

The International Prophetic Voice for the Endtimes

# Midnight Call

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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# The Bible Is True



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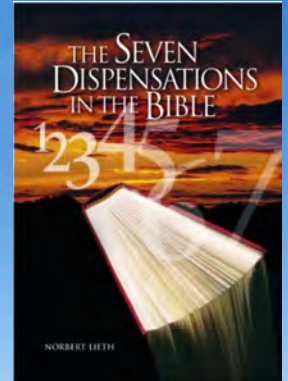
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## 7 COVER STORY

### The Bible Is True

By G. Wasserzug

When we take the Bible in our hands, we must do it with reverence, for we stand before the holy, living God Himself—before His Son, Jesus Christ. The Bible is more than a book; it is more than a human testimony; it is the living Word of God.



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## Fear Not



“After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward” (Genesis 15:1).

**By Arno Froese**

**T**his is the first time in our Bible where the words “fear not” appear. It was addressed to Abram before his name was changed to Abraham. It was a difficult time, because Abram was childless. It seems as if God ignores the pleading of Abram, but then He does something strange: “And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be” (v. 5). Thus, God tells Abraham in a very realistic manner that his descendants will be innumerable. Verse 6 then testifies: “And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.”

This is the beginning of the implementation of salvation through faith. No wonder Abraham is called the father of all believers (Romans 4:16b).

Why faith? The answer is relatively simple: Eve, the mother of us all, put her faith in the statement of the serpent instead of God. Thus, only through faith can man return to God.

When reading the Old Testament and noticing the various laws and commandments, one quickly realizes that God repeatedly revealed Himself to His people in marvelous and supernatural ways. Yet, what was the result? They believed not. Thus, true believing faith does not come from the manifestation of the supernatural.

This leads us to the question: Where does faith come from? It is the gift of God. John 6:44a states, “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.” Ephesians 2:8-9 proclaims: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

Because Eve and Adam ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, all descendants know what is good and what is evil. Whether it be Christians, Muslims, Hindus, or atheists, all know the difference. One will not find a government—regardless of what type—that says, don’t honor your parents; killing is

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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 nine 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 therewith 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-tribulation 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.

good; go ahead and commit adultery; yes, you can steal; yes, you can lie; it is the right thing to covet what others have.

The Bible says: “Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour’s” (Exodus 20:12-17).

When Jesus spoke of the Comforter (Holy Spirit), He explained that “he will reprove the world of sin” (John 16:8). Thus, my sin guilt—past, present, and future—is now subject to God’s forgiveness, which is available because Jesus paid it all when He poured out His life in His blood on Calvary’s Cross.

This acceptance of the substitutionary death of Jesus envelopes me in the promise, for example, of Psalm 23:4: “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” Believers are given the assurance of Romans 8:15: “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”

## **Reasons for Fear**

Now we come to the center of our subject, “Fear Not.” Where does fear originate? From sin. Fear of the past, fear of the present, fear of the future is often in our minds. Jesus, in His prophetic speech, states about the end times: “Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth” (Luke 21:26a).

Today, we find ourselves in the midst of an information explosion. At any moment during the 24-hour day, we can



Often, we hear authors and ministers of the gospel proclaim, “We are living in a chaotic and fearful time.” Yet, if we were to compare our time with that of one or two centuries ago, we would realize that today there is more peace, prosperity, and security than ever.

hear, read, and even see the horrible things that are taking place upon planet earth. That is the fear of the world: the fear of global warming, pollution of the oceans, rising of the sea levels, flooding, the destruction of the rainforest, the possibility of famine and pestilence, etc.

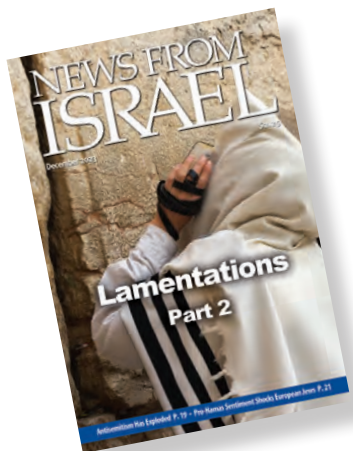
Often, we hear authors and ministers of the gospel proclaim, “We are living in a chaotic and fearful time.” Yet, if we were to compare our time with that of one or two centuries ago, we would realize that today there is more peace, prosperity, and security than ever.

Thus, to summarize this editor’s note titled “Fear Not,” it is totally up to me to fear or not to fear; to involve myself in the things that are being propagated, or to turn my mind to the things God speaks to me in His Word: “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good plea-

sure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32). It is your and my choice to believe and occupy myself with what I hear, read, and see in the news media, or to rely on the precious words of God. It is my choice to accept or reject John 14:27: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

For us, the best is yet to come. With these words, we wish you the Lord’s blessings and His presence throughout 2024. (MC)

**Correction:** On page 34 of the December *Midnight Call* and page 28 of the December *News From Israel*, the date when Bethlehem ceased being part of Israel should have read December of 1995, not 1955. We apologize for the error.



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# The Bible Is True



## G. Wasserzug

The Bible has been translated into the majority of the world's languages, and millions of copies have been sold worldwide. It is a bestseller in many countries. Everyone who claims the name "Christian" is expected to know the Bible and to have read it. This unique book challenges its readers to take a stand, for it is virtually impossible not to take action after reading it.

**T**he Bible has a strange history. For some, it is a beloved book, an indispensable companion, food for the soul. Other people hate the Bible. They have attempted to eradicate it, tear it, burn it, mock it, forbid it, cut it to pieces, and criticize it. For yet others, the Bible is something they want to hide from and forget about. However, the Bible always triumphs over its adversaries. Those adversaries are dead and their books old and yellow, but the Bible lives on. It possesses mighty spiritual power. The Bible's influence

upon humanity is unparalleled. People flock to hear its truths proclaimed. Today, light and darkness stand out in increasingly sharp contrast. Man has become warped in his judgment; thus, his attitude toward the Bible is also warped.

## **Is the Bible the Word of God or the Word of Man?**

We are faced with two predominant, yet contrasting claims concerning the Bible. The living Church, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, says

# The Bible Is True

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“yes” to the Bible; while the new theology, based upon human understanding, says “no” to it. Thus, we have two claims confronting one another: 1) the Bible is the Word of God; and 2) the Bible is the word of man. Born-again believers assert that the Bible is the Word of God, and base our claim on the highest authority there is; namely, the authority of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who says, “I am ... the truth” (John 14:6).

Those who claim the Bible is the word of man base their assertion on the authority of human understanding, which is darkened by sin. Man is clearly overstepping the sphere of his abilities by trying to judge matters of a spiritual nature. Man is taking upon himself something that he has no right to. The Bible says of this: “But the natural man [i.e., the man who relies on his own understanding] receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:14).

In its claim, the new theology is proof that man with his limited understanding cannot grasp the divine. Modern theology only accepts what is visible or discernible to the intellect. Everything else is passed off as myth or legend. This new theology says the Bible is not understandable to the human intellect. That is certainly true, yet the error lies in the fact that the same theology calls everything that is incomprehensible to the human intellect, myth, legend, or fairytale.

Many things exist between heaven and earth that the wisdom of man does not comprehend. What the modern theology of

our day calls “myth,” born again believers testify to as divine truth. We do not base this claim on the authority of any person, and decline to substantiate this claim by means of human logic. Even the greatest of philosophers can only think within the limitations of time and space. But the nature of God and His Word cannot be limited in this way, because both He and His Word are eternal; He is exalted above space and time. The Bible says, “the word of our God shall stand for ever” (Isaiah 40:8b).

Therefore, we reject the authority of man in his judgment of the Bible. There can be no discussion when it comes to the validity of the Bible; believers choose the authority of Jesus Christ. We want to know what He says about the Bible, and we are prepared to bow unconditionally to this authority. We would, as Paul wrote, take captive “every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5b).

## **Jesus Proved the Old Testament Is the Word of God**

The Bible is divided into two sections: the Old Testament—from Genesis to Malachi—and the New Testament—from the Gospel of Matthew to the Revelation of John. The Apostle Paul wrote that the Church is “built upon the foundation of the apostles [New Testament] and prophets [Old Testament], Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone” (Ephesians 2:20).

What does Jesus Christ say concerning the Old Testament? Remember, He had exactly the same Old Testament books as we have today. He knew the Scriptures. The Jews were amazed and said, “How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?” (John 7:15).



Modern theology only accepts what is visible or discernible to the intellect. Everything else is passed off as myth or legend. This new theology says the Bible is not understandable to the human intellect.

Jesus lived in the Word of God: His thoughts, speech, and prayers were saturated with the words of the Old Testament. All of the Scriptures of the prophets—beginning with the books of Moses—were God’s Word to Him. He taught His disciples to see the living Word in the Scriptures; namely Himself, the Word of God who became flesh. Jesus’ testimony concerning the Old Testament is always simultaneously His testimony that He is truly the Word of God in person. For this reason, He said to the Jews: “Search the scriptures: for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” (John 5:39).

He reproached the theologians of His day: “had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me” (John 5:46; cf. Numbers 20:12). He contradicted the learned Sadducees,

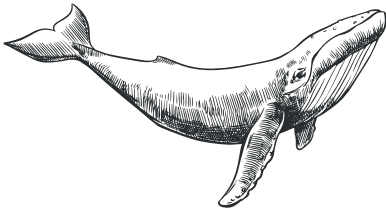
who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. He rejected them with the Word: “Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God” (Matthew 22:29). He explained to the unbelievers in His time, “the scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35b).

Thus, He spread His hands protectively over the Old Testament. To Him, it was absolutely the Word of God. We can prove that Jesus knew the individual books of the Old Testament, and described them without exception as the Word of God. He affirmed its basic doctrine of God, man, the devil, sin, and redemption. This was *His* doctrine! He testified to the prophecy of the Old Testament and the history contained in it, as the truth that must be fulfilled. He accepted its scientific statements concerning space, the earth’s origin, and its end. He confirmed the truth of every word of the Pentateuch with the



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Jesus believed in Jonah's three-day ordeal in the belly of the fish, and even used that very event as an illustration of His own death and resurrection.

words: "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matthew 5:18).

Jesus often cited the books of Moses. We know He answered Satan when He was tempted by using the Word of God from the book of Deuteronomy: "It is written" (Luke 4:4, 8; cf. Deuteronomy 9:10). For Him, this was to eliminate all discussion. "It is so!"

