

The International Prophetic Voice for the Endtimes

Midnight Call

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WHY DID CHRISTMAS HAVE TO HAPPEN?

PART 2

Timely Tracts for Gospel Outreach



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What the Greatest Creature Can Learn from the Smallest One



By Norbert Lieth

Director of Missions, Midnight Call International

In Proverbs 6:6 we read: “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise.” Man, in his God-given status, is unquestionably the highest creature on earth, and the ant belongs to the very smallest of all living beings. So, what then can we learn from her?

First of all, certainly diligence. During the summer, for example, we see how the ants work tirelessly and in a well-organized fashion. They drag, pull, carry, and help each other. Relative to their body size, they are extremely strong and, compared to their length, very fast. The two following verses tell us all that, although ants do not have a leader, they work together in perfect harmony and gather their food during harvest time. Similarly, the Church of Jesus has no ecclesiastical head but is led by the Holy Spirit.

Most Christians are undoubtedly hardworking, faithful, and reliable. They go about their jobs, care for their families, and help within the congregation. Of course, rest periods are also important—that is why ants go into a kind of winter hibernation. But inertia is constantly lurking at the door: inertia regarding the Bible, our prayer life, or attending worship services. We are in danger of forgetting that it is still harvest time and we should be participating.

We should help build up the Church and win people for eternity. To become tired or unfocused in these efforts can greatly impair the outcome.

As research has shown, ant colonies function as one organism. Also, ants can only survive within a community. If, for any reason, one of these small animals loses contact with its colony, it faces certain death. Christians who isolate themselves from the congregation, who leave the fellowship to walk their own way, not infrequently lose spiritual vigor, fall for wrong doctrines or sects, grow to be eccentric, and wither away.

Each individual Christian has been born into the Church as a member of the body of his Lord, and thus needs fellowship with other believers. This fellowship provides mutual edification and continuing spiritual life and vitality.

A former forester told me about the winter hibernation of ants. When the spring sun warms the ant hill, those on the upper level awaken first. They then crawl out, lay down on top of the ant hill, and absorb the warmth. Subsequently, all warmed up, they move into the lower layers, so the others may be warmed and awakened. Isn't that also our task as Christians: to warm one another, give practical aid, and provide helpful assistance where needed?

EDITOR'S NOTE

Proverbs 30:25 tells us that “the ants are not a strong people.” Yet they prepare their food in the summer. Thus it is also with the Church of Jesus: not strong within itself, but when it holds together, united with one Spirit, it can move mountains. Therefore, we should strive for unity and avoid envy, jealousy, and discord. We don't want to work against one another, but for and with each other ... keeping the highest goal before our eyes—Jesus.

May the following verses of the letter to the Philippians inspire us to do just that: “Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil 2:1-5, NASB).

Let this be our resolution for the New Year. (MC)

Note: Wilfred Hahn will be skipping his column this month and next, due to a busy schedule.

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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 com-
ing, 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 there-
with the infallibility of the Holy Scripture, which is God's Word, and
in the eternal Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

WE BELIEVE Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was conceived of the
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 Je-
sus 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.



WHY DID CHRISTMAS HAVE TO HAPPEN?

PART 2

Johannes Pflaum

We try to protect the people we love. No father would send his child into a forest full of wolves. No husband would send his beloved wife into a war zone, knowing she would meet with nothing but hostility and murder. But God sent His Son into just such a situation.

“**H**erein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10).

It even goes beyond that. The sending of God’s Son alone is beyond our comprehension, but from John 3:16 we see that the Father also *gave Him* (that is, gave Him up). He knew that the world and mankind

God sent His Son and gave Him up, because it was the only way to redeem mankind, hostile to Him as he was.

would not only reject His Son, but also cruelly torture Him to death on a cross. This giving up includes all of Jesus' suffering, up to His bitter death.

You may have seen Christmas cards depicting an image of a cross above a manger. This motif makes it clear that there can be no celebration of Christmas or Jesus' birth without acknowledging the Cross. Anyone who tries to ignore Jesus' death and sacrifice during Christmastime, is losing himself in meaningless sentimentality.

God sent His Son and gave Him up, because it was the only way to redeem mankind, hostile to Him as he was. Second Corinthians 5:19 is a passage so powerful that it almost takes your breath away. There are so many wonderful words and passages in the Bible, that can bring us to tears and shake us to the core in the face of God's incredible love and grace: "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them..."

In other words, God was in Christ and reconciled a hostile and rebellious humanity with Himself. Only God Himself could accomplish this; we play no part in it. When it comes to rescuing the lost, we have no power at all. Therefore, He sent His Son, the Lord Jesus, and gave Him up.

Mankind's history is also one of failed attempts at self-improvement and redemp-

tion. For thousands of years, humanity hasn't wanted to admit that it can't save itself. We're rebelling against our lost state and God's unerring judgment. Our theme verse also applies to this rebellion: "For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people."

God did for us what we couldn't do for ourselves ... what we wouldn't even want to do for ourselves. And He did so without our having asked. The Lord Jesus lived out the righteousness we need for fellowship with God, but can never manage to accomplish ourselves. He lived only for His Father's glory. He glorified His Father in every thought, word, and deed. And then on the Cross, he bore God's righteous judgment for our guilt. He gave His blood and His life to satisfy God's justice, because a holy God cannot compromise on sin. A good 700 years before Jesus' birth, the prophet Isaiah summed up the situation with these impressive words: "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isa 53:5).

The Father sent His Son and gave Him up. And the Son was willing to take God's judgment and be crushed for us, so there would be a way to salvation.

The first Christmas miracle: God loves the world. Then the second Christmas miracle: God gives His Son. The word "gives"

God knew that the world and mankind would not only reject His Son, but also cruelly torture Him to death on a cross.



is important, because it clarifies the purpose of Jesus coming into this world. And that brings us to the third point:

The Third Christmas Miracle: God Creates Salvation

John 3:16 continues, “that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” God loves mankind, detached from Him and rebellious against Him as he is. God gives up His Son on the Cross. He was “in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself” (2 Cor 5:19). Through His death and resurrection, Jesus made peace with God and unveiled new, eternal life. This is the only way of salvation for humanity, which stands under the divine summary, “For, behold, the dark-

ness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people.”

“Great,” we could say, “we’re all set then.” God loves the world and sent His Son, so now we can just sit back and enjoy the Christmas spirit. But it isn’t that simple.

In John 3:16, we see an important qualification: “that whosoever believes in him should not perish.” God loves the world. God gives His Son. But it’s a matter of grasping these truths in faith. It’s not the case that people are saved and just don’t know it yet; salvation and redemption from a world detached from God, are inextricably linked with faith in Jesus Christ. And not just faith in the sense that we’re unsure of something, but hope it could be true. For example, believing that we might get a white Christmas because it’s so scenic. Nor is this faith an abstract, intellectual affirmation of something you believe is true, but which doesn’t affect your life.

Faith means agreeing with and accepting God’s judgment, both about humanity’s spiritual darkness and about one’s personal life. We see ourselves as God sees us. To be blunt, we’ve screwed up everything because of the Fall. There is nothing lovable about us humans, who have been severed from God. We have only the misery of our guilt and abysmal forsakenness. And yet God loves us so much that He gives up His beloved, eternal Son, the Lord Jesus,



When **George Whitefield** preached in England and North America, he taught people what it means to be lost and rightly under the judgment of a holy and righteous God.

and sends Him into this world ... permits Him to be crushed for our guilt and transgressions, and gives us everything in Christ: forgiveness, peace with God, and a new, eternal life. We must grasp this in personal faith, clinging to Christ and letting Him take the reins as Lord, so that He can lead, guide, and change us according to His will. God loves this world, even when it turned against Him. He accomplished everything necessary for salvation in Christ. But only faith in Jesus, knowledge and acceptance of why the Cross was necessary, brings salvation.

“That whosoever believeth in him should not perish.” Without saving faith in Jesus Christ, people are facing God’s eternal judgment. This is what we mean by “lost.” The love of God for this world, which was made plain in Christ’s birth and His work of redemption, is of no effect if you don’t personally grasp it in faith. And if you want to believe but don’t think you can, then ask Him to work that faith in you, just like the man who cried out desperately to Jesus in Mark 9:24: “Lord, I believe; help thou [to get rid of] mine unbelief.”

Being lost is the inevitable end of a humanity that has turned away from God,

perishing forever under God’s righteous judgment. We deserve it. When George Whitefield preached in England and North America, he taught people what it means to be lost and rightly under the judgment of a holy and righteous God. Many people returned to their homes with the realization, “We are lost and deserving of nothing better.” The next day, they heard about God’s love and Jesus’ perfect sacrifice. Against the backdrop of their own lost condition, this truth shone all the brighter. That is the wonder of this third Christmas miracle: God creates salvation. Philipp Friedrich Hiller put it this way:

What mercy and divine compassion
Has God in Christ revealed to me!
My haughty spirit would not ask it,
Yet He bestowed it, full and free.

Jesus was born as a child to bring salvation. Old Testament believers had waited for God to send the promised Savior. They didn’t yet know exactly how and what He would be, but because they had faith in God in the midst of a humanity far removed from Him, their longing was directed toward Him. And then He came to accomplish the work of redemption. Jesus’ incarnation shows God’s great love for us humans. But that isn’t the end of the story.

WHY DID CHRISTMAS HAVE TO HAPPEN?-PART 2

Despite our smartphones, tablets, computers, electric cars, and modern means of transportation, we're not in our best days since the Fall.

Christmas also reminds us that Jesus is coming again: no longer a child to accomplish redemption, but in power and glory to judge humanity. Two thousand years ago, He accomplished everything necessary for the salvation of individuals. Today, in His great love and patience, He is still waiting for people to turn and be saved through faith in Him. He is waiting, though mankind in his rebellion hasn't improved for the last 2,000 years. When Jesus returns in power and glory—and that could be very soon—the damage is done, so to speak. For all those who didn't believe in Him, all that remains is judgment:

“For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:17-18).

