

TOMORROW'S WORLD

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The Handwriting
Is on the
Wall





A personal message from the Editor in Chief, Roderick C. Meredith

Do Not “Assume” ANYTHING!

One of the wisest men I have ever known told me, quite a number of times, “Learn not to **assume** anything!” He went on to point out that a great many common assumptions were *simply not true*.

Yet, many people **assume** all sorts of falsehoods that are, in fact, not true! Such assumptions can lead to extremely serious mistakes in judgment—and can *ruin* our lives physically, mentally and spiritually if we are not careful!

Most of us remember that for hundreds of years most people *assumed* the world was **flat**. People today laugh about how silly that assumption was. But which of **today’s** “assumptions” will we soon consider even sillier?

A few decades ago, the medical establishment commonly told mothers **not** to breastfeed their babies. Doctors *assumed* that various formulas were better than a mother’s own breast milk. Yet, today, in the highest scientific and medical circles, it is clearly understood that the mother’s own breast milk has been “programmed” (so they say, to avoid giving credit to a Creator) to give the best nourishment to her own baby. Also, it was commonly *assumed* in medical circles that male circumcision was “barbaric” and entirely unnecessary. Yet, today, we read that **many** doctors and medical leaders have come to realize that male circumcision is extremely beneficial for health in various ways.

Another common **assumption** is that all the professing Christian churches are *really* “Christian.” Yet many of these churches teach a number of doctrines and practices *directly opposite* those which your Bible clearly reveals. Should we *assume* that ministers are “Christian” when their teachings and practices are *diametrically opposed* to what the Bible plainly teaches?

Remember, the Bible exhorts us to **prove** *any* idea to be sure it is correct. We read: “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21, KJV). The Berean Christians were complimented “in that they received the word with all readiness, and **searched the Scriptures** daily to find out **whether** these things were so” (Acts 17:11). Notice that they were not necessarily *disproving* what Paul was saying. Rather, they kept a genuinely “open mind” and were willing to **search** throughout the Bible to see if what Paul was saying matched up with the Scriptures. That, my friends, is *profound* advice for all of us! Do *you* do that?

Think! Where do *you* get the doctrines that you believe? Where does your church *really* get those doctrines? *Out of the Bible?* **Are you sure?**

Consider how most “mainstream” ministers say that God promises that the faithful Christian’s *reward* will be eternal life in heaven. People take this for granted. But is it what the Bible actually says? I have for many years offered a \$1,000 reward to **anyone** who could prove to me **from the Bible** that God promises “going to heaven” as the eternal reward of the Christian. And for decades, *no one* has been able to claim this \$1,000.

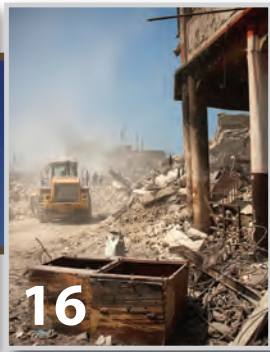
Why? Because the Bible clearly indicates, over and over, that the reward of the Christian is to reign *on this earth*—not up in heaven! In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, “Blessed are the meek, for they shall *inherit the earth*” (Matthew 5:5). And Jesus Christ directly stated, “**No one** has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven” (John 3:13).

Did Jesus Christ know what He was talking about? Surely, if we go to heaven, then Abraham—the “father of the faithful”—would be there. So, too, would be the

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What Is the **MEANING** of Your Life?

By Roderick C. Meredith

When I was 15 years old, my friend Jimmy Mallette suffered an accidental death. As they let down the casket containing Jimmy's body, my mind was flooded with memories about how we sat out on the nearby Missouri hills and philosophized about all kinds of things together. As teenage boys attending different Protestant churches, we could certainly understand that we were not getting a total answer as to *why* we were born, what life was all about, or about the ultimate goal of humanity. So, during the long summer

days and early evenings, we sat in our backyards or on the hillsides discussing these things.

