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Midnight Call

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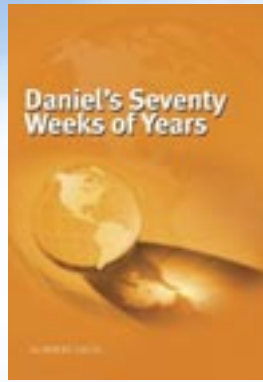
THE COMING MUSLIM INVASION?

“Our Bible does not speak of a Muslim invasion, nor does it indicate that there will be such a danger, but it does speak of the invasion and dominance of Churchianity. Satan, the father of lies, the murderer from the beginning, has been very successful at deceiving the nations of the world into believing that if they can defeat their imagined enemy—in this case, international terrorism—then the world can live in peace and security.”

– Arno Froese

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– Norbert Lieth

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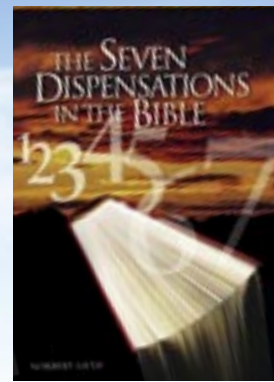
THE GREATEST TURNING POINT

In recent history, there have been various great turning points. We are now in the midst of an economic turning point, and for some time a political turning point has been taking place all over the world. Yet the Bible speaks of a turning point which will characterize society in the last days.

– Norbert Lieth

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“Wherever we look, we see the power of Biblical prophecy.”

By Norbert Lieth

Director of Missions, Midnight Call International

In our present time, Israel is attempting to build an empire based on the strength of politics, negotiations, and the military. Understandable from a human point of view, given the pressure and terrorism the State has had to confront internationally. However, that is not the solution.

In front of the Knesset, the seat of the government in Israel, there stands a great seven-armed candlestick (menorah), on which words from Zechariah 4:6 are engraved. In Hebrew, this sentence has exactly seven words: “*Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.*”

Doesn't the seven-armed menorah remind us of Jesus having the seven Spirits of God (Rev 3:1)? Revelation describes the return of Jesus and the restoration of Israel. Only through Him is Israel's future secure. The same is true for the whole world, and that also is our comfort. The increasing political chaos and people's attempts to save the planet, are often the result of acting without God. But Bible-believing Christians

know that the world is not left to its own devices. There is a Lord who fulfills His plan and who brings everything to its goal. We can continue to trust Him and thus find rest. Not to worry means to let go of all that is beyond our influence and leave it with Him, who controls everything. This does not mean that we sit back and relax; rather, that amid all the necessary responsibilities, we cling to our trust in His providence.

“Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near” (Mark 13:28). For some years now, the congregations in Israel that believe in Jesus have been growing exponentially. There are large youth conferences that had not existed on this scale before. Despite some show of opposition, believers have the courage to proclaim their faith, and the number of conversions is increasing significantly. Searching and awakening is underway in Israel.

On the other hand, there is resistance from the Jewish-Orthodox side. Thus,

EDITOR'S NOTE

there was even talk in Israel about a bill that would ban public missionary speeches about Jesus. Believers who spread the Gospel would then have to anticipate prison sentences. Two worlds colliding: One Christian, and one anti-Christian.

“...When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape” (1 Thess 5:3). A large part of the Arab world is in the process of making peace with Israel. In the United Arab Emirates, three cubic sacred buildings have been erected: one representing a church, another a mosque, and the third a synagogue. The structure of the buildings is meant to demonstrate that no one religion is above the other. Imagine this, in the midst of the Islamic world! Even ten years ago, such a thing would have been unthinkable. The region is also to become the leading trade power between the continents, a beacon in the midst of a global, interconnected world.

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts” (2 Peter 1:19). In every direction we look, we see and discover the power of Biblical prophecy and its timeliness.

In gratitude and with a heartfelt: Maranatha! (MC)

In light of the times, *News From Israel* is

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



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OUR TASK

Midnight Call Ministries is a nonprofit missionary organization, dedicated to proclaiming the entire Bible as the unfailing and eternal written Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and the unerring guide for the Christian faith.

The object of Midnight Call is to call people everywhere to Christ, to proclaim the return of Christ, to prepare Christians for His coming, and to uphold the faith and warn of false doctrines. *Midnight Call* magazine is available in twelve languages. All work done through radio, literature and missionaries is supported entirely by the gifts and free will offerings of God's people.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

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

WE BELIEVE Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, lived a sinless life, and shed His blood to save mankind. He died and arose bodily the third day, was seen by over 500, and later ascended into heaven.

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

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

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

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

A person in a white shirt and dark pants is walking away from the viewer down a long, brightly lit hallway. The walls and floor are a warm, golden-yellow color. A bright light source is visible at the end of the hallway, creating a strong glow and casting long shadows. The overall atmosphere is one of hope and forward movement.

The Future

Norbert Lieth

“Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me” (Isaiah 45:11). A biblical forecast for Israel, the nations, and the Church.

The end of the world should have been December 21, 2012—at least, according to predictions of the Mayan calendar, which ended on that day. But the event didn’t materialize. There are institutes devoted to “futurology,” whose focus is predicting future trends. They are frequently incorrect.

Of course, forecasts for a post-Covid world are also circulating. Examples include an increase in isolation, financial collapse, growing unemployment, governmental overreach, more control over citizens ... we’re sleepwalking into a surveillance state, and politics is likewise sleepwalking on ahead of us.

Looking back, we can see that forecasts for 2021 were also completely wrong. All sorts of dubious predictions didn't come true. But, interestingly enough, nobody predicted the coronavirus pandemic, and countless conspiracy theories have failed to come true in its wake. No, there's only one person who can reliably convey the future to us: the One who determined and described it in advance, and who has a plan for the world and each person in it.

God has revealed the future to us through the Bible.

Hundreds of prophecies have been proven as fulfilled, so we have good reason to believe that those awaiting fulfillment will also come true.

"The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD..." (Ps 33:10-12).

When you apply this truth to your life, you'll immediately gain a completely different perspective...

The Future of Israel

Amnesty International has recently called for renewed international pressure on Israel. However, the nations that publicly advocate for Israel's annihilation weren't mentioned. The discrepancy (which is exhibited by many of Israel's critics) was noticed by columnist Sascha Lobo. He called out the German Green Party's anti-Semitism, stating:

"It's against all discrimination, unless it affects Jews and Israelis."

81 years have passed since the Wannsee Conference took place in Berlin in 1942. That's where the systematic murder of eleven million Jews throughout Europe—the "Final Solution"—was planned. Years ago, I was able to visit Wannsee Villa, which has since been turned into a museum. Visitors can see the original papers and notes from the conference. Thank the Lord the Germans lost World War II and the Nazi Reich perished wretchedly. Germany was literally devastated. The Nazi henchmen talked big, but were eventually murdered or executed themselves. More than six million Jews had been brutally murdered, but roughly the same number of non-Jewish Germans died. This also proved the truth of God's Word: "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee" (Gen 12:3a).

On May 14, 1948, three years after the Holocaust and the fall of Nazi Germany, the Jewish State was proclaimed in Tel Aviv. Tel Aviv means "Old New Land," and the name has a future perspective. When the State was founded in Tel Aviv, David Ben Gurion said, "We waited 2,000 years for this—and it took only half an hour to do it."

"The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations" (Ps 33:10-11).

I'd like to take up three points from the New Testament that explicitly testify to Israel's future:

There's only one person who can reliably convey the future to us: the One who determined and described it in advance, and who has a plan for the world and each person in it.

1. A small word with great importance: “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Matt 23:38-39).

The Lord gave this prophecy on Tuesday of Holy Week. The people had cried out something similar, when Jesus publicly entered Jerusalem as the Messiah on Palm Sunday, fulfilling Zechariah 9:9: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee...” (cf. Matt 21:4-5). “And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest” (Matt 21:9).

Consequently, it concerns a twofold, “Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.” The first time was when Jesus originally entered Jerusalem on a colt (Matt 21:5). The second time will be when He returns upon a white horse (Rev 19:11). This is exactly what the Bible prophesies. Interestingly, the same statement is made twice in Psalm 24, and one might wonder why.

The first time: “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle” (Ps 24:7-8).

The second time: “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory” (vv. 9-10).

Why is the same thing said twice in a row? The first time refers to Jesus' first coming and His entry into Jerusalem (Matt 21). The first time, He fought on the Cross at Calvary, defeating Satan, sin, and death. The second time, He'll come visibly as the Lord of hosts, and will enter Jerusalem as such (Ps 24:10; Rev 19:14).

2. Proof of Israel's deferment and acceptance: “And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world” (Acts 15:13-18).

These verses reference the Church from among the nations being grafted in. Typically, the order of things was: first Israel, then the nations. First the Jews, then the Gentiles. First “...the lost sheep of the house of Israel”

Eighty-one years have passed since the Wannsee Conference took place in Berlin in 1942. That's where the systematic murder of eleven million Jews throughout Europe—the “Final Solution”—was planned.

(Matt 15:24). But this time, it's the other way around: first the nations, and then Israel. First, from among the nations, one people (that is, the Church of Jesus). After that, at Jesus' return, Israel's spiritual renewal. The prophets didn't speak of what came next (cf. Amos 9); that's a New Testament revelation. But it agrees with what Amos said in the context of New Testament events (Acts 15:15).

Eventually, after the Lord's return, the other nations in the messianic kingdom will also be converted. This has always been known. These are the nations of the Great Tribulation, which will be confronted with the Gospel at this time. It's evidence that God's purposes for Israel weren't abandoned, but that the Church was grafted into them for a time.

The promise for Israel and the Gentiles that the kingdom will come, has not been rescinded.

3. The mystery: “For would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob” (Rom 11:25-26).

What is this mystery about?

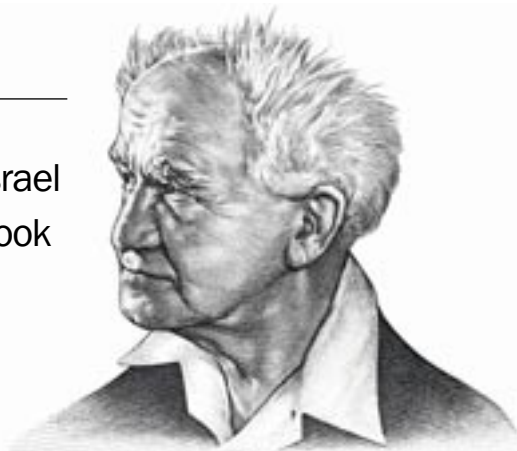


It was no secret that Israel was hardened. Isaiah had already spoken about this, as had the Lord Jesus and the Apostle Paul (Matt 13:14-17; Isa 6:10; 29:10; 44:18; Rom 11:8). It was also no secret that Israel will one day be saved; the prophets had also spoken about that. The mystery is the salvation of a full number from among the nations.

The question is, how long will the hardening last? When will Israel be accepted again? What is the prerequisite for them to be saved? The answer is that in His foreknowledge, God had a mysterious plan for Israel's hardening. He wanted to form Jews and Gentiles into a new people in an olive tree: Unbelieving Jews were broken off, and Gentile believers were grafted in (Rom 11:19-20). When the full number of Gentiles (a figure known only to God) is grafted into the olive tree, the Church Age will end and the Church will be raptured. At that time, God will turn His attention to Israel's coming salvation. Jesus returns to Zion (Rev 14). “For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable” (Rom 11:29).

