did so.

Then “Joseph opened the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians” (v. 56).

Scripture tells us that, receiving payment, Joseph collected all the money that was found in Egypt and Canaan. Again, we note that Joseph collected ALL of the money in these lands as payment. Joseph took every last penny in return for grain, so that people might eat and be saved from the famine.

What was the result? Joseph then controlled all payment specie. He deposited all of this money into Pharaoh’s coffers. (MC)

(To be continued next issue.)

ENDNOTE

- 1 <https://freedomhouse.org/article/media-restrictions-today-will-harm-democracy-tomorrow>

Living in the Last Days

DR. RON J. BIGALKE



Perseverance is one of the most frequently used words throughout the New Testament Epistles. God’s people are continually exhorted to persevere. Why? Because we experience challenges, difficulties, and opposition that prevent us from persevering. Consequently, we find the continual encouragement to persevere.

Most people were not familiar with *The Lord of the Rings* prior to the release of the movie. Perhaps now most are, at least, aware of the general plot. One of the primary characters, Frodo, must bring the accursed “ring of power” (a symbol of evil) to be destroyed in Mordor, where it was forged by Sauron, the Dark Lord, who is the primary antagonist. Throughout the fic-

tion series (whether the book or movie), Frodo’s perseverance is apparent. Frodo is always aware of the tremendous duty that is his alone. Realizing the challenges, difficulties, and opposition to persevere, Frodo remarks repeatedly, “I know what I must do.”

In Hebrews 12, the Bible teaches us that same perseverance. “Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us,

Living in the Last Days

We are taught by both example and precept to persevere (in the lives of Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, Daniel, Paul, and others). Repeatedly, the Bible exhorts the people of God to persevere.

let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

We are taught by both example and precept to persevere (in the lives of Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, Daniel, Paul, and others). Repeatedly, the Bible exhorts the people of God to persevere. The supreme example of perseverance is the Lord Jesus Christ, “who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame.” Despite hardship or opposition—whether emotional, physical, or spiritual—all those who trust in Christ for salvation are encouraged to persevere. Life can be a challenge, especially when seeking to live in a manner pleasing to God. The Bible is all truth, and by persevering with integrity, the believer experiences Scripture’s transforming power in order to endure.

THE WARNING

(2 Tim 3:1-9) “In the last days,” human depravity will be progressively worse, posing a very real challenge for those pursuing faithfulness to God. The “last days” refers to the time from the Lord’s first coming to His return (i.e., the interadvent age). The days are “last” because they comprise the final extent of the

present church age. A primary component of godly living is having the proper view of the future. The concept of hope directly affects the believer’s perspective for the future. The hope of a believer involves the ultimately righteous outcome of history and human concerns; the expectation of bodily resurrection; and the anticipation that even in the present, there are opportunities and privileges for service, in addition to the Lord’s gracious provision for every need of His people.

Biblical hope also considers human nature with a candid realism, by understanding the direction of history prior to the second coming of Jesus Christ. For example, the book of Judges appears to convey that history tends to deteriorate as a result of human depravity. Certainly, this idea is evident in the early history of humanity prior to the Genesis Flood, and is manifest again in Jesus’ prophecy of the future in Matthew 24—25. Nevertheless, the grace of God also characterizes “the last days,” in that salvation is available for “whosoever” will believe (John 3:16-21, 36).

The characteristics of ungodliness, as described in verses 2-5, are similar to present times. Therefore, what Scripture says is quite important. “Lovers of self” is the first item on the list of moral evils, which is understandable since it is the essence of all sin and the source from which all the other characteristics arise. Self-love results in desires that consume the soul. The new birth in Christ is intended to



Many people today have little respect for God and virtually no humility in the presence of rightful authority. “Revilers” speak evil, especially concerning God. Boastful, arrogant blasphemers act as if they are the most important. Sadly, many live as if God does not matter nor anyone else.

cause individuals not to live any longer “for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf” (2 Cor 5:15).

The primary concern of self-lovers is their own desires, so naturally they will love the money that can supply those yearnings. “Boastful” people always want all the attention, and thus make a big display of themselves. “Arrogant” refers to those who exalt themselves above others. Many people today have little respect for God, and virtually no humility in the presence of rightful authority. “Revilers” speak evil, especially concerning God. Boastful, arrogant blasphemers act as if they are the most important. Sadly, many live as if God does not matter nor anyone else.

“Disobedient to parents” is another example of self-will. In the Old Testament, God is the Father of Israel. Jesus claimed God as His Father and taught His followers to do the same. Believers relate to God as Father through Jesus the Son. God is Father, not only in that He is the Creator, but also because He is the Savior. When the emphasis is on self, people believe they deserve more than they already have. Therefore, it is important to be reminded, “Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above” (Jas 1:17a). Thus, one should

respond with gratitude to God for His good grace.

The “unholy” are those lacking inner purity, and who may even scoff at such a notion (cf. 1 Tim 1:9). To be “unloving” is to live without natural affection, particularly toward one’s blood relations. Those who are “irreconcilable” are implacable and find it natural to be “malicious gossips,” which is to partake of the character of Satan. “Without self-control” means to be without any restraint; they become “brutal” (inhuman savages), despising any goodness. The persons described are entirely contrary to the spirit of Christ, who is “gentle and humble in heart” (Matt 11:29).

Having described those who only seek their own desires, with virtually no thought of how others will be affected, such individuals also have little interest in matters of eternal significance. They are, therefore, disrespectful toward spiritual things, even while trying to maintain a godly façade (2 Tim 3:4-5). Being passionate to gratify fleshly pleasures (v. 6), they are “always learning”—simply for the sake of interest in novel ideas (simply because something is new)—yet are “never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” (v. 7).

Living in the Last Days

The individuals described are compared to “Jannes and Jambres [who] opposed Moses” (v. 8). There is always someone to oppose the truth. “In the last days,” such people will become progressively worse. Based upon the reference to the burden of guilt (v. 6), it would seem they primarily oppose the doctrine of human lostness (depravity) and the need for redemption.

While it may seem that devilish individuals, and the proliferation of false ideas and philosophies, are overcoming the truth, Scripture affirms that such apparent successes are temporary: “they will not make further progress” (v. 9). God’s power and truth will expose the foolishness (“folly”) to everyone, even as Jannes and Jambres were eventually shamed because their power was inadequate and limited. Deceptions and lies deteriorate, and in such ruins, the false beliefs of those who devised them are revealed for their inherent foolishness. God is sovereign, and the anti-Christ spirit of the last days will never overcome the Lord.

THE CHARGE

(2 Tim 3:10-17) What can God’s people expect in the last days? The distinct manner in which a follower of Christ lives (his or her “teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance”) will result in “persecutions, and sufferings” (vv. 10-11). The life of faith will always result in opposition sooner or later (v. 12), because “evil men and imposters will proceed from bad to worse” (v. 13). Conflict is inevitable when believers’ commitment to the living Word and written Word are directly

opposed to the ideas and practices of the world in general. A godly lifestyle will convict others of sin; for that reason, it will always bring forth a volatile response from unbelievers.