Jesus' return will be a terrifying horror for all who don't believe in Him, as well as for everyone who has already died without Christ's salvation. And then something else will happen before this first creation comes to its end. Israel will recognize their Savior in Christ, and this earth will flourish again for a thousand years. Not because we humans have turned things around and solved the million-dollar question or the

climate crisis, but because Christ will visibly reign and Satan will be bound.

Despite our smartphones, tablets, computers, electric cars, and modern means of transportation, we're not in our best days since the Fall. To the contrary: mankind is trapped in darkness and distance from God. Technical innovations don't change that. Just think of the legalized killing of unborn life in the womb, or the many relationships destroyed by hate and strife. The best days for this earth since the Fall will come with Jesus' return. He will judge mankind. He will solve all issues of peace and justice, as well as the environmental problems. These are very real impacts of Christ's reign and the nations seeking His will.

This first earth will pass away after the Millennium. Just as God created our earth, He will create a new heaven and a new earth:

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all

And once the new earth and the new heavens have arrived, we won't need to worry that it will eventually end, like our last happy vacation. The new creation will go on forever and ever in the glory of God.

tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful" (Rev 21:1-5).

John 3:16 is speaking of eternal life. This life that comes from God is already creating something new today, through faith in Christ. One day it will lead to eternal, inseparable, visible fellowship with God. That too is part of the salvation of the world: the knowledge that the best days aren't a thing of the past, but are still yet to come.

And once the new earth and the new heavens have arrived, we won't need to worry that it will eventually end, like our last happy vacation. The new creation will go on forever and ever in the glory of God. We will marvel even more at the magnitude of salvation. However, this is only true of those who have accepted Jesus as their Savior. He brought salvation to this dark world that remains separated from Him. Jesus created good out of our sinful, hopeless, total loss of a world.

Conclusion

So, the first Christmas miracle is that God loves a humanity that has broken away

from Him and rebels against Him. He loves us despite all the self-inflicted darkness surrounding us. The second Christmas miracle: God gave His Son. Not only did He send Him into a detached humanity, but also gave Him up for our salvation. Christ accomplished a free, full, and everlasting salvation, though we hadn't even asked for it. And finally, the third Christmas miracle: God creates salvation.

The important thing is believing in Jesus Christ as the Savior, as your Savior. His return is the great hope for everyone who belongs to Christ, and for this earth. And then, after His messianic reign, that redemption will flow into a new heaven and a new earth that God will create. But the only way to get there is through faith in Jesus Christ.

It seems appropriate to end with a verse from the Advent hymn, "O How Shall I Receive Thee" by Paul Gerhardt:

Thou comest, Christ, with gladness,
in mercy and goodwill,
to bring an end to sadness
and bid our fears be still.
We welcome thee, our Savior;
come gather us to thee,
that in thy light eternal
our joyous home may be.

(MR1221/1262)



Lessons from Megiddo

(Sites of the Bible Series)

DR. RON J. BIGALKE

Megiddo (modern Tel Megiddo) is an important Old Testament city situated on the Mount Carmel mountain range. It overlooks the Plain of Esdraelon (Valley of Jezreel) and is approximately 18.6 miles (30 km) southeast of the modern Port of Haifa in northern Israel.

The plain (valley) separates the Carmel and Samaria mountain ranges in the south from the northern Galilean hills. If the history of the land of Israel were compared to the game *Monopoly*, the site Megiddo would be “Boardwalk” (because it would be the most coveted space on the playing board). As real estate agents commonly say, what is most important regarding property is location, loca-

tion, location (and that is certainly true regarding Megiddo).

Suppose a person greatly desires control of something, such as Megiddo in antiquity. Should it be acquired simply because it is coveted? What occurs in such circumstances, when someone wants what God has given and has commanded to guard? Obviously, a problem arises, and conflict is inevitable. The predica-



The Valley of Jezreel Viewed from the Hill of Megiddo

Credit: R. Bigalke

ment may even involve a person's heart, soul, mind, and strength as the coveted prize.

The Significance of Megiddo

Megiddo is one of the most strategic locations in the land of Israel, because it is the lookout of the most important pass through the Mount Carmel range. Its exceptional location made it a site of conflict for the major and minor powers of the region. Whoever controlled ancient Megiddo was able to dominate the trade and traffic routes along the International Highway (the Via Maris) connecting Egypt and Mesopotamia. Megiddo linked the great powers of ancient Mesopotamia with Egypt: Assyria, Babylon, and Persia. Many critical battles occurred at Megiddo, because the city provided both financial and military security.

The first historical reference to Megiddo occurred during the reign of Pharaoh Thutmose III. He conquered the land of Israel, and thus began Egyptian rule over Canaan, which continued for more than 300 years. Thutmose knew the significance of his victory and

remarked, "The capture of Megiddo is the capture of a thousand cities." The immensity of the plain is so remarkable that Napoleon supposedly declared, "All the armies of the world could maneuver their forces on this vast plain. . . . There is no place in the whole world more suited for war than this. . . . [Megiddo] is the most natural battleground on the whole earth."

The original inhabitants of Megiddo were the Canaanites (Judg 1:27), who remained in the city even when the Philistines conquered it and retained control, until it was subjugated by the Israelites in the time of King David. Approximately 70 years subsequent to Thutmose III, Joshua defeated "the king of Megiddo" (Josh 12:21). God used Deborah to rout Sisera's Canaanites "near the waters of Megiddo" (Judg 5:19-21). The discovery of horse stables at Megiddo has been attributed to King Solomon, who "had 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots, and 12,000 horsemen" (1 Kgs 4:26; cf. 10:26), and apparently stationed some of those chariots and horses at the city. Solomon fortified Megiddo by rebuilding its walls: "Now this is the account of the forced labor which King Solomon levied to build the house of the LORD, his own house, the Millo, the wall of Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer" (1 Kgs 9:15).

Pharaoh Shishak invaded Judah and conquered Megiddo in 923 BC (1 Kgs 14:25). Two kings of the Northern Kingdom—Omri and

Lessons from Megiddo

The value of Megiddo cannot be exaggerated, and has a powerful word of application today.

Ahab—rebuilt on ruins of the city. The economic prosperity and military strength of the Northern Kingdom is displayed at Megiddo more than any other ancient city in Israel, which is evident in the remains of impressive gates, palaces, stables, and water systems. Megiddo was an important Israelite city until 733 BC, when King Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria conquered it. King Ahaziah of Judah died at Megiddo when King Jehu of Israel led a successful rebellion (2 Kgs 9:27). The esteemed King Josiah of Judah was killed there in a battle with Pharaoh Neco (2 Kgs 23:29).

The value of Megiddo cannot be exaggerated, and has a powerful word of application today. The strategic location of Megiddo made it the envy of all who passed through the land of Israel. Whenever someone captured Megiddo, they would frequently rebuild directly on the remains of a different period of habitation (what archaeologists call a tel). Unsurprisingly, today, the towering ruins of Tel Megiddo provide a spectacular view of the Jezreel Valley. Scripture even prophesies of a future battle where opposition to the Messiah will gather at the “place which in Hebrew is called Har-magedon [meaning ‘hill of Megiddo’]” (Rev 16:16). Megiddo became associated with this eschatological battle due to great wars being fought in its vicinity and in memory of the godly King Josiah, who was killed there. The battle of Armageddon will go beyond Megiddo, since it is the place from

which all the armies of the earth gather and go forth to fight throughout the entire land of Israel.

Isaiah prophesied of Messiah coming “from Edom” (63:1), and the prophet Joel (3:2) said “all the nations” will be brought “to the valley of Jehoshaphat,” which is near Jerusalem. The final battle will extend from Megiddo in the north to present day Jordan in the south—and through the valley of Jehoshaphat near Jerusalem, which will be the primary focus of interest since God “will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle” (Zech 14:2). Many Jewish and Christian sources regard “the mourning of Hadadrimmon” to be in reference to the grief of the Jewish people at Josiah’s death (Zech 12:12), which anticipates a future time when the nation will mourn for the Messiah as they grieved for Josiah (vv. 10-12). The campaign of Armageddon will involve many battles that will conclude at the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev 16:13-16; 19:11-19).

The fact that the final battle occurs in relation to Megiddo (cf. Rev 16:16) is significant, because it brings to mind the ridge of Mount Carmel, where the prophet Elijah battled the 450 prophets of Baal. King Ahab and Queen Jezebel promoted Baal worship in Israel, and thereby persuaded the people to engage in gross idolatry. In response, Elijah challenged the people’s compromise in asking, “How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow

Megiddo proves that it is always easier to accommodate the culture than to oppose its influence; it is always easier to compromise than to guard oneself as God has instructed.

him” (1 Kgs 18:21). With all Israel gathered at Mount Carmel, Elijah forced them to make a decision. They had to choose either God or Baal, and could not continue worshiping both.

Elijah publicly and willingly put God to the test. He offered the prophets of Baal an opportunity to make their god known. Elijah made an altar for his sacrifice, as did the prophets of Baal; yet Elijah called upon the name of the Lord, while the prophets of Baal called upon their god. Whoever answered by fire would prove “He is God” (v. 24). The god of the Baal worshipers failed to answer, so Elijah called upon the true God to reveal Himself by fire, which fell from heaven and consumed the offering and the altar (v. 38). Elijah commanded the prophets of Baal to be seized, and they were brought “to the brook Kishon” (the Jezreel Valley) and slain there (v. 40). Elijah’s extraordinary triumph over the prophets of Baal is a small preview of the great apocalyptic battle at Armageddon, in which God’s power will be manifested in the destruction of His enemies. Just as Baal and his prophets were conquered near Megiddo, so also will Satan and his forces be defeated at “Har-magedon” (the “hill of Megiddo”).

Learning from Megiddo

What is the lesson of Megiddo for us today? First, the Israelites failed to expel the Canaanites from Megiddo (in addition to other locations). Those sites occupied the primary roads

by which one would enter the land of Israel. Not to take control of those cities is the equivalent to leaving one’s doors unlocked. Israel’s compromise was disastrous, precisely as God said it would be: “Their gods will be a constant temptation to you” (Judg 2:3). What is amazing is how many altars remain in ruins at Megiddo which face west instead of east (toward the rising sun), as God instructed.