The Future

David Ben-Gurion at the founding of the nation of Israel in Tel Aviv: “We waited 2,000 years for this—and it took only half an hour to do it.”



I could make further arguments from the New Testament for Israel's salvation: the fig tree; the twelve thrones of the twelve Apostles, to judge the future Israel on earth; Jesus' ascension (Acts 1); the Olivet Discourse; the reasoning from Revelation ... but I want to remain within the scope of this article.

The Future of the Nations

Michelangelo once said, “God didn't create us to abandon us.” God became man to be with us forever. He's one of us. If He gave up on us, He'd be giving up on Himself. The nations have a future.

No matter what the peoples of the earth are planning, the counsel of the Lord comes about in the end. That's a great consolation. “This also cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working” (Isa 28:29).

We see numerous examples of this in the Bible, in history, and in biblical prophecy. Abraham lived in the aftermath of the Tower of Babel. Joseph's rejection meant salvation for Jacob, his family, and the world at the time. Israel's bondage in Egypt ensured that the people came to the Promised Land, and many prophetic promises were fulfilled. Emperor Augustus' approach to registering the population, fulfilled the prophecy that the promised

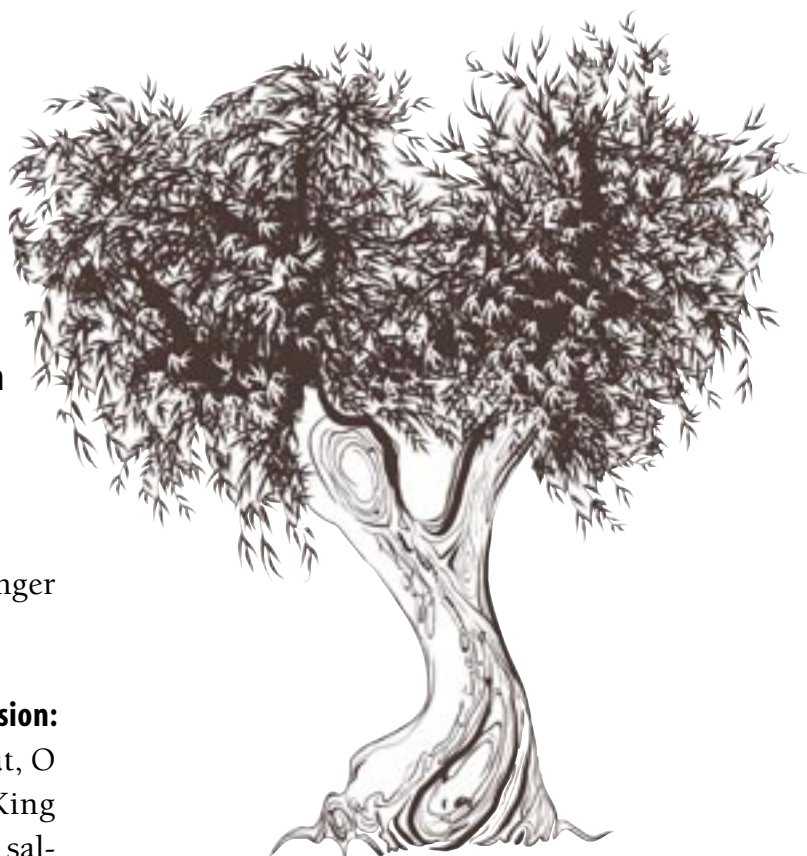
Redeemer would be born in Bethlehem. The rejection of Israel brought us salvation. World War I prompted the purchase of land in Jewish territories. World War II resulted in the State of Israel. The Great Tribulation and its sorrows will bring about the return of Jesus and the new life of the Millennium.

Even the events of our day are serving to fulfill God's plan. We can rejoice in that.

1. Looking ahead: Hope is like a bridge that carries us to the other shore. Isaiah 2 shows us that at the end of days, Jerusalem will be exalted above all other nations. The nations will stream to the mountain of the Lord, coming to be taught (this is the fulfillment of the Great Commission: they will become disciples). The Lord will judge between the peoples, and they will unite. Swords will be beaten into plowshares; there will be a great disarmament with no more war drills; and then, the nations will want to walk in the light of the Lord (cf. Zech 8:2-23).

Finally, the goal has been reached, which the nations could never have achieved without Him. It becomes clear to everyone that only the divine Lord can bring renewal. Justice and peace will reign, along with rest and security (Isa 32:15-20). Creation is liberated (Rom 8:18-25). The climate is renewed (Isa 49:10).

In His foreknowledge, God had a mysterious plan for Israel's hardening. He wanted to form Jews and Gentiles into a new people in an olive tree.



Wild animals will no longer pose any danger (Isa 11:7-9).

2. Jesus' first and second coming in a single vision:

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass” (Zech 9:9).

This is the first coming. He will come again after His resurrection, ascension, and enthronement at the right hand of the Father. And since Zechariah 9:9 (which speaks of the first coming) and verse 10 (which speaks of the second) belong together, we know that the Lord will return to Israel. Everything will be completed there, the site of His first coming.

“And he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth” (Zech 9:10b; cf. v. 14).

This is the second coming. The current Age of Grace/Dispensation of the Church is not yet seen or considered in these verses; it takes place between them.

3: The wedding guests: The Lord will return to earth to reign. “Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth” (Rev 19:6b). And the

marriage of the Lamb will come with this rise to power. “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready” (Rev 19:7).

This marriage, then, takes place on earth, not in heaven, and Israel is referred to as the bride. Otherwise, there would have to be a wedding in heaven before the Lord's return in glory, at the same time the Great Tribulation is happening on earth.

The nations are also invited to attend the wedding feast: “Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb” (Rev 19:9). This refers to the nations that share in Israel's blessing in the Millennium: “That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things” (Acts 15:17; cf. Amos 9:11-12).

“Hope is like a bridge that carries us to the other shore. God hasn’t forsaken us; Jesus is standing on the other side waiting for us.”



The Future of the Church

Peter Hahne stresses: “Christians don’t need to fight for the future, because it was already won on Calvary.”

On the other hand, a poster for a bank shows a young woman with this phrase beside her: “She has a retirement account, but no plan for the future. That’s entirely normal.”

Really? That’s the norm? This poster expresses the great dilemma: that the world has no hope, nor can it offer any—just some trivial plans that are supposed to comfort you, and at most, last only until death. God, on the other hand, has an eternal plan for the future, and He is carrying it out. He also has a plan for your future. You can take this one to the bank, because without God’s future, all human precautionary plans are doomed to fail.

A manufacturer once proudly showed some visitors his factory and the adjacent property. He emphasized that everything that they could see in all directions was his, and that he had

earned it. Then, one of his guests spoke up. “It’s remarkable that you own so much along the four points of the compass. But, may I ask,”—and he pointed upwards—“what do you own above them?”

We should be taking hold of eternal life and “Laying up in store for [our]selves a good foundation against the time to come...” (1 Tim 6:19). Anyone without this foundation steps into the future without hope.

On September 2, 1998, SwissAir Flight 111 crashed off the coast of Halifax, Nova Scotia. Two hundred twenty-nine people from 44 different nations died. One of the pilots was from the place where my family and I were living. The fatal accident was probably caused by a short circuit in a cable with broken insulation, which belonged to the in-flight entertainment system. It was just a spark, but it was enough to bring down a plane and kill 229 people.

The hopelessness of the grieving families was tragic. People saw their lives and futures

as completely destroyed, and they were no longer capable of happiness. This terrible suffering is also a picture of eternal hopelessness. Consider sin, our broken relationship with God. People are looking elsewhere for entertainment and distraction, not realizing that they are falling. Many times, it's "just" a single spark that brings great suffering to us and our fellow human beings.

Christians also mourn—quite a bit—and our past can repeatedly revisit us. But the grief of those who believe in Jesus is different from that of people who are apart from Him. Christians may mourn, but they do so with hope. Christians have a fundamental peace that comforts them in their sadness and more.

Hopelessness is like a dehydrated person dreaming of a drink, and then waking up still thirsty and emaciated. The Christian's hope, on the other hand, is fulfilled. It is oriented toward the hereafter, to the heavenly, spiritual blessings in Christ (Eph 1:3). "For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel" (Col 1:5).

Our hope isn't based on this earth, which is limited: "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof..." Our hope is based in heaven, so it's limitless. As Christians, we have every reason to look to the future with hope. Christians can attest to what painter Salvador Dali once said: "I prefer to remember the future."

As someone put it: "Hope is like a bridge that carries us to the other shore. God hasn't forsaken us; Jesus is standing on the other side waiting for us."

Therefore, our lives don't have to be one crisis of faith after another. Instead, a confidence of faith can set in. For our hope isn't subject to corruption, but is an incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading inheritance in heaven (Col 1:5; 1 Pet 1:4).

We should be considering this life more from a perspective of the hereafter and heaven, according to our position in Christ. Then, things will be easier for us. The Church's future is to be taken to heaven, to later appear with Christ: "But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil 3:20). "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col 3:4).

Jesus gave His blood for redemption, and rose from the dead as the firstfruits. He is the guarantee for our future. Jean Jaurès said, "The greatest people are those who are able to give hope." There is no doubt that Jesus is the greatest human being to ever exist, because He is still alive and giving hope.

Look to your future: It's in the Bible. It's founded in Jesus Christ. Don't get lost in doubt and self-doubt. Don't be discouraged; persevere, and don't give up! Keep your eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. Look at this life from the perspective of the next one.

The Mayan calendar was wrong. But what we do know about Jesus is that the prophets said He would come, and He did. Jesus said He would die, and He died. He said He would rise again, and He rose from the dead. The Bible says He will return, and He is coming again.

(MR0622/1239)



BLESSED WITH NEITHER POVERTY NOR RICHES: PART 2



In the first part of this series, we briefly highlighted the concepts of assets and wealth on the earth today. We concluded that mankind has come a long way in magnifying worldly riches.

By Wilfred Hahn

The most unimaginable things in the earth's sphere are now owned by humans. The "lust of the eyes" in this late era of world history, has been built up into a highly sophisticated, debt-based system of ownership and capital valuation, giving rise to massive wealth, riches, and splendor. Seen in the aggregate, this great, big, measurable pile of wealth—though much of it indeed is false wealth—serves as a perfect anchor for the materialist and humanist agendas mounted against God in the latter days.

In this second of our 3-part series, we take a brief excursion into the rarified world of big money and wealth. Just who is experiencing its splendor? And just what does the Bible have to say about wealth in general and its prophetic role? As it turns out, quite a bit.

No Shortage of Hoards

Many commentators and economists today point to the widening chasm between the wealthy—namely, the "super wealthy"—and the general populace. Wealth distribution today is perhaps

more uneven than ever before (whether in North America or the entire world). Lately, economist authors such as Thomas Piketty (celebrated author of *Capital in the 21st Century*) and Emmanuel Saez have gained a following due to their attempt to explain the reasons for this wealth stratification. An accepted conclusion by most commentators is that this condition generally causes slower economic growth. Nevertheless, Piketty has already been branded a Marxist by the factions who believe that wealth accretion is a divine right. And so, the debate continues.