In difficult times and circumstances, it is not uncommon to feel discouraged, even hopeless and weary. When those feelings arise, it is always good to refocus attention upon what is truth (vv. 14-15). People act in accordance with their beliefs. Faithful living is possible when possessing knowledge of the truth, and then acting in accordance with those beliefs in one’s daily decisions, in addition to the behaviors in which one engages. The reality of faith in God is proved by endurance.

God’s truth includes “all Scripture” (v. 16), which means the entire Old and New Testaments. The phrase “inspired by God” is derived from the Greek *theopneustos* (θεόπνευστος), meaning “God-breathed.” The origin of Scripture is God, and the Bible represents His thought. God took the initiative and gave His truth through the Holy Spirit, who impelled erring humans as penmen, yet miraculously superintended them as they wrote, thereby preventing any error or omission in Scripture. Scripture is “God-breathed,” and can be trusted as inerrant and infallible. The trustworthiness of Scripture means it is credible and worthy of belief. God gave His Word to reveal Himself and His will for humanity. Scripture makes errant humans wise unto salvation, and hearing and heeding it will certainly grant you the strength and wisdom needed for living in the last days (v. 17).

(1203)



Traces of a Mother



PAOLO MINDER

Mother's Day has been celebrated for over 100 years. Some thoughts from a biblical perspective.

The first known official celebration of a mother took place in West Virginia in 1907. Anna Marie Jarvis (1864-1948), a Methodist, wanted to commemorate her late mother, Ann Jarvis. A pastor's wife, she founded the Mothers' Day Work Clubs in 1858, to promote healthy families and counteract the high child mortality rate. The clubs collected dona-

tions and used them to buy medicine and arrange housekeeping for families where the mother had tuberculosis.

On the second Sunday in May 1908, a year after the first memorial service at the Methodist Church in Grafton, all mothers were again solemnly commemorated at Anna Marie Jarvis's urging. Anna Marie had 500 red and white car-

Traces of a Mother

New life is born: perfect, full of potential, and wonderfully made, down to his tiny fingers and toes. And at the same time, this new life is so fragile that he depends completely on his mother's care.

nations distributed to other mothers in honor of her own. Since then, the custom of commemorating mothers has spread around the world. We want to come back to this originally appreciative purpose, even if commercial interests are threatening to crowd out the real sentiments of Mother's Day.



What Does It Mean to Be a Mother?

When Adam named his wife Eve, it was “because she was the mother of all living” (Gen 3:20). God Himself is no longer the sole creator, but man and woman are brought into the miracle of “Project Life.” New life arises through conception. A woman becomes a (biological) mother by giving birth to life.

Consider the woman in labor. After strenuous exertion and birthing pains, the newborn sees the light of day. It is often a midwife who delivers the baby, and her next words are mostly in praise of the mother. The newborn is placed in the mother's arms and onto her stomach as quickly as possible. If he hasn't already, the newborn calms down and cuddles up to his mother. Sometimes, he even tries to nurse without having been taught.

This moment illustrates motherhood. New life is born: perfect, full of potential, and wonderfully made, down to his tiny fingers and toes. And at the same time, this new life is so fragile that he depends completely on his mother's

care. Otherwise, he wouldn't survive. The only person a baby “knows” at this age is his mother and her voice. He's safe with her. This relationship is so unique that it's difficult to explain. One example to illustrate:

Two women once came to see King Solomon, both claiming to be the birth mother of a single baby. Solomon ordered that a sword be brought to cut the baby in two, with half given to each woman. Then the woman whose child the baby truly was (the real mother) said, “Oh, my lord, give her the living child, and by no means put him to death.” But the other woman said, “He shall be neither mine nor yours; divide him.” Solomon understood the unique relationship of a mother to her child, and used it to determine who the true mother was (1 Kings 3:16-28). “Her heart yearned for her son” (v. 26).

A Mother Is Multi-Talented

Despite gender mainstreaming and the fact that society no longer believes that biology defines gender (unlike in the past), women are still needed to give birth to life. “Surrogate mother” is a term and concept still used in LGBT circles. It takes a mother to care for new life. They nurse the newborn and, beyond mere nourishment, provide the feelings of safety and security through touch. The resulting healthy bond is unique and lasts a lifetime.

The formative and educational dimension of motherhood, can be seen in all forms of love—serving, explaining, admonishing, comforting, listening, paying attention, spending time, teaching what matters in life, teaching good from bad, fearing God, suffering when a child strays...

We could list a number of areas that a mother assumes responsibility for in her child's life. Just some of these are life-giver, breadwinner, caretaker, nanny, teacher, comforter, organizer, chief financial officer, administrator, cook, mediator, judge, advocate, decorator (cf. Prov 31:10-31). A mother isn't just busy, she's multi-vocational. Her work is so important that it can't be calculated or defined as a percentage of the household income. And when a mother is employed outside the home for whatever reason, she is doing something almost supernatural. She's expected to be on call 24 hours a day.

Most of the time, the mother is also the final authority when it comes to how well the household works together. Her contribution is crucial! She's like the Secretary of the Interior, responsible for the house's wellbeing; whereas the father is more like the Secretary of State, ensuring that his family is protected at home and can thrive under the best conditions possible.

At the same time, it's important to consider that if a mother wants to do everything as perfectly as possible, it can result in self-imposed excessive demands. She is exposing herself to permanent overload, which quickly leads to exhaustion and discouragement—and not all mothers have equal strength or resilience.

Every mother deserves the highest respect! "Her children rise up and call her blessed; her

husband also, and he praises her" (Prov 31:28). Happy is the house where such mothers live. They deserve all possible praise.

Bathsheba, King Solomon's mother, came before him with a request that he was unable to grant. Nonetheless, the first thing he did was have another throne set up to his right, beside his own, and ask her to be seated. Solomon honored his mother (1 Kings 2:19).

From Exodus 20:12 ("Honor your father and your mother...") to Proverbs 23:22 ("...do not despise your mother when she is old"), we are urged to honor our mothers all their lives.

A Mother Is a Role Model

Every mother impacts her environment. Her influence through her intense, direct relationship with her child is the most important factor. "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov 22:6).

The formative and educational dimension of motherhood, can be seen in all forms of love—serving, explaining, admonishing, comforting, listening, paying attention, spending time, teaching what matters in life, teaching good from bad, fearing God, suffering when a child strays...

God has specially equipped mothers to often know instinctively what's going on, and how to handle it. It's crucial for fathers and husbands to support her in all areas, and to work with

Traces of a Mother

There is no such thing as a perfect mother. But there are mothers who always want the best for their child, and that's enough!



her for the children's well-being. It's equally important that they protect the mother's position and authority; not just in front of the children, but possibly also in front of the in-laws.