Megiddo proves that it is always easier to accommodate the culture than to oppose its influence; it is always easier to compromise than to guard oneself as God has instructed. Scripture provides specific commands to protect His people from dangers that are not readily evident. Certainly, obedience to God’s commands is challenging, yet it is not as difficult as the results of compromise.

Similar to the time of ancient Israel, the culture fights to control a person’s heart, soul, mind, and strength (what rightly belongs to God). As one considers the influence of a culture that is often contrary to God’s will, it is all the more necessary to “watch [our] life and doctrine [beliefs] closely,” as 1 Timothy 4:16 instructs. Controlling specific cities in Israel meant monitoring significant points of entry into their lives. The issue was not simply military-related; rather, it was spiritual. In a similar manner, believers must guard the vital means of access into their heart, soul, mind, and strength.

(1274)



Is the Ukraine War the Start of Gog and Magog?

SAMUEL RINDLISBACHER

How much of biblical prophecy is playing out in current events around the world? A brief examination of end-time prophecies, Israel, and Gog and Magog.

While evaluating the terrible war between Russia and Ukraine, Ezekiel 38—39 is often referenced, causing people to ask whether this war could be the beginning of the onslaught that Ezekiel prophesied. Based on my understanding of the Bible, I don't believe this to be the case for the following reasons:

The march of Russia (Gog and Magog from the far north; Ezek 38:1-2, 15) will come at a time when Israel is dwelling in safety and without walls (vv. 8-11). This isn't the case today. Although "Shalom" is the common greeting in Israel, true peace is still a pipe dream. Large security walls, electric fences, military checkpoints, a large army contingent, and continuous

The Antichrist will be so effective that people will voluntarily and democratically help him get to power.

military standby are part of everyday life in Israel. Additionally, terrorist plots are uncovered (and prevented, for the most part) on a daily basis. Yes, people are talking about peace a great deal (1 Thess 5:3) and making peace treaties with more and more nations. Nevertheless, Israel's peace is threatened daily, and powerful enemies (first and foremost Iran, Hamas, Fatah, the Islamic State, and others) are denying Israel's right to exist. Because of this, the march of Gog and Magog (Ezek 38—39) couldn't be taking place today.

This future march is the deployment of a great army and many peoples led by Gog (Ezek 38:14-23), an enemy from the far north (v. 15). It will occur when Israel is gathered from among the Gentiles one last time. Biblical prophecy shows that Israel will be scattered again during the Great Tribulation after the Rapture of the Church, but will be preserved in a safe place by God Himself. After that, the remnant of the Jews will return to Israel and dwell in complete safety (cf. Rev 12:6; Ezek 38:8; Mark 13:27). The attack of Gog and Magog will then threaten this safety, but the Lord Himself will fight for Israel and judge Gog and Magog (Ezek 39:11). This victory will be the final victory of the Lamb, Jesus Christ, over His enemies. Then the Lord, as

King of Israel, will establish His Millennial Kingdom. This will forever change Israel's fate (Ezek 39:25-28), for God Himself will be Israel's guarantee of security. He will pour out His Spirit on Israel and never hide His face from His people again (v. 29).

The March of Gog and Magog in Revelation

We see another march of Gog and Magog at the end of the book of Revelation. This deployment, however, must be distinguished from the march of Gog and Magog in the book of Ezekiel. The two are completely separate events. One will take place at the beginning of the Millennium and will be the final challenging of God's rule on earth.

The other event will take place at the end of God's reign on earth. It is the very last rebellion of Satan and his accomplices. God's fire will end their rebellion and irrevocably seal Satan's fate (Rev 20:7-15).

Summary

Events are coming at us fast. New information is bombarding us daily. But the many reports of horrific news aren't yet the events from Revelation. Rather, they serve as harbingers. They are the rumble of thunder and the flash

Is the Ukraine War the Start of Gog and Magog?

Satan will only have a free hand here on earth after the Rapture has taken place and we, as the Church of Jesus, are in heaven to celebrate the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:1-8). Then the world will go off the rails. Civil wars, cost of living, inflation, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts will increase to an unprecedented degree (Rev 6).

of lightning of the ever-approaching apocalyptic storm. They are references to the events that pave the way for the Antichrist (Rev 6:2; 13:11ff.). Even if civil wars, rising prices and inflation, hunger and plagues, etc. are on the rise today (cf. Rev 6), these events aren't yet the Great Tribulation. They're just a "foretaste" of what is soon to come.

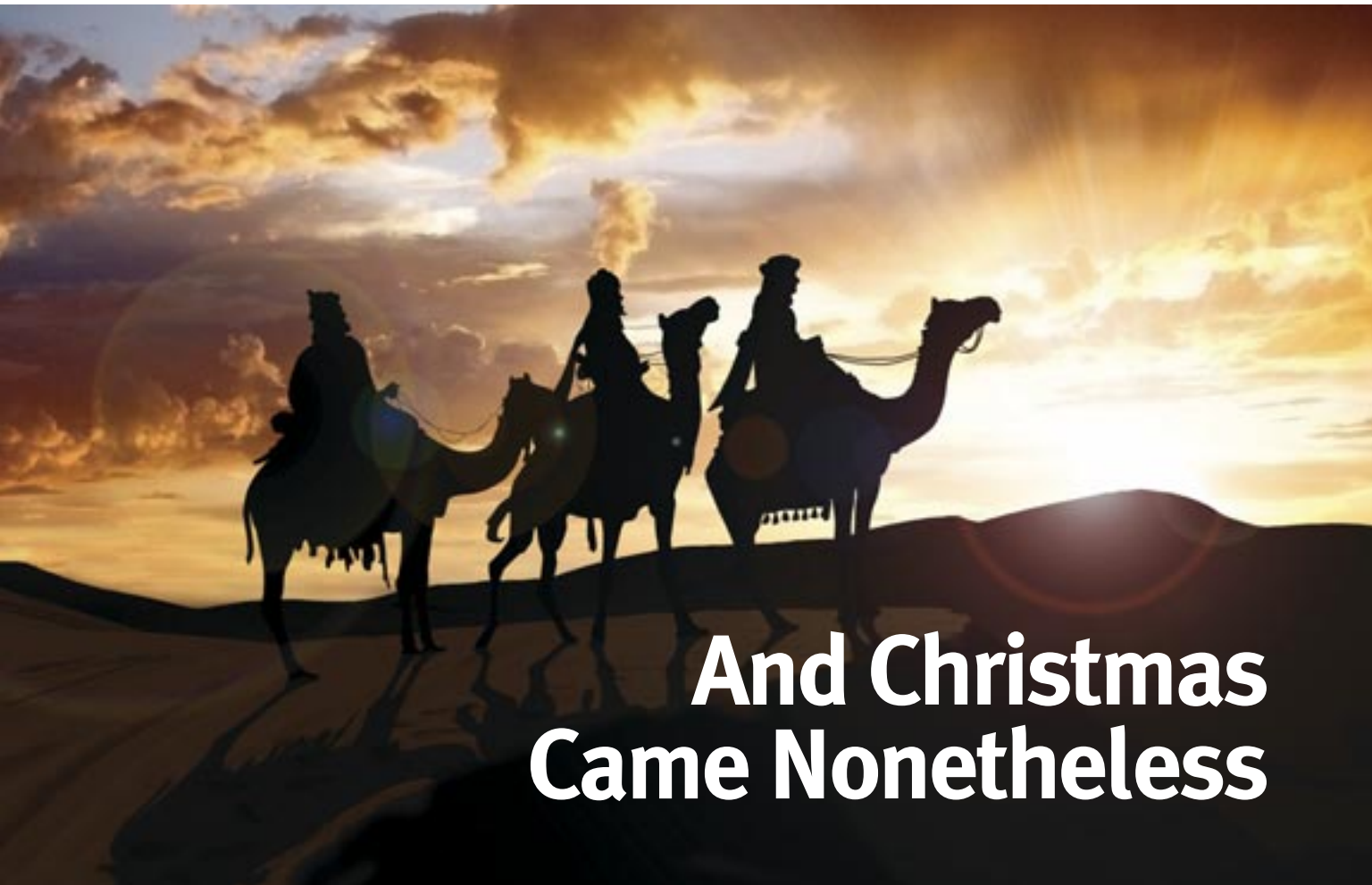
Satan will only have a free hand here on earth after the Rapture has taken place and we, as the Church of Jesus, are in heaven to celebrate the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:1-8). Then the world will go off the rails. Civil wars, cost of living, inflation, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts will increase to an unprecedented degree (Rev 6). These events will help give the Antichrist power. The Antichrist will superficially solve people's problems (Dan 11:36), but his system is one of deception (Rev 13:11-18). He will be so effective that people will voluntarily and democratically help him get to power (Rev 17:13). Many will see the Antichrist as their "redeemer." Not the redeemer from their sins, but from their economic, political, and societal problems. They will accept him, just as

Jesus foretold (John 5:43). Together with his companion, Europe's political leader, he will establish a satanic entity endowed with Satan's power (Rev 13:4), to turn humanity against God and His Christ.

The recent past shows us how something like this could come about. Adolf Hitler came to power in 1933 and was elected democratically. The factors that aided and contributed to his victory were inflation, mass unemployment, the chaos of war, poverty, hunger, and epidemics, as well as a chief propagandist (Goebbels), who was a master of every form of manipulation and deception.

The course has been set; the end-time train has begun to pick up speed, and we're watching with amazement as God's Word is fulfilled. We don't have to bury our heads in the sand, but we can be glad that we can expect Jesus Christ and His Rapture any day now. So, let's use the time we have remaining to invite people to Jesus Christ, so they can be reconciled to Him. Let's rejoice because our Lord is coming—perhaps today! Maranatha; come soon, Lord Jesus!

(MR0822/1266)



And Christmas Came Nonetheless

Norbert Lieth

It wasn't a tranquil time of harmony and comfort, nor were the circumstances suitable for Christmas. Yet in spite of this—or perhaps because of it—Christmas came.

Back about 2,000 years ago, the entire world was gripped by a circumstance similar to ours under the coronavirus. The world was ruled by the Roman Empire, and King Herod reigned over Israel under its authority. The people suffered under his repression. He'd turned the country into a police state that

rewarded informers. There were times when citizens were forbidden to meet, either publicly or in secret. He positioned guards to control society. And if someone was caught breaking the law, he was punished severely.