Interestingly, the Bible provided a view on these matters long before anyone invented the terms "capitalism," "Marxism," or anything else. Jesus said: "From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked" (Luke 12:48b). Whether legislated or not, those with much have greater responsibility.

The Levitical financial system that the Hebrews were commanded to practice, kept a check and balance on wealth distortions. To recall, God said

Despite the interruption of the Global Financial Crisis (beginning some time ago), total modern asset wealth has continued to soar in value (including the Covid environment).

through Moses, “At the end of every seven years you must cancel debts” (Deuteronomy 15:1). As such, we see that a seven-year debt cycle was instituted. We can conclude that there should be no such thing as perpetual debt: Every Sabbath Year, debts had to be laid flat. Anyone who could not pay back their debts by that time was forgiven this amount.

We can imagine just how different our economies would be today, were this same convention applied. There would be no massive accumulations of debt as we see in our time.

But, back to the present-day reality. Without a doubt, wealth has been stratifying in recent decades to sharp extremes. That said, comparisons to ancient history are difficult to make. It could well be that the world’s wealth skew today is even more extreme than the late ancient Roman era.

What we do know for sure is that wealth, based on its modern definition—this including everything from hard assets (i.e., real estate, gold, etc.) to highly-derived financial instruments—is at its highest in the entirety of mankind’s history. Despite the interruption of the Global Financial Crisis (beginning some time ago), total modern asset wealth has continued to soar in value (including the Covid environment). We have hazarded the estimate that this value has been rising an average of 10% plus a year since the early 1970s. Of course, this is much, much faster than total world population growth (which is only inching along at an annual pace of 0.8% in the recent decade).



As we will see, all of this provides the facility for some gargantuan wealth hoards to be accumulated, by both individuals and various entities such as corporations or sovereign wealth funds.

Is this mere happenstance? No, we think not. It is largely a function of rampant materialism and greed, converging through globalization and financialization (driven by the “lust of the eyes,” 1 John 2:16). All of these are coinciding developments outlined in Bible prophecy, according to this writer’s beliefs. Moreover, James expressly mentions that this condition of hoarding will exist in the last days:

“Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming on you. [...] You have hoarded wealth in the last days. Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. You have condemned and



murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you” (James 5:1-6).

What is observed here is that hoarding and love of wealth have taken on primacy. Economic fairness for the poor is neglected. Somewhat imaginatively interpreted, it is an era where the elite rich try to enlave themselves and find safety, in their brutal strategies to preserve and build more wealth.

Beyond Riches?

The most recent update of the Wealth Report 2023¹ by Knight Frank, states that the world had 2,629 billionaires at the end of 2022, up 58% from 1,682 in 2014.

A billion dollars is a lot of money. It is hardly possible to imagine. And, the world may have its first trillionaire before long (amounting to one million times one million) according to some forecasts. Currently, Elon Musk (world-renowned founder of Tesla, among other activities) has a net worth greater than \$200 billion. Other contenders to be the first trillionaire could be Jeff Bezos (founder of Amazon) and Bernard Arnaut (owner of famous luxury brands). Both are estimated to have a net worth of greater than \$150 billion.

In America and many other countries, more and more wealth and income are held or received by a smaller group of people. For example, according to *Forbes*, the planet’s billionaires are now worth \$12.2 trillion.

In the Service of the Monied Rich

The service of managing money has been a growth business. Why? The value of real and financial assets has been climbing over time; and secondly, as mentioned, it has been piling up in fewer hands.

There are quite a number of asset management firms with over one trillion in capital, according to the consultancy Willis Tower Watson (one firm with over \$10 trillion). Some firms (we will not mention names) have been shown in the past to have been only too willing to deal with anyone with money . . . no matter the source of the wealth.

Despots, dictators, and others who may have pillaged their countries—perhaps stolen the proceeds of resource exports, or misdirected foreign aid for tens of billions—have found willing complicitors. In the past, they have had little difficulty hiding their assets abroad, with the professional help of “highbrow” financial service companies, the names of which would be well-recognized. Thankfully, there are some organizations such as Global Financial Integrity, that are seeking to expose such corruption. The scale of global kleptocracy that this organization has unearthed can hardly be believed.

Despite the supposed crackdowns on tax havens and offshore financial centers, the megarich (and many of the world’s multinational corporations) use covert companies and bank accounts, as well as complex offshore financial structures, to own mansions, yachts, art masterpieces, and other assets of all types. Highly paid accountants and middlemen help to hide identities and business interests, establishing shelter for assets as well as securing tax advantages not available to the average person.

Perhaps surprising to many, experts consider the United States to be the biggest haven of all.

In short, the wealthy have been accruing wealth in leaps and bounds in recent years. Evidence of their rising stature and consumption patterns is everywhere. We will cite some examples. In doing

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so, we must be careful not to claim these short-term, one-off anecdotes as proof of Bible prophecy. Nevertheless, taken in aggregate, it would still be correct to sense the developments in the present era as part of a prophetic timeline.

Powerful World of the Elites

Without a doubt, the world's wealth is stratifying. A very small group of people, by whatever means, control immense inches. According to a report by Wealth-X/UBS several years ago, the average total wealth of a billionaire's social circle (of only the top three connections) is estimated to be \$15 billion. Factoring in all the connections between the world's billionaires, would represent a social circle worth a combined \$33 trillion. Suffice it to say that the ultra-rich travel in rarified circles.

We earlier quoted an estimate of the number of billionaires in the world—2,629. We see here that a very small band of people control a very large portion of global wealth. Such wealth affords great influence and power, at a time where money and economics are highly esteemed by the world.

As James prophesied, in the last days we are to expect a great heaping up of wealth. It is also reasonable to infer from Scripture, that the endtime world would be greatly transfixed with the love of money and greed (see 2 Timothy 3). Many people stand to be trapped economically, being carried away with the cares and anxieties of this world (see Matthew 13:22; Luke 21:34). But, does Bible prophecy tell us anything specifically about the role of the rich and elites in the last days?

We can conclude that money and greed definitely define the “antichrist” streams and impulses in our world. Satan most certainly uses these as lures to gain willing accomplices for his endtime scheme. Also, we can agree that most of the events concerning the elites mentioned in the Bible, will unfold throughout the Tribulation period (though James' prophecy and those concerning the 10 kings could occur earlier).

Nonetheless, it is only reasonable to expect that the trends that give rise to these conditions will be noticeable well in advance . . . for example, such as we are observing in this very article. One other thing we certainly do know from Scripture, and that concerns the final outcome for the elites. We will come back to this point (as well as illuminating their identity) in our conclusions presented in a following Part 3.

Thoughts to Ponder

Of course, not everyone is rich or well-off, seen from a materialistic perspective. Nor can we say that all rich people are evil or taken up with the love of money.

To an extent, wealth is a relative concept. Today, even billionaires are feeling poor and disadvantaged in their circle of relationships. Why? Because they see themselves as not having enough, relative to someone richer than they.

Generally, the demands and temptations of great wealth test the strongest and most ethical of people. Very, very few are able to live free of its lures and without being singed by its hot fires.



We can actually lay up wealth in heaven, where thieves cannot steal and moths cannot destroy.



Jesus warned about this, saying: “Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God” (Matthew 19:24). As it turns out, despite the fact that some of the patriarchs and major personalities the Lord used in His salvation plan for the world were rich, the Bible generally does not have much good to say about the wealthy. Some of the Bible’s authors directly equated the rich with bad people (see James 2:6).

Most of us can be thankful that we are not super-rich. It could be threatening to one’s eternity. The Proverbs writer recognized the problems of wealth, saying: “Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, ‘Who is the LORD?’ Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God” (Proverbs 30:8-9).

Yet, all those who are saved are rich, the Bible tells us. “[...] Godliness with contentment is great gain” (1 Timothy 6:6). But, sadly, some have still “been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows” (verse 10) due to the love of money.

The world, in its frenzied preoccupation with temporal money, overlooks the greatest investment deal of all time ... a proposition that pays eternal rewards. We are given the opportunity to convert filthy worldly money into eternal riches in heaven.

Paul points this out. “Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life” (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

We can actually lay up wealth in heaven, where thieves cannot steal and moths cannot destroy.

In Luke 16:8-9, Jesus validates this investment offer. “[...] For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light. I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.”

In the final Part 3 of this series, we will address the fate of the elites and just what will happen to the world’s wealth distribution. Bible prophecy provides the answer to these interesting questions. ^(MC)

ENDNOTE

1 <http://www.thewealthreport.net/#sthash.E9a1c0yx.dpbs>

A photograph of ancient ruins in Caesarea Maritima National Park. The scene shows several stone structures, including two prominent columns and a large archway. The ruins are set against a clear blue sky. In the background, there are some trees and a modern building. The overall atmosphere is one of historical significance and archaeological interest.

Ruins in Caesarea Maritima National Park,
a city and harbor built by Herod the Great in about 25-13 BC

Caesarea Maritima: Both Beautiful and Hideous

(Sites of the Bible Series)

DR. RON J. BIGALKE

The New Testament references two cities in Israel bearing the name Caesarea. One is Caesarea Philippi, which the Roman Emperor Caesar Augustus gave to Herod the Great, and was later enlarged by Herod's son Philip, who named it for himself and Caesar.

The other is Caesarea Maritima on the Mediterranean coast (approximately midway between Haifa and Tel Aviv), an impressive city built by Herod the Great from 22-10/9 BC on the older site of a Phoenician port-town named Strato's Tower. The city is located 23 miles south of Mount Carmel and approx-

imately 65 miles northwest of Jerusalem. Herod named the city in honor of his patron, Caesar Augustus, and intended for it to serve as the Roman metropolis of Judea and the official residence both for the Herodian kings and the Roman procurators. Jews and Gentiles populated the city.

Caesarea Maritima: Both Beautiful and Hideous

Credit: R. Bigalke



The Inner Harbor at Caesarea Maritima

Strato's Tower was built in approximately 250 BC and named for the king of the Phoenician city of Sidon. Caesarea served the Phoenicians as a harbor and trading settlement on the route between Phoenicia and Egypt. The city was also important as a primary Mediterranean port, due to the construction of stone breakwaters north and south of the harbor. Josephus provided an interesting account.

Now upon his [Herod's] observation of a place near the sea, which was very proper for containing a city, and was before called Strato's Tower, he set about getting a plan for a magnificent city there, and erected many edifices with great diligence all over it, and this of white stone. He also adorned it with most sumptuous palaces, and large edifices for containing the people; and, what was the greatest and most laborious work of all, he adorned it with a haven, that was always freed from the waves of the sea. Its largeness was not

less than the Pyraeum [at Athens]; and had towards the city a double station for the ships. . . .

Now there were edifices all along the circular haven, made of the most polished stone, with a certain elevation, whereon was erected a temple, that was seen a great way off by those that were sailing for that haven, and had in it two statues, the one of Rome, the other of Caesar. . . . Herod also built therein a theatre of stone; and on the south quarter, behind the port, an amphitheatre also, capable of holding a vast number of men, and conveniently situated for a prospect to the sea [*Antiquities of the Jews* 15.9.6].