Together, we sent off for various books and pamphlets by philosophers and religionists who offered to explain the *meaning of life*. However, being fairly intelligent and well-read, we quickly realized that these people, too, did not have any *genuine* answer.

Over the next several years after Jimmy's death, I continued to meditate on these things. I tried to think through *why* we were born, *what* life was really all

about and what was the ultimate *purpose* for our lives. Our local Protestant preacher droned on and on with “nice” generalities—being good citizens, being kind to others, perhaps sending help to the “starving Chinese” (as we supposed they were, back then). Although our pastor’s “do-good” thoughts were probably helpful in a way, they did **not** ever stir me to any kind of particular action, nor did they even begin to answer the growing questions in my mind as to **why** we are really here. **Why** must all humans suffer and die? If we were to go to heaven after death, as my preacher said, would we just sit around up there playing harps, with **nothing** to do?

“Is that *all there is*?” I wondered.

A few years later, I read one of the most touching and meaningful books I have ever laid my eyes on. It is entitled, *Man’s Search for Meaning*, written by Dr. Viktor Frankl—an extremely intelligent and sensitive man who later became regarded as the leading psychiatrist in Europe. I found this book unique in its approach to getting at the real **meaning** of life. Because of Dr. Frankl’s horrifying experiences as a prisoner in Theresienstadt, Auschwitz and other concentration camps, he certainly had a special perspective in searching out and answering—in a *human sense*—the ultimate question as to our *reason for being*. He writes, “If there is a purpose in life at all, there must be a purpose in suffering and in dying. But no man can tell another what this purpose is. Each must find out for himself, and must accept the responsibility that his answer prescribes” (p. xiii).

Please note carefully the above paragraph discussing man’s **purpose** in life. Dr. Frankl writes, “Each must find out *for himself*, and must accept the responsibility

that his answer prescribes.” In a human sense, this is certainly true. However—and this is a **huge** “however”—if there is a real God and if the Holy Scriptures are the revelation from that God, then we should be willing to carefully look into that inspired writing and find out what **God says** is the purpose for human life! Obviously, most highly educated men—doctors, scientists, philosophers and psychologists **do not** do that. Unwittingly, perhaps, they leave out the **only** genuine possibility for finding out the *real purpose* of our human existence. For the One who created us reveals a genuine purpose for our lives. And we must be willing to humble ourselves before Him, our Creator, and find out *what He tells us* that awesome purpose is.

GOD’S REVELATION

Turning in our Bibles to the very beginning of God’s revelation, we find that—as He created man—God said, “‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them” (Genesis 1:26–27).

From the very beginning, God made human beings in His very “image,” or likeness. As we consider this, it is obvious from the Bible that we are in the physical likeness of God—who is also described as having arms, legs, head and features. But we are **also**—to a *limited extent*—made in His likeness in that we have been given genuine *mind power* and *creative imagination* like God—in a way *no other creature* has been formed. For the Bible

clearly reveals that there is a “spirit” in human beings. The Apostle Paul wrote, “For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit [that] is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual” (1 Corinthians 2:11–13).

This “spirit essence,” which is joined to the human brain, dramatically *lifts* humanity far above the animal kingdom. For, again, *no other* creature even remotely approaches the capacity of humankind in scientific, intellectual, musical and other accomplishments. *No other creature* is remotely capable of sending space vehicles to the moon, building skyscrapers like the Empire State Building or inventing the kinds of computers that can store and spew out literally *trillions* of pieces of information per second!

For human beings are *unique*—they are truly made “in the image of God,” their Creator.

Remember also, in the creation account in the book of Genesis, God describes how each of the animal and bird creatures was created “*according to its kind*” (vv. 21, 24, 25). When God said, “Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness,” He was indicating that human beings were to be *created according to the God kind*! Your Bible says more than once: “God is love” (1 John 4:8, 16). A normal, happily married young couple nearly always want to *share* their love and their lives with a child—born after “their kind.” Is the God

of the Bible so inward and selfish that He would not want to share *His* thoughts, *His* plans, *His* love and *His* glorious universe with others of *His* kind? People usually fail to *think this through!* But it should be obvious, if we are willing to truly understand what God tells us in so many ways throughout the Bible. For He tells us that we are to be “born again.”