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus took the standard of the Law proclaimed in the Pentateuch (first five books of the Old Testament) as the basis of all ethical conduct. God says what is good and what is sin. No man can shake these eternal standards and go unpunished, and no man can alter them, for they are eternal. The laws of nature will not change with passing fashions, nor will the ethical laws of God change. In God's commandments lie the high tension of God's will. In other words, "Hands off!" "Caution!" "Danger!" In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said: "Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time" (Matthew 5:21a). Then He expanded this standard to His own (born again believers) and stated: "But I am telling you that not only the sinful deed, but also the sinful thought and the sinful look incur guilt in God's eyes."

Jesus believed the historical reports contained in the Old Testament. He described them as being true and confirmed them with His divine authority. He affirmed the report of

the creation of man, "God created man in his own image" (Genesis 1:27a).

Therefore, Jesus was rejecting the theory of evolution—which seeks to prove the development of man from animals—thousands of years before there even was a theory. He confirmed the authenticity of the Flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. He spoke about David, Solomon, and Elijah. He delved into the infinite abundance of the prophetic Word and passed it on.

Jesus knew the prophets; He read them, believed them, and cited them as speaking the Word of God. He mentioned Isaiah as being the author of the book bearing his name (including the last part of it) when He read from it in the synagogue at Nazareth. He used the words of the prophet for His own legitimization: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me" (Luke 4:18a). Then He added: "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (verse 21b).

Jesus based His powerful speech about future events—including His return and the establishment of His kingdom on earth—on the words of Daniel the prophet (Matthew 24). He repeated the signs of the end, and like Daniel, He spoke about the "abomination of desolation" that will stand in the holy place. Jesus believed in Jonah's three-day ordeal in the belly of the fish, and even used that very event as an illustration of His own death

Jesus Christ testified of the glorious truth: “I myself am the fulfillment of all the words that God spoke through the prophets.” Here, the depth of Scripture’s divine content—particularly the Old Testament—is revealed.

and resurrection.

How the Psalms lived in the heart of our Lord! He opened our eyes to see that the Psalms are the hymns of the Messiah: They describe His coming in glory, and also the wrath and judgment that will come upon humanity during the time of the Antichrist. The Psalms proclaim the grace and judgment of Jesus Christ. This is the explanation of the “Psalms of Revenge.” Jesus prayed the Psalms in the dark and holy hours on the cross, proving that they speak about Him.

A critical theology teaches that as a child, Jesus clung to the beliefs of His time, also in respect to the Old Testament. Is this true? We have the opportunity to hear from the risen Christ on His judgment of the Scriptures.

After He rose from the dead, Jesus was no longer in the body of limitation that He received through His Incarnation, but was in a new spiritual body: in the full power of life eternal, and in the fullness of divine wisdom. The risen Christ also testified with divine authority: “The Bible is true! I am the content of the Bible!” He said to the disciples on their way to Emmaus: “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:25-27). And to the disciples, the risen Christ stated: “all

things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me” (Luke 24:44b). The risen Lord was referring to the entire Old Testament with His statement about “the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms,” thereby testifying that the Old Testament is true.

### **Jesus: Fulfillment of the Old Testament**

Jesus Christ testified of the glorious truth: “I myself am the fulfillment of all the words that God spoke through the prophets.” Here, the depth of Scripture’s divine content—particularly the Old Testament—is revealed. We look into the Scriptures as into a clear, deep, mountain lake and see the reflection of Jesus Christ in every single word.

The first five books of the Bible reveal Him to us in a host of symbols. For instance, we see Him in the bloody sacrifice on the altar, which was necessary for the sinful people to be reconciled to God. The first five books also show us the high priest and the sanctuary of the tabernacle, in which the presence of God dwelt. All of the Old Testament sacrifices are fulfilled in one sacrifice—Jesus Christ, who said: “I lay down my life for the sheep” (John 10:15b). He described Himself as the fulfillment when He stated: “as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John



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3:14-15). The eternal High Priest—concealed in the five books of Moses—is found in the One who said: “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep” (John 10:11).

The throne of David in Jerusalem is the central point of Israel’s history. This throne, as the center of world government, is the content of historical books. One king follows another, but none of them is the One for whom the people long: the King of righteousness and of peace. Jesus Christ, however, testified to Pilate: “I am He; I am the King.” He testified that He would come to receive His kingdom and set up His throne. Righteousness and peace are found in Jesus Christ, the King of all kings!

The prophets told what they heard. They received the Word of God. But Jesus Christ is the Word of God! He is the great Prophet in whom all prophecy is fulfilled. He is able to say: “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30). The perfect Prophet is found in Jesus Christ.

## **What Does Jesus Christ Say About the New Testament?**

The New Testament lies before us as a particular section of Scripture for the Church of Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is very important to know whether the New Testament is true. Is the New Testament God’s Word? Can we rely on every word contained in the New Testament? Where is the authority that can tell us with absolute certainty, whether we have the testimony of the first Church with the human testimony of the apostles, or whether the entire New Testament is, without exception, God’s Word? Again, Jesus Christ is the only authority—exalted above and

beyond all human opinion—who can validate the New Testament. He provided two perfect ways for the New Testament to be written down, before He was taken up from this earth.

First, He called the 12 apostles by name, to which the exalted Christ later added Paul in place of Judas. [Ed. Note: There is debate on this issue, as others say it is Matthias, based on Acts 1:26.] Then, He provided for the absolute reliability of the New Testament when he filled the 11 apostles and Paul with the Holy Spirit, which had the particular task of revelation and inspiration of the Word of God through the apostles. Thus, we might call the New Testament the Scriptures of the apostles of Jesus Christ. Man cannot add one word to these writings. The revelation to the apostles and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the apostles, is absolutely unique and concrete fact. This can never be repeated!

Jesus promised His chosen apostles the Holy Spirit as their inspirer, who would make the Word of revelation alive and speak it through them in clear words that they could record. Every word they wrote is the Word of the Holy Spirit that He spoke through the apostles. Jesus said the following to the 11 apostles, a message that first and foremost belonged to them: “the Holy Ghost ... shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26). In other words, “The Spirit of truth, which comes from the Father, will testify of me, and you will testify also.”

This is the New Testament, the testimony of the Holy Spirit through the apostles. That is why Paul took such great pains to emphasize

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep”  
(John 10:11).



he was a true apostle; that he was not only a believer or a missionary, but also an apostle who belonged to the apostles of Jesus Christ who directly received revelation of God's Word. Paul wrote: “For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Galatians 1:12). He humbly yet firmly maintained, for the sake of his service, that “in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing” (2 Corinthians 12:11b).

The New Testament is the Word of God given to the apostles, through the direct revelation of the Holy Spirit, and written down by them or by apostolic scholars such as Mark or Luke. Paul testified: “when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the

word of God” (1 Thessalonians 2:13). These are not “words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth” (1 Corinthians 2:13). What immeasurable riches are presented in the Bible!

### **Every Word of the Bible Is the Word of God**

The Bible is the breath of the living God; therefore, it is true! We could sum up the Bible—both the Old and New Testament—by saying: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Timothy 3:16a). The Amplified Bible translates the verse: “All Scripture is God-breathed.” “Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1:21b).

That is why it is so serious when we contradict the Bible or doubt God's Word.

# The Bible Is True

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The Holy Spirit reveals the picture of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures. We see His glory; we love Him more and more, and the Holy Spirit makes the Word a living power in us. Through His Word, He conforms our character to the image of Jesus Christ.

When we do, we are following in the footsteps of the first doubter of God's Word, the devil, who questioned God's Word when he said to Eve: "Hath God said...?" (Genesis 3:3). With this question, the pathway of human suffering began. Paul harshly rejected any tampering with the Word of God when he wrote: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8).

At the end of the Bible, we read these earnest words: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Revelation 22:18-19).

## How Should We Respond to God's Word, the Bible?

We know that Jesus Christ testified to and gave us His holy guarantee that the Bible is the Word of God, and that it is true. What should we then do? From the Bible, a Person is speaking to us. When we take the Bible in our hands, we must do it with reverence, for we stand before the holy, living God Himself—before His Son,

Jesus Christ. The Bible is more than a book; it is more than a human testimony; it is the living Word of God. Thus, the Bible demands a decision of our will and trust toward this Person who speaks to us through it. We must say in our hearts: "I want to obey you. I trust You. I believe that the Bible is true because You, the Lord Jesus Christ, testify to it." This decision changes our entire lives. As born-again believers, we hear the Word of God in our spirit through the Holy Spirit, and then we can open our hearts wide and say: "Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth" (1 Samuel 3:9).

The Holy Spirit in us then illuminates the Word of God. Bible reading time becomes the holiest and most beautiful hour of our day. This is fellowship in familiar conversation with God. The Holy Spirit reveals the picture of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures. We see His glory; we love Him more and more, and the Holy Spirit makes the Word a living power in us. Through His Word, He conforms our character to the image of Jesus Christ. Paul wrote: "We ... are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 3:18b; cf. Genesis 1:27).

According to the authority of the risen Lord, whoever has decided to believe exactly what Jesus Christ believed, will experience profound assurance in his regenerated spirit that the Bible clearly testifies of its truth and life. (1358)





## Restless Nations Jostling to Usher in the 10 Kings



By Wilfred Hahn

Given the state of geopolitical affairs today, it is key to see that groups of countries must come together to assemble sufficient, common-minded heft to affect their agendas. Why? Because there is no longer a common global consensus, as we will show. Power is being spread more widely.

**G**lobalism is on the ropes. Critically, this long-running trend is beginning to break up in our time. This is a fascinating and momentous development for many reasons. However, this writer believes the most notable one is that it reveals the birth pangs of minilateralism. What is this? It is the geopolitical fragmentation of national relationships that (we believe) will eventually set up the emergence of the 10 Kings.

This group of kings is mentioned or pictured in the Bible a total of 10 times. They must, therefore, be an important end-time actor. And indeed this is the case.

### **The West, Downhill and Fading Out**

Why the global tumult ... and why today? For one, countries are becoming less cooperative. They are driven by self interest, non-aligned objectives, hatred, and quixotic human actions.

This makes for much strife and volatility. And since the world is secular and evil, at least some countries will gladly aspire to help fulfill the Antichrist’s agenda.

As mentioned, most interesting of all is this connection: It sets up the world for the 10 Kings. Minilateralism dovetails with the 10 kings mentioned in Scripture—a small group of countries that under the aegis of the Antichrist, successfully aggregates sufficient power to control the entire world.

In our view, this development is unfolding before our very eyes ... is at the very doorstep. The 10 kings must emerge first, before the Antichrist is on the scene. At that time, the 10 kings give their power to the Antichrist. “The [...] ten kings [...] have one purpose and will give their power and authority to the beast” (Revelation 17:12-13). And then, “The beast [...] was given authority over every tribe, people, language



A common question therefore is this: Are the 10 Kings revealed before or after the Rapture? We can't be sure. But suffice it to say that the preparations or events that signal the advance of the 10-King association will be difficult to keep hidden.

and nation” (Revelation 13:5-7). He must have enough power and authority so that “no one will be able to stand against him” (Daniel 11:16).