Mothers in Christ

In Scripture, mothers illustrate aspects of God's love and actions: "As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you" (Isa 66:13). David says, "But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child is my soul within me" (Ps 131:2).

David and Isaiah use the image of a mother caring for her child to describe how God cares for His children. What an honor for a mother's service!

In this regard, wives with no children, as well as singles, can experience a spiritual purpose too. They can also bring about life by allowing God to work in their lives; by blessing others through participation in the creation of new spiritual life, and providing support for it.

Countless women in churches become mothers to others through their commitment,

prayers, mentoring, and taking time for others. Mothers in Christ! And there are many mothers who lead their biological children to Jesus, becoming "mothers" in more than one sense of the word. So, with God's help and as His daughter, *all* women are called to motherhood in Christ.

Just as a well-read book will make an impression, the people who surround a mother also "read" her life—both visible and spiritual—and are shaped by it. Every mother inscribes her children's lives through her actions and her very being. For example, the judge Deborah was called "a mother in Israel" because of her caring advice and guidance (Judges 5:7).

Dear mother, no matter how you're doing and how you're feeling (encouraged or discouraged, confident or overwhelmed, under pressure), remember: there is no such thing as a perfect mother. But there are mothers who always want the best for their child, and that's enough!

While you're caring for your loved ones with such faithfulness and devotion, know that there is One who cares for you too: your Heavenly Father. You are His daughter, and He knows how you're doing. He has promised never to forsake you, and to lead you through every situation and support you in every moment (Isa 40:29, 31). Take pleasure in your motherhood (whether physically and/or in Christ), and be assured: you are valuable and praiseworthy! (MR0521/1165)



WORLD FOCUS



Fear of Artificial Intelligence

More Americans said they are “more concerned than excited” by the increase of artificial intelligence, a developing technology hastened by the pandemic, being applied to daily life, according to a Pew Research Center survey about the rise of AI.



The researchers polled 10,260 US adults from November 1 through November 7. Participants were asked about six developments: facial recognition technology, social media algorithms, robotic exoskeletons, computer chip implants, driverless cars and gene editing.

The findings revealed a positive outlook for facial recognition, algorithms and exoskeletons. By contrast, the respondents were significantly more worried about the use of computer chip implants in the brain, the future of autonomous passenger vehicles and gene editing.

About 45% of respondents said they were equally concerned and excited about the rise of AI, citing reasons for concern as potential job loss, privacy implications and decrease of human connection. However, those who welcomed the new technology said it will save time, especially at work.

-www.jpost.com, 19 March 2022

Commentary: Fear of the unknown is natural. Particularly the older generation does not know what to do with media algorithms, robotic exoskeletons, chip implants, driverless cars, etc.

If we were to compare the technology of a car manufactured before the 1950s with one made today, it would be helpful to understanding some of these developments.

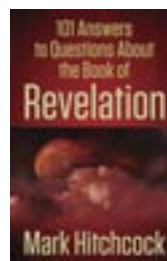
Also, many of us can recall when rubber tires began to be installed on farm tractors. The very first ones in town were laughed at; “nothing beats steel wheels,” it was said. But similar statements were made when the first tractor appeared; horses, mules, and oxen had been the reliable source of power in front of farm equipment.

That’s all history; today, it’s artificial intelligence (AI). What is it? In simple terms, using computer-controlled algorithms to make decisions, to perform tasks commonly associated with humans. Does it work? The answer is yes, but we must add, limited to the input by human intelligence.

A book published in 1999 by Neil Gershenfeld, titled *When Things Start to Think*, says on the inside cover, “We live in a world of increas-

ingly instructive informational technology requiring that people meet the need of machines rather than the other way around.” Amazing information and theories are discussed, which in most cases is only understood (to a degree) by people occupying themselves with computer science.

A sentence on page 133 was quite prophetic: “The architecture of a computer becomes a kind of digital deity that brings order to the rest of the world for him.” Quite striking and alarming indeed for Bible readers. Here we are reminded of Revelation 13, where mankind is instructed by the false prophet to manufacture “an image of the beast.” Then verse 15 continues, “And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.” Not man’s intelligence, but the AI intelligence of the image becomes the decisive factor in determining whether a person truly worships or not.



ing whether a person truly worships or not.


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(See *101 Answers to Questions About the Book of Revelation*, Item #2295, \$15.99.)

 **RUSSIA**

Orthodox Church Mixes War and Christianity

Russia's Cathedral of the Armed Forces was consecrated in 2020. It sits in Patriot Park, a military theme park in Kubinka, around 60km to the west of Moscow.

 The church is khaki green, topped with a gold Orthodox cross. The diameter of the main dome, at 19.45m, references the end of the Second World War. Nazi tanks were melted to make the floor. Angels gaze down on Russian soldiers in a mosaic commemorating the country's role in Syria's civil war, the invasion of Georgia in 2008 and the annexation of Crimea in 2014.

In Russia, church and military go hand in hand. Patriarch Kirill, the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, implicitly supports Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine. He spouts Kremlin propaganda, claiming that Russia is not the aggressor and that genocide is being perpetrated by Ukrainians against Russian speakers in the Donbas. Nor is his endorsement of this war unique. During his tenure, Russian priests have blessed bombs destined for Syria and Crimea. Bishop Stefan of Klin, who presides over the Cathedral of the Armed Forces, leads the church's department for cooperation with the army. Before taking holy orders he was an officer in the missile-defense force.

In 2015, 71% of Russians identified as Orthodox and 57% said following the



faith was an important part of what it meant to be Russian. Many perceive the church to be of growing importance in their lives, although few attend. This makes it a powerful tool of propaganda—a conduit through which to promote a single vision of Russian values, at odds with Western liberal societies.

Patriarch Kirill is a staunch ally of Mr. Putin. In 2012, he described his presidency as a “miracle of God.” It has certainly benefited the church. On Mr. Putin's watch, Russia has passed laws that restrict the rights of rival religious groups, retrieved religious artefacts that were sold off under communism, and built thousands of churches. All that has bolstered the power that church leaders have to influence large swathes of the population. In 2007 the church reunited with many Russian parishes outside the country, healing a rift of 80 years. This boosted its power as a tool of foreign policy in the diaspora too.

The patriarch has begun to cast the conflict as a holy war, with implications that he says go beyond politics. “We have entered into a struggle that has not a physical, but a metaphysical sig-

nificance,” he warned the faithful in his sermon on Forgiveness Sunday, the last day before Lent in the Orthodox calendar. The Armed Forces Cathedral's mosaic com-

memorating the Russian wars that God has supposedly smiled upon leaves room for future conflicts. Ukraine may soon join the list.