Herod "rebuilt it all [Strato's Tower] with white stone, and adorned it with several most splendid palaces, wherein he especially demonstrated his magnanimity." He "overcame nature" at Caesarea (by reason of the "stormy sea," threatening "south winds," and "vast waves"). "Now, although the place where he built was greatly opposite to his purposes, yet did he so fully struggle with that difficulty, that the firmness of his building could not easily be conquered by the sea; and the beauty and ornament of the works were such, as though he had not had any difficulty in the operation..." [*Wars of the Jews* 1.21.5-6]. What is most prominent in Josephus' account is Herod's "most splendid palaces," built on a promon-

tory jutting into the Mediterranean. Even today, Caesarea is one of the most picturesque sites in Israel.

As the headquarters for the government, Caesarea exhibited Roman culture with a massive amphitheater (seating thousands) and an enormous temple, dedicated to both Caesar and Rome, and with a large statue of the emperor. The city also had a competitive sports festival that rivaled the Olympics. The sports stadium is where tensions climaxed between Jews and Gentiles, because in AD 26, when Pontius Pilate was sent to Caesarea as prefect over Judea, he ordered that statues of the emperor be taken to Jerusalem. A considerable delegation of Jews protested by gathering in the hippodrome of Caesarea to demand their removal. Josephus documented the event.

On the next day Pilate sat upon his tribunal, in the open market place, and called to him the multitude, as desirous to give them an answer; and then gave a signal to the soldiers that they should all by agreement at once encompass the Jews with their weapons; so the band of soldiers stood round about the Jews in three ranks. The Jews were under the utmost consternation at that unexpected sight. Pilate also said to them, that they should be cut in pieces, unless they would admit of Caesar's images; and gave intimation to the soldiers to draw their naked swords. Hereupon the Jews, as it were at one signal, fell down in vast numbers together, and exposed their



Ruins at Caesarea Maritima

necks bare, and cried out that they were sooner ready to be slain, than that their law should be transgressed. Hereupon Pilate was greatly surprised at their prodigious superstition, and gave order that the ensigns should be presently carried out of Jerusalem [Wars 2.9.3].

Forty years later (AD 60), the Jews of Caesarea were killed, which led to the outbreak of the AD 66 revolt in the city, when 20,000 Jews were killed in one day. The Jews remained in Caesarea, though it was a strained relationship with their neighbors. One of the most heartrending events to occur in the hippodrome is retold annually in the account of “The Ten Martyrs” (*Aseret Harugei Malchut*) in the Yom Kippur liturgy. During the Jewish revolt against Rome in the reign of Hadrian (AD 132-35), 10 mishnaic era rabbis were publicly tortured and executed for actively teaching the Torah. *Eileh Ezkerah* (“These do I recall”) is the poem that

Caesarea Maritima: Both Beautiful and Hideous

Credit: R. Bigalke



Remnants of the Walls and Moat

meticulously describes and remembers their martyrdom, beginning with the somber line (a poetic inversion of Psalm 42:5): “When I think of this, I pour out my soul.”

The hippodrome at Caesarea is testimony to the tension between Jew and Gentile, Jerusalem and Rome. Walking along the shore of Caesarea, a young woman named Hannah Szenes (Senesh) from the neighboring Sedot Yam Kibbutz wrote “A Walk to Caesarea,” which is considered one of Israel’s unofficial anthems. The song is most commonly played on *Yom HaShoah*, the Holocaust Remembrance Day. The English translation reads, “My God, my God, may it never end—the sand and the sea, the rustle of the water, the lightning of the sky, the prayer of man.” In 1943, Szenes

joined a clandestine military project, departing Israel for her native Hungary. She was captured and killed by the Nazis, and thus Caesarea bears another connection to the worst of humanity. Caesarea is certainly magnificent, yet its anti-Semitism combines both the sublime and the unholy.

Scripture records several events that occurred in Caesarea. Philip preached to the Gentiles at Caesarea and made his home there (Acts 8:40; 21:8). God directed Philip to leave the great revival that was occurring in Samaria for the purpose of talking to one person, thereby emphasizing that God’s thoughts are not our thoughts (Isa 55:8-9). Needs and opportunities are not always the primary factor in determining the will of God; faithfulness to the Lord’s calling is most important (Acts 8:26-29).

Cornelius and his household were converted at Caesarea, and became the first Gentiles in the church (10:1-48; 11:11). Peter used “the keys of the kingdom” (Matt 16:19) for the final time, as he introduced the gospel of grace that is ministered by the Holy Spirit. God prepared Cornelius for this special work by speaking to him while he was praying (vv. 1-8), and readied Peter while he was relaxing (vv. 9-16); thus, emphasizing the need to be attentive to God’s leading (cf. Rom 8:14).

The death of Herod Agrippa I was at Caesarea (12:19-23). “On an appointed

day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat on the rostrum and *began* delivering an address to them. The people kept crying out, ‘The voice of a god and not of a man!’ And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died” (vv. 21-23). Josephus noted:

When Agrippa had reigned three years over all Judea, he came to the city of Caesarea, which was formerly called Strato’s Tower; and there he exhibited shows in honor of Caesar. . . . On the second day of which shows he put on a garment made wholly of silver, and of a contexture truly wonderful, and came into the theatre early in the morning; at which time the silver of his garment being illuminated by the fresh reflection of the sun’s rays upon it, shone out after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent as to spread a horror over those that looked intently upon him; and presently his flatterers cried out, one from one place, and another from another (though not for his good), that he was a god. . . .

Upon this the king did neither rebuke them, nor reject their impious flattery. But, as he presently afterwards looked up, he saw an owl sitting on a certain rope over his head, and immediately understood that this bird was the messenger of ill tidings, as it had once been the messenger of good tidings to him; and

fell into the deepest sorrow. A severe pain also arose in his belly, and began in a most violent manner. . . . And when he had been quite worn out by the pain in his belly for five days, he departed this life. . . . [Antiquities 19.8.2].

The biblical and historical accounts are essentially the same, with only minor differences. Josephus may have sensationalized some of his details, yet the accounts are not contradictory. The variations make it evident that the essential record is true.

Paul was likely imprisoned at Herod’s Upper Palace, where he had the opportunity to testify before governors and a king (23:35). His three defenses at Caesarea were before Felix (24:1-27), Festus (25:1-22), and Agrippa II (25:23—26:32). From the harbor of Caesarea, Paul sailed on his voyage to Rome. All that occurred in Paul’s life would fulfill God’s “capitol commissioning” (9:15), in addition to the Lord’s promise to Paul that he “must witness at Rome also” (23:11). Being imprisoned and enduring unrelenting trials was not pleasant for Paul, yet he prudently took advantage of the opportunities before him. Truly, as the Lord said, everything was leading “to an opportunity for . . . [his] testimony” (Luke 21:13). What a vital perspective to have for the opportunities before you and me.

(1343)



UK

How Old Is Our Universe?

For years, astronomers and physicists have primarily calculated the age of the cosmos by measuring the time elapsed since the Big Bang and studying the oldest stars.

But the study published in the journal “Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society” seems to confirm that previous estimates were widely off. What’s referred to in the new study as the “impossible early galaxy problem” has long baffled scientists who struggle to reconcile why some galaxies thought to have come into existence long after the Big Bang appear to in fact be much older than the universe’s estimated age.

The redshift of light—literally, light from distant galaxies stretched and shifted toward the red part of the spectrum—is what has long helped to inform physicists’ estimates of the universe’s age. In simple terms, the thought has been that the redshift indicated the distance of stars and galaxies, and hence, the faster they are moving away from Earth.

What does that mean? If these constants evolve, then the time it takes for the early galaxies observed in the Webb telescope to form extends from a few hundred million years to several billion years.



Photo made available by NASA shows the main mirror assembly of the James Webb Space Telescope during testing at a Northrop Grumman facility in Redondo Beach, Calif. Chris Gunn, NASA via AP



NASA’s Webb telescope observed the Southern Ring Nebula in near-infrared light, left, and mid-infrared light. Space Telescope Science Institute Office of Public Outreach, NASA, ESA, CSA, STScI, Webb ERO Production Team

Better put, it would offer an explanation for the advanced level of development and mass observed in the previously puzzling early galaxies.

-*www.usatoday.com*, 14 July 2023

Commentary: While we respect astronomers/scientists and their work, we do notice that it is mainly based on theoretical “estimates,” arriving at vastly different conclusions where

time is concerned. Doubtless, this will continue—one theory replacing another—but in the end, the puzzle is not solved by any astronomical studies. However, it is already solved when opening the first page of our Bible: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). Reading Job chapters 38 to 41, God asked 84 questions, many of which deal with the universe. Job answered: “I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes” (Job 42:5-6).

There is no end to so-called scientific discoveries when it comes to the universe. Regarding planet earth, Peter writes: “Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?” (2 Peter 3:12). The next verse is addressed to those who believe: “Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look

for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

8049

(See *The Remarkable Record of Job*, Item #2273, \$8.99.)



NAURU

Haven for Rich Apocalypse Preppers?

Whether it's space, the ocean's darkest depths or everlasting life, uber-wealthy tech leaders are infamous for grandiose visions of where their deep pockets might take them.

Among these is the dream of getting away from taxes, governments and even the apocalypse by escaping to some remote place—such as an island in the Pacific.



The island nation of Nauru, which is not for sale.
©Torsten Blackwood/AFP/Getty Images

It's this vision that made an appearance in a lawsuit filed by failed cryptocurrency exchange FTX, which is looking to recover more than \$1 billion from its founder, Sam Bankman-Fried, and three other executives. The complaint details plans to use FTX funds to purchase the island nation of Nauru, an atoll that is home to more than 12,000 people, and to survive the end of the world by building a bunker there.

Apart from the difficulty of simply purchasing a sovereign state—a representative for Nauru has said it “was not and has never been for sale”—experts caution that it is not an ideal place to

live out the end times. The 8.1-square-mile island has limited fresh water, little arable land and imports at least 90 percent of its food. With most of its critical infrastructure on the coast, it is especially vulnerable to extreme weather amid climate change.

“This really shows how much billionaire doomsday prepping is really about fantasy,” Calum Matheson, a professor at the University of Pittsburgh who has studied preppers, said of the FTX plans. For the rich, “doomsday is a fantasy to play with, but they can always keep it at a distance.” It is simply “entertainment,” he said.

-*www.msn.com*, 26 July 2023

Commentary: These wealthy individuals apparently have enough free time to dream of places where they can theoretically avoid any consequences of a potential apocalypse. It's interesting that the facts on the ground show that this particular island is highly unsuitable for survival in such a case. Not to mention the founder of the failed cryptocurrency firm that planned this is currently under prosecution for fraud.

However, it's not just the ultra-rich that entertain ideas of buying bunkers in preparation for doomsday scenarios, but also average Americans have succumbed to the hype put out by companies looking to profit from fear

of the unknown. Christians should heed Jesus' instruction to “Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on” (Matthew 6:25a). He later continues, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness” (verse 33a).

8042

-By K. Farmer

(See *Heavenly Rewards*, Item #2357, \$14.99.)

SINGAPORE

Most Powerful Passport for 2023

For five long years, Japan has been sitting pretty in the No.1 position in the Henley Passport Index, which measures global travel freedom in terms of how much visa-free and visa-on-demand access to the world different citizens enjoy.

But for 2023, Japan's been knocked down into third place and the new titleholder is Singapore, whose citizens are able to visit 193 destinations out of 227 around the world visa-free.