There are plenty of reasons to beware, but this one particularly so. Quickness! The 10 kings are not in service for very long. For example, no sooner have the 10 kings allied with the Antichrist, that three of them are uprooted according to Scripture (backstabbed or betrayed?—Daniel 7:24). Events will unfold rapidly, as “he must remain for only a little while” (Revelation 17:10b).

A common question therefore is this: Are the 10 Kings revealed before or after the Rapture? We can't be sure. But suffice it to say that the preparations or events that signal the advance of the 10-King association will be difficult to keep hidden. To the contrary, we think. The tumultuous geopolitical chafing and shifting will be hard to miss in the *New York Times* or *Washington Post*. Following, we provide some evidence for this view.

### Restless Nations

Fragmentation of geopolitical affairs can be seen everywhere.

Recently, Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India and host of the recent meetings of the Group of 20 (G20) in New Delhi, welcomed the attendees with a Sanskrit slogan, “Vasudhaiva

Kutumbakam.” Translated, this means, “The world is one family.”

The emphasis of the conference was global unity. The reality, however, is quite the opposite: The world is riven with rancor and strife ... and increasingly so.

Since India took over the presidency of the G20 in December 2022, nearly two dozen ministerial meetings have failed to nail down a single communiqué. Usually, meetings of these major conferences always produce a report of agreed upon resolutions. The world is obviously not in a peaceful state.

Clearly, the New Delhi G20 meeting showed how significantly global power institutions are fragmenting. Consider that two major members, Xi Jinping (General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party) and Vladimir Putin (President of Russia), skipped the meeting entirely.

Also note the United Nations General Assembly of 2023. For most of the UN's nearly eight decades of existence, meetings were always the high point for its participants, when world leaders met to argue over the pressing causes of the day. Apparently, no longer. Despite serious “world” issues such as war in Europe, a spate of coups in Africa, natural disasters blamed on climate change, and friction between China and America, only one leader (France) of the five permanent UN members



For most of the UN's nearly eight decades of existence, meetings were always the high point for its participants, when world leaders met to argue over the pressing causes of the day. Apparently, no longer.

that wield veto votes, was in attendance.

Next, we provide more evidence of global fragmentation. Observe the World Trade Organization. It officially commenced operations in 1995, replacing the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) that had been established in 1948. It has been a long time since any new initiative of this organization has been ratified by its members. Its operations have effectively been blockaded by the US. (Regional trade agreements, however, have moved forward sporadically, but there have been no "global" initiatives.) This is globalism today—unwound, toothless and frustrating.

A major catalyst for anti-globalism initiatives is a high dissatisfaction with the West ... the superpowers ... and rich-country bullies (as other, less powerful nations may see them). Nations such as the US and other wealthy countries still dominate (i.e., NATO and the G20 ... and others). As such, failed progress for global unity is spurring the efforts of non-aligned

countries. They are forming new organizations that are intended to disrupt or weaken the West. Some of the more prominent of these are listed next.

A new contender making fast tracks is the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). It is a multilateral development bank and international financial institution, which aims to collectively improve economic and social outcomes in Asia. Already, it is the world's second largest multilateral development institution. Headquartered in Beijing, China, the bank currently has 106 members, with 14 prospective members from around the world (even including Canada).

Next, we review the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). It is a forum of 120 countries that are not formally aligned with or against any major power bloc ... so far. After the United Nations, it is the largest grouping of states worldwide. The countries of the Non-Aligned Movement represent nearly two-thirds of the





International relationships and nation groups are fragmenting as never before.



United Nations' members and contain 55% of the world population.

There are many more signs of fragmentation around the world. Consider two other contenders: first, the African Union (AU), and second, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). The AU is an organization of 55 African nations. (Of note, the African Union also became a member of the G20, as did the EU some time ago.) The SCO was initially founded in 2001 by China and Russia. Today, it consists of 8 nations, covering approximately 80% of the area of Eurasia and 40% of the world population.

Not last by any means, we must mention another group of nations that is also rapidly gaining global clout. It is the BRICs countries. Starting with four members in 1995 (Brazil, Russia, India and China), this year it welcomed in six new members, bringing the total to 11 countries. Quoting Wikipedia: "BRICs is a grouping of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa [...] The BRICs nations encompass about 27% of the world's land surface and 42% of the global population. Brazil, Russia, India and China are among the world's ten largest countries by population, area, and GDP (PPP [purchasing power parity]), and the latter three are considered to be current superpowers, or potential emerging superpowers." Already, economists are speculating that this group will eventually be called BRICs Plus 132 ... meaning 132 additional members. If so,

this will be a powerful group.

By now, the reader will gain a sense of the "restlessness" of nations. Smaller groups and countries are gaining crucial profiles and influence.

### Thoughts to Ponder

An interesting phenomenon is unfolding. After almost one hundred years of rapid globalization, international relationships and nation groups are fragmenting as perhaps never before.

What is the agenda? As already mentioned, many nations are rankled with the global institutions (International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the United Nations, and many others) that are dominating policy and have proven to be inflexible at times. Most of these organizations were launched in the late 1940s (prompted by the horrors of the two World Wars). Already in the early 1950s, counter groups were mobilizing.

What must one conclude, viewing the jostling and positioning of nations today? Globalism is in decline; unilateralism is ascending. Many policymakers are losing patience with the calcification of various agencies and NGOs (non-governmental organizations). The consensus approach no longer works.

All of the above, we believe, foreshadows the emergence of the 10 Kings.

No doubt, many of the candidates for a slot in the 10 King line-up are already in existence today. (MC)



# The Beginning and the End

## Sites of the Bible, Series Conclusion

**Dr. Ron J. Bigalke**

The initial chapters of Genesis reveal that God created two trees in the midst of the garden in Eden: “the tree of life ... and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Gen 2:9). The tree of life was so named because its fruit would grant life eternal to the person who ate from it (3:22). The book of Proverbs refers to the tree of life as symbolic for happiness, health, longevity of life, and success (3:18; 11:30; 13:12; 15:4).

**I**n response to Adam’s rebellion, God drove him from the garden in Eden and “stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life” (Gen 3:24). In the new heaven and new earth, God “will grant [the blessed] to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God” (Rev 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19).

A popular motif in ancient Mesopotamian literature is the idea that a plant could have fruit to bestow life upon the one who ate it. For in-

stance, the *Epic of Gilgamesh* refers to “a secret of the gods,” which is that a wondrous plant (“like the buckthorn”) hidden under the sea will return a man to the state of his youth. Gilgamesh opened the conduit, “tied heavy stones [to his feet] ... pull[ing] him down into the deep [and he saw the plant].” Though it pricked his hands, he retrieved the plant. “A serpent snuffed the fragrance of the plant,” stole it and “shed [its] slough.” The myth implies that the serpent gained immortality, which is the reason

# The Beginning and the End

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The Israelites wandered “forty years in the wilderness,” yet neither their clothes nor sandals were tattered (Deut 29:5), which is an indication of how God can preserve and sustain His people.



for shedding its skin.

The story of Adapa also shares the motif of a lost opportunity to attain immortality. The myth refers to bread and water of death in addition to that of life. Adapa was warned by his father Enki not to eat the bread or drink the water, because it would be that of death set before him. Adapa did not eat or drink, and was deprived of immortality as a result of his being overcautious. Humanity is thus destined to live a mortal life. The tree of life is one of the oldest themes in ancient Near Eastern art, where it either symbolized life or was a symbolic representation of a king.

Adam and Eve probably could have eaten from the tree of life prior to the Fall, for God said, “From *any* tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil [*only*] you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die” (Gen 2:16-17, emphasis added). One may rightly inquire why they did not eat from it. Revelation 22:2 mentions that the leaves of the tree provide healing. Therefore, the tree

could have been one means of sustenance for Adam and Eve. Ultimately, the Lord God is the One who “is before all things, and in Him all things hold together” (Col 1:17). The Israelites wandered “forty years in the wilderness,” yet neither their clothes nor sandals were tattered (Deut 29:5), which is an indication of how God can preserve and sustain His people.

Perhaps the tree of life was effective only when a mortal who might otherwise die consumed its fruit. In that regard, the fruit was medicinal yet effective only for a person suffering from infirmity. God pronounced death upon Adam and Eve (and all their progeny) because of their rebellion; therefore, being without sickness in their original innocence, they would not have any reason to eat from the tree of life. Moreover, the exclusive desire of Adam prior to the Fall would have been to serve God as Creator and Lord. Being created in untested innocence, Adam simply lacked selfish desires or interests, and would have no desire to eat from the tree of life even when God had not prohibited him from doing so. Only when Adam ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil would there be concern that he would desire to eat from the tree of life, which is why God did not allow Adam (or any of his progeny) to take from it, “and eat, and live forever” (Gen 3:22).

Prior to his rebellion, Adam was essentially neutral in his inclination toward good and



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evil. Therefore, his decision was unbiased by a disposition to sin, and was certainly freer than the choices made by those who are born dead in sins and trespasses. The lack of any proclivity to disobey God's command was the reason for external temptation from the serpent, who enticed Adam to sin. Satan made no effort to tempt Adam to eat from the tree of life, because his intent was to cause Adam to sin. Furthermore, the Lord had not forbidden Adam from eating of the tree of life. The origin of evil is somewhat of a mystery because the Bible does not explain its source, only where it did not originate. Evil was not intrinsic to Adam or Eve, nor does it originate from divine temptation. Satan, the evil tempter, did not plan his deception in dialogue with the first parents; rather, he did so solely in opposition to God's Word. Humanity acting independent of God by means of self-assertion, is what allowed evil to enter the world.

Only when God sentenced Adam and Eve to death (2:17; 3:19) was it necessary to prevent their eating from the tree of life. To eat from the tree could potentially extend their natural life forever. That would be contrary to God's declaration that in eating "you will surely die," as they might elude the sentence of death and thus procure eternal life. Adam and Eve were prevented from eating from the tree so they would not live forever and boastfully commend themselves for changing their destiny, even though they were appointed unto death. Satan very likely suggested to Adam that should he be threatened with death, which the tempter disputed ("You surely will not die!"), the tree of life which was "in the midst of the

garden" (and thus easily accessible) would always be a means to save himself from dying. To prevent any efforts to secure life for himself in such a manner, Adam had to be expelled from the garden.