-www.economist.com, 21 March 2021

Commentary: This unholy alliance of church and state is troubling for us believers, because these (at least nominally) Christian leaders in Russia are supporting a war against another nominally Christian country, Ukraine, which from our outside perspective appears to be an unjust war. It is particularly interesting how Putin, an avowed atheist by virtue of his position in the Soviet Communist Party, and these supposedly Christian leaders have made strange bedfellows in advancing nationalistic interests.

Scripture is to be applied to believers and the wider Church before the world. Thus, Paul's warning in Ephesians 6:12, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places,” is particularly relevant when it comes to these leaders.

Orthodox Church *(continued from page 28)*

Thankfully, not all Russian Orthodox agree, as mentioned later in the article: “This untempered support of Kremlin propaganda has divided the church. More than 280 Russian Orthodox priests from around the world have signed an open letter condemning the invasion.” Also, as we continually point out, Jesus said, “I will build my Church,” and indeed there is a lively and growing—though often unseen—evangelical movement in Russia, as in China and other parts of the world that might surprise us.

However, the application should be for us to examine our assumptions and beliefs about the righteousness of our governments in the so-called Christian West, and especially any affinity for military forces that conflates their job with actual spiritual warfare. These clearly allegorical passages are intended for believers, such as the subsequent verses in Ephesians 6: “Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God ... the breastplate of righteousness ... the shield of faith, where-with ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.” This does not refer to physical armaments



or geopolitical warfare on earth.
7721
(By J. Froese)
(See *Spiritual Warfare in the End Times*, Item #2370, \$15.99.)

CANADA

Killing Targets Muslims

A family of five who were struck by a vehicle were targeted because they were Muslims, Canadian police said.

Four members of the family were killed in the incident and one remains in the hospital.

The incident occurred when a truck plowed into the group of pedestrians.

“This was an act of mass murder perpetuated against Muslims,” London, Ontario Mayor Ed Holder said. “It was rooted in unspeakable hatred. The magnitude of such hatred can make one question who we are as a city.”

Police in London, Ontario said the victims are a 74-year-old woman, a 46-year-old man, a 44-year-old woman, and a 15-year-old girl.

“We believe the victims were targeted because of their Islamic faith,” London Police Chief Stephen Williams said.

“We understand that this event may cause fear and anxiety in the community, particularly in the Muslim community, in any community targeted by hate,” he said. “There is no tolerance in this community [for those] who are motivated by hate [targeting] others with violence.”

Police arrested the suspect in the parking lot of a nearby mall.

-www.timesofisrael.com, 7 June 2021

Commentary: This news was published by TimesofIsrael.com on 7 June 2021, but is quite relevant even today. There



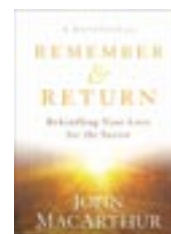
Police officers search for evidence at the scene of the attack in London, Ontario
Geoff Robins/The Canadian Press/AP

are a number of sources on the internet that publish articles related to the persecution of Muslims, not published by the mainstream media.

What is the motivating factor of this horrendous crime? One word: hate. Where does hatred originate? In modern times, quite often through social media and one-sided reports.

Jesus makes this statement: “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh” (Luke 6:45).

The apostle Paul adds: “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies” (Galatians 5:19-20).



7707
(See *Remember and Return*, Item #2317, \$14.99.)

 CHINA

Making Billionaires Faster Than US

China has been producing new billionaires—especially female billionaires—much faster than any other country in the world.

 By the numbers: China and the U.S. together have produced 55% of the world’s “known” billionaires, according to Hurun’s 2022 Global Rich List.

China has more total billionaires: 1,133 to the U.S.’s 716. And its billionaire population is growing about three times faster than America’s, according to Hurun.

The three cities with the biggest billionaire populations are now all in China: Shenzhen just overtook New York City for third place.

Worthy of note: Of the most successful self-made female billionaires in the world, 60-70% are Chinese—a rate that’s stayed consistent for the last 16 years.

A few of the causes: The previous one-child rule meant women have had to take fewer career breaks. And the societal structure where families live together or close to one another has given women more child care options.

-*www.axios.com*, 20 March 2022

Commentary: This was unthinkable just a few decades ago. A communist-ruled country was considered to be inferior, having limited freedom and often poverty-stricken. That was the picture projected by the Western media.

Today, the story is quite different. China’s leadership has effectively im-

plemented the tools for success; namely, the mixture of capitalism, socialism, and communism. Virtually all other nations in the world work on a similar principle, but in the opposite direction. Where will it all lead? Equalization of the nations of the world. China can no longer be ignored by the West. And, based on the success stories of the last few decades, this communist country will take the leading position—in the first place, in manufacturing. Even now, many call China the factory of the world. The globe is interconnected like a giant factory, with millions of assembly lines churning out greater quality merchandise, faster than ever before.

Here we are reminded of the origin of globalism: the building of the Tower of Babel. Their goal is revealed in Genesis 11:4: “And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.” We notice the words “they ... us ... we.” They wanted to be important; they were self-centered and success-oriented.

In these last days, we can see that the adhesive for globalism is merchandise. The god of this world knows his aim: creating a unified, peaceful, prosperous, and secure world. Only by success, prosperity, and luxury galore can Satan complete his master plan of deception.

In regard to the Tower of Babel, we read in verse 6: “And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all

one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.”


7717

(See *Exposing Mystery Babylon Part 1*, Item #1078, \$4.50.)

 UKRAINE

NATO Bucharest Summit Bites

There’s a cliché that backroom negotiations at big summits sometimes feel as if they’re taking place in a “hall of mirrors.”

 In the case of the 2008 Nato summit in Bucharest, where Ukraine was first offered the now red-hot issue of joining the Western alliance, it was also literally true.

The Nato summit was held in Nikolai Ceaușescu’s People’s Palace (now the Palace of the Parliament). It’s a fairy-tale-turned-nightmare monument to the ego and self-promotion of the late Romanian dictator.

Professional historians and diplomats please correct me because, first, this is 14 years ago; second, I wasn’t covering this angle; and, third, even the official communique from the summit only listed it as item 23: but I can’t help recall how US president George W. Bush was pressing his fellow Nato delegates to give Ukraine and Georgia Nato membership.

The European end of the Nato equation (then led by Angela Merkel, Gordon Brown, Nicolas Sarkozy) pushed back, until the final communique offered them the aspiration of joining a compromise

half-way house called the “Membership Action Plan.”

“Nato welcomes Ukraine and Georgia’s Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in Nato. We agreed today that these countries will become members of Nato. Both nations have made valuable contributions to Alliance operations.”

Fatefully, the words that probably still echo inside Putin’s head are those in the second sentence, that, “these countries will become members of Nato.” Putin invaded Georgia later that same year. The three-day summit ended on 8 April 2008, the Russian invasion of Georgia in August.