And while Asia has long dominated the top of the leaderboard in the index

(continued next page)



Passport (continued from page 25)

created by London-based global citizenship and residence advisory firm Henley & Partners, Europe is bouncing back. Germany, Italy and Spain have all moved up into second place with visa-free access to 190 destinations, while Japan and South Korea are joined in the No.3 slot by Austria, Finland, France, Luxembourg and Sweden.

The United States and the United Kingdom have both been on a downward trajectory since the halcyon days when they jointly held the No.1 spot way back in 2014.

Henley & Partner's list is one of several indexes created by financial firms to rank global passports according to the access they provide to their citizens.

-www.cnn.com, 18 July 2023

Commentary: This research shows that globalism is well, alive, and thriving. Nations that can open their doors to visitors without a visa, must have a well-functioning security system and advanced information-gathering ability. The lowest scores are among countries such as Syria (30), Iraq (29), Afghanistan (27). Their citizens are limited when it comes to traveling the world. Not to mention that these are dangerous places with somewhat unstable governments.

Is there Biblical significance in this? Yes: we note that Revelation 13 reveals the final government. Verse 3b says, "and all the world wondered after the beast," or verse 8a, "And all that



(See Progressive Globalism, Item #1092, \$5.50.)

ISRAEL

Thousands of New Homes Planned

Israel's far-right government approved plans to build thousands of new homes in the occupied West Bank—a move that threatened to worsen increasingly strained relations with the United States.



The decision defied growing U.S. criticism of Israel's settlement policies in occupied lands. It also raised tensions with the Palestinians at a time of rising violence in the occupied territory.

Multiple Israeli media outlets said the Defense Ministry planning committee that oversees settlement construction approved over 5,000 new settlement homes. The units are at various stages of planning, and it was not immediately clear when construction would begin. The ministry did not immediately comment.

The international community, along with the Palestinians, considers settlement construction illegal or illegitimate and obstacles to peace. Over 700,000 Israelis now live in the occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem—territories

dwelt upon the earth shall worship him." Travel is a contributing factor to unifying planet earth. 8046

captured by Israel in 1967 and sought by the Palestinians for a future state.

-www.nbcnews.com, 27 June 2023

Commentary: Israel is the only functioning democracy in the Middle East. They are super successful when it comes to high tech, agriculture, water preservation, and quite obviously have the best military in the world.

While we cannot deny that Arab Palestinians do experience disadvantages from Israel's presence, we must insist that Israel does have a legal right to settle territories they have won by military force. It is the standard throughout the world that the winner dictates the laws, and the loser becomes subject to the winner. For example, the Republic of Austria lost roughly 60% of its territory after World War 1. Following the Treaty of Versailles, Hungary lost two-thirds of their territory, and 3.3 million Hungarians became citizens of other countries.

Above and beyond any geopolitical disagreement, we must point to the Bible, where God's unconditional promise to Abraham defines the borders of the Promised Land: "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Genesis 15:18).


8048

(See Israel Always, Item #2403, \$18.99.)

 SWEDEN

Rare Earth Discovered

The state-owned LKAB mine, which sits 125 miles north of the Arctic Circle, is one of the world's largest sources of iron ore, used for making steel.

 This year, the company made a game-changing discovery at the mine. Mixed in with the iron ore were rare earths—raw materials that are used to power motors in wind turbines, electric vehicles and a range of other products that are critical for the transition to clean energy. The company said it found the largest-known deposit of rare-earth metals in Europe.

The discovery of the deposit, known as Per Geijer, comes as many European countries like Sweden try to develop energy independence. That includes breaking a reliance on China, which dominates the world's supply and processing of key metals and minerals, including rare earths. It also comes as European countries seek to switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources like wind and solar, using technologies that rely on rare earths.

Ebba Busch, Sweden's deputy prime minister, who is also the minister for energy, business and industry, told NPR that Sweden needs to be energy independent. She says that this message was driven home after Russia cut off energy supplies to Europe because of its support for Ukraine.

"We are so dependent on minerals from China," says Erika Ingvald, the head



The iron ore mine of Swedish state-owned mining company LKAB, in the northern Swedish town of Kiruna
Jonathan Nackstrand/AFP via Getty Images

of mineral information and mining industry at the Geological Survey of Sweden in the college town of Uppsala. "And China is known for using their raw materials, for instance in geopolitical challenges, if you like ... as a weapon."

China also dominates rare-earth processing, but Ingvald says there's movement to increase processing capacity in Europe.

-www.npr.org, 18 July 2023

Commentary: The article further reveals that rare earth deposits were discovered way back in the 1960s. But the discovery of Per Geijer is very significant in our days, as the world is racing to switch to renewable energy, using technologies that rely heavily on rare earth minerals.

Sweden is one of the super-successful, semi-socialist countries, with a per capita GDP of \$53,600 (2021). Life expectancy is 82.8 years. While Sweden is a member of the EU, they have kept their own currency, the Swedish krona, which has apparently served them

quite well. Religiously, 60% are Lutheran, but a survey by WI Network Market Research states that "about 80% of respondents said they are either not religious or convinced atheists."

Again, this shows that religion is relatively insignificant, not

only in Sweden but also throughout Europe. Thus, this is further preparation for the world to ultimately accept



the manmade religion as revealed in Revelation 13.


8047

(See Revelation 13: Satan's Last Victory, Item #1067, \$11.95.)

 USA

Conservative Christians, Muslims Unite to Fight Wokeism

[Tommy Robinson] has observed that "Islam has become an attraction for so many, because people are looking for something strong in principle that can stand its ground." Lamenting the state of the West, he has noted that there are areas of common ground between his extreme far-right views and certain forms of conservative Islam.

 Earlier this spring, outside the Montgomery County Public Schools headquarters in Rockville, Maryland, a disparate assembly of organiza-

(continued next page)

Lawmakers Reach Data Rule Deal

EU countries and EU lawmakers agreed on rules that govern how Big Tech and other companies use European consumer and corporate data, with safeguards against non-EU governments gaining illegal access.



EU concerns about data transfers have grown following revelations by former U.S. intelligence contractor Edward Snowden in 2013 of mass U.S. surveillance.

The new legislation gives both individuals and businesses more control over their data generated through smart objects, machines and devices, allowing them to copy or transfer data easily from across different services.

The Act makes it easier to switch to other providers of data processing services, introduces safeguards against unlawful data transfer by cloud service providers and provides for the development of interoperability standards for data to be reused between sectors.

-www.reuters.com, 27 June 2023

Commentary: In this case, Big Tech has been targeted. Next, the same or similar laws, regulations, and stipulations will be implemented by the rest of the world.

Where will this lead? There simply is no other path but to increasingly unify the world. The commercial and financial aspects require global regulation and laws. However, in the end, Bible prophecy will be fulfilled: “And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more” (Revelation 18:11). 8030

(See *Exposing Mystery Babylon Part 2*, Item #1080, \$4.50.)

Wokeism (continued from page 27)



Illustration by Richard Corrigan/Dogeatcog for New Lines

tions gathered to protest. Moms of Liberty, a self-proclaimed American conservative Christian organization, rubbed shoulders with hijab-wearing Muslim mothers, collectively chanting “protect our children!”

Coming from communities previously suspicious of each other’s identities, the protesters were united on one issue: that children need protection from LGBTQ material in their education.

This is nothing new for [Mike] Cernovich, who has tweeted to his million-plus followers that: “A moderated form of Islam is probably the West’s only hope against wokeism.” The pair encouraged people in the West to consider learning “many great things from Islam,” referring to its focus on traditional family values. They made a distinction between the majority of Muslims and the radical elements who commit ter-

rorism. Cernovich added that the “majority of terrorism victims are in fact Muslims, and we were, as Christians, burning heretics just a few hundred years ago.” A decade ago, this attitude would have been unthinkable in discussions of Islam in right-wing circles.

-newlinesmag.com, 20 June 2023

Commentary: Whenever political alliances are made, strange bedfellows are to be expected. For years now, we’ve seen Catholics and evangelicals arm-in-arm, fighting against abortion (and even contraception in the case of Hobby Lobby and Little Sisters of the Poor), but it is surprising to see this conservative ecumenism extend its reach to now include Muslims.

Let us remember the admonition in Mark 16:15: “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” Our neighbors—whether nominally Christian, Muslim, or other—are all in need of the saving grace of our Lord. Let this sink into our hearts before we join forces with the lost to fight political and cultural wars. Second Corinthians 6:14 is clear in this regard: “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?” 8033

-By J. Froese

(See *The Cross in the Shadow of the Crescent*, Item #2300, \$16.99.)

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 **USA**

'Eternal Life' Pill?

Experts estimate that the “fountain of youth” pill may be on the horizon, thanks to a jellyfish-like marine creature called *Hydractinia symbiolongicarpus*, which regenerates its entire body from cells located in its mouth.



Hydractinia symbiolongicarpus
(photo credit: WIKIMEDIA)

 *Hydractinia* are tiny tube-shaped creatures that live on the shells of rare crustaceans. Their remarkable regenerative abilities are expected to have implications for healthcare and anti-aging treatments.

These abilities were discovered after researchers sequenced pieces of RNA, which are related to the biological process of gene aging.

Dr. Andy Baxevanis from the National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI) in the US stated, “By studying some of our most distant animal relatives, we can start to unravel some of the secrets of regeneration and aging—secrets that may ultimately advance the field of regenerative medicine and the study of age-related diseases as well.”

-www.jpost.com, 11 July 2023

Commentary: The headline of the article grabs your attention, with the idea

that simply taking a pill can lead to an unending life on earth. While these scientists may in the future be able to extend life by a few years with such advancements, the unavoidable reality remains that all will die.

The real question is whether one has eternal life *after* one dies, which is only possible through “faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave



himself for me” (Galatians 2:20b).

8037

-By K. Farmer

(See *Final Destiny*, Item #2377, \$5.95.)


 **RUSSIA**

Outlaws Transgender Procedures

Russian President Vladimir Putin signed new legislation which marked the final step in outlawing gender-affirming procedures, a crippling blow to Russia’s already embattled LGBTQ+ community.



(AP Photo/Dmitry Lovetsky, File)

 The bill, which was approved unanimously by both houses of parliament, bans any “medical interven-

tions aimed at changing the sex of a person,” as well as changing one’s gender in official documents and public records. The only exception will be medical intervention to treat congenital anomalies.

It also annuls marriages in which one person has “changed gender” and bars transgender people from becoming foster or adoptive parents.

The ban is said to stem from the Kremlin’s crusade to protect what it views as the country’s “traditional values.” Lawmakers say the legislation is to safeguard Russia against “Western anti-family ideology,” with some describing gender transitioning as “pure satanism.”

-abcnews.go.com, 24 July 2023

Commentary: Russia—the dominating nation of the former Soviet Union, a communist society based on the promotion of atheism—is more Bible-oriented than so-called Western Christian

nations. Genesis 1:27 proclaims: “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” There is nothing

in between.

8050

(See *Christians in a Cancel Culture*, Item #2383, \$15.99.)

“Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock” (Jeremiah 31:10).

BY ARNO FROESE

The prophet Jeremiah is one who uses the word “nation(s)” quite frequently; a web search shows that the word occurs 76 times. *The Tim LaHaye Prophecy Study Bible* states, “In this, the longest prophetic book in the Old Testament, are 1,364 verses, 812 of those being predictive in nature or 60 percent.” We take special notice of the word “nations,” which is not exclusively about Israel but all the nations in the world.