Is being “born again” merely an emotional religious experience that we can work up in church or at an evangelistic campaign? **No!** It is the most important and transcendent experience that we could possibly imagine—literally being **born** into the very Family of God! The Apostle Paul was inspired to tell us, “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and **joint heirs** with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. For I consider that *the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*” (Romans 8:16–18). Here, your own Bible clearly indicates that *true Christians* are to be “joint heirs” with Christ, and that we are to be “glorified” together with Him. The clear indication is that all the trials, tests, suffering and anguish we go through are only preparatory to becoming *full sons* of the Creator God—sharing *His* glory and this magnificent opportunity with Jesus Christ Himself, the **firstborn** Son.

BORN AGAIN

Paul continues, “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren” (v. 29). If Christ is the “firstborn” among

many brethren, then it should be obvious that there are **many more brethren** who will be born of God, as Christ was when He rose from the tomb. Earlier, Paul writes that Christ was “declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness,



by the resurrection from the dead” (Romans 1:4). So Christ was not born of God in an evangelistic campaign. He was declared the Son of God with power by being **resurrected** from the dead. For, as we have seen, He was the **firstborn** among many brethren.

My friends, when you really understand it, our heavenly Father is **not** merely creating lower creatures such as cows or goats or squirrels “in His image.” He is creating beings who are *like Him* in many ways and who have the *awesome potential* to become **full sons** of God Himself by a resurrection from the dead! They will then be able to share—with the Father and Jesus Christ, their Elder Brother and “*firstborn* from the dead”—the plans, the joys and the experiences of the God Family. In this way, God Himself will be *giving, sharing* and *loving* human beings made in His image who become **fully surrendered** to Him and **willing** to live according to the way the Creator intends—and thus bring peace and happiness throughout all eternity!

This has been **God’s supreme purpose from the beginning!** Not

some sentimental ideas of merely having a few emotional experiences, or of performing rituals established by the churches of this deceived world (Revelation 12:9)—all of those are **nothing** compared to the awesome **purpose** for which God has actually made us “in His image”! We need to **understand**. And we must be willing to **cry out** to the Eternal God to help us genuinely *do our part* to overcome our human nature, the pulls of this world, and Satan the devil. For, again and again, the Bible clearly indicates that we do not just automatically become children of God through some religious or emotional experience. Rather, we must make a *total surrender* to our Creator—**burying** ourselves in heart and mind, as symbolized when we are “buried with Him through baptism” (Romans 6:4). As Jesus said, “So likewise, whoever of you *does not forsake all that he has* cannot be My disciple” (Luke 14:33). When we finally make that **total surrender** to the true God to let Him genuinely **rule** our lives—when we accept the *true* Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, and daily let Him *live His obedient life* within us through the Holy Spirit (Galatians 2:20), then *and only then* will God put His Spirit within us, to enable us to be **overcomers** and to be “born again” at the resurrection!

Only the genuine **overcomers** will inherit eternal life as *full sons* of the Eternal God. Speaking in the first person in the book of Revelation, Jesus said, “And he who **overcomes**, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron; they shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels’—as I also have received from My Father” (Revelation 2:26–27).

Please understand: God will **not** allow human beings to be born

into His divine Family unless they *first totally surrender* to Him, to His rule, to His righteous laws and to His entire way of life. Otherwise, they would become potential adversaries—like Satan the devil, who tried to exalt himself and became willing to **fight against** God (Isaiah 14:12–15)!

THE GLORY OF GOD'S FAMILY

When we are *really* born of God, we will truly be **like God**. Although God the Father will *always* be in total power and authority as the ultimate **Head** of the Family, and Jesus Christ will always be our Elder Brother and High Priest, we will have the *same basic capacity* once we are made Spirit beings and *full sons* of our Creator! As Jesus now appears with “eyes like a flame of fire” and whose voice is as “the sound of many waters”—like the mighty waves crashing on the rocks of the Northern California coast—so *we* may be joined and become part of the Creator's family and **rule** with God and Christ forever in *glorious power*, if we fully surrender to our Creator!