Fourteen years on, and he has invaded Ukraine too.

Was Bush right, to want to offer immediate membership? Or was Europe right, to offer it as a distant prospect?

I don’t know the answer to that—and there were certainly no answers on offer in that endless hall of mirrors.

-euobserver.com, 17 March 2022

Commentary: The excerpt from the article by Matthew Tempest, published by *EU Observer*, reveals some of the roots of the present Russian war against Ukraine. The ending of the war is hidden for all practical purposes; only time will tell.

It is our opinion that this Russian war on Ukraine will become a major contributing factor toward closer unity of the so-called Western world—particularly Europe. This forced unity is expected to produce a significantly

stronger military capacity for the EU and the rest of the European nations.

We reiterate, however, that our responsibility as Christians is to support and pray for His Church in Ukraine, and also in Russia. We cannot look into the invisible world, and often do not understand all its implications. Doubtless, scores of people on both sides will cry out to the Lord and be added to His Church—may it be completed soon.

7720

(See *The Great Mystery of the Rapture*, Item #1038, \$18.99.)

FRANCE Every 10 Days a New Evangelical Church

Every ten days a new evangelical congregation is being established in France.

 Such church growth cannot be found in any other European state. That was reported by Daniel Liechti, the president of the church planting commission of *Le Conseil national des évangéliques de France* (CNEF—the National Council of Evangelical Churches in France). The umbrella organization represents 33 evangelical movements making up about 70% of the 650,000 evangelical Christians in France. According to Liechti, there are over 2,500 evangelical Christian churches in the country. New converts among French people are those who have visited evangelical churches for months or years. Grand-scale evangelization, where many churches participate, is no longer a re-

ality, because most denominations have distanced themselves from the way of true Christianity.

-Idea: *Das Christliche Spektrum*, 6/2022

Commentary: Although the French edition of *Midnight Call*, *L’Appel de Minuit*, has been published since the late 1960s with somewhat minimal results, it was a joy to read the translated article, as it appeared in *Idea* in the spring of 2022. France’s population stands at about 63 million people, of which 47% are Catholic, 4% Muslim, and 2% Protestant. Like most countries with universal health-care, life expectancy in France is high: 82.4 years.

The commission of new evangelical churches is targeting its goal at establishing one evangelical church per 10,000 in population.

One thing we do know is that the Church—the body of Christ, the temple of the Holy Spirit on earth—will continue to grow until perfection. Temple construction is ongoing: “In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord” (Ephesians 2:21). 7716

(See *The Sure Foundation of the Church*, Item #1066, \$18.50.)



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

EZEKIEL 38-39...DINOSAURS... WHO ARE THE SAINTS?

Ezekiel 38—39

Is what Putin is doing a prelude to Ezekiel 38—39 being fulfilled? It seems like events are unfolding so quickly that the Tribulation seems near.

-R. Adams, PA

Answer: Ezekiel 38:11 states: "And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates." Israel is more protected than any other country in the world, yet they do not "dwell safely."

Dinosaurs

Dear Arno,

Do you think the dinosaurs were the serpent? The Bible says the serpent beguiled Eve, and God told the serpent he will crawl on his belly. Now all the dinosaurs are buried under dust, and we have no more of them. I think that at the time of the Flood, they all died—when the water went down, they were under dust. Dinosaurs, with long necks and long tails, look like a serpent with legs.

I have always thought this way, but a lot of people say all animals, etc. were taken on the Ark two-by-two. The serpent was the dinosaur, who now crawls on his belly. Just what do you think? He was called the serpent in the garden (and had legs at that time).

-M. Shaum, OH

Answer: The serpent was cursed: "dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life" (Genesis 3:14b). That prophecy has not been fulfilled, because serpents still eat animals, but in the future—during the millennium—Isaiah 65:25 says, "...and dust shall be the serpent's meat."

Dinosaurs were created by God; they also entered the Ark. However, because of their relationship (which you so plainly emphasize) to the serpent, they became extinct. Many other families of animals also no longer exist.

The other opinion is from those who believe in the Gap Theory. Reading the first two verses in the Bible, we meet 1. Creation and 2. chaos. That means between the time God created heaven and earth, there was an immeasurable time in which dinosaurs developed and caused "chaos." They could have



been the angels who rebelled against God. Jude writes, “And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day” (Jude 6).

I believe in the Six-Day Creation, including dinosaurs.

Who Are the Saints?

I would really appreciate it if you would take the time to answer a question that I have been struggling to answer for some time. In regard to the event of the pre-Tribulation Rapture of the born-again saints (prior to the 7-year Tribulation period), many justify their claims from Revelations 4:4: “And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.”

I have heard from many preachers and read from many others (about Rev 4:4), that the four and twenty elders represent the Church (the born-again believers)—which is taken in the pre-Tribulation Rapture—because they see Jesus opening the first seal, which reveals the Antichrist.

But Revelation 13:7 states: “And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.”

Now if we (the saints/holy ones/born-again believers) are at this time in heaven—witnessing Jesus opening the first seal and releasing the Antichrist to the world—why does Daniel

7:21 say, “...the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them” (also Revelation 13:7)? Yet the saints are in heaven?

-B. Richner, GA

Answer: There are different groups of people called “saints.” For example, in Psalm 106:16: “They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord.” These are the saints of the Old Testament; obviously beginning with Abraham, down the line to John the Baptist. But they do not belong to the saints of the newborn Church of Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul addresses the saints in Ephesians 1:1: “...to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus.” That is the Church.

Another group of saints is mentioned in Revelation 13:7. These are the Tribulation saints. They request revenge: “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” (Revelation 6:10). Following Jesus cost them their physical life.

The Church, built during the time of grace, is saved by grace and not works. We don’t have to pay a price for our salvation, and we do not ask for Him to “avenge.”

The action of the four-and-twenty elders is worshipping God, who is on the throne. Again, no rejoicing when the horrible judgment comes upon planet earth, and no request for “revenge.”

The four-and-twenty elders are most likely the representative of the Church. They are “redeemed ... by thy blood” and “kings and priests” (Rev 5:9-10), which corresponds to Revelation 1:6. (MC)



ELECTED—BUT NOT COMMITTED



By Peter Malgo

This was the title of a report in our daily newspaper concerning a member of the Reformed denomination. Whatever the background of that story, these words could also describe the life of so many Christians: “Elected, but not committed.”

Our Lord Jesus said to His disciples: “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain” (John 15:16a). This was also meant for Judas. But he did not walk the path which Jesus had envisioned for him. It is actually said of Judas that “he went,” but he had a different destination in mind: “Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?” (Matthew 26:14-15a). Judas was chosen, yet not committed. And this, even though he had been sent out on the express order of the Lord, just like the other disciples: “These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go ... And as

ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 10:5-7).