It is the prophet Jeremiah who also reveals fulfilled prophecy; for example, in verse 15: “Thus saith the Lord; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not.” Matthew confirms the fulfillment of Bible prophecy when he writes about King Herod murdering children under 2 years of age: “Then was fulfilled that

which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not” (Matthew 2:17-18).

It is Jeremiah who speaks of the virgin birth: “for the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man” (Jeremiah 31:22b). The Hebrew word *sabab* can be translated, “to revolve, surround, or border.” Luther translates it, *das Weib wird den Mann umgeben*, which means “to detour.” Joseph was told, “fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 1:20b).

Jeremiah continues, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of

When reading or listening to the news media, it seems as if Israel is drowning in endless chaos. That may all be true and right, but we must understand that these things that are occurring today, whether positive or negative, are only of a temporary nature.

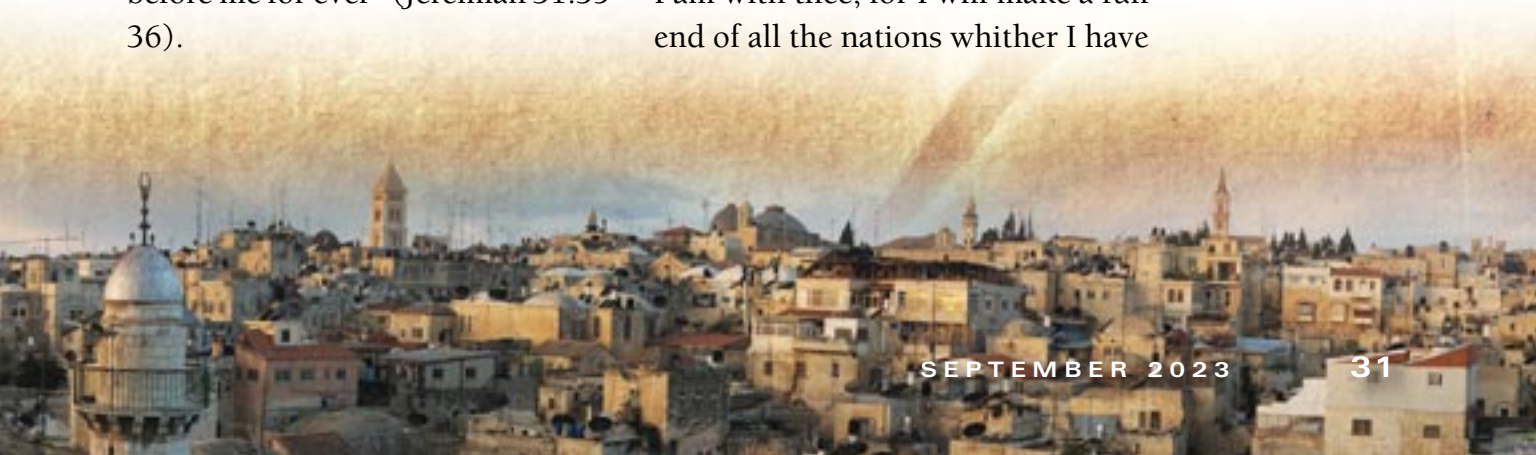
Judah” (Jeremiah 31:31). That, of course, is the new covenant. Hebrews 8:13 declares: “In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.”

When reading or listening to the news media, it seems as if Israel is drowning in endless chaos. That may all be true and right, but we must understand that these things that are occurring today, whether positive or negative, are only of a temporary nature. The same prophet declares the unconditional existence of the nation of Israel: “Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever” (Jeremiah 31:35-36).

Yes, Israel collectively is still blind when it comes to the Messiah. As the apostle Paul testifies: “blindness in part is happened to Israel” (Romans 11:25b). But—and this is important to emphasize—grace will break through: “For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins” (verse 27). That is yet to come. When? Back to verse 25: “until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.”

That is why we will tirelessly continue to proclaim the glorious, liberating gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to people everywhere. That is why we pray for Israel, particularly for the Church in that nation. According to reliable sources, believers are growing exponentially in the land.

Over and over, the question is asked: What will happen to our (any) beloved country? Here again, Jeremiah answers: “Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the Lord: for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have



driven thee: but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished” (Jeremiah 46:28).

Zionism at Work

A recent article in the *Jerusalem Post* was headlined, “Vast majority of Russian and Ukrainian Jews expected to immigrate in mass ‘exodus.’”

An in-depth study conducted by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR) has shed light on the recent migration trends among European Jews, providing valuable insights into the political realities and experiences of Jewish communities across the continent.

Most Ukrainian Jews are expected to leave the country in the next 7 years,

if they haven’t already, as well as more than half of Russian Jews, according to the report.

Of particular note is the situation in Russia and Ukraine, where 2022 marked a turning point. If current migration rates persist for the next seven years, it is projected that 80% to 90% of Ukraine’s 2021 Jewish population and 50% to 60% of Russia’s 2021 Jewish population will have emigrated.

-*www.jpost.com*, 5 July 2023

This report and many others reconfirm prophetic Scripture: “And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase” (Jeremiah 23:3). (MC)

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



Jubilee: A Year of Release and Redemption



By David Phillips (*Ebenezer's CEO*)

Note: Please read Leviticus 25. This chapter speaks about the Year of Jubilee, which I will be referencing in this article.

“**A**nd you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family. That fiftieth year shall be a Jubilee to you; in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of its own accord, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine. For it is the Jubilee; it shall be holy to you; you shall eat its produce from the field” (Lev 25:10-12).

During the Year of Jubilee, everyone is to return to his own property.

All property goes back to the original owner. Everything is given back and fully restored ... a true Biblical “reset.”

This “reset” was spoken about in the Bible over 3000 years ago, and was not invented by any globalist. It was a godly order and a command that was to be kept by the people of Israel.

This year (2023), during the fall feast of the blowing of the shofar, there will be the announcement of a Year of Jubilee coming up. Can you imagine, this will be the **70th Year of Jubilee** since Israel entered the Promised Land!

Do you realize in what extraordinary time period you and I are living in? A person may usually experience a Jubilee once in a lifetime, some twice. This is even more reason to join in the celebration of it! My family and I are excited.

The people of Israel entered the Promised Land after celebrating Passover.

“When your children ask you, ‘What does this special time mean to you?’ you will say, ‘It is a Passover gift to the LORD, because He passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt. He killed the Egyptians but saved our homes.’ And the people bowed to the ground and worshiped. On that same day the LORD brought the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their family groups” (Ex 12:26-27, 51).

It must have been March/April, which is the first month of the year biblically.

“The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, ‘This month will be the beginning of months. It will be the first month of the year to you’” (Ex 12:1-2). “This day you are about to go out, in the month of Abib” (Ex 13:4).



This coming new Biblical year (April 22, 2024) will announce the 70th Year of Jubilee since Joshua stood up and led Israel to enter the Promised Land (roughly around 1406 or 1407 BC).

My question to all of us concerning the end times: Could this 70th Year of Jubilee be our release from the toils of this world and a hint to the soon coming Rapture? Could the restoration of our ancient spiritual inheritance in God's kingdom be near? Don't get me wrong, I am not indicating any date or day, but only a time frame.

Therefore, God's 'appointed times' reveal God's plan and sequence of events.

This will be clear to us as we read about sounding the shofar on the Year of Jubilee. In Leviticus 23, God established 7 "appointed times" for His people, each appointed in its specific time and place by His sovereignty. These appointed times symbolically portray God's plan of redemption and deliverance. They also reveal much more: how God will renew creation, bring His people home, and re-establish His kingdom here on earth. They reveal God's actions in a more practical way. The use of His feasts is to be noted as signs for those who are living and guided by the Holy Spirit.

When does a Jubilee actually begin?

"You are to number seven years of rest for yourself, seven times seven years. The time of the seven years of rest will be forty-nine years. Then let the horn (shofar) be heard on the tenth day of the seventh month (Yom Kippur). On the day

to be made free from sin you will let a horn be heard all through your land" (Lev 25:8-9).

Each coming Year of Jubilee should be announced by shofar blasts on Yom Kippur, in the 49th year of the Jubilee cycle. Then, the Year of Jubilee starts about 6 months later, on the 1st day of the 1st month of the 50th year. Fourteen days later is Pesach eve ... redemption out of Egypt (The 50th year overlaps with the 1st year of the next 49-year cycle).

The Year of Jubilee under the Mosaic covenant foreshadows its glorious spiritual fulfillment in the New Covenant.

The Ancient Hebrew Year of Jubilee

Jubilee at first appears in the book of Leviticus. God said a Jubilee year was to be celebrated after every 49 years. During this 50th year (the Year of Jubilee), all debts were erased, and all indentured Israelites were freed. Everyone and everything in Israel was to be restored to their original clans and families. Sorry to say, but there is no evidence in the Bible that the Israelites really kept this.

God told Moses to start the 49-year Jubilee cycle "when you enter the land that I am giving to you." Also, "the land itself must observe a Sabbath to the LORD" (Lev 25:2).

Jubilee and the Ebenezer Home

As you all know, we at the Ebenezer Home are seriously working to expand our home and capacity, because of the urgent needs of the believing community that is growing in Israel. Although we pray that our Messiah will return soon—and we believe HE will—in the mean-



time, while we wait, we won't stop serving Him and those that are in need.

This past month alone, we have had to reject at least three requests from dear elderly believers who asked to be accepted into the Home ... all because of the very limited space we have in Ebenezer and the lack of a nursing ward. More and more people desperately need a home. This causes me deep pain, and I greatly regret that we had to deny entry, simply because we have no ability to accept them. This is becoming more and more of an issue as the Messianic believing community continues to grow ... and thus a greater number of elderly needing to be cared for.

During the Year of Jubilee, the land itself will observe a Sabbath.

"...When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall keep a sabbath to the LORD" (Lev 25:2b).

At the Ebenezer Home, like the land being able to have a year of rest, we long to see more elderly being able to have true rest, with no worries at the end of their life. Will you join us in providing them a real Shabbat period till they enter their heavenly rest?



Our immediate prayer requests I personally want to share with you:

1. May our Heavenly Father make it possible to buy the nursing home that is one mile away from us. I am in negotiations about the price, and will keep you updated on this. If we could go this route, we could expand the Home without the trouble of a major building project.

2. The ministry that we are renting our current building from, is willing to give us ownership ASAP to help us expand the building for assisted living.

3. We pray to raise a tax fee for "redeeming" the building and registering it in our name, for about \$2.3 million. We pray to be able to redeem this building by the proclaiming of the Year of Jubilee!

I know these are high sums: we are asking the congregations in Israel to join in as well. Will you stand with us and help us redeem the building? This month's donations will be dedicated to the project. *Chag Sameach* (blessed feast), and thank you so much for joining us in prayer!

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Address letters for publication to: Letters to the Editor, Midnight Call, PO Box 84309, Lexington, SC 29073. Include full name, address, and daytime phone number or email. Without name and address, letters will be discarded unread. All material is subject to editing. Midnight Call assumes all publishing rights on letters sent to the Editor.

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

GREEN BURIAL... REAL JEWS... RAPTURE NOT IN BIBLE?