If they had eaten from the tree of life, Adam and Eve would have lived eternally in a world cursed by sin. God, however, promised He would send forth the Messiah, who would defeat Satan and bring deliverance to fallen humanity, so that rather than being merely created in innocence, he might experience redemption. The destiny of redeemed humanity is greater than a condition of innocence, and is only possible because redemption is necessary. God's greater purpose for humanity is redemption in Jesus Christ, who will make "all things new" (Rev 21:5).

Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; [and] no one comes to the Father but through Me" (John 14:6). He alone has the "words of eternal life" (6:68). By removing the tree of life from Adam and Eve in their unregenerate state, He prevented them from the possibility of attaining eternal life in a world cursed by sin. God demonstrated His grace by not allowing fallen humanity to partake of what would have allowed them to live eternally in a world "subjected to futility," "corruption," groaning, suffering, and pain (Rom 8:20-22). He has made provision for redeemed humanity to enjoy life eternal in the new heaven and earth, where "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain" (Rev 21:4). "There will no longer be any curse" (22:3a).

# The Beginning and the End

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The process of temptation observable in Genesis 3 is instructive, because the tactics are the same that Satan uses today ... Satan often tempts a person to believe that God's will for him or her is primarily for the Lord's benefit, rather than for his or her personal welfare.

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil does not receive as much emphasis as the tree of life in Scripture. God created Adam with free moral agency, and immediately placed him under a prohibition: do not eat from one particular tree in the garden, or he would surely die. Satan deceived Eve by his craftiness (2 Cor 11:13). She disobeyed God by eating of the tree of knowledge, and "gave [the fruit] also to her husband" so he would rebel with her (Gen 3:6). They fell into sin with their experiential knowledge of good and evil. Humanity became like God, with the ability to discern between good and evil (v. 22). The characteristic aspect of their new knowledge was the consciousness of guilt, shame, and sin (vv. 7-11).

The process of temptation observable in Genesis 3 is instructive, because the tactics are the same that Satan uses today. The tempter implied that God's prohibition regarding the tree was for purely selfish reasons (vv. 1b, 4-5). Satan often tempts a person to believe that God's will for him or her is primarily for the Lord's benefit, rather than for his or her personal welfare. Temptation from the devil always seeks to contravene God's Word. The serpent wanted to create doubt in Eve's mind regarding the character and Word of God. Eve repeated what God had said, yet she made more than a few significant changes in the process (vv. 2-3). She disparaged God's provisions (vv. 2-3a), added words to the prohibition (v. 3b), and min-

imized the penalty for disobedience (v. 3c). The serpent also denied the penalty and caused Eve to doubt the character of God in giving the prohibition (vv. 4-5).

Satan suggested that God knew Eve would be as He is, and that was the reason for His commandment. The accusation against God was His withholding good, and thus intended to create doubt concerning His integrity. To challenge God's Word was to question His goodness, and to dispute God's goodness was to question His Word. God's true actions and motives were the best interest of humanity, yet Satan falsely implied that it was God's benefit at the expense of others. Eve focused all her senses upon the forbidden tree, and disobeyed the Lord by eating its fruit. She also involved her husband in the rebellious act (v. 6). The appeal of the forbidden fruit was sufficient enough to entice Eve to use her God-given desires in a sinful manner. Her threefold enticement is similar to the various means of temptation revealed in 1 John 2:16.

To satisfy herself with food, to appreciate the beauty of the fruit, and to obtain knowledge and wisdom, are legitimate desires that could be satisfied in a God-ordained manner. God has always asked people to trust His Word, believing He is sovereign and good. Eve, however, chose to act independently and be subject to none but self. God's desire is for His people to trust Him and thereby live abundantly (John

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The sites of the Bible, in addition to the entire earth, are significant because the ground upon which everyone walks is where God manifests His glory.

10:10; 17:3). Authentic satisfaction is heeding God's Word, which is to live by faith, not sight. Adam and Eve suffered the consequences of their disobedience: their knowledge of evil resulted in alienation with each other (Gen 3:7) and God (vv. 8-10). The fall of Adam and Eve not only resulted in a curse upon all their progeny, but also upon all creation (Rom 8:20-23).

Malachi was the last of the prophets that God sent to the remnant at Jerusalem. His prophecy is the last of the twelve Minor Prophets and is the final book of the Old Testament in English Bibles. Malachi's prophecy was given in postexilic times. Approximately one hundred years prior, a faithful remnant had returned to the Promised Land. Haggai's prophecy indicates that God's people were far more responsive spiritually at that time than the ones whom Malachi addressed. During those one hundred years, the people began to regress; the priesthood was corrupted, and the reader senses the need for some kind of resolution, which is precisely what the prophecy announces. Malachi's concluding words address the divine curse upon all creation since the beginning of human history. Malachi promises the coming of Messiah in relation to the "great and terrible day of the LORD" (4:5). Restoration is coming so God "will not come and smite the land with a curse (v. 6). The Old Testament closes with this word of promise (and begins four hundred years of silence from God, until He sent the angel Gabriel to announce a Son who will fulfill the prophecy) and indicates why Malachi is an

appropriate conclusion for English Bibles.

A word of promise was given in association with God's judgment. Genesis 3:15 is what is usually called the *protoevangelium* ("first announcement of the gospel"), because it gives the initial promise of a coming Redeemer. The "seed of the woman" is Jesus Christ, and He will ultimately triumph over satanic forces. With the introduction of sin into the world, there is also the promise of divine provision. Jesus fulfilled God's original purpose for humanity through His obedience "to the point of death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:8). The curse will be removed as a result of Jesus' atoning sacrifice, so redeemed humanity "may have the right to the tree of life" (Rev 22:14).

From the first book of the Bible to the last, the physical earth is the realm in which God accomplishes "the freedom of the glory" of His children (Rom 8:21). The new heaven and earth will be the fulfillment of God's plans for creation and humanity. God's intent for humanity to exercise dominion over the earth, under His sovereignty, will be fulfilled. The sites of the Bible, in addition to the entire earth, are significant because the ground upon which everyone walks is where God manifests His glory. He will bring renewal and restoration to the first heaven and earth, such that they are filled with the glory of the Lord. Humanity will rule under God's sovereignty and will display His everlasting majesty, which He has foreordained and predestined since the foundation of the earth.

(1359)





# The Power Behind the Power

**By Norbert Lieth**

What calming the storm on the Sea of Galilee reveals about our Lord, the unseen world, and our lives.

**T**he storm was raging, the disciples were afraid, but the Lord was sleeping. One might ask how the Lord could even sleep in this situation. Maybe He was just too tired after all of His earlier exertions and troubles. Neither the raging storm, nor the water in the boat, nor the great danger, woke Him up. But when His disciples called to Him, he reacted immediately.

## **Secure in His Power**

This incident teaches us a spiritual lesson. There was a storm; the ship was flooding; they

were in great danger; everyone around the Lord was afraid ... but Jesus was sleeping. For us, this means that those who know they are safe in Jesus have peace of mind in every situation. Those who know the plan, the purpose, and the promises of God can rest in them. They don't need to panic. And the one who has complete trust in the Almighty can cope with any situation. He has power over our powerlessness.

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee” (Isa 26:3). “I will both lay me

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down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety” (Ps 4:8).

Storms may come upon us, and our lifeboat threatens to sink; we’re surrounded by dangers, and fear wants to spread. We think we’re sinking, far from shore, and the Lord isn’t responding. In all these things, our faith can stand the test. We can remind ourselves that the Lord is on top of things and knows how to master every situation. That’s why the disciples call Him “Master.”

### **The Power Behind the Power**

Jesus rebuked (cursed, threatened) the wind and the waves, and there was a great stillness. Inanimate things like matter and energy, with no personality, can’t actually be scolded: only things with a personality. Jesus threatened the Pharisees and scribes and demons (as well as Peter), and he scolded his disciples for their unbelief. Once the Lord even cursed a fig tree, but it had served as a symbol of Israel’s situation.

The fact that Jesus rebuked the storm could indicate that an unseen force was behind it. Satan and His demons were trying to prevent Jesus and His disciples from reaching the other shore, because the Gadarenes were living there and the demons were causing mischief.

We read in the book of Revelation that angels hold the four winds at the four corners of the earth, and will later damage the earth and the sea (Rev 7:1-2). This shows that personages are behind natural events: good angels, but also evil ones (demons). We also see in Revelation that Satan hurls a stream of water after the woman (a symbol for Israel) to carry her away

(Rev 12:15). Again, a person is recognizable behind the substance of water.

In the territory of the Gadarenes, there was a legion of unclean spirits who entered the pigs and threw themselves into the Sea of Galilee (Matt 8:32). The pigs died, but what became of the evil spirits? It’s interesting that the story of the exorcism of the evil spirits, occurs immediately after the calming of the storm. Could the sea have been an abode of demons?

Paul writes, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Eph 6:12).

Obviously, Satan can still influence natural events with his army of demons. He doesn’t want the Lord Jesus to reach the other shore with His believers (later, with the remnant of Israel and this world). Satan will be cast out from there. That’s why he stirs up the sea of nations. We know that the Church’s place is in heaven, and that it will one day be caught up there in the Rapture (1 Thess 4). We also know that Satan will be cast down from heaven and thrown to earth (Rev 12). Satan will be bound before the establishment of the millennial kingdom, so he can no longer deceive the peoples. And finally, we know that God’s victory is that the Messiah will reign as King on earth (Ps 22). Satan wants to prevent all these things from happening with all his might, and that’s why he churns the ocean in his anger.

This reality in the invisible realm could well have been the reason why Jesus not only spoke to the storm as the Creator, but also rebuked it as Lord. Throughout Revelation, we read of

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They didn't truly believe He would get them to the other side. They believed they were more at the mercy of the wind and the waves than believing His Word. That's why they acted out of panic. If you give up your faith, you become powerless, and powerlessness wins.

spiritual beings—good and evil—battling each other and exerting their influence over world events. Some want to prevent Jesus' return, and others are in God's service for the fulfillment of His Word.

What's behind our global crises and natural phenomena? Is it demonic forces, churning up the ocean and causing fear and panic, with God's permission? Posing a great danger to the world, and hoping to ensure its downfall? We must keep this perspective on biblical prophecy and spiritual reality in mind, not least so we can act in a way that is spiritually correct.

Just as the disciples called out to Jesus, Israel will call out to Him in the future. "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come ... O God of our salvation; who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea ... Which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people" (Ps 65:2, 5, 7).

### **The Power Above All Power**

"O LORD God of hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?" (Ps 89:8).

We live in extraordinary, exciting times. The Church's ship of life is also being shaken. But we have the Lord in our midst. His rest is our rest. He will arise in His time and demonstrate His power. He'll bring us through the storms of time to the other shore. We will not perish, but

will certainly arrive. In doing so, however, our faith will be repeatedly challenged.