Caesar Augustus had only his own interests in mind. He ordered that all the people



And Christmas Came Nonetheless

Caesar Augustus ordered that all the people in the world should be registered.

in the world should be registered. His intent was to be able to better control the populace and collect more taxes. Luke the evangelist reports how the people had become docile, writing, “And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city” (Luke 2:3).

These circumstances also forced Joseph the carpenter and his wife Mary to depart from Nazareth, their home, for their birthplace in Bethlehem. Mary was heavily pregnant. The way was dangerous, difficult, and long. The people were depressed by the pressures and political circumstances of the time. There was anything but a Christmas spirit in the air. Historian Markus Spieker comments, “It seems like the devil is really letting off steam. And now God comes.”

Yes, in the middle of this situation, unnoticed by everyone, God was bringing together all of those circumstances and using them. He fulfilled His prophecies, and Jesus was born into the world in Bethlehem.

In hindsight, we can see how everything fits neatly together, like pieces of a puzzle. Hardly anyone pays attention at the time, but God rules the world and carries out His plan, in the midst of seemingly haphazard events.

Over 700 years prior to Jesus’ birth, the Jewish prophet Micah prophesied on God’s behalf: “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting” (Mic 5:2).

Jesus is the eternal Son of God. He was to be born human in Bethlehem to redeem a lost world. God managed to use the political circumstances and confusion for His purpose. In the end, nothing was fulfilled but His promise.

Consider the present, the uncertainty of our days. The growing fears. The hardships that have grasped the whole world. They paint a bleak picture. Aren’t we also hearing about registering? About increased surveillance and controls?

But we haven’t been left to our own devices. God has promised that His Son will return to earth. Once again, the Almighty will use the circumstances in the world to fulfill His promise. Jesus will take the world’s affairs in hand to bring peace, justice, and security.

God’s great goal is the divine dominion of His divine Son, Jesus Christ. The Bible says this about Him: “Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he



You shouldn't just participate in Christmas celebrations; no, let Jesus' birth become your own personal celebration.

hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31).

You can experience this rescue today!

Maybe something in your life has gone awry. Disappointments have overtaken you. Guilt is weighing you down. Each attempt to fix things results in a dead end of hopelessness. The pressure is mounting. It's becoming unbearable. You're disappointed in your life, your fellow human beings, and yourself. Yes, life has become dangerous, the obstacles insurmountable, the fear great, the confusion impenetrable. Things aren't going according to your plans. It seems like the devil has trapped you in a revolving door of misery. But stop! In all of this, God has His plan for you. Jesus speaks into your circumstances: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

It can be Christmas for you nonetheless. I want you to realize that God is using your life circumstances to draw you to Himself. And that means more than just a bit of Christmas cheer, mulled cider and cookies! More than a little joy, a little love, a little exchange of gifts. You can get more than just a little something out of life.

Jesus came to the earth as life. He brought us the best message. Not just for

the four weeks of Advent, but for eternity. Anyone can be saved; anyone who desires it, no matter how low he has sunk. It requires no effort on his part, but is completely by God's grace. He gives total amnesty. Jesus gave His life and rose from the dead to accomplish this. He wants to give you true life in all its fullness; namely, the life that flows into eternal life. And indeed, He is able—it can be experienced!

One poet expressed the meaning of Christmas this way:

Man was made in God's image.
Because this image is lost,
God, an image of man,
is born this night.

You shouldn't just participate in Christmas celebrations; no, let Jesus' birth become your own personal celebration. Accept Him in faith as God's greatest gift to you. God's Word promises: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb 7:25).

In spite of everything—or perhaps because of it—let it be Christmas in your heart!

(MR1221/1207)

Nevertheless, We Continue

STEPHAN BEITZE



What can we do when we're discouraged? What a marathon runner with no legs, and the Apostle Paul, can teach us.

It's not uncommon to get extremely disappointed or discouraged in the service of the Lord. You might be hearing from others how well their church or ministry is doing, and think, "I wish I could say the same."

But we need to be aware that everyone has problems, trials, and challenges. Not everything we attempt will go smoothly. We may have lost church members. Perhaps others have left us. Maybe there isn't even a good church nearby, where the Word of God is proclaimed clearly. Maybe we have family problems. There may be problems at work, or with our health. We could even have lost someone very dear to us. It could also be the case that we were treated unfairly. Perhaps we have encountered opposition for the sake of the Gospel. Perhaps our friends, or even our brothers and sisters in the faith, have disappointed us. We may have gone through a time

of adversity, or a ministry we devoted our energy to hasn't yielded the fruit we'd hoped for. We might be feeling like all our efforts were in vain. Maybe we're fed up and disappointed with it all.

Is there a solution? How can we even go on?

There are numerous well-known marathons worldwide, and millions run every year. Completion rates vary across courses, but overall, about 20% of those who begin a race don't finish. The New York City Marathon is the largest in the world. The records for the 42 km (26.2 miles) course are 2:05:06 (men's, set in 2011) and 2:22:31 (women's, set in 2003). And yet one impressive time stands out: 4 days, 17 hours, and 21 minutes. This was the completion time of Bob Wieland (bobwieland.net), who had lost both his legs serving in the Vietnam War. He "walked" the entire route on his hands. Not only that, but also, he took nearly four years to cross

Knowing that God wanted him in Rome, Paul appealed to Caesar.



the entire United States to raise funds for veterans.

Why is it that 20% of healthy, able-bodied runners don't finish the marathons they begin, while this man persevered to the end despite all odds? How can you run when you don't even have legs?

Consider the life of a great missionary: the Apostle Paul (Acts 20:17-24). He was on his way to Jerusalem, even though the Holy Spirit had forewarned him that he would be taken prisoner there. He could have decided to remain in Europe, to continue in his blessed church-planting ministry. Why would he expose himself to danger unnecessarily? But he said, "I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself," and kept going.

Someone who doesn't know the Apostle Paul's life might say, "Talk is cheap, but he doesn't know a thing about my problems. It's easy enough to say you'll keep going anyway."

But the reality is quite different (cf. Acts 20:19). In 2 Corinthians 11:23ff., the Apostle lists his trials: flogged five times by the Jews, whipped three times, stoned once, and ship-

wrecked three times (up to that point). He was in constant danger during his travels through deserts, across seas, over rivers, and on lonely roads. He was in danger among Jews and Gentiles alike, and even among false brethren. He suffered all sorts of anxieties and hardships, in addition to his constant concern for his fellow brothers and sisters in Christ and churches, etc.

It could be said that symbolically, his legs had long since been cut out from under him. But he still said, "I do not account my life of any value," and set out for Jerusalem.

In Jerusalem, Paul was nearly lynched, taken prisoner, and suffered slander. But he stood firm. He was imprisoned under Felix in Caesarea for two years. He could have invested those wasted years so fruitfully in church planting! Felix was convinced of Paul's innocence, but expected the Apostle to bribe him in exchange for freedom. Paul could have asked the local church to "solve" the problem, since it would ultimately benefit the Church and the spread of the Gospel. But he was unwilling to do that and didn't compromise. Afterwards, he had an interview with Festus, who could have released him. But knowing that God wanted him in Rome, Paul appealed to Caesar. However, Paul was well aware of what this appeal to Caesar would entail: it meant remaining in captivity until the emperor was willing to receive him.

Now the disastrous crossing to Rome followed, including Paul's fourth shipwreck, and a snakebite to boot. When he was near Rome, brothers and sisters from the church there met and encouraged him (Acts 28:15). He seemed

Nevertheless, We Continue



We need to be asking ourselves whether we are in the place God wants us to be.

to really need it. Afterwards, he remained chained to a Roman soldier for two years (v. 16). If we were to put ourselves in his place, we could say, “What an injustice! How unreasonable.” He was imprisoned for four years while innocent (Acts 28:30). Again, so much wasted time that could have been used for church planting and missionary travel! But Paul didn’t despair. He didn’t allow himself to feel that everything was useless. No, he used this time to continue preaching the Gospel (Acts 28:31), and wrote the wonderful letters to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.

After this, he was released for a while. He could have told himself, “I’ve suffered and worked enough! Now it’s time to enjoy a well-deserved retirement.” But instead, he went back to work: organizing help for various churches, and writing more books. A short time later, he was imprisoned again. This was the final imprisonment that led to his martyrdom.

Surely the great Apostle Paul had many brothers and sisters to lovingly care for him in prison. After all, his ministry had been so blessed, and so many people had learned the Gospel from him. He must have received many visits from people who brought him the things he needed and comforted him in these difficult circumstances... But unfortunately, this wasn’t the case. Quite the opposite: Demas left him because he loved the world more (2 Tim 4:10). Apparently, a certain Alexander testified

against him instead of in his defense (v. 14). This great and blessed man of God was alone. His best friends and coworkers were away or sick like Trophimus (v. 20). The only one who remained with him was Luke (v. 11). Perhaps people were beginning to question Paul’s actions. Perhaps Paul’s repeated imprisonments were being seen as God’s judgment. In any case, he was left completely alone.

He was abandoned to the point that he couldn’t even properly shield himself from the cold. He had to ask his friend Timothy to bring his cloak. Wasn’t there a single person in Rome who could have lent him a cloak or blanket? Apparently not. These were the circumstances in which he was writing his second letter to Timothy, which was to become his final letter and legacy. He sensed that the end was near and wrote, “For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come” (2 Tim 4:6). He knew that he would die for the sake of Christ.

Let’s revisit the example of the marathon runner, the man without legs. In this context we could say that figuratively, Paul’s legs weren’t the only things that had been cut out from under him, but his arms as well. How could he still stand firm and keep going? What was the secret of his perseverance, courage, and stability?

I think there are three main reasons:

You may be feeling depressed, powerless, defeated, and feel tempted to give up on everything. Look to the Lord, the author and perfecter of our faith!

1. The Certainty of His Calling

“...The ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus...” (Acts 20:24). He knew that God had called him and set him in this place. The circumstances he was confronted with made no difference; he could press on.