Green Burial

Dear Sir,

Would you be able to send me a copy of an article on “green funerals”? I remember reading about it in your magazine and then misplaced it. I think it may have been an answer given in the question-and-answer section.

I'd appreciate this, as we don't have much money for our burial—when it comes.

-J. Wilson, MI

Answer: Speaking of funerals, most of us are in denial. We somehow think it's a long way off, or brush it aside with, “Let's not talk about it now.” Yet, just as sure as one is born, one must die. To make pre-arrangements for burial is as natural as writing a will.

There is much information available on the internet under “green funeral.” Here is my own arrangement with a local “green funeral” establishment in South Carolina: \$300 casket, \$200 transportation,

\$800 for opening and closing grave. Total: \$1,300. Embalming and concrete vault are not required by law in most cases.

Real Jews

Dear Mr. Froese,

I heard that you ignore the clear Bible teaching about who is the Israel of God, the seed of Abraham; namely, who is a true Jew. And, on top of that, you defend the Khazars, who pretend to be descendants of Abraham and therefore claim the land in Palestine. Is this true? Did you take Romans 9:8 out of your Bible, which shows that children of the flesh are not the children of God, and that the kingdom was taken away from even the true descendants of Abraham in Matthew 21:43?

-K. Langer, GERMANY

Answer: If you believe you are the true Israel (as Catholics, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses do), Romans 11:25-26 must be an embarrassment: “blind-



ness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved..." Those who claim to be Israel are still "blind" and must wait for their salvation.

Romans 11 begins, "Hath God cast away his people? God forbid." Note also the unconditional promise to Abram the Hebrew: "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Genesis 15:18).

Rapture Not in Bible?

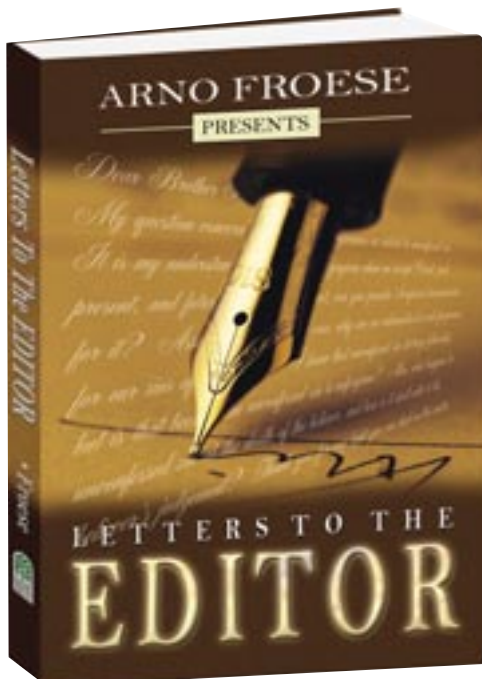
I enjoy your articles and subscribe to your magazines, with thanks. Some articles are spot on and enlightening to read and meditate on. However, using the term "Rapture" is unbiblical and seems to be a word mainstream Christianity likes to emphasize. Where in ALL legitimate translations of the

Bible do you see the manufactured, man-made term Rapture? NONE. At any rate, I find the loose, derogatory term a bit unpleasant.

-N. Sones, CANADA

Answer: First Thessalonians 4:17 says, "...shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air..." That simply means raptured. Other translations read, "...will be taken in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air"; or, "will be gathered up along with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." In the German translation, the word *Hingerückt* is used: in plain English, Rapture.

Incidentally, "mainstream Christianity" does not agree on the Rapture. Most reject it outright. We may call it "catching up," "raised up," or any other term, yet it is still the same. We are raptured into heaven in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. That's Biblical. (MC)



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ITEM #1045

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Author: Arno Froese



WHAT IS MY ANSWER?



By Peter Malgo

One of the first words that children often take into their beginning vocabulary is “No.” And, not uncommonly, they make frequent use of it, sometimes even quite defiantly. Growing older doesn’t usually improve this attitude. This character trait to first say “No” to everything is found in many people.

Of course, here I am not talking about the “No” required when following Jesus: “No” to sin, to questionable behavior, to seduction. In short: the “No” Eve *should* have said when confronted with the matter of tasting the fruit of the forbidden tree.

The negative, destructive “No” that I am talking about here is the one that comes from the lips of many people very quickly. Someone has a good idea: maybe a coworker, a church member, or a relative—he takes the initiative, and immediately gets a “No” thrown back at him. Thus, constructive solutions are often nipped in the bud before being considered. To be honest, don’t we also belong to that group of people who initially meet a good proposal with skepticism ... who first say “No” ... who prematurely consider the opposite idea, and

don’t respond to the other one at all? Actually, this trait should have fallen away from us at our conversion. But most of us have taken this negative attitude with us into our new life.

Of course, we really don’t *want* to be dismissive. But, again and again, we find ourselves making things difficult for our neighbor. Paul also had to struggle with himself. In the letter to the Romans, he describes the two natures within him: “For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do ... For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice” (Rom 7:15, 18-19). And finally, in verse 24 he cries out: “Oh, wretched man that I am!”



Here is the key: If we put on the attitude of Jesus, if we say “Yes” to becoming like Him, then we will also see our neighbor in a different light.

Yet Paul learns to overcome this conflict. A few years later, in his letter to the Philippians, he expresses very clearly his respect for his neighbor in the first verses of the second chapter: “Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others” (v. 4). And then he turns the focus to Jesus: “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” (v. 5). Peter gives a concrete picture of how Jesus was: “who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return” (1 Pet 2:23a). Here is the key: If we put on the attitude of Jesus, if we say “Yes” to becoming like Him, then we will also see our neighbor in a different light. Basically, it is a question of how our attitude is toward the Lord. Do we say “Yes” to God, “Yes” to His will? Or is there still resistance in our hearts?

In Matthew 21, a father tells his two sons to go into the vineyard. One replies immediately and clearly: “I don’t want to do it.” But then he changes his mind: “afterward he regretted it and went” (v. 29). Don’t we want to imitate this son and reconsider our behavior toward the Lord, allowing Him to change us? And don’t we also want to learn to regard the other person higher than ourselves ... to not always immediately try to downplay or block everything when someone else makes a suggestion?

God said an all-encompassing “Yes” to us in Jesus Christ. He did not impose any conditions, but accepted us unreservedly out of grace. In and through Jesus, He gave us total fullness. How then should we not unreservedly say, “Yes, Father” each day to His ways with us? He is truly worthy of being honored! (M)

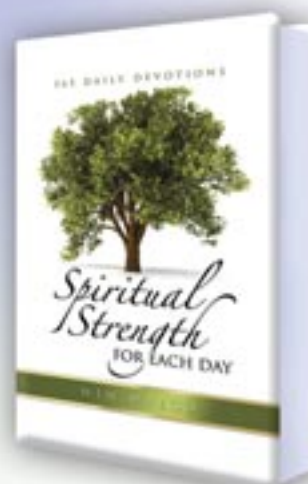
Powerful Daily Devotional

Spiritual Strength for Each Day serves as a guideline for believers who seek a deeper and closer relationship with Jesus Christ our Lord. This book is intended to remind the reader throughout the year that life as we know it is temporary, and the ultimate goal of our lives should be to prepare for eternity...desiring to hear the words from our Lord, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

SPIRITUAL STRENGTH FOR EACH DAY ITEM #1062

400 pgs. • Hardcover

~~\$16.95~~ **Clearance \$7** Author: Wim Malgo





ARGENTINA

The Power of the Word and Wounded Souls

BY STEPHAN AND CARINA BEITZE, BUENOS AIRES

Solutions for poorly trained church leaders, as well as reflections on suffering children, blessed efforts, and new contacts.



There's great economic hardship in Argentina. The past year ended with 94.8% inflation. We're seeing evidence of this in a decrease in literature sales (much smaller) this year. Although life in Argentina is certainly marked by one of the greatest crises in the nation's history, its World Cup title was a welcome—albeit brief—escape.

A Solution for Inadequate Schooling

In Argentina's northwesternmost province of Jujuy, many churches have leaders who have never attended Bible school, nor have they received a good education more generally. When the instruction and practical application provided to a church is poor, it has a negative impact. So, the board of directors of a Bible

school decided to establish a special program for church leadership. Classes are held every Friday evening by Zoom, and an on-site intensive course is taught in person on the last Saturday of the month.

I was asked to teach Evangelism and Discipleship, followed by a two-hour Q&A period. We were amazed that around 50 church leaders took part in the new program. Additionally, there was a one-week teaching seminar at a local Bible school, where I expanded on the teachings of Christ and the Holy Spirit for about 8 hours each day.

We were also invited to the Word of Life missions conference. We presented Midnight Call's literature there, and had exchanges with many missionaries and young people about the call to worldwide missions. It did us good to talk to other brothers and sisters in the faith who are experiencing the same struggles, but who also share the same vision.

A Terrible Fate

Every year, we close our Sunday school with a beautiful celebration. Around 60 children, who are taught the Word throughout the year, give a performance. Parents, of course, are also invited. Most of these children come from a



nearby slum. We experience many happy things, such as decisions for Jesus, but also some that cause us profound sadness.

My wife Carina and our children Michael and Damaris, are among the children's teachers. They learned from a 12-year-old that her mother had sold the girl's body to men in the family and neighborhood, beginning when she was nine years old. This finally came to light when she had to be brought to the hospital after being raped. Although her case is pending in the court system, the girl was returned to her mother. The family hasn't allowed us any contact with her since.

The Suffering of Girls

In January, we preached the Word at a youth camp in the north of the country. An intern from Breckerfeld Bible school had come, freeing us both to go. Those were truly blessed days with the 150 youth there.

In the course of providing pastoral care, we learned that six girls in a room of twelve had been sexually abused in either their childhood or teens. Only God's intervention and His Word can bring true comfort and heal their wounded souls. There were many other issues that were burdening the young people. By God's grace, several of them also made decisions for Jesus.

In the Amazon

The Swiss ministry Indicamino invited us to a missions conference near the Amazon in Peru in late February and early March. Their work is primarily with the indigenous people of Peru's lowlands. Their mission station, Indicamino's oldest and largest, is located on a massive tributary of the Amazon River. Their mission field is the entire Peruvian Amazon region—an area about ten times the size of Switzerland! Around 3 million people live



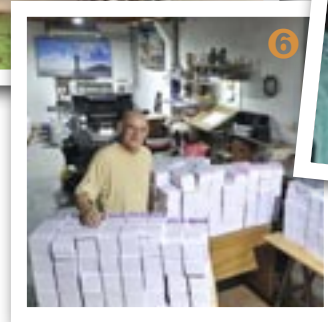
- ① Stephan Beitze at the youth camp
- ② Our intern
- ③ Sunday School closing celebration



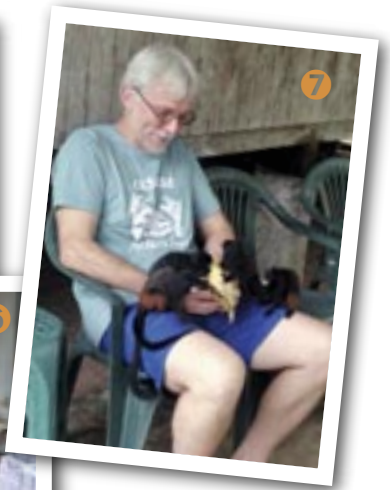
4 At the youth conference



5 At Indicamino



6 Erich Schäfer at work



7 New friends in the Amazon

there, at least 300,000 of whom are indigenous people from 55 different ethnic groups.