"And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him" (Luke 8:25).

Why did the Lord rebuke the disciples' unbelief? Because they were afraid of sinking, even though the Lord had given them the promise of reaching the other shore: "Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth" (v. 22).

They didn't truly believe He would get them to the other side. They believed they were more at the mercy of the wind and the waves than believing His Word. That's why they acted out of panic. If you give up your faith, you become powerless, and powerlessness wins.

If Jesus says to us, "Let us go over unto the other side," and if He Himself is with us, then we'll get there no matter how terrible the raging storms are on the way. He has promised us the destination of the shore of His kingdom, and we'll reach it through all our troubles. He will ensure that we won't perish but arrive safely. As Hans Peter Royer once said, "Sometimes God calms the storm, but sometimes God lets the storm rage and calms his child."

(MR0522/1250)



## GERMANY / AUSTRIA

### German/Austrian Passport for Holocaust Survivors

In the tumultuous era of World War II, the horrifying grip of the Nazi regime led to the tragic loss of millions of Jewish lives. The atrocities did not occur on German soil alone; many Jews were murdered in Austria and elsewhere in Europe, of course. Today, the German and Austrian governments both enable the descendants of holocaust survivors or victims who were citizens or residents of the country to obtain citizenship by heritage.



In 2021 several substantial amendments were made to the German Citizenship Law. These amendments immensely broadened the circle of eligibility.

The new clause 15 of the Citizenship Law stipulates that the descendants of former residents of Germany, who lived in the country before January 30th, 1933, and subsequently departed after this particular date, meet the requirements for acquiring German citizenship.

In September 2019, Austria amended its citizenship law as well. The new amendment states that

those eligible for citizenship are the descendants of holocaust survivors who escaped Austria between 1933 and 1955. Those survivors had to have a center of life in Austria and be Austrian citizens or citizens of one of the Austro-Hungarian Empire countries.

It is important to note that the law now allows one to gain citizenship through the mother's side as well, and not only through the father's side. Furthermore, those who served in the standing army are eligible as well. However, those holding Austrian citizenship who choose to serve in the standing army will have to give up on their Austrian citizenship, with no option to retrieve it.

The best way to get the relevant documentation is by performing an archival search in the relevant archives. This search can take up to 6 months since the documents were not converted into digital copies.

Usually, the searches are highly successful, and the required documents are found. This means that the process can proceed to the next step, the preparation of the request itself. [Promoted Content]

-[www.haaretz.com](http://www.haaretz.com), 29 August 2023

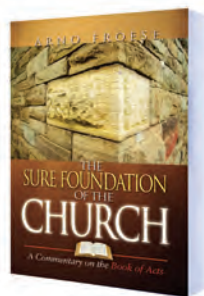
**Commentary:** Those who receive German or Austrian citizenship become citizens of the European Union, and thus the continent is open to them. The obvious advantage is ease of travel; according to CNN Travel, the five top passports in terms of visa-free destinations are: 1) Singapore; 2) Germany, Italy, Spain; 3) Austria, Finland, France, Japan, Luxembourg, South Korea, Sweden; 4) Denmark, Ireland, Netherlands, UK; 5) Belgium, Czech Republic, Malta, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, and Switzerland. Repeated research has revealed that countries whose citizens travel the most are significantly more successful than those whose citizens stay home.

We notice that Europe is the real power broker when it comes to global travel. WorldAtlas.com lists Hong Kong in first place, followed by Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Denmark. What was unthinkable just a century ago has now become reality. Due to travel, the world is increasingly being formed in the pattern of globalism.

Why globalism? The god of this world (all nations) is in the process of mimicking something that is



most unusual; namely, the Church of Jesus Christ, consisting of born-again believers who are present in all countries on planet earth. Once that Church has reached its fullness, it will be taken out of this world. Then, the god of this world with all his demons, will have a heyday in building a near perfect world—although only temporary.



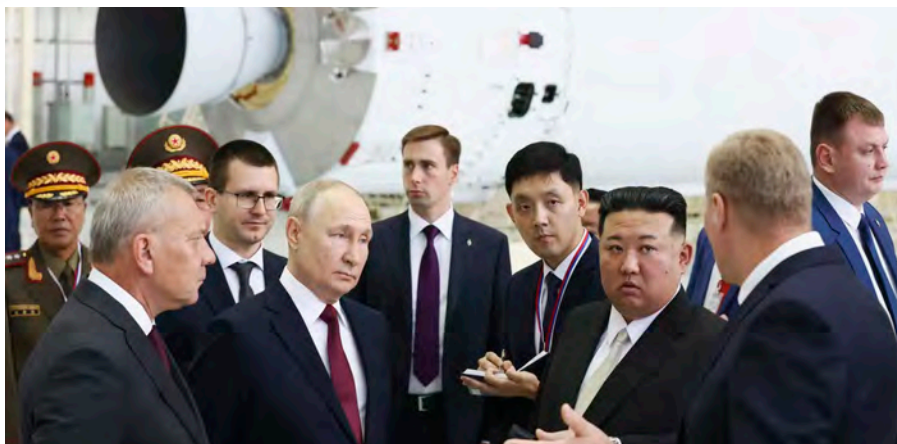
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(See *The Sure Foundation of the Church*, Item #1066, \$18.50.)

## NORTH KOREA Kim Visits ‘Comrade’ Putin

Calling each other “comrade,” the men toasted their friendship after Putin showed Kim around Russia’s most modern space launch facility and they held talks alongside their defense ministers.

 The two countries have an interest in demonstrating, despite their geopolitical isolation, they have partners they can call on. And both seek to weaken U.S.-led sanctions and pressure campaigns, against Russia over the war in Ukraine and against North Korea for its nuclear weapons and missile programs, analysts said.



The leaders toured a rocket assembly hangar before they sat down for talks. Artyom Geodakyan / AP

“Putin and Kim would both gain from a transactional bargain but they would also gain geopolitically by giving off the impression that their nuclear-armed countries are cooperating militarily and sending a warning about potential consequences to America’s allies and like-minded partners that support Ukraine,” said Duyeon Kim, of the Center for a New American Security.   
-www.reuters.com, 14 September 2023

**Commentary:** With Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the country has become more isolated than ever. And North Korea’s Kim Jong Un is the leader of an isolated country with little to no connection to the so-called West, under the dominance of the USA.

Mason Richey, a professor at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in Seoul, stated: “It’s just difficult for me to imagine that Xi Jinping and Kim Jong Un and

Vladimir Putin can trust each other enough for a real long term concerted alliance formation.”

What will be the outcome? Any prognosis based on personal and one-sided opinion, will result in the failure of such.

When the disciples asked Jesus, “When shall these things be?” He first made a profound statement: “Take heed that ye be not deceived” (Luke 21:7-8). In Matthew 24, Jesus gave the same answer to the disciples, and then makes the infamous prophecy: “And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in diverse places” (verses 6-7).8087

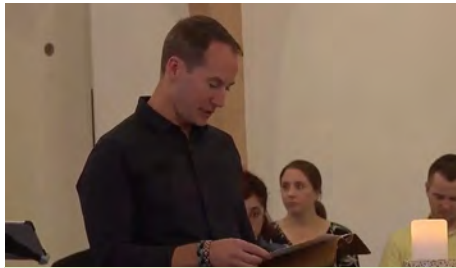


(See *Hidden Signs in the Olivet Discourse*, Item #1060, \$10.95.)


 U S A

## Artificial Intelligence Sermon

The Violet Crown City Church in North Austin, Texas, embraced the future by introducing an AI-generated worship service, according to The Mirror US.



Pastor Jay Cooper used the language learning model to do the Lord's work by having it write sermons, prayers, and a song. [mediadrumimages/Violet Crown City Church](https://mediadrumimages/VioletCrownCityChurch)

 The inspiration for this unconventional approach came when Pastor Jay explored the capabilities of AI through ChatGPT, initially using it for crafting humorous country music lyrics.

During the service, Jay recorded the entire worship experience, with the AI generator taking center stage. Remarkably, the AI system was capable of crafting heartfelt prayers, delivering a sermon, and even composing an original song inspired by the sermon's message.

"Although many were impressed by AI's ability to create prayers, a sermon, and an original song based on the sermon, along with being glad we have a much better un-

derstanding of AI now, many in our church expressed that the service felt shallow and generic and that it was missing the most important component of worship, which is heart and the human spirit of joy and authenticity."

-[www.jpost.com](http://www.jpost.com), 3 October 2023

**Commentary:** Artificial intelligence exists by first putting in vast amounts of information from human intelligence. Original information originates with God, and to mankind, the Creator has allocated intelligence.

The interesting part of this abbreviated report reveals, "The AI system was capable of crafting heartfelt prayers, delivering a sermon, and even composing an original song." One thing becomes clear: Mankind is becoming more and more dependent on his own works.

For example, there are only rare exceptions where television is not present in a household. Cell phones are a given, and internet access is global. Thus, slowly but surely, man is being educated to increasingly trust his own works. This is evident when watching or listening to any media; there is a certain direction each accredited media source follows, and thus educates its listeners and viewers to think likewise. There is much more to come in the not-too-distant future.


Just as the Israelites manufactured their own god of gold while on the way to the Promised Land, "god" manufacturing will increase in these end times, which ultimately will lead to the creation of an image of the beast. It is the manufactured image that will have religious and economic power: "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name" (Revelation 13:16-17).



 F R A N C E

## Making Abortion a Constitutional Right

President of France Emmanuel Macron announced his intentions to enshrine abortion rights in the country's constitution.

 "I want the force of this message to help us change our constitution to enshrine the freedom of women to have recourse to the voluntary interruption of pregnancy," Macron told the crowd.

Macron made the pitch to the council in recognition of the 65th anniversary of the French Constitution.



Macron will submit a draft to the highest administrative court.  
Christophe Petit-Tesson/AFP/Getty Images

The National Assembly previously voted to enshrine the “right” to abortion with an overwhelming majority.

Abortion was decriminalized in France in 1975, and the French public remains largely pro-choice, though the procedure has gestational limits.

France limits most abortions to 14 weeks, which was only recently increased from 12 weeks in February [2023]. That makes it similar to other countries in Europe, although more restrictive than England, where abortions are mostly limited to up to 24 weeks.

-www.foxnews.com, 7 October 2023

**Commentary:** We reiterate, abortion is taking the life of an unborn child and is equivalent to murder.

Based on a Google search, it was the Soviet Union that first legalized abortion in 1922, the US in 1973, and France in 1975. Today, some 60 countries have liberalized their abortion laws.