Bearing this in mind, we need to be asking ourselves whether we are in the place God wants us to be. He may be calling you to occupy a position you don't want to be in. Or you may be in another place of your own choosing, that God hadn't intended for you. But when you are in the place that the Lord has shown you, you can also be assured that He will take care of everything else. Paul obeyed the call of God. He knew: “This is the place that God wants me to be, and this is where I'll see to it that I carry out my task.”

2. The Certainty of God's Help and Presence

Paul had God's promise: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor 12:9). He leaned on this promise until the end of his life, when he said, “But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it...” (2 Tim 4:17).

If the Apostle Paul had this assurance, then so can we. You may be feeling depressed, powerless, defeated, and feel tempted to give up on everything. Look to the Lord, the author and perfecter of our faith! Not only will you be able to keep going, but you will soar above

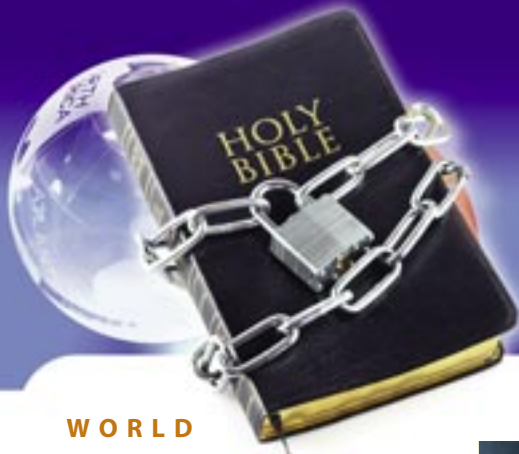
the obstacles like an eagle, as Isaiah so beautifully wrote. You will rise up, and neither faint nor grow weary. The Lord will renew your strength, for it does not lie in us, but in Him. We want to be getting this power from Him again and again!

3. The Certainty of Being with the Lord Soon

At the end of his life, the Apostle Paul said, “The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom” (2 Tim 4:18). Paul's letters are constantly sharing the certainty of the Lord's swift coming. This gave him complete comfort. So much so that he even wrote to the Thessalonians at that time, “Therefore encourage one another with these words” (1 Thess 4:18). He knew that all of the labor and anguish would soon be over, and then he would pass into eternity. That was his consolation. And when he wrote to the Corinthians about the Rapture, he ended by saying, “Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain” (1 Cor 15:58).

He knew that he would soon be with the Lord. This comforted him, but also filled him with zeal for the Lord's business. There was much to do, and little time left to reach so many people with the Gospel! Dear readers, that is also our certainty. Which is why we aim to continue on the path that God has laid out for us.

(MR0722/1258)



WORLD FOCUS

WORLD

Christian Persecution Rising

Persecution of Christians has worsened in at least 18 countries at the hands of both totalitarian governments and militant non-state actors in recent years, according to a new report.



Released by Catholic group Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) on Nov. 16 and presented to the U.K. Parliament, the report pinpointed Asia, Africa and the Middle East as the regions where the persecution of Christians is most grave.

Nigeria in particular teeters on the brink of becoming a “failed state” because of jihadists, the report warned, explaining that one analysis tallied as many as 7,600 Christians killed in the country between January 2021 and June 2022.

In his forward to the report, Father Andrew Adeniyi Abayomi, whose church in Nigeria was attacked by gunmen on Pentecost, wrote: “The suffering Church needs people to speak out for us. For the killing to stop, more organizations like ACN need to proclaim the truth of what is happening to Christians all over the world. If not, we will always remain persecuted and forgotten.”

The “world’s oldest and most important Christian communities located in



For Christians in Afghanistan, “the rise of the Taliban has driven Christians underground—they live in fear of arrest, torture and execution,” according to ACN. (Voice of the Martyrs)



Christian nuns wave placards as they march during a demonstration against the tabling of the Protection of Right to Freedom of Religion Bill in Bengaluru, India. (Abhishek Chinnappa/Getty Images)

Iraq, Syria, and Palestine” are also particularly endangered, the report continued, noting that the Christian population in Syria has plunged from 1.5 million to only 300,000 since 2011.

-www.foxnews.com, 21 November 2022

Commentary: Gathering from various other sources, it is noted that when the Christian religion exhibits power, they are potential candidates for vicious opposition and, as reported by

many, outright persecution. The Catholic Church in particular is a visible target for fanatics, primarily jihadists.

Hebrew 13:3 admonishes the believer: “Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer

adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.” Remember means to pray for these brethren, so as to participate in their suffering. We pray for comfort, strength, longsuffering, and patience. Here is the testimony of the apostle Paul: “By pureness, by knowledge, by long suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things” (2 Corinthians 6:6-10).


7893

(See *Waiting on God*, Item #2311, \$15.99.)

 ISRAEL

Invisible Face Mask

Face masks protect their wearers from life-threatening respiratory infections of all kinds. However, they also pose harmful psychological effects, such as reducing facial identification and emotion recognition, making it difficult for people to understand what those who wear them are saying.

 Conventional face masks have also led to a dramatic rise in plastic waste, exacerbated by governmental mask-wearing mandates, producing millions of tons annually.

In a breakthrough that will save lives and also help protect the environment, researchers at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa have developed a revolutionary invisible face mask to protect wearers against the transmission of COVID, MERS, influenza and other respiratory viruses.

The team, led by Prof. Moshe Shoham and Prof. David Greenblatt, invented a radically new solution to the conventional mask dilemma by creating an invisible “air screen” in front of the wearer’s face. The air screen originates from within a lightweight filter-covered unit mounted on the visor of a cap. Several major advantages became clear: The air screen protects the eyes, nose and mouth without reducing facial identity, emotion recognition or oral communication. The air screen is also reusable, so it doesn’t pollute the en-



Air-Screen: Fluidic facemask that can protect against viruses like COVID.
(photo credit: Wisdome Wearables)

vironment like the plastic throw-aways used around the world.

-www.jpost.com, 27 November 2022

Commentary: In the meantime, we must look back a few decades. Securing safety belts for drivers and passengers was unthinkable decades ago. In the US, it was 1968 when the seatbelt became nationally mandated. How about smoking? Selecting a seat on a plane, one had the option for smoking or non-smoking. These things now belong to the history books. Smoking is outlawed in public places in virtually all countries of the world. Not buckling up can result in fines up to \$200 (in the US).

Dr. Roger Liebi, in his book *Bible and Science* (not available), quotes Number 19:11, 16, and 19 dealing with the subject “Bacteria and the Dead.” He then writes: “The Law of Moses taught that direct contact with a human corpse contaminates. However, one is cleansed by washing in the water of

the ritual bath ... The knowledge behind this law was ignored into the 19th century. As a result, at times up to 66% of new mothers died. The Jewish doctor Ignaz Semmelweis (1818-1865) was the first to demand that his students wash their hands thoroughly before helping in the delivery room. In this way, he was able to drastically reduce the number of deaths following childbirth. Semmelweis reaped bitter abuse from many of his scientific colleagues and finally ended up in a mental hospital. His colleagues found no problem dissecting a corpse for research purposes and then assisting a birth with unwashed hands. Only later was Dr. Joseph Lister (1827-1912) successful in introducing hygienic measures.”

Now we are thankful for medical science protecting us from bacteria, viruses, and other disease-causing agents. Mask-wearing, keeping distance, and vaccination have caused quite a controversy among believers. Worldometers.info documents deaths due to Covid-19 per 1 million population: USA, 3,300; Israel, 1,270. Only time will tell how effective invisible masks will be at reducing the spread of contagious disease.

7896


(See *Are We Really Living in the Last Days?* Item #2277, \$17.95.)



  **RUSSIA/CHINA**

Railway Bridge Across Amur River

Russia and China launched traffic on the first-ever railway bridge across the Amur River at the interborder section Nizhneleninskoye-Tongjiang, the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) said in a press release.

 “The launch of traffic on the bridge opens a new transport corridor between Russia and China, which removes a number of existing infrastructure restrictions. The distance for transporting goods to the northern provinces of China will be reduced by more than 700 km compared to existing routes,” RDIF noted.

The governments of Russia and China signed the agreement on the bridge’s construction in 2008. The RDIF together with Chinese partners financed more than 70% of the construction of the Russian part of the bridge. The VEB. RF state development corporation and Russian Railways also acted as investors in the project, according to the RDIF report.

-tass.com, 16 November 2022

Commentary: The West unitedly condemned Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, implementing significant sanctions, embargoes, boycotts, and other measures that have contributed to Russia’s tendency to look toward the East; in this case, China. These two nations belong to



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the BRICS economic group: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, representing about 41.1% of the world’s population, with 3.22 billion people. That is substantial when one compares it to NATO countries, with barely 1 billion people. Thus, we see the conglomeration of great power blocs, with countries moving either toward the East or the West. Africa, with 1.2 billion in population, has the potential for significant growth; not only population-wise, but also economically.

We notice that these gigantic power blocs will swallow countries of lesser significance or minor economic players, thus drawing the world closer to a truly global government. This must come to pass in order to fulfill Revelation 17:13:

“These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.”

7898

(See *Exposing Mystery Babylon*


Part 1, Item #1078, \$4.50.)



 **U S A**

Sun Stranger Than Astrophysicists Imagined

A decade’s worth of telescope observations of the sun have revealed a startling mystery: Gamma rays, the highest frequency waves of light, radiate from our nearest star seven times more abundantly than expected. Stranger still, despite this extreme excess of gamma rays overall, a narrow bandwidth of frequencies is curiously absent.

 “It’s amazing that we were so spectacularly wrong about something we should understand really well: the sun,” said Brian Fields, a particle astrophysicist at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

Physicists do not think the sun emits any gamma rays from within. (Nuclear fusions in its core do produce them, but they scatter and downgrade to lower-energy light before leaving the sun.) However, in 1991, the physicists David Seckel, Todor Stanev and Thomas Gaisser of the University of Delaware hypothesized that the sun would nonetheless glow in gamma rays, because of cosmic rays that zip in from outer space and plunge toward it.