Indicamino holds a conference for their employees each year. This year, I was able to share the Word several times a day. The fellowship with other missionaries was truly blessed, and we were able to make new friends there. Since I love the tropics, this was a nice change from the concrete jungle of Buenos Aires.

Great Help

Erich and Jutta Schäfer came out of retirement to join us for the three summer months. They enjoyed being with their children and grandchildren (Daniel Schäfer and family) again. They used this time for numerous evangelistic outreaches. They also got to work immediately, reprinting almost a million tracts that we had run out of. We are so grateful to them for their service. (MR0723)



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

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Midnight Call's **September Resource Guide**



Avoiding Confusion and Redeeming the Time in These Last Days

As we wonder how close the end times truly are, we must return to God's Word for clarity and wisdom. *Has the Tribulation Begun?* delivers enlightening biblical truth alongside powerful encouragement to live for the Lord today.

HAS THE TRIBULATION BEGUN? ITEM #2406

224 pgs. • Paperback

~~\$16.99~~ **Sale \$12** Author: Amir Tsarfati



Gain a Clearer Picture of the End Times

With this study guide companion to *Has the Tribulation Begun?*, bestselling author and prophecy expert Amir Tsarfati guides you through a biblical overview of the last days.

This insightful resource will help you untangle the mysteries of the end times while encouraging you with a peace that comes from living with an eternal perspective.

HAS THE TRIBULATION BEGUN? STUDY GUIDE ITEM #2407

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~~\$10.99~~ **Sale \$8** Author: Amir Tsarfati



Christian Fiction...or Biblical Fact?

- Why do some believers object to the idea of a rapture?
- Does the timing of the rapture really make a difference?

As you explore what Scripture says about the end times, you'll get a grander glimpse of your glorious future and the deepest hope of every follower of Jesus.

CAN WE STILL BELIEVE IN THE RAPTURE? ITEM #2332

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Authors: Ed Hindson and Mark Hitchcock



What can people on Earth expect during the last days?

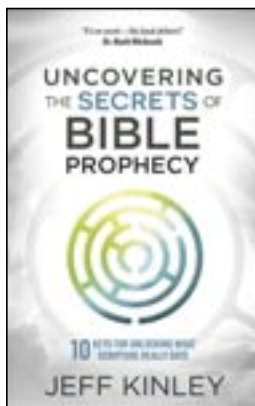
15 FUTURE EVENTS THAT WILL SHAKE THE WORLD

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Author: Ed Hindson



What God Really Said Will Happen

An extremely helpful guide to understanding the nature and purpose of the prophetic passages in Scripture.

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UNCOVERING THE SECRETS OF BIBLE PROPHECY

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Concise, Biblical Answers to Your Challenging Questions

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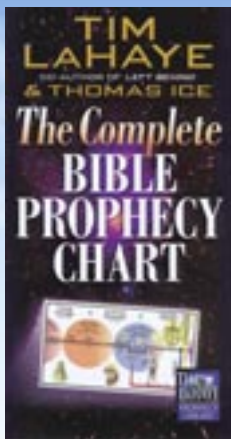
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THE MOST ASKED PROPHECY QUESTIONS ITEM #2388

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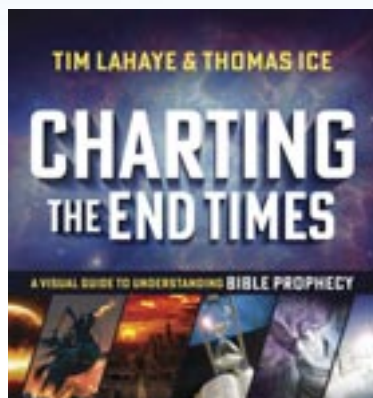
A panorama of the ages on one full-color master chart

Beginning with eternity past and looking all the way to the prophetic future, LaHaye and Ice provide a compelling overview of key points and events in Bible history. Certain to become a much-used resource, God's Prophetic Plan Chart is a unique and handy reference tool for Bible teachers and everyone interested in future events. (Same chart included in *Charting the End Times*.)

THE COMPLETE BIBLE PROPHECY CHART ITEM #2307

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Authors: Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice • 12 pgs.



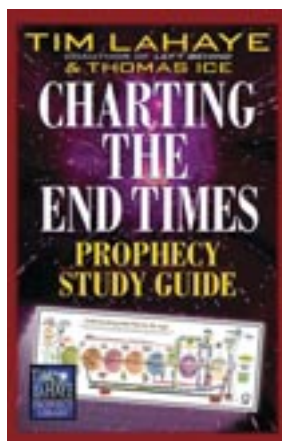
A Visual Guide to Understanding Bible Prophecy

Prophecy experts (the late) Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice teamed up to produce a visual resource unmatched by anything available in the Christian book marketplace! The result of decades of careful research and Bible study, the charts and well-written explanatory text provide a fascinating picture of the times ahead. *Charting the End Times* includes...

- A foldout portraying God's complete plan for the ages
- More than 50 full-color charts and diagrams
- Timelines of the end times
- A comprehensive overview of the key elements of the last days
- Clear answers to tough end-times questions

CHARTING THE END TIMES ITEM #2320 • 144 pgs. • **Hardcover**

~~\$29.99~~ **Sale \$22** Authors: Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice



Instructive, practical study guide

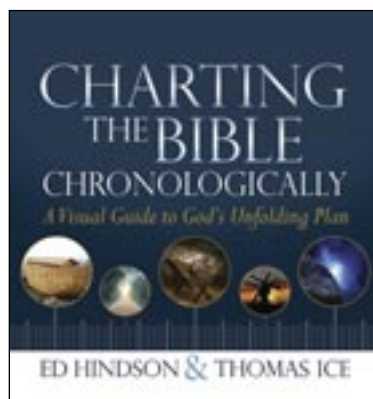
Designed for use by individuals or study groups, *Charting the End Times Prophecy Study Guide* takes readers step by step through the high points of Bible prophecy with helpful charts that offer a clear picture of what will happen and when in the last days. Readers will welcome this interactive study about the Rapture, the Tribulation, the return of Christ, the judgment, the Millennial kingdom, heaven, and more.

A dynamic resource that can be used with or without the companion book.

CHARTING THE END TIMES PROPHECY STUDY GUIDE ITEM #2321

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~~\$9.99~~ **Sale \$6** Authors: Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice



God's Plan Made Clear from Beginning to End

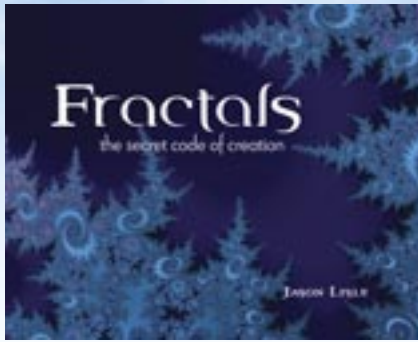
The Bible follows the rise and fall of kingdoms and governments, covers millennia of ancient history, and reveals God's plan for humanity through powerful accounts that still speak today. *Charting the Bible Chronologically* by authors Ed Hindson and Thomas Ice gives readers a panoramic view of the events recorded in Scripture, all laid out in chronological order. Included in this book's 40-plus full-color charts are...

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- Overviews of major empires
- A master foldout chart of the entire Bible

CHARTING THE BIBLE CHRONOLOGICALLY ITEM #2322 • 144 pgs. • **Hardcover**

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Is there a secret code embedded in Math itself?



The artworks displayed in this book have always existed, built into the numbers at creation. Dr. Lisle suggests that only the Christian worldview can make sense of this secret code. As such, the images in this book are a demonstration of the truth of that worldview.

- Demonstrates that even abstract concepts like numbers could not exist apart from God
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Author: Jason Lisle



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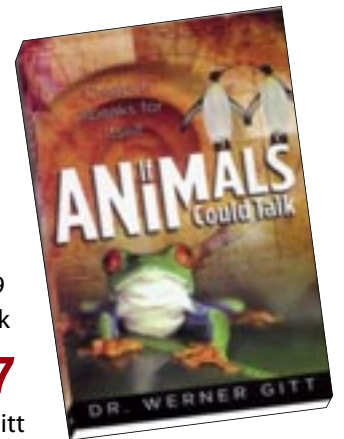
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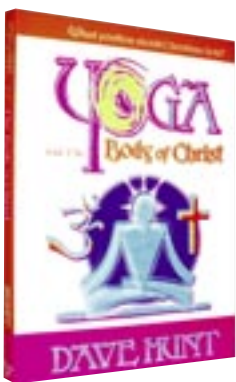
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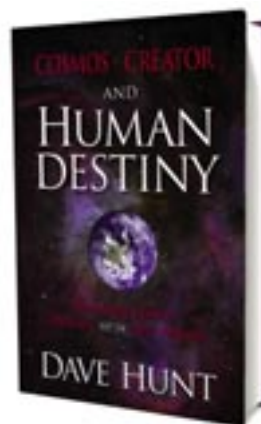
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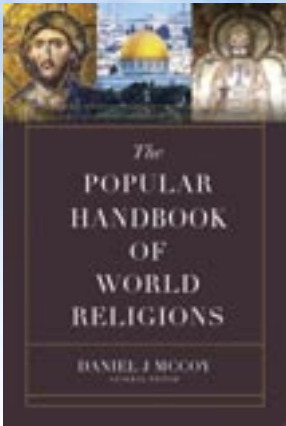
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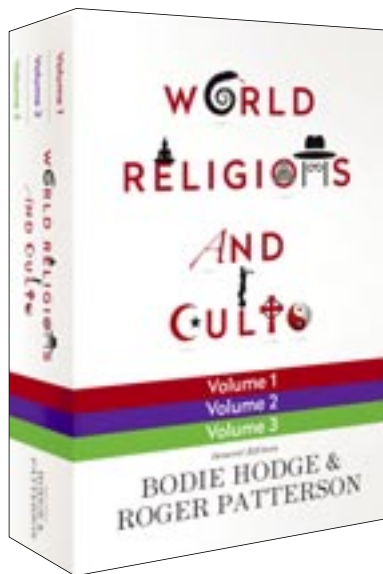
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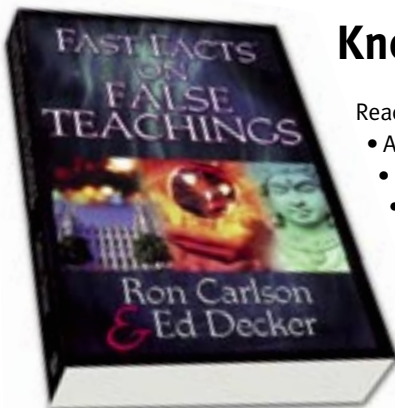
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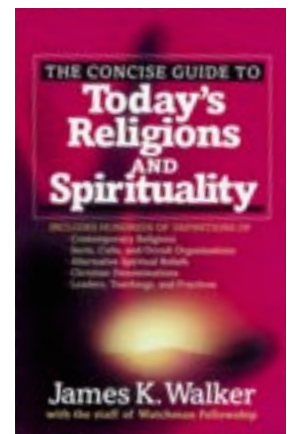
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