What about us, who have been elected, without exception, by our Lord? Are we following the path of His chosen, or have we allowed sin to bear fruit? Judas’ betrayal of our Lord is obviously such a terrible matter that most of us will probably, hand on heart, proclaim that we would never do such a thing. But we still must allow the question to be asked: are we really His followers? Betraying Jesus need not be as spectacular as in the case of Judas. Each one of us comes to a crossroads in our daily life, where we have to decide: are we going to bear fruit for our Lord, or are we pursuing a different direction? This other road leads to betrayal of our Lord. Could it be that we are actually on this



other path, which will result in our being apart from the elect?

Let us examine ourselves: what is our goal? We plan our future so carefully. We always strive for something that we haven't yet achieved. And while we make plans, we miss the best of all; namely, a life with Jesus. Paul writes to the Corinthians: "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor 6:2b). A life with Jesus means to consciously live and work in His presence. It means to prove ourselves as "ministers of God" (v. 4).

Elected, but not committed. That must have been Peter's concern, who describes it to the readers in his second letter: "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall" (2 Peter 1:10). Peter knew very

well of what he spoke, since he denied the Lord Jesus in His most difficult hours (see Luke 22:54-62).

Elected—but not committed? How will we react when we find ourselves in a similar situation as Peter? Dear friends, let us stay firm in our election and stand with Jesus totally, without compromise. We have received a high commission from Him; namely, to be His ambassadors (2 Cor 5:20). And this high office demands our full attention! Peter cried bitter tears over his failure. It may well be that we too may be led through such a dark valley of tears. The Lord's loving intent is to bring us, like Peter, to say to Him: "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee" (John 21:17). Lord, I will stand with you wherever it may lead. Elected—and fully committed! (MC)

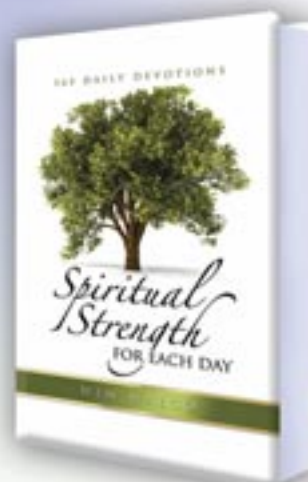
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Russians and Ukrainians at Ebenezer



By David Phillips *COO (Chief Operating Officer)*

The Ebenezer Home has a population of both residents and team members who, on average, could resemble Israel's general population. We have Jewish and Arab believers, and new immigrants from multiple countries. Like in the general population of Israel, we have residents and workers from both Ukraine and Russia, living together under one roof ... and yet their countries fight each other.

This morning I went to see the residents. I have known them all over the years and have spoken with them both privately and together in groups. Yet I have never heard a word of hatred toward one another or any accusations, even though all fully understand the events and hostilities going on between their countries.

We consider this a miracle from our Heavenly Father! It reminds us of this Scripture verse: "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Philippians 3:20, NKJV). All of

us ARE heavenly citizens awaiting our King together.

Yes, there are congregations in Israel that consist of both Russian and Ukrainian believers, who quarrel, fight, or have disagreements. But within the Home, it has truly been a blessing to watch how both the Ukrainians and Russians feel and think about one another. As the fighting broke out, I expected quite some arguing, but what our Ukrainian cook shared with me during a conversation I had with her a few days ago, really amazed me. She and her husband immigrated to Israel in the 1990s. She expressed in her own words what we have seen and felt concerning the unity among the believers at Ebenezer: "I have never seen such unity among the believers who are from Russia or Ukraine, and who pray for one another. We all understand that it is a spiritual war more than a physical battle, and this is for sure what Mathew 24:7 speaks about: 'For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines,



and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.’ Jesus prepared us for this!”

And it’s true. Here at the Ebenezer Home, both Ukrainians and Russians are standing together in prayer: at the start of each day, and during our devotional and break times. One Russian nurse shared with me, that the situation has caused her and her family living in Russia, to pray for their leaders more frequently. She said: “Even if we sometimes dislike the leaders or disagree with them, we are called to keep them in prayer. The Lord taught us this through 1 Tim 2:1-4: ‘I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved,

and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”

Then she pointed a finger at me and said with a kind of Russian chutzpah (A yiddish expression meaning bravery that borders on rudeness), “David, tell your friends in America to do the same; corrupt leaders teach us the neces-

sity of prayer.”

I asked more of our Ebenezer family how they feel about what is going on. One of them shared these words from 1919, which came out of a heart full of sorrow and pain through the Revolution in Russia. But these words, to this day, still express the hope we have in our faith (let me know if you could read the Russian):

**И там и здесь между рядами
Звучит один и тот же глас:
Кто не за нас, тот против нас,
Нет безразличных, правда
с нами.**

**А я один стою меж них,
В ревущем пламени и дыме,
И всеми силами своими
Молюсь за тех и за других.**

**Максимилиан Волошин,
1919 год**



English Translation:

Both here and there among the ranks
 Resounds one and the same voice:
 “Who is not with us is against us!”
 “No one is indifferent, truth is with us!”

And I stand one among them
 In the howling flame and smoke
 And with all my strength
 I pray for them and for the others.

Maximilian Voloshin, 1919


These words of the Christ-loving Russian writer during the Revolution, really express best how the people at Ebenezer feel and act regarding what is going on, and how they reacted with past hostilities and clashes in Israel between the Jews and Arabs.

I’m sharing this with you, not to make Ebenezer seem more spiritual or better than another place. It is but the grace of God and the love of Yeshua that binds us together. I

repeat, it’s only by God’s grace and the power of prayer from many like you, who support us and mention us before the mercy seat of our Heavenly Father. Your prayers are not in vain. Yes, many of the residents have questions; some have a hard time since their families are still in one of these countries. May the Holy One of Israel be there to comfort His people through this time, as He has throughout history.

Please pray for the people in Israel. There are believers who are truly struggling with the war and what is occurring. As mentioned, there are some congregations where Ukrainian and Russians worship together, but have lost their unity and eternal perspective. Let us all turn these world events into a victorious prayer, with the help of our sovereign King and Messiah Yeshua!

Remember, love and forgiving one another are the key to joy and peace. May we follow Yeshua’s example in Luke 7:47: “Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.”



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“And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves” (Luke 23:12).

BY ARNO FROESE

Herod Antipas—the man who had ordered the death of John the Baptist—now saw Jesus, of whom he had heard so many things. Yet the Bible says, “He [Jesus] answered him nothing.” Pontius Pilate’s confession was, “I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him” (verse 14b). We know from history that Pontius Pilate died in 39 AD. Eusebius of Caesarea’s *Ecclesiastical History* states that he killed himself on orders of Emperor Caligula. Both Pilate and Herod were exposed to the truth, and both testified that Jesus was innocent. But that, quite apparently, was not sufficient. These men had to think of their position.