Yet the Fermi Telescope detects, on average, seven times more gamma rays coming from the solar disk than this cosmic-ray theory predicts. And the signal becomes up to 20 times stronger than predicted for gamma rays with the highest frequencies. “We found that the process was consistent with 100 percent efficiency at high energies,” astrophysicist Tim Linden said. “Every cosmic ray that comes in has to be turned around.”

(continued next page)

Sun (continued from page 28)

This is puzzling, since the most energetic cosmic rays should be the hardest to mirror.

Whether or not cosmic rays account for the entire gamma-ray signal, Joe Giacalone, a heliospheric physicist at the University of Arizona, says the signal “is probably telling us something very fundamental about the magnetic structure of the sun.” The sun is the most extensively studied star, yet its magnetic field—generated by the churning maelstrom of charged particles inside it—remains poorly understood, leaving us with a blurry picture of how stars operate.

-quantamagazine.org, 1 September 2022

Commentary: What is an astrophysicist? BetterTeam.com explains: “An Astrophysicist uses physics, mathematics, and computing knowledge to investigate the formation of stars, planets, and galaxies. Astrophysicists study astronomical events

and celestial bodies to learn more about the universe and how it was formed, from either an observational or theoretical standpoint.” These well-educated, brilliant minds continue to discover something new—simply meaning the past was not true.

We take special notice of words such as, “spectacularly wrong ... this is puzzling ... poorly understood ... blurry picture,” revealing there is much guessing involved when it comes to many long-standing theories. The beginning is found in Scripture: “And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day” (Genesis 1:3-5). We realize that this is not the creation of the sun, the moon, and the stars. He

spoke life into existence, because He is life; He is the eternal One, the Creator of truth.


Only later we read of the creation of the sun, the moon, and the stars: “And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day” (Genesis 1:14-19). 7836

(See The Heavens, Item #2391, \$19.99.)

NEW ZEALAND

16- and 17-Year-Olds Should Vote

New Zealand’s highest court ruled that the country’s current voting age of 18 was discriminatory, forcing Parliament to discuss whether it should be lowered.

 The Supreme Court found that the current voting age of 18 was inconsistent with the country’s Bill of Rights, which gives people a right to be free from age discrimination when they have reached 16.

“This is history,” said Make It 16 co-director Caeden Tipler, adding: “The government and Parliament cannot ignore such a clear le-

gal and moral message. They must let us vote.”

Political parties in New Zealand have mixed views on the subject. The Green Party wants immediate action to lower the voting age to 16, but the largest opposition party, the National Party, does not support the shift.

-www.nbcnews.com, 20 November 2022

Commentary: At this point in time, BatchGeo.com say that 86% of the 237 listed countries have a minimum voting age of 18 years old. The first country to lower the age from 21 to 20 was Czechoslovakia in 1946. By the end of the 1900s, 18 had be-

come the common voting age, and remains so today in most countries.


What does the Bible say? Twenty is the key number when reading the book of Numbers, beginning with chapter 1. In chapter 26, verse 2 we read: “Take the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, from twenty years old and upward, throughout their fathers’ house, all that are able to go to war in Israel.” We note the words, “twenty years old and upward.” This obviously led the European world to declare a 21-year-old person an adult. 7892

(See Fractals, Item #2387, \$29.99.)

WORLD

Food Insecurity for 8 Billion?

Every night around 828 million people go to bed hungry, according to the World Food Program (WFP), a United Nations organization focusing on providing food assistance globally.

 “We are on the way to a raging food catastrophe,” U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres told world leaders at the G20 Summit in Bali, Indonesia. “People in five separate places are facing famine.”

The world produces enough food yearly, around 4 billion tons, to feed everyone, but around one-third of all food made, approximately 1.3 billion tons of fruit, vegetables, dairy and meat, goes to waste, according to the United Nations’ Food and Agriculture Organization.

When food prices increase, households switch to cheaper staple foods and processed foods instead of buying more nutritious—and generally more expensive—foods, such as fruits, vegetables, dairy, meat, decreasing the quality of their diets, said Saskia Osendarp in an April op-ed in *Nature* magazine.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has also increased food prices, as both countries are important suppliers of wheat, barley, corn and sunflower oil.

At the Committee on World Food Security, WFP executive director David Beasley said the world is facing threats of mass starvation and that global leaders must act and provide humanitarian support.

-abcnews.go.com, 19 November 2022



Local civilians queue for food distribution in Kherson City, Ukraine.
Anadolu Agency via Getty Images

Commentary: The world’s five largest wheat producers are China, India, Russia, USA, and France. What is important in this case is export. The top five exporters are: Russia, 23.9%; Canada, 12.4%; USA, 12.2%; France, 10.3%; and Ukraine, 8.9%. According to Beef2Live.com, “Food therefore is grown in abundance. Two major problems are distribution and food waste.” UN.org reports, “An estimated 70% of total global food production is wasted.” Interestingly, Statista.com lists the top ten food wasting countries as: Nigeria, Greece, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Australia, Kenya, Mexico, Ethiopia, Malaysia, and France (the US ranked 22nd out of 35 countries).

The other issue is distribution. Countries with a degree of financial disability are in a difficult position to keep supply chains functioning.

In summary, hunger will continue to be a reality.

We are reminded of Revelation 6, where we are introduced to the four riders of the apocalypse. After the third seal is opened, we read in verse 6: “And I

heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.” In plain words, this means skyrocketing prices for food. The NIV reads, “Two pounds of wheat for a day’s wages, and six pounds of barley for a day’s wages.” That doubtless is describing global famine.

Unusual are the words, “hurt not the oil and the wine.” These are two luxury items, not needed to sustain life on earth. But they demonstrate cleansing and healing, as was the case with the Good Samaritan.

It is our understanding that in the midst of the horrendous judgment that comes upon earth, the oil means the anointed of the Lord. Regarding the wine, we are reminded of Psalm 80:8-9: “Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land.” This means Israel. The prophet Jeremiah states, “Jacob ... shall be saved out of it” (Jeremiah 30:7b). 7890

(See *Jacob’s Dozen*, Item #2385, \$7.95.)



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True Bible Prophecy and Digital Bible Courses

BY JAN EISSES, MONTEVIDEO

On the direction of our preaching, and the possibilities of our online work.

Each Friday, we (Victoria, Alberto, Walter, and I) record the “Radio Journal.” We recently commented on an article about Pope Francis’ statement that we’re now experiencing a Third World War (with the invasion of Ukraine). In fact, there is war of some kind almost everywhere in the world: between countries and within countries, cold wars and drug wars (a growing problem here in Latin America).

However, in our “Radio Journal,” as well as in our general preaching



“Llamada de Medianoche” radio team

within Midnight Call Ministries, we want to look upwards. God wants us to shine like bright stars in the midst of a perverted and twisted humanity, bringing hope to mankind: “How



beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns’” (Isaiah 52:7).

The third virtual conference on the prophetic Word (mentioned in Stephan Beitze’s report last month) was prepared in cooperation with the field offices in Argentina, Guatemala, and Bolivia. It was livestreamed on YouTube from our studio. It was called *El abuso de la profecía bíblica* (“The Use and Abuse of Biblical Prophecy”). Samuel Pérez-Millos spoke on improper use (*abuso*), and Stephan Beitze spoke on proper use (*uso*).

What’s being presented as Bible prophecy online today is pretty

shocking. It’s often astrology mixed with Bible passages taken out of context, or conspiracy myths that are crowding out Christ and His Word in the minds of God’s children. The passage our conference was based on is clear: “For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty” (2 Pet 1:16).

At the time of the conference, Spanish Midnight Call’s long-awaited online Bible courses began. We’re currently offering a series on Bible interpretation (hermeneutics) with Héctor Leites (head of a Bible school in Montevideo), as well as one on Christology with Stephan Beitze. New classes are uploaded every Monday. (MR0922)

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Action for Israel



MIDNIGHT CALL

“And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done” (Daniel 11:36).

BY ARNO FROESE

The epitome of narcissism is described in the above Scripture. It is he who wishes to be equal to or even replace God the Creator. The prophet Isaiah describes his desire: “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High” (Isaiah 14:14). Who is he? It is Lucifer. In the New Testament he is called the great dragon, the old serpent, the devil, and Satan.

The center of his activity is God’s chosen land, Israel. The land we so dearly love; the land wherein the patriarchs dwelt—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; from which the prophets came and proclaimed God’s message.

But, above and beyond all, it is the land where God was revealed in the flesh; whose coming to Israel was prophesied long ago. His work is documented in the four Gospels and Acts in the New Testament. It is a land incomparable to any other country on earth. As a matter of fact, the Bible makes this devastating statement about all the nations: “All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity” (Isaiah 40:17). That is enough reason for us



not to unnecessarily worry about what’s happening on planet earth, what transpires

among the nations. The entirety of human history is placed in this category, “less than nothing.”

Yet, Israel stands out. She is different; she is unique; she is called a holy nation and her land, the Holy Land. But at the same time, she is also referred to as the most abominable. It is this Mystery Babylon which has attempted—and still does today—to create its own self-made god. The prophet Ezekiel exposes Jerusalem with these words: “As I live, saith the Lord God, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters. Behold,



this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy” (Ezekiel 16:48-49).

It is sad for us to realize that Jesus said to the Jews in the land of Israel: “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). However, after judgment comes salvation.

Reading Hosea chapter 2, one notices that the words “I will” appear 23 times. The first 13 verses expose Israel’s horrible sin of idolatry. But then, beginning in verse 14, the “I will” is directed to His people Israel in the spirit of compassion, as evident in the last verse: “And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God” (verse 23).

Israel Today

It has been over 11 years since this writer visited Israel. Thus, the yearning to return to the land was fulfilled during the month of October last year. From our small group of staff and board members, there were several who had never been to the Holy Land. We carefully instructed

them on how to answer the immigration and security authorities when entering the land. From the multiple times we have traveled to Israel, we have gathered much experience, which we could authoritatively pass on to those members of our group who were traveling to the Promised Land for the first time.

Before we entered the area of passport control, we noticed a number of kiosks where travelers would scan their passport. Not knowing the procedure, we continued but were stopped at a gate, where an officer asked to see our visa. Thus, we returned to these machines and dutifully scanned our passport, after which the machine issued a visa the size of a driver’s license.