Although humanity has for many years tried to explore outer space and “conquer” the universe—in that sense—God's full sons will *really* be able to do all of this with virtually no effort! For we will be members of the **God Family**! Can we understand that? God is making true Christians **full sons** in His glorified Family—to share with these future sons the glory, the power, the full creative imagination and intelligence which He has.

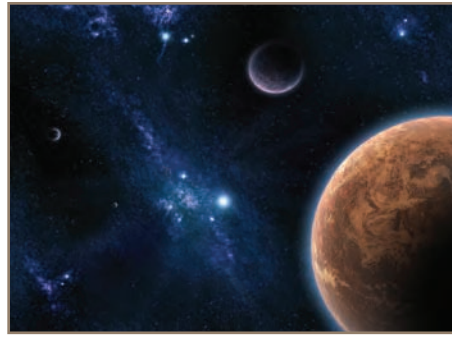
Just think! Not having to resort to rockets and capsules and air tanks to help us breathe in space, we will be able to travel to Mars or Pluto or even farther—**not** at the speed of sound, but at the *speed of thought*! Can we begin to imagine

the *magnificence* of God's ultimate **purpose** for creating human beings “in His image”?

The Apostle Paul was inspired to pray that Christians, “May be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen” (Ephesians 3:18–21). When we are literally “filled with all

the *fullness of God*,” then we will be **full** members of the God Family. For God's actual sons are not like goats or cows by comparison. They are *real* sons. As my four sons share the human potential and capacity of their father, so too will God's sons! Do we get it? *Can we comprehend it?*

The Eternal God inspired the Apostle Paul in the book of Hebrews to explain all of this even further. God inspired Paul to tell us, “For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. But one testified in a certain place, saying: ‘What is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You take care of him? You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, and set him over the works of Your hands. You have put all things in subjection under his feet.’ *For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him.*



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But now we do not yet see all things put under him” (Hebrews 2:5–8).

Linguists acknowledge that the Greek word translated as “all” in the above passage literally means “everything”—the *entire universe*! For God plans to make His true sons **real sons** with the total capacity of the God Family in the *same way* that all of us in the human family are *totally human*! Describing this awesome fact, the Apostle Peter wrote of God's “**exceedingly great** and *precious promises*, that through

these you may be partakers of the **divine nature**” (2 Peter 1:4). So—when we are literally *born* of God at the resurrection—God does not just **call** us His sons. Rather, He places *His very nature* in us so that we *come right from God*, bearing His divine nature—in the *same way* that we came right out from our *human* parents and have *their* nature. *That* is what it means to be “born of God.”

JESUS' FINAL PRAYER

Finally, in discussing this transcendent topic, we must *never leave out* the magnificent and truly inspiring prayer Jesus uttered to God on the night before He died. Jesus said, “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son that Your Son also may glorify You.... I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was” (John 17:1, 4–5).

Later, He said, “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those

who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. *And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:* I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me” (vv. 20–23).

Here, our Savior—who was God in the flesh and whom God had used at the beginning to *create everything* (John 1:3)—was asking the Father to give His disciples the **same glory** which He had shared with the Father from eternity!

In this final section of Jesus’ most inspiring prayer, He was obviously praying for us—we today who believe “through the word” which the disciples wrote for us in the Bible. He prayed that “all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be **one** in Us” (John 17:20–21).

At the resurrection, true Christians—the real **overcomers**—will be **born** of Spirit, made **full members** of the Family of God and be **totally one** with God and with Christ *as They are one* with each other. Notice how Jesus states that the magnificent **glory** which God had given Him was also given by Jesus to His true followers—“that they may be **one just as We are one**” (v. 22).

Could it be any clearer?