Under the headline “Abortion Law,” Wikipedia writes: “...the first modern state in legalizing abor-

tions on request—the law was first introduced in the Russian SFSR in 1920, in the Ukrainian SSR in July 1921, and then in the whole country. The Bolsheviks saw abortion as a social evil created by the capitalist system, which left women without the economic means to raise children, forcing them to perform abortions. The Soviet state initially preserved the tsarist ban on abortion, which treated the practice as premeditated murder.”

Indeed, “premeditated murder” is the proper term. Question: Why was it illegal before? The simple answer is the human conscience of believer and unbeliever alike recognized that life comes from a higher power—God the Creator. Thus, in these end times, man wants to play god and takes it upon himself to take the life of the unborn, which functions with virtually all the faculties of a born person.

When reading Scripture, we notice how the heathen recognized the existence of God. Luke 23:44-46 reports that there was darkness over all the earth for three hours, and Jesus cried out on the Cross: “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” Verse 47 testifies: “Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.”

The prophet Daniel speaks of the end times: “And he shall speak

great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time” (Daniel 7:25). 8103



(See *Bloodline*, Item #2355, \$16.99.)



E U

## Half a Million New Stars Discovered

A decade ago, the Gaia space mission was launched by the European Space Agency (ESA) with the ambition of creating a 3D map of our galaxy.



After observing some 1.8 billion stars, and having a near complete map of the Milky Way, scientists realized a crucial gap: They did not have a clear view of parts of the sky that were packed with stars.

Astronomers have been charting the Milky Way for centuries but the sheer number of stars in them can sometimes overwhelm telescopes and our ability to read them properly.

The half a million new stars revealed in Omega Centauri mean it is the most crowded region explored by Gaia so far.

The data can help us understand how the stars of the Milky Way are distributed and why some parts of



the universe, like these clusters, have more mass than others.

Gaia has recently found 381 cases where evidence for gravitational lensing was observed. ESA scientists say this means that the Omega Centauri cluster's gravity bent light coming from distant sources called quasars.

Quasars are remote sources of bright light that could be powered by black holes.

In the next data release in 2025, Gaia will give information about eight more such star-packed regions of the sky.

Scientists hope this will help confirm the age of our galaxy, locate its center, verify how stars change through their lifetimes and ultimately infer the possible age of the universe itself.

-www.dw.com, 10 October 2023

**Commentary:** The statement, "the sheer number of stars ... can sometimes overwhelm telescopes and our ability to read them properly," is true and will be proved by the next so-called discovery in the universe. Yes, the cosmos is infinite, because it was created by an infinite God, who was, who is, and forever will be.

The closing statement in this article expresses the scientist's hope—in reality, hopelessness—to: "confirm the age of our galaxy ... and ultimately ... the possible age of the universe itself." There

is infinite territory never discovered by humans. The Spirit of God reveals it, as we can see in Psalm 148:2-5: "Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts. Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created." 8105



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

## TURKEY

### Doesn't Recognize LGBT

Speaking at an AK Party congress in Ankara, Erdogan, who has frequently labeled members of the LGBTQ community as "deviants," said neither his party, nor their nationalist MHP allies, recognized the LGBTQ community.



"We do not recognize LGBT. Whoever recognizes LGBT can go and march with them. We are members of a structure that holds the institution of family solid, that strongly embraces the family institution," he said.

"We will dry the roots of sneaky acts aiming to destroy our family institution by supporting perverse political, social and individual trends," he told tens of thousands of flag-waving and chanting supporters.

-www.nbcnews.com, 9 October 2023

**Commentary:** It is noteworthy that Turkey is a Muslim country. When checking HumanDignity-Trust.org, one notices that virtually all of the Middle East and the wider Muslim world are in agreement with President Erdogan's statement, "We are members of a structure that holds the institution of family solid, that strongly embraces the family institution."

The only country opposing LGBT on the American continent (North and South) is Guyana, a small nation of about 800,000 people, of which approximately 35% are Christian and 6.8% Muslim.

It is not insignificant nor coincidental that Jesus refers to a great sign in the end times, namely Sodom: "But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Luke 17:29-30).

8104

(See *Jesus and the End Times*, Item #2356, \$15.99.)



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“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah” (Jeremiah 31:31).

BY ARNO FROESE

**W**e immediately note that this is directed toward the house of Israel and the house of Judah. What is this new covenant? It is the covenant based exclusively on the blood of the Lamb; thus, replacing the covenant of the old, which continually required the blood of animals.

Verse 32 explains: “Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD.” The reason for the new covenant is that Israel did the unthinkable: “my covenant they brake.”

We do well to read this chapter carefully and note the first verse: “At the same time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.” That is the promise of the new covenant, which does

not require Israel to fulfill certain obligations in order to attain it. This, incidentally, reminds those who are born again of the Spirit of God from among the Gentiles, that we have not earned our salvation but it was given to us freely. Ephesians 2:8-9 testifies: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

When occupying ourselves with the Jewish nation Israel, we must always keep in mind God’s unconditional promise for them: “they shall be my people.”

During the Jewish absence from the Promised Land, they never forgot Zion. From generation to generation, at the end of the Passover Seder and the end of the Yom Kippur service, they would proclaim or sing, *L’Shana Haba’ah B’Yerushalayim* (“Next year in Jerusalem”). Jews have always lived in Jerusalem, with 3,000

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plus years of proven records. Even as they were dispersed all over the world, on all continents and in virtually every country on planet earth, the yearning, “Next year in Jerusalem” was kept alive.

The great majority of Jews were not necessarily religious; thus, the first mass exodus to the land of Israel came from the non-religious camp.

The desire to return to Jerusalem gave birth to Zionism. It was established as a political organization in 1897 by Theodor Herzl in Basel, Switzerland. JewishHistory.org reports:

Most historians identify five waves of immigration of Jews to the Land of Israel. The First Aliyah—the first of these waves—covers the period from 1881 to 1901. This 20 year timeframe preceded official Zionism, which Theodore Herzl inaugurated in 1897.

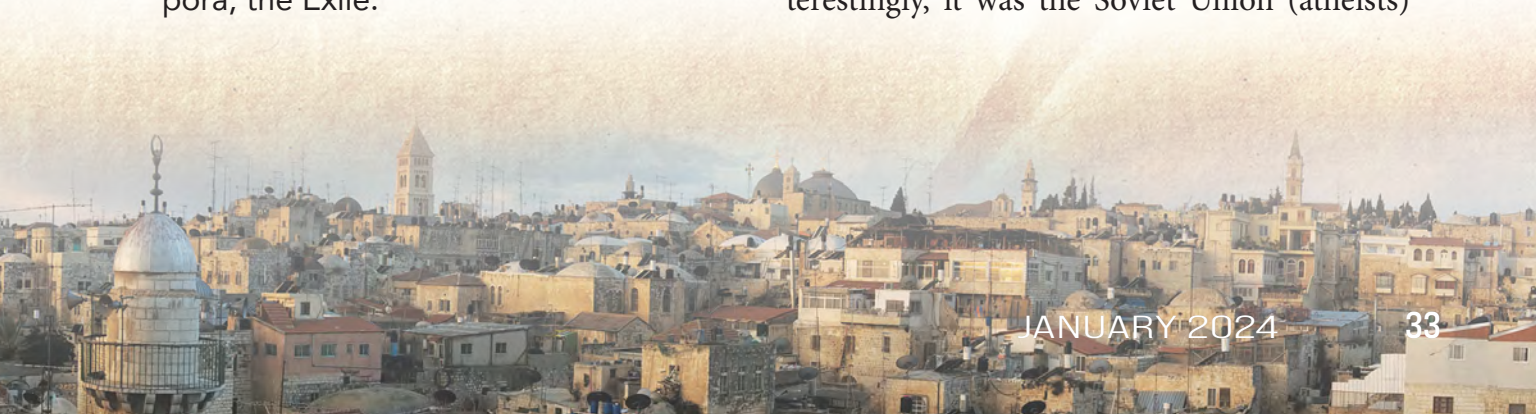
It is significant that its participants did not give their movement a non-descript, generic name such as The Jewish Society for Re-colonization of the Holy Land. They gave it a name based on a biblical verse. Even though theirs was in effect a secular movement, it was built upon a religious impetus and feeling. The verse summarized their entire philosophy: It was time to get up and leave the Diaspora, the Exile.

Why, we may ask, did they wait 2,000 years? We find the answer in Ezekiel 36, where the prophet is ordered to “prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD.” That is somewhat strange; it does not speak to the people. Further down we read why the topographical land is addressed first: The land is being prepared for the people. Thus, we read in verse 8: “But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come.”

There is more. The Jewish people had to have the courage to do something they hadn’t done for 2,000 years: be farmers and soldiers. Thus, God had to intervene supernaturally. We read: “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh” (Ezekiel 36:26). Even today, a Jew in Israel is incomparable to a Jew in the Diaspora. They have received a new heart and a new spirit.

But that’s not the end; verse 27 declares that this is not only a new spirit, but also “my spirit.” That is God’s goal with His people, and He will bring it to pass in His time.

Summarizing the short history of modern Israel, we see that the motivation was not exclusively religious, but self-determination. Interestingly, it was the Soviet Union (atheists)



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which greatly contributed weapons to the Jews to defend themselves. At that time, the UK and the USA had an arms embargo on Middle East countries and territories. Later, as Israel progressed and did not become a communist state, they leaned heavily on the French for weapons. The Six Day War was primarily won with French-supplied Mirage jet fighters. That friendship did not last long, and France also placed an arms embargo against Israel. A little later in 1968, US President Johnson agreed to sell Phantom jet fighters to Israel.

Today, the tables have turned completely.

The US heavily depends on military technology developed and proven in Israel. The Jewish nation has become a power to be reckoned with, with superior military expertise, not to mention their advances in agricultural science and the ever-growing high-tech industry.

However, all the developments are of a temporary nature. In Jeremiah 31, God guarantees the existence of Israel based on the universe. Verse 36 reads: "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." (MC)

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







## With a Thankful Heart

By David Phillips (*Ebenezer's CEO*)

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, said the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it” (Malachi 3:10).

It is now fourteen years since I began serving here at the Ebenezer Home, and it is with a very thankful heart that I sit down and write this. In January 2023, I stepped into the role as Ebenezer's new CEO. It's been a year since that day, and despite the many challenges and hard work, our Heavenly Father has blessed me in a very personal and deep way: He brought prayer warriors to surround me. *Toda raba* to each one of you who has labored in prayer for the Home, especially for me as I learn this new role. Our Father has used your prayers mightily to uphold, encourage, and guide me as I care for Ebenezer.