That was all; with our passport and visa in hand, we quickly went through passport control without a hitch. Quite naturally, the scanning apparatus not only scanned and recorded the passport details, but also took our picture; thus, documenting that the person entering Israel is exactly the same as the one described in the passport. Doubtless, every traveler’s details were also automatically checked against Israeli and international databases, and flagged if there was anything suspicious. Welcome to the technological age of computers!

One must mention that on the return trip from Israel to Charlotte, NC, we waited no less than one hour and 33 min-

utes for the American immigration officers to compare our passport picture with the traveler.

Ebenezer Senior Citizens' Home

After having read so much about the Ebenezer Home, it was a joy to see the excellent work being done in favor of the aged believers in Jesus, some of them Holocaust survivors. They are being taken care of in a spirit of love, compassion, and quite often with extended patience. The atmosphere, filled with the Spirit of Christ, was almost tangible.

Bethesda Assembly

On the Sabbath, we were invited to attend services at the local Bethesda Messianic Assembly. The entire service was impressive and spiritually uplifting. While all held in Hebrew, we were able join in on some of the old hymns in English. The message was extraordinary, with excellent headset translation. What was most

notable was the volume of young people, which cannot be said of many of our churches in North America. Dual event youth groups have to meet at the Beth Shalom facilities not too far away. Indeed, we were abundantly blessed by being guests at the Bethesda Assembly.

Ebenezer/Action for Israel

Some have asked about the allocation of funds. For Ebenezer, 100% of funds received through Midnight Call Ministries is transferred to the Ebenezer Senior Citizens' Home.

Action for Israel is administered by Fredi and Beate Winkler, who are the directors of Beth Shalom. They in turn prayerfully allocate funds where needed most in Haifa and the rest of Israel.

Thank you for praying and for your support of Israel, especially now for His Church in His land—particularly for the ever-growing number of young Israelis finding the fulfillment, “Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.” ^{MC}



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

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TREE RINGS



As you go into the forest, you come to a freshly sawed-off tree trunk. Have you ever tried to count the tree rings?

By Peter Malgo

Some of these rings are close to each other and therefore hard to count, while other rings are broader, indicating years of good growth. The rings of a tree reflect, among other factors, the climate: in a mild year they are broader, while in a very cold or very hot year they are more narrow. In the Bible, trees are quite often mentioned in connection with man.

I recently stood at the open grave of someone who had devoted a large part of his life to the service of Jesus Christ. At the funeral service that followed, the story of his life was recounted. A richly fulfilled life was laid out for those attending; the tree rings, so to speak, of his life ... good and bad years, lean and fulfilled years—a cross-section of his life in fast motion.

What would the cross-section of our life look like, our “tree rings”? If, for example, a tree is exposed to poor climate conditions or negative environmental influences, it cannot develop a deep root system ... cannot grow properly or bear fruit. So it is with us humans: If we unnecessarily spend time in an inhospitable, godless

environment, our spiritual growth is slowed or even comes to a standstill. And worse yet, there will be no fruit. The psalmist draws just such a picture: “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly” (Psalm 1:1a). Man is then compared to a tree: “And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper” (v. 3).

The Bible also uses this image in some other places. Thus, the life of man resembles a tree in many ways. Back in Paradise, man’s life was already closely related to trees: the Tree of Life in the middle of the Garden, and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Both tree and man produce either good or bad fruit.

One can estimate a tree’s age mostly by its circumference. This is less the case in humans. The age of a tree also shows in the condition of its bark: A gnarled tree with scars testifies to many a storm. Man is not spared such storms of life either. At age 50, one is no longer 20! But a tree is really beautiful when it is old and

One can estimate a tree's age mostly by its circumference. This is less the case in humans. The age of a tree also shows in the condition of its bark: A gnarled tree with scars testifies to many a storm. Man is not spared such storms of life either.

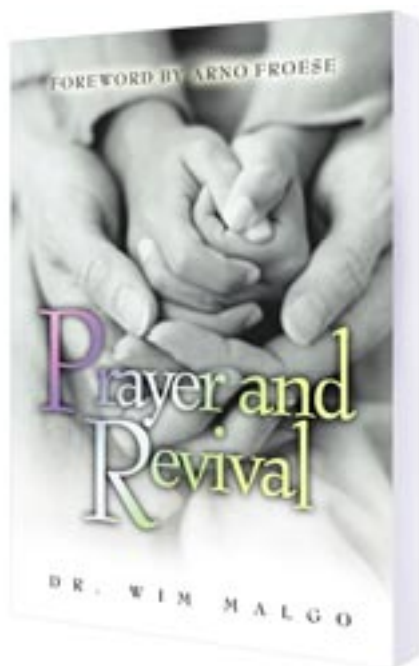
big. Only then can it provide a lot of shade. This is a picture of man's life experience: the greater the variety of circumstances—and here I am referring primarily to God's children—the more he is able to give comfort, to give "shade" and have a stabilizing effect.

Years ago, trees in orchards were infected with fire blight, a dangerous plant disease caused by bacteria. Thousands of trees had to be felled and burned. Even though some of them still looked healthy



from a distance, their condition was such that they had to be taken down.

How these events remind us of the words of our Lord. Are not many supposed Christians also afflicted with the dangerous disease of sin? And how does the fruit look then? May the Lord give us born-again Christians grace to overcome in all things (Romans 8:37), so that—concerning the reward—we won't have to be cut down and our cross-section of life, our "tree rings," may endure before the Lord. (MC)



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Passing on the Torch: Ebenezer's New CEO



“But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24).

By Shmuel Aweda *(Ebenezer's Chairman)*

This past year, Johnny, our beloved manager of 24 years, shared that he felt the Lord calling him on to other things... But who would take up the torch and become Ebenezer's new CEO? Our board began praying and seeking the Father's will, in who we should ask to step into this special role.

Being the CEO of the Ebenezer Home is not a task for the weak at heart. As Israel's only believing senior citizens' home (run both by and for believers), it requires having a very special calling to serve the elderly believing community. Not only this, but also it demands adequate leadership skills, having the ability to serve and care for both residents and team, and retaining and having certain state-related licenses and training. Needless to say, it's a very complex role, and not many people are capable of fulfilling it.

After much prayer and seeking the Lord's direction concerning Ebenezer's future, on behalf of our board (and after praying about a few candidates), as Ebenezer's chairman, I asked our COO, David Phillips, if he would become Ebenezer's new CEO. David already

has many of the required skills, talents and experience, along with a deep love and knowledge for both the team and residents. Looking back over the years David has served the Ebenezer family, I felt like the Lord had prepared him for such a time as this. To our great joy and appreciation, David agreed.

David: on behalf of the board, residents, and team, thank you for agreeing to pick up the torch and run the race the Father has given you; for your heart for this ministry, and also for your great love for the gospel! May our Heavenly Father be with you, guide and direct you, and bless you with the wisdom and understanding you need as you transition into this new role as Ebenezer's CEO. We, the board of Ebenezer, stand behind you.

To all who are involved in the Ebenezer family, on behalf of the board of directors, I would like to take this special opportunity to thank each one of you. Thank you for faithfully standing with us; for your support, prayers, encouragement, and for keeping our new CEO in your prayers! It is so special to each one of us... Again, thank you!



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

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

THE REAL ISRAEL... BIBLE OR SCIENCE?... PAST VISION

The Real Israel

Galatians 3 is one of the clearest expositions of the everlasting covenant made with Abraham. The seed of Abraham is Christ, and if you are in Christ through faith, you are an heir of the promise and Abraham's seed. There is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female; we are all ONE in Christ Jesus. So, the salvation plan from the foundation of the world is that no matter what dispensation you lived in or are going to live in, you must be in Christ.

Paul makes it very clear: Jesus' work on the cross made us both one, one new man, one body, access to one Spirit, fellow citizens with the saints of the household of God. And all of us are being fitly framed together into a new holy temple, built specifically for a habitation of God.

In Ephesians 2:15, Jesus abolished everything pertaining to Israel and the old covenant. Being born of physical Israel has absolutely no advantage, while being the children of promise means everything.

In Romans 11:25b-26a, the controversy begins: when "the fullness of the Gentiles [has] come in ... all Israel shall be saved." If I am not mistaken, you think a special dispensation is going to occur for physical Israel.

I propose that knowing who the real Israel is, greatly affects your view and timeline of the Second Coming of Christ.

By now, you are pondering this as the Bereans, or you are greatly annoyed and tossing this into the heretical circular file. I am not a heretic or false teacher. None of the Scriptural evidence I have provided will mislead or draw a born-again believer from prayer or proclaiming the gospel.

-G. Kimmel, OH

Answer: Your quotation of Galatians 3:28 reveals the wonderful spiritual unity of His Church. Yet a Jew continues to be a Jew, just as a male continues to be male, and the same goes for female.

Quoting Romans 11, you failed to mention the words, "blindness in part is happened to Israel." Subsequently, if you claim to be the new Israel, you are



still blind and your salvation depends on the fullness of the Gentiles. The special dispensation for Israel (physical) will take place, according to Zechariah 12:9-10. This speaks of literal, geographical, physical Israel. They will be saved by "the spirit of grace." The Church cannot fulfill the words, "they shall look upon me whom they have pierced." Nor can the Church fulfill Jeremiah 31:35-36. If I see the sun rise and behold the moon and the stars, I am endowed with the glorious assurance that Israel shall not cease to be a nation.

Bible or Science?

Dear Mr. Froese:

I received your letter and am amazed that you still put up with my somewhat irreverent ideas about the Bible and religion. As a boy, I went every Sunday to the Methodist Church. I began attending Sunday School at age 6, where the teachers told me the stories of the Bible. Even at age 6, I recognized that these were just stories and not about real people.

I love to read and study the Bible, but I do not necessarily believe it to be the "Word of God." The Bible was written FOR God, not BY God. As such, it was written by people who, like us, are fallible and were not trying to write either history or science, but religion! The Bible is very poor in its science, and not much better in its history. It takes stories and tries to fit them into a Biblical perspective, rather than into a scientific or historical context. The Bible is based on the doctrine of authority, which states, "The Bible is true, be-

cause it says it is true." Science, on the other hand, has to be proven by evidence. Thus, evolution is indeed science. If someone comes up with a better idea which can be proven, then it becomes the new paradigm.