This verse definitely indicates that we will become **full sons** of God and **totally members** of God’s divine Family—“one” with God and with Christ *just as They are one!* If you wish to learn more about this vital topic, please contact the regional office nearest you (listed on page 30 of this magazine) and ask for your

free copy of our inspiring booklet, *Your Ultimate Destiny*.

By working with human beings through His Spirit—and through allowing all of us to make our mistakes, to go through our trials and tests, to try out our *own* forms of human government, education and religion—we will have finally come to the place of *total surrender* to our Creator and will then—through His Spirit—become fit and

Family—of the whole universe! **This** is the awesome future of those who are willing to totally surrender to their Creator *and do His will*.

All of the previous sufferings of humanity—all the trials and tests, the torture camps, the loss of loved ones through sickness or accident or war, all of the anguish and sadness that comes upon us because we ourselves and all humanity have been *going*

At the resurrection, true Christians—the real overcomers—will be born of Spirit, made full members of the Family of God and be totally one with God and with Christ as They are one with each other.

ready to have the glorious power of the very Creator as *full members* of the Family of God. We will then be able to walk, talk and “fellowship” with God and Christ in a way very few now even imagine. We will be able to share—as members of the God Family—various challenges that will yet arise in governing, and in making ever more complete God’s plan throughout the entire universe. We will have spirit bodies. We will never grow tired. We will never be sick. We will never feel discouraged. For we will be glorious Spirit beings in the divine Family—the Creator

the wrong way—will **vanish!** The Bible tells us, “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away” (Revelation 21:4). May God help **all** of us truly understand the ultimate **purpose**—the *real reason* why we were born. And may He help us have the willingness and the humility to study His inspired word—to prove these things to ourselves and—through His Spirit—to “make our calling and election **sure**.” ■

YOUR ULTIMATE DESTINY



You were created for an amazing and awe-inspiring purpose. Understanding that purpose will bring joy and fulfillment to your life as never before.

Write for our FREE booklet, *Your Ultimate Destiny*, or download it from the Booklets section of our Web site www.TomorrowsWorld.org.

Questions & Answers

Question: In Revelation 18:4, a voice from heaven commands, “Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.” In 2 Corinthians 6:17, we are told, “Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.” Does God want me to go live in a wilderness, like a hermit, away from anything unclean? What do these verses mean?

Answer: First, we need to understand the context of these verses. Revelation 18:4 tells Christians to come out of “Babylon” (v. 2). In 2 Corinthians 6:14–17, the Apostle Paul exhorts Christians to disassociate themselves from “unbelievers” (v. 14).

“Babylon” here refers not to a particular city, but rather to a false religious system that has its roots in ancient pagan Babylon. That system today is far more pervasive than most people realize. To learn more, request our free booklet, *Satan’s Counterfeit Christianity*. If you understand the true teachings of the Bible, but you still participate in religious rituals and traditions that mock those teachings, then you have not yet come out of Babylon.

What does it mean to be “separate” from unbelievers, as commanded in 2 Corinthians 6:17? For centuries, groups of men and women have formed isolated communities, even retreating into monasteries and convents, in order to be separate from those with different beliefs. But such a step is a superficial one, and does not address the real problem. In fact, anywhere there are human beings, there is carnal human nature. Even when we are by ourselves, we may be “in” the world if we desire the things of the world more than we desire the things of God (Matthew 6:33).

To come out of the world, we need to change **ourselves**. We come out of the world by changing our ways—by giving up the spiritually and physically unhealthy practices of those who reject God. Each of us needs to “gird up the loins of your mind” (1 Peter 1:13). This means to protect our minds from unwelcome and unwholesome influences. Do we listen to gossip and slander? Do we entertain thoughts of violence and hatred? Do we watch movies with pornographic or degrading images of sexual acts? Or, are we following Paul’s advice? “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever

things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things” (Philippians 4:8).

To stay close to God, we need to ask for Christ’s help to make the correct choices about our activities and also our friends. The people with whom we associate can make or break our efforts to come out of the world. “Do not be deceived: ‘Evil company corrupts good habits.’ Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame” (1 Corinthians 15:33–34).