This past year has seen many changes, as well as improvements, in the Home. We can't thank you enough for your love and support as we do the required and much needed projects. It's a blessing to see the residents enjoy the outside sitting area, and the new entrance that allows them to move around independently. The kitchen staff are enjoying a newly renovated freezer and fridge room (which was a must, as the walk-in fridge and freezer was often breaking down). We were able to replace our old kitchen stove, which was giving us a lot of trouble and becom-

ing very dangerous to operate. And now, we are also working toward collecting the funds needed to purchase our building (see our article from Sept. 2023 for details). This is just to name a few of the projects that have been going on around here.

But we could only accomplish these projects because of your love and support. Our Father has used YOU to bless the Ebenezer Home this past year, and I want to thank each one for standing beside us and helping to carry this ministry onward.

As Ebenezer's CEO, I also want to thank the entire Midnight Call team for your amazing love and support for this ministry and work! Your labor of love for Ebenezer has blessed us so much.

There is one special person I would like to share about, who taught me a lot about life as a young adult over 30 years ago, when I spent quite a few months at Midnight Call Ministry.

Mr. Froese, thank you for teaching me all you did, but especially one particular lesson, which I will remember and practice all my life: to think big and not to hesitate. You used to tell me to “think big,” but then you showed me how to put this into daily practice. Learning to think on a different scale strengthened my faith. Yes, God





the Father directs all that we think and do; He gives the faith, courage, and patience. Thank you for teaching me these lessons (and many more).

You all have faithfully stood beside us, encouraging, praying, and helping us in so many ways. You have not only blessed us here at Ebenezer, but also bless our supporters. From the depths of our hearts, thank you! May our Heavenly Father reward you for all that you do.

We truly look forward to watching what the Lord will do this coming year, and will share more about the upcoming events with you all.

Special greetings from here in Haifa. May the Holy One of Israel abundantly bless the year 2024 for you.

### Ebenezer and the War



At the time of this writing, Ebenezer has been working hard to bring our preparations up to the highest level, even though we have been prepared to the level of mandatory request and national standard of preparedness. We have received new instructions and government requests to up-

grade to higher levels of readiness, such as: food for 3 weeks (besides what we are required to have ahead of time), extra water, purchasing satellite phones (in the event communication stops working), extra medications and medical supplies, etc.

This war is unlike any other and requires us to be prepared in ways we've never been before. The Ministry of Welfare and the Israel Home Front Command are in daily contact with me. We know Yeshua keeps and protects us, and without Him, all these preparations would be in vain. But we also realize we must do our absolute best to provide for our elderly in the most complete way possible, and look after those whom He has entrusted to our care. We pray constantly to know how to do this. Thank you for keeping us in your prayers, and may the following verses bless you:

“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions’ sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good” (Psalm 122:6-9).

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# Letters to the Editor

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.

## PSYCHOLOGY... JOEL'S PROPHECY... SUPERSESSION

### **Psychology**

As a committed Christian, student of psychology and recipient of its practices, I am cautious about what principles I entrust my life with. What psychology does is unravel the past and assist the client to obtain a better frame of reference for the future. Do not dismiss its truths and applications and call it all heresy; that is simply not true. I do agree that heresy fills some psychological granaries, but it is up to the Christian to sort the wheat from the chaff and decide what is safe to use ... even trusting that sometimes we are wrong.

May I also point out that there is a lot of chaff in the religious granary as well, and much damage done by those who misapply God's Word. Unless one understands and applies, all the Bible verses in the world will not change behavior. "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he." That's good psychology, and AA knows it. Its 12-step program is very success-

ful, because people follow a rigorous program designed to get to the truth behind their addiction, and AA encourages them to trust their Higher Power, which most profess to be God.

In day-to-day living, Christians entrust their physical health to physicians and hospitals, most of whom are not Christian. We don't insist they believe the same way we do in order to be treated.

*-M. Wagner, WA*

**Answer:** What I do know is that psychology is not a science. It attempts to deal with the soul and the spirit. That field, we believe, belongs exclusively to the Word of God.

Much is written about the AA 12-step program, both pro and con. One thing is absolutely sure: Those who claim success are dependent on—or more fittingly, in bondage to—the AA system for the rest of their life. That's not freedom.



I have no problem with non-Christian physicians. Whether they be atheists, Muslims, Hindus, or Christians, it makes no difference to me; I trust that they practice true medical science.

### Joel's Prophecy

Hello Arno Froese,

Your magazine was a blessing to me. I was reading one issue, and something caught my attention. You said, "No new visions or additional revelations are needed." So, when did Joel 2:28-29 become fully and completely fulfilled? And, if it hasn't, then what should men and women do with their "revelation" through dreams and visions? "Afterward" in verse 28 indicates the end times. God promises to "pour out" His Spirit in abundant supply ... thus fulfilling Moses' prayer of long ago that all of God's people would have the gift of the Spirit (Numbers 11:29). Peter quotes Joel directly (Acts 2:16-21) at Pentecost, but that was not the ultimate, climactic, exhaustive fulfillment, when the Spirit is poured out and people call on the Lord's name in order to be saved. The signs of the end of the world in Joel 2:30-31 make it evident that its ultimate fulfillment will be at the end of earth's history.

-J. Riley, GA

**Answer:** Jesus is building His Church, and for that He ordained apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. However, the foundation of the Church is "built upon ... the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2:20). Note, no evangelists, pastors, or teachers are mentioned for the building of the foundation. We do not need another foundation, more prophets, and more apostles. Joel's message is directed strictly toward the people of Israel. Peter confirms this in Acts 2:14, "Ye men of Judaea..." But you are right that the ultimate fulfillment is yet to come.

### Supersession

I saw that the *Religious Studies Review* published an article on the topic of Supersession. I would like to share with you my article on the Orthodox Church's relationship to Supersessionism.

This review shows that at least one meaning of Supersessionism matches Orthodoxy. The simplest meaning is that the New Testament supersedes the old one. "Supersede" means to succeed or overrule in function or authority of the preceding thing.

Modern Orthodox materials say Christ supersedes the old covenant,



His coming supersedes previous revelations, the Orthodox priesthood supersedes the Mosaic one, the Pentecost with the Holy Spirit supersedes the earlier one, and New Testament teachings supersede Old ones in a hierarchical sense. Similarly, the Recognitions of Clement say a new custom supersedes an older one. Pope Leo said the true sheep superseded the sheep that were prefigurements. Tertullian wrote that the new course of things (in the NT era) supersedes the old, and that the law is “superseded.” He explains that Christ’s gospel is a different one in terms of “conduct,” but not “worship.”

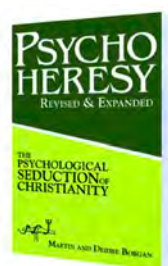
The main counterargument to describing the New Testament as “superseding” the Old one is that it supposedly means the latter disappears in every way. However, that is not necessarily the case. A new law or agreement can supersede another, while leaving some or all of its provisions intact. Further, while none of the sources above are “infallible” for Orthodox Christians, it appears that in at least one of these ways, the New Testament “supersedes” the Old.

*-H. Smith, PA*

**Answer:** The article about Supersessionism seems to be fueled by arguments for the sake of argu-

ment. In the end, the main point of the Old and New Testament—Jesus Christ and Him crucified—is de-toured.

The Church is a mystery, “This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church” (Ephesians 5:32). Does the Church replace Israel? The Apostle Paul answers: “I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he fore-knew” (Romans 11:1-2a). Paul takes great pains to explain the existence of Israel parallel to the Church: “For I 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...” (verses 25-26a). Therefore any church, denomination, or doctrine claiming to be Israel is still “blind.”



## Psycho Heresy

Almost everywhere one turns in the church one sees psychology. The psychologizing of Christianity has reached epidemic proportions. We see it everywhere in the church, from psychologized sermons to psychologized persons. However, the psychologizing of the church is neither biblically nor scientifically justifiable.

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BOLIVIA

## Encouragement and Inspiration in Our Boarding School Work

BY OBED HANISCH, RIBERALTA

On the children's answered prayers, and what things are affecting them and our staff at school.

**T**he first few weeks of school are usually very challenging for children and staff alike. The first graders are often still homesick and need their tears wiped away. Some children “disappear” into the crowd and need to be deliberately included. Others find it difficult to integrate into groups, and will often react with defiance, aggression, or insolence. Yet others blossom, really soaking up the love that is dished out—and clearly enjoy hanging on Señó's arms (Seño is what the superintendent is called here).

### Highs and Lows

“Today I came into the room at 1:55 pm, just before homework time. Two girls are already seated, absorbed in their work... I greet them and ask, ‘So, how's it going? What kind of homework do you have?’ I was completely surprised by the answer: ‘Hi, please don't distract us! We have a lot of homework and want to get it done on time.’” (Emilie Bergen)

“This year we have a girl who, at just seven years old, is more rebellious than any other student I've had in 20 years. I was at a loss on what to do, and it drove me to prayer. Thank God, He's changing the

girl's heart: she's increasingly realizing her behavior isn't pleasing to Him. And the Lord is giving us wisdom to recognize what's going, so we can better respond to her. Now we know she watches a lot of TV at home, and her imagination is polluted by horror movies. That's why, for example, she's afraid of shadows and often doesn't do what she's told.” (Nery Gonzales)

“Yerco\* angrily tore his assignment from his notebook. He was very discouraged because he didn't understand it. When he had calmed down, he rewrote the problems. After many explanations, he finally understood them. The children need a lot of help and encouragement with their schoolwork.” (Brigitte Wolff)



Brigitte Wolff giving homework help



Two “Senos” monitoring children as they solve their homework problems

### When Children Pray...

“Claudia\* comes to show me her homework: ‘Look, I think I got them all right.’ She’s correct, and I praise her: ‘That’s great, not a single mistake. You’re even the first to finish today.’ Claudia\*: ‘Yes, I didn’t feel like doing it at all, so I prayed that God would help me right from the start.’” (Emilie Bergen)

“Juan\* was able to go on a mission trip with his mother. The gospel was preached, and a team of doctors traveled with them. This mission was deep in the jungle. When the team wanted to go even further in, his mother told him, ‘You can’t come with us today.’ He said, ‘I’ll pray I can go with you.’ The Lord heard his prayer and he was able to go.” (Brigitte Wolff)

“Manuela\* came from her classes, and really wanted to tell me something that was private and couldn’t wait till after lunch. ‘Yesterday after Sunday

school, I prayed in my room that God would forgive me of my sins. Now I’m a daughter of God. That’s definitely important, isn’t it?’” (Noemí Bany)


Thank you for your continued prayers! As we trust in our Lord, we repeatedly expect Him to give us all things. So, our prayer is that He’ll continue to provide everything for us each day.