Later, we read in Acts 4:26-27: “The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together.” Interestingly, the rulers of the

world were co-responsible for the execution of Jesus, according to Scripture.

This reminds us of Psalm 2:2: “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed.” In light of this, it is needful to analyze what’s happening today from spiritual perspectives. All earthly leaders—whether it’s Putin, Biden, Germany’s Scholz, or Ukraine’s Zelensky—are under the legitimate jurisdiction of Satan, the originator of sin. Yet virtually every country claims exception. The Bible says, “There is none righteous ... all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:10, 23).

What is happening between Russia and Ukraine is rooted deeply in the soil of those countries, drenched with the blood of their people.

We must not be confused by recent historical markers such as, “Ukraine experienced a brief period of independence in 1880—1920.” Ukrainian history actually goes back to the 7th century BC and a people called the Scythians. The same can be said about

Russia. Before 1991, it was called the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). They too can go back in history long before the continents America and Australia were discovered.

Today, with Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the geopolitical alliance has changed. For the West, one word became prevalent: unity. Without exception, the Western bloc unanimously condemned Russia for the invasion of Ukraine.

But, going east, we notice that another giant, China, at least sympathized with Russia in their invasion of Ukraine. Two previous enemies are becoming better friends.

Israel is our focus. Over and again, the prophets of old declared, "For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem" (Joel 3:1). There are many unforeseen circumstances that caused the Jews to return to the land of their fathers, the land of Canaan. Several events in the past few decades, contributed to an increasing number of Jews returning to the Promised Land. The National Center for Biotechnology Information published the following:

During the past 6 years, immigration to Israel of 700,000 persons from the former Soviet Union (FSU) included about 140,000 from radiocontaminated regions

of Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia near Chernobyl.

-www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov, 1997

While Israel has a good relationship with Russia, Russia also has good relations with Israel's declared enemy, Iran. Will these two countries become closer friends in opposition to Israel?

Until this moment, Israel has had a relatively free hand to strike Iranian-backed military operations in Syria, under Russia's observing eyes. Will that continue? A recent article in the *Jerusalem Post* reads:

At the Security Council, Russia reminded Israel that it stands with Syria, where it is militarily entrenched, regarding Damascus' demand that Israel returns the Golan, which the IDF captured during the defensive Six-Day War in 1967.

Israel annexed the Golan in 1981, but to date, the United States is the only country that recognizes that sovereignty. In December, the cabinet approved a NIS-1-billion plan to increase Israel's population on the Golan, including through the creation of two new towns.

-www.jpost.com, 24 February 2022

At this point in time, it's only the United States that recognizes Israel's sovereignty over the Golan. But in the end, the story will look quite different according to the prophetic Word, and that is decisive: "I

will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land” (Joel 3:2).

What is the reason for gathering all nations to judgment? Because they have “parted my land.” This is the problem with the nations of the world. While Israel is friends with more nations today than ever—even developing diplomatic relations with a number of Arab countries—one thing they all are 100% in opposition to is Genesis 15:18: “In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.” That is the real issue.

In the meantime, we as Christians should pray increasingly for His

Church in Ukraine, Russia, and Israel. From many reliable sources, we understand that Acts 2:47 is continuously in fulfillment; not only worldwide, but also particularly in Israel: “Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

Explanation of Action for Israel

After the Yom Kippur War in 1973, our late founder, Dr. Wim Malgo, established an emergency fund for poor families in Israel who had lost a loved one in the war. Later, several building projects were undertaken. One of the major projects included part of the Assaf Harofeh Medical Center (now called the Shamir Medical Center).

As of late, Action for Israel funds are mainly designated for believers in Israel in need. ^{MC}



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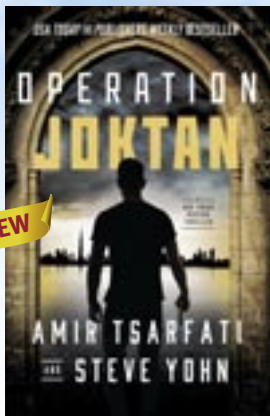
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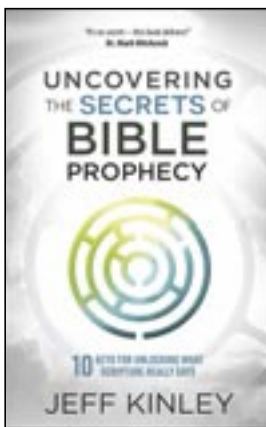
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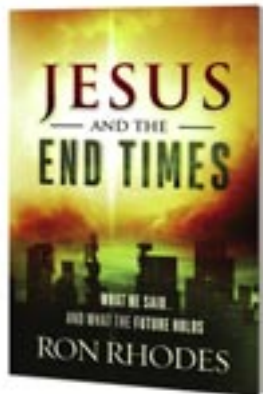
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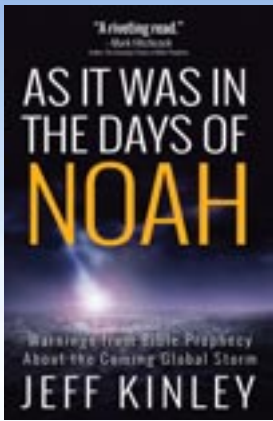


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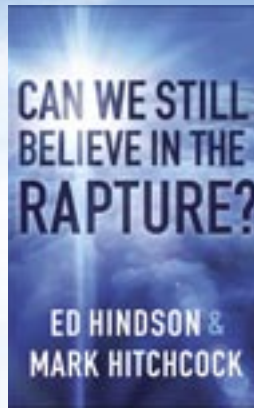
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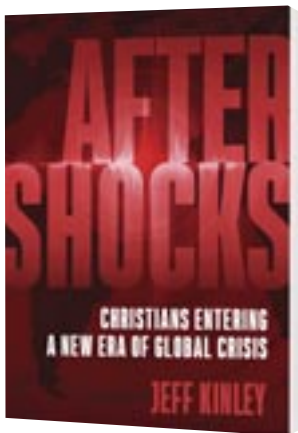
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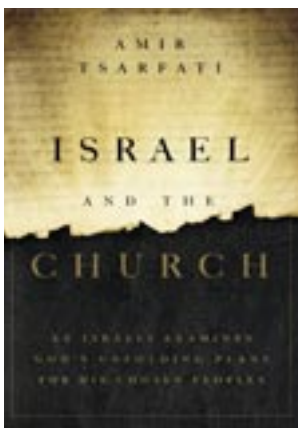
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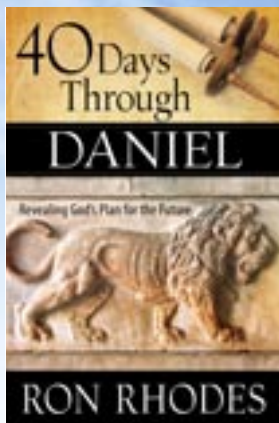
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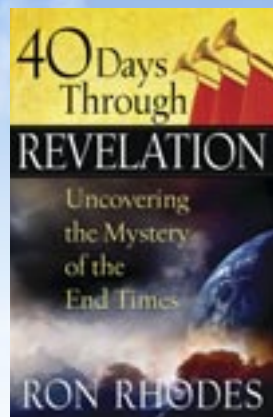
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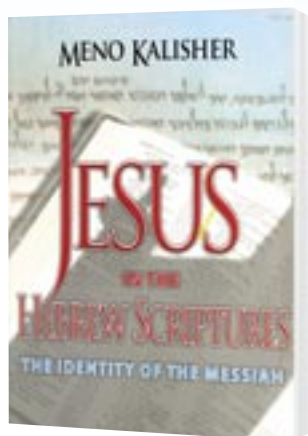
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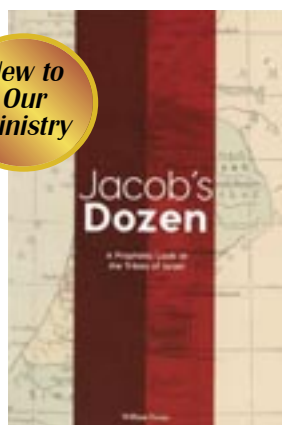
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Author: Amanda Hope Haley