Ultimately, of course, we cannot fully come out of the world by ourselves. We need the Holy Spirit—God’s gift to us—through which God’s law will be written on our hearts. With God’s Spirit in us, we will learn to love God’s law and His ways, and we will truly come to know Him intimately. How can we know that we know Him? “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked” (1 John 2:3–6).

Sadly, countless millions today who call themselves followers of Christ are not even trying to “walk just as He walked.” Will we follow the unbiblical traditions of men, or will we do as He did? One key sign of our faithfulness is how we follow His direct example of keeping the seventh-day Sabbath (Luke 4:16–17). For more, read our booklet *Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?*. The world around us would pressure us to keep a Sunday “Sabbath”—or no Sabbath at all. Will we bow to that pressure? Or will we “come out” of that world, and live the way God wants us to live? The choice is up to each one of us!



By Douglas S. Winnail

parades by homosexuals are among the biggest tourist attractions on the annual social calendar.

Fifty years ago, if you had *predicted* this would happen in America, Britain, Canada or other Western nations, your credibility and even your sanity would have been *questioned*, because such ideas would have been *unthinkable!* Yet, the unthinkable *has happened!* Judeo-Christian culture is being *deliberately undermined* and *systematically destroyed* by social changes that ignore, defy and reject clear biblical teachings. In our brave new world of secular thinking, belief in the God of the Bible, the practice of the Christian religion and the promotion of Christian values have become the objects of *ridicule* and *scorn!* Today, practices that once prevailed in the ancient pagan, pre-Christian world—abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, occultism and the worship of nature—have *re-emerged* to challenge and displace beliefs and values that *once defined* our Western nations!

While news reports *describe* and tradition-minded columnists *lament* what is happening, vitally important questions are *almost never addressed*: *Why* are these dramatic changes occurring today? What is the *real significance* of the shocking transformations occurring in our modern “post-Christian” societies? *What lies ahead* for nations that once professed Christianity but now *reject* their heritage? Does history offer any advice about the direction we are heading? Are we *really* advancing to a new level of existence, or have we turned a *blind eye* to obvious lessons of history?

Surprising as it may seem today, *there are* definite answers to these questions. There is a *source* that reveals the *true significance* and *unsuspected outcome* of the sweeping social transformations that are turning the Western world upside down. This often-ridiculed and seldom-cited source is **the Bible**—and its sobering message is *supported* and *amplified* by the record of history. The Bible, unlike any other book, reveals the *true cause* of human problems and the *future course* of

What is ahead for America and other Western nations? History and Bible prophecy hold sobering answers!

Shocking and almost unbelievable *changes* are taking place in nations that once proclaimed, “In God we trust.” In so-called “Christian” America, where President Andrew Jackson once said the Bible was the foundation of the Republic, atheists and secularists regularly win battles to banish prayer and remove the Ten Commandments from public display. Instead of learning the truth about creation and Jesus Christ, public school students can learn about Muhammad, or Shiva, or about how to be a witch! In England, where martyrs once died to uphold their understanding of the Bible, children now learn in *grade school* how to practice “safe sex,” and theologians write about the impending “death” of Christianity in Britain. In Holland—once a nursery of the Protestant Reformation and a sanctuary for Puritans who later came to America—prostitutes, deviant sex and drug parlors are now prominent features in many cities. In Australia, flamboyant

our history. Correctly understood, the Bible and the record of history have much to teach us—if we have eyes to see—about the surprising outcome of the cultural changes that are rocking Western nations. We need to *listen* to the warnings of history and Scripture!

A LESSON FROM THE PAST

The Bible records a remarkable event that occurred in 539^{BC}—one with *increasing relevance* for us today! Belshazzar, the king of Babylon, held a great feast for one thousand of his nobles. During the festivities, he toasted pagan gods with cups that were taken from the temple in Jerusalem. As the king began to drink, *a man's hand* appeared and wrote several words on the wall of the palace—*terrifying* the king! The aged prophet Daniel was summoned to decipher the words—that spelled out the *imminent doom* of Belshazzar and his kingdom. However, before Daniel revealed the meaning of the words, he informed the drunken king that his arrogant behavior would have dire consequences. The Bible records that on that *same night*, Babylon fell and the king was killed (Daniel 5).