(MR0923)




“Yesterday after Sunday school, I prayed in my room that God would forgive me of my sins. Now I’m a daughter of God. That’s definitely important, isn’t it?”

*\*All the children’s names have been changed. Images are for illustrative purposes, and do not correspond to the children in the text.*



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## Is There Life Afterwards?



By Peter Malgo

Written in large letters on the cover of a weekly magazine, the above heading caught my eye. Immediately, my thoughts went to the *real* life “afterwards,” the life after death in heaven. However, the cover story had a different focus: It concerned whether the winners of a music-star competition would find their way back to a normal life after such a glamorous time.

There are more and more competitions in our society; not only in sports where it is about real achievement, or where it is a matter of the (supposedly) best musical talent. The most beautiful woman in the world is crowned “Miss Universe,” and something similar exists for the handsomest man. Television highlights the entire selection process, which often takes several weeks. The spotlight of public attention shines mercilessly into the most private spheres. Yet after this one year, what comes next? Is there life afterwards? And does this life still have meaning?

Interestingly, the Bible also tells of a selection process, in which one contestant after the other has to step up, without knowing what the purpose is. And there is no moderator or show-master who runs this election—it is Samuel, a priest and prophet of the Old Covenant. The spectators who are gathered there are not involved in the election; rather,

it is God Himself who is prompting Samuel. And *He* is the one who speaks: “This is not the one,” until finally He says, “*This* is the one.” The setting where this takes place is not a theater stage or television studio, but a site where sacrifices are brought ... where one purifies and sanctifies oneself.

Samuel must have confided in the father, Jesse, that he would select one of his sons and anoint him king over Israel, as one by one they are now standing before Samuel. We can imagine that the sons were freshly clothed and looking very handsome. So, the first one comes: “And it came to pass ... that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the LORD’s anointed is before him” (1 Samuel 16:6). However, it was not God’s choice. “But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but



At the time we went before God to the place of greatest sacrifice—Calvary—and said “Yes” to Jesus, God looked into the innermost part of our hearts ... He filled us with His Spirit, and we were born again to a living hope.

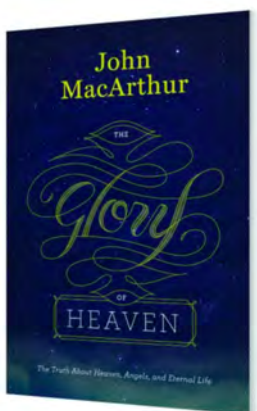


the LORD looketh on the heart” (v. 7).

Thus, one after the other steps up until finally David, the youngest, is taken from the field and comes before Samuel. He is the one to be anointed as king: “Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to” (v. 12). David became, so to speak, “Mr. Israel.” Immediately, David was filled with the Spirit of the Lord: “and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward” (v. 13). From then on, David’s

life was totally different. Even though it took him through highs and lows, he walked in truth and righteousness before God. Solomon testifies to that in 1 Kings 3:6. That was David’s life “afterwards,” and it wasn’t over in just one year: It was never the same again.

We experienced this when we became Christians. At the time we went before God to the place of greatest sacrifice Calvary—and said “Yes” to Jesus, God looked into the innermost part of our hearts. Then God said: “He is the one! To him I give the royal dignity, the royal priesthood.” He filled us with His Spirit, and we were born again to a living hope. Since then, His Spirit has testified to our hearts that we are born again. Christians are chosen by God for eternal salvation. Yes, for Christians there is life afterwards ... eternal life! Like David, let us walk before God with a sincere heart, to live up to our divine destiny. (MC)



## The Glory of Heaven

If you’re going to call it “home” for eternity, don’t you want to know what it’s like?

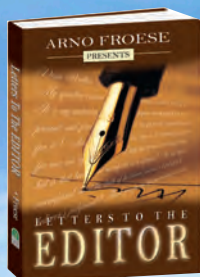
Our pictures of heaven range from comical to curious, mystical to fictitious, with bits of biblical truth thrown in. But if heaven is our future, and we are to be living with an eternal mind-set in the present, a Hollywood scriptwriter’s interpretation of the afterlife just won’t suffice. Quite simply, we need to know more about what lies ahead for the sake of what lies in front of us today.

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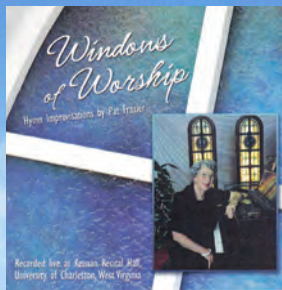
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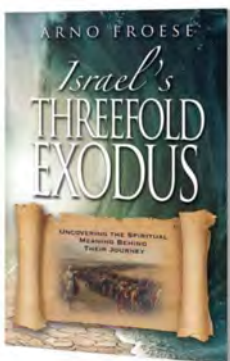
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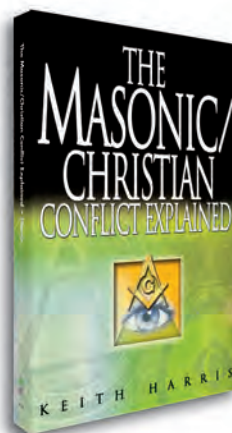
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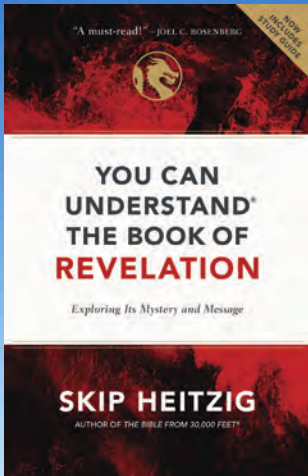
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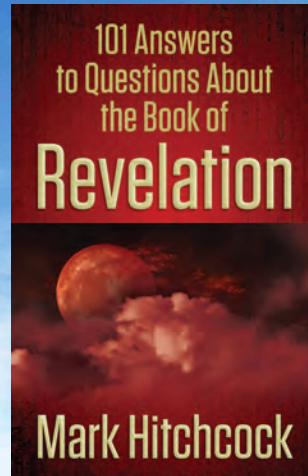
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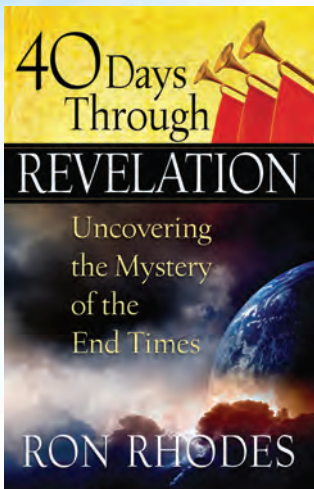
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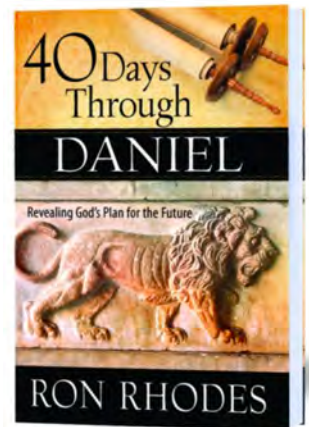
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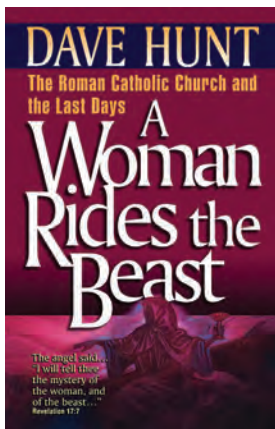


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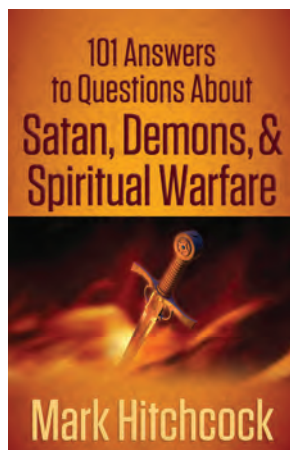
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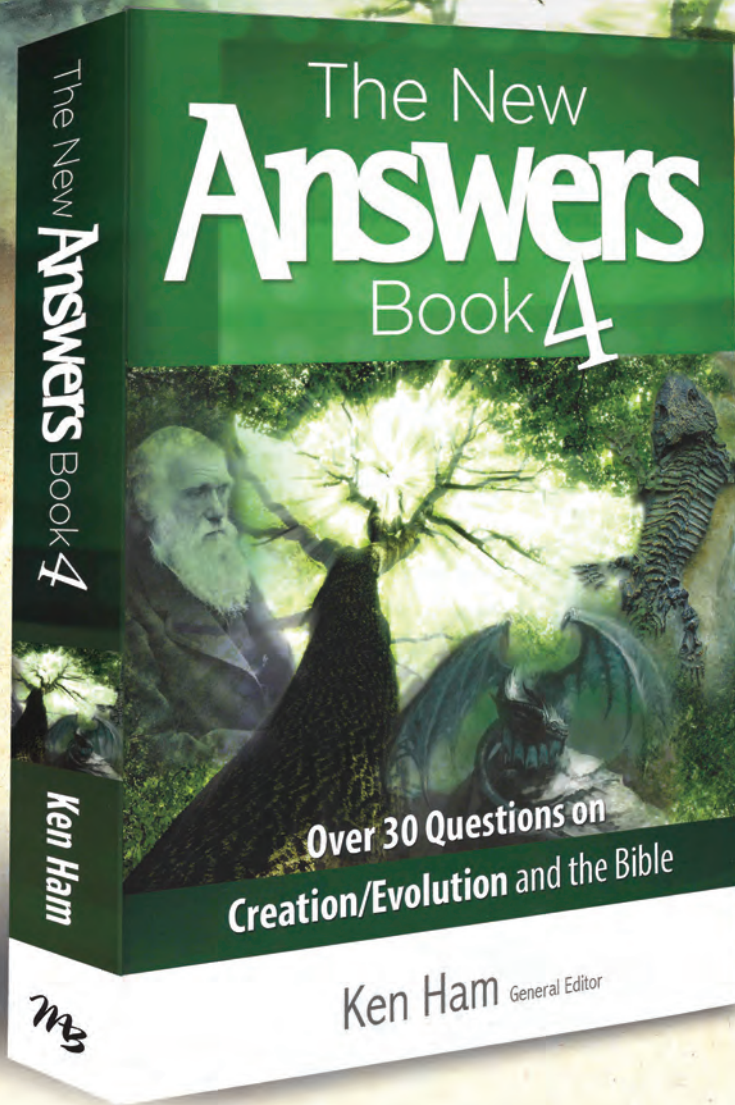
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