-J. Phillips, TX

Answer: There are volumes of documentation clearly refuting the theory of evolution. In brief, no life has ever been created from dead material. AnswersInGenesis.org reports about the Miller-Urey experiment at the University of Chicago in 1952. They claimed to create the building blocks of life in a test tube. Interestingly, "The experiment also deliberately excluded oxygen, as it would have destroyed their results." FamousScientists.org lists Bible-believing Christians from many different countries; for example, Isaac Newton, Johannes Kepler, Leonhard Euler, Michael Faraday, and hundreds more. These great scientists stood solidly on the truth of Holy Scripture.

Psychology.fandom.com writes: "Criticisms include 1) disputes about the testability of evolutionary hypotheses, 2) alternatives to some of the cognitive assumptions (such as massive modularity) frequently employed in evolutionary psychology, 3) claimed vagueness stemming from evolutionary assumptions (e.g., uncertainty about the environment of evolutionary adaptation, EEA), 4) differing stress on the importance of non-genetic and non-adaptive explanations, as well as 5) political and ethical issues."

Do you think that your detailed explanation [not all published here], beginning with your childhood, plus your trust in "science," renders John 3:36 null and void? "He that believeth on the Son hath ever-



lasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

Past Vision

Dear Mr. Froese,

While there are a number of factors that indicate your error, I’m going to give you just the start.

To begin, the vision/prophecy was given in the first year of Belshazzar, which would be about 9 years after the death of Nebuchadnezzar—much closer to the end of the Babylonian Empire than the beginning.

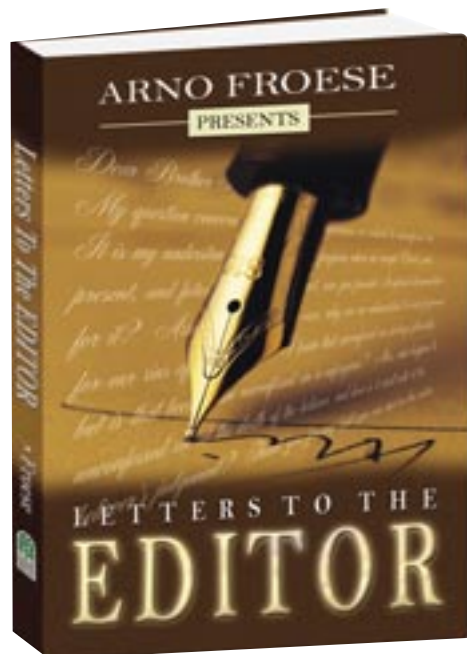
This would mean that God gave Daniel a vision of something that was past: I don’t think so. But if you can give me one prophet, chapter, and verse of another vision/prophecy, where part was past and the

majority was future (more than 2,000 years), I’ll have a little more respect for your opinion.

-D. Smith, CA

Answer: Reading Revelation 12, it reveals a prophecy/vision of the past, present, and future. Verse 5 reports the birth of the man child, Jesus, and His ascension to heaven: “caught up unto God.” That was written around 96 AD, long after Christ was born.

Revelation 6:4 is another example. The red horse rider takes “peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another.” Is this past, present, or future? The answer is all three combined. Peace was taken away when sin entered the picture. Shortly thereafter, Cain killed Abel. That killing continues until this day. (MC)



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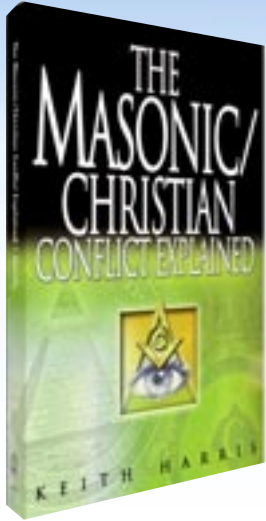
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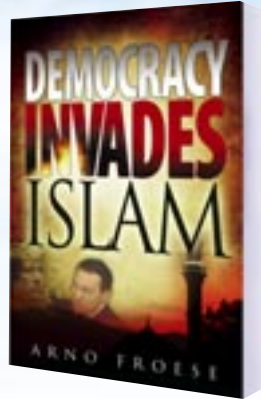


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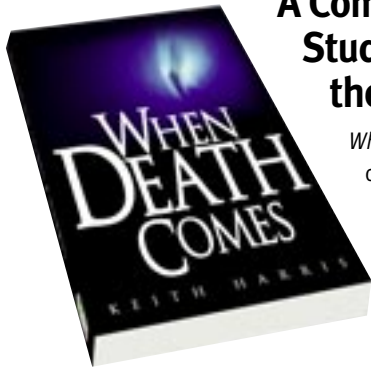
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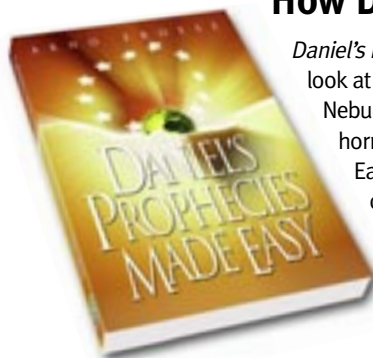


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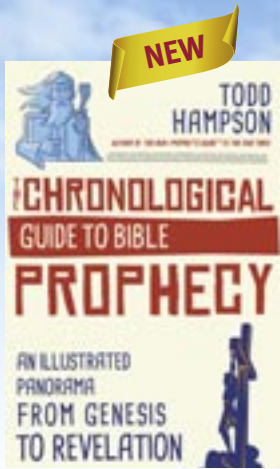
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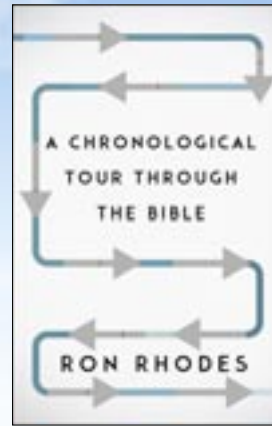
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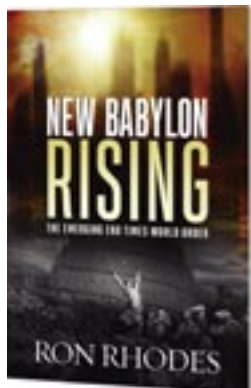
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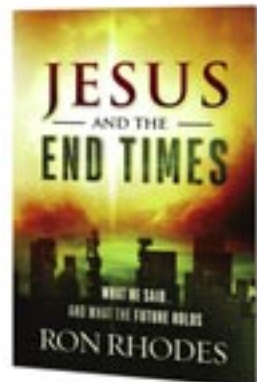
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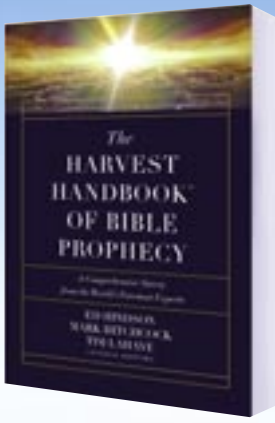
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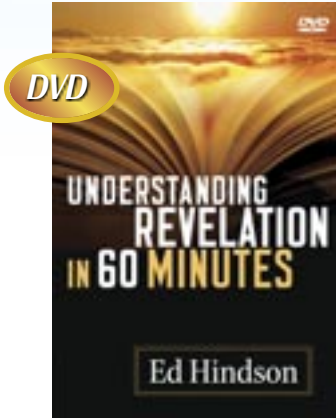
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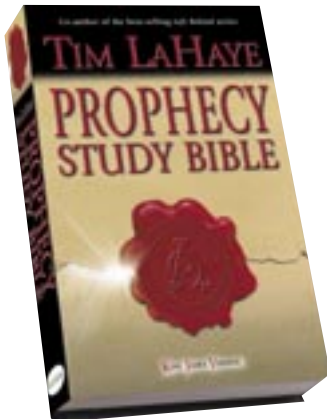
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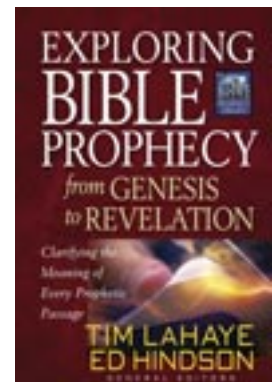
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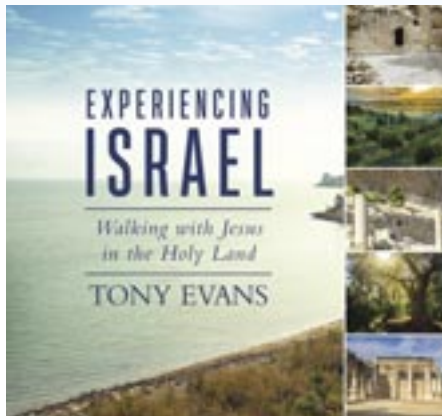
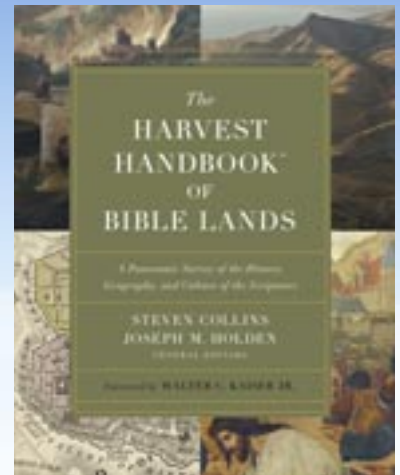
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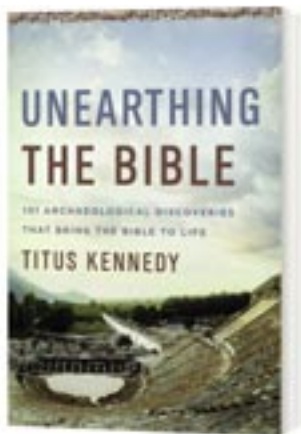
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