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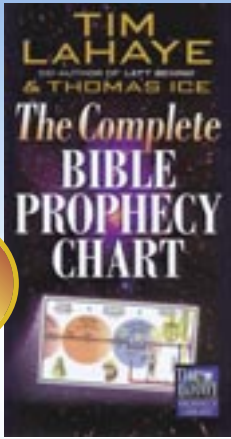
This study of Elijah's life will captivate you as it walks you through a pivotal period in Israel's history. When he was caught up to heaven, his disciple Elisha cried out, "the chariot of Israel, and its horsemen." Elisha was referring not to the chariot but to the prophet. It was Elijah's intimate relationship with God that gave the prophet his title; and his amazing confrontation with the prophets of Baal endures as one of Scripture's most vivid accounts of how God demonstrated His awesome power before the unbelieving.



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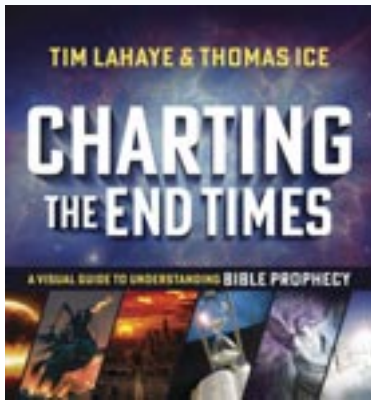
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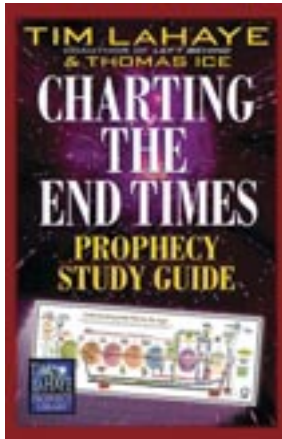
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- Clear answers to tough end-times questions

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Instructive, practical study guide

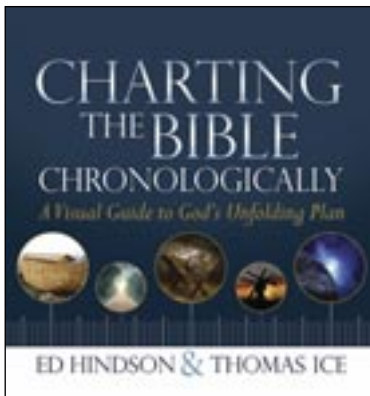
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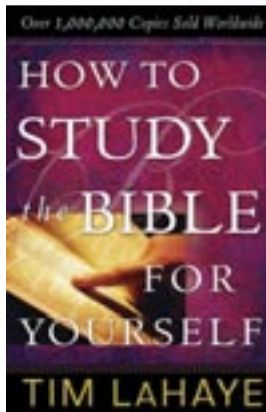
Misquoted dives into the most commonly misused verses from the Bible—verses that are well worth reclaiming because of the significant impact they can have on your life. You will discover that Scripture, when you consider the context...

**is not all about us, but Christ and the forgiveness of our sins
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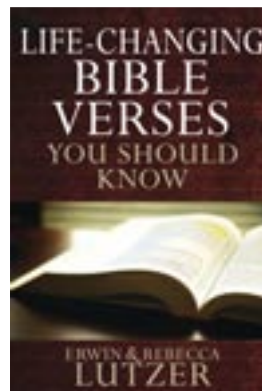
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Authors: Erwin W. Lutzer and Rebecca Lutzer



A Ticking Climate Bomb?

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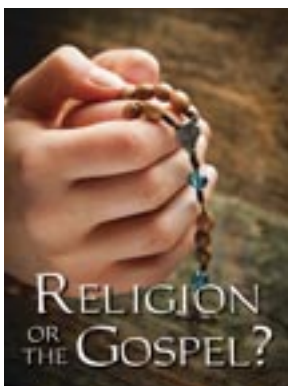
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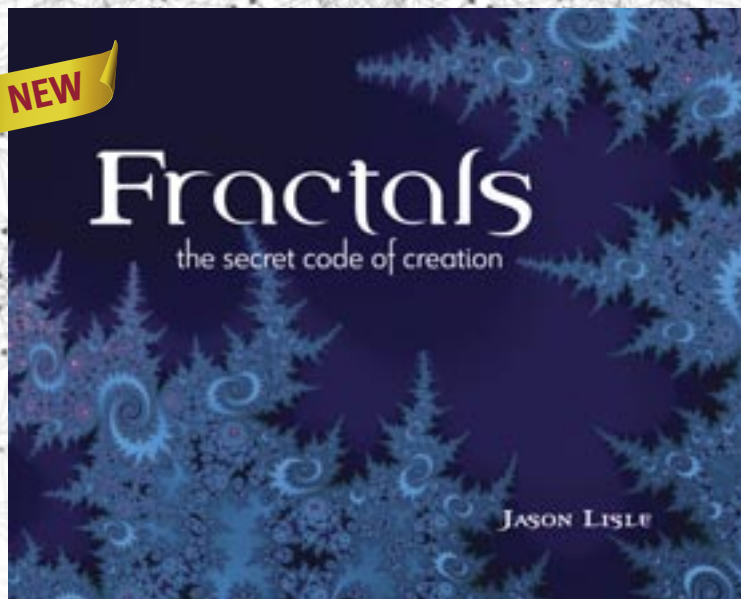


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