Greek historians confirm the biblical account. Writing in approximately 450^{BC}, the Greek historian Herodotus described how the Medes and Persians defeated the Babylonians in a battle just north of the city of Babylon. The Babylonians retreated into their supposedly impregnable double-walled city. Confident of their safety, Belshazzar's festivities were held while his enemies were encamped outside the city. The Medes and Persians, recognizing the difficulty of a direct attack on the walls of Babylon, *diverted the river* that ran through the Babylonian capital, and entered the fortified city at night through

the riverbed—while Belshazzar and his nobles were toasting pagan gods with the vessels taken from the temple in Jerusalem. Herodotus does not record the handwriting on the wall, but in his account, the city of Babylon *was taken by surprise—and fell suddenly* (*The Histories*, book 1, sections 191–192)!

You might ask, “What does this ancient event have to do with us today?” Discerning minds can draw *several important lessons* from this historical incident: (1) Pride and arrogance have consequences—Belshazzar despised and defied the God of the Bible—and, as a result, he lost his kingdom and his life. (2) Forgetfulness can be fatal—Belshazzar forgot the lessons his predecessor Nebuchadnezzar had learned—that there is a God in heaven who rules in the affairs of men and brings down those who walk in pride (Daniel 4:34–37). (3) Negligence carries a big cost—Belshazzar *ignored the signs of the times*—he *was not watching* when he was surrounded by his enemies—and his city was taken by surprise! (4) When Belshazzar finally saw the handwriting on the wall, *it was too late*—he had crossed the line; he had reached the end of his rope—and God brought him and his kingdom down!

While critics dismiss these accounts as *irrelevant* to nations in the 21st century, more astute thinkers offer a different perspective. The Spanish philosopher George Santayana once said, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it”—in other words, if we fail to *learn the lessons of history*, we are bound to *repeat the mistakes of history!* Social critic Os Guinness put it this way, “A generation that fails to read the signs of the times may be forced to read the writing on the wall” (*The American Hour*, p. 414). Writing five

centuries after the fall of Babylon, the Apostle Paul said these events were important because “all these things happened to them *as examples*, and they were written *for our admonition*, upon whom the ends of the ages have come” (1 Corinthians 10:11). The Bible clearly reveals that these events were recorded to *teach us lessons, so we can avoid making the same mistakes*—if we have eyes to see!

But, *are there signs of the times today*—that are *clearly visible*—yet are ignored by most? Have the hours spent on Facebook, watching television, or playing video games *blinded us* to the significance of what is happening around us? Do we *recognize* the dangers that are threatening our culture and the future of our nations? Are we *aware* of warnings that are being sounded?

WARNINGS ABOUND!

For the last several decades, journalists, teachers, theologians and politicians have been warning about the *dangerous drift* of once “Christian” nations in the Western world. Yet, like Belshazzar and the people of ancient Babylon, our modern nations have *continued* down the road that leads toward oblivion and the dust bin of history—because we do not seem to notice or listen to the alarm bells that have been ringing!

In 1988, noted theologian Carl F. H. Henry wrote a book entitled *The Twilight of a Great Civilization* in which he warned of America's drift toward *neo-paganism*. He wrote, “The Barbarians are coming and they threaten to undermine the foundations of Western civilization” by promoting a “humanistic rejection of God and the Judeo-Christian foundation of Western culture... the new barbarianism has

embraced a *new pagan mentality*... it proclaims that there is no fixed truth, no final good, no ultimate meaning and purpose, and that the living God is a primitive illusion... it champions mysticism, occult forces and powers, communion with nature and exotic religions... where these pagan impulses hold sway the results are moral and intellectual decay paralleled only by Pompeii and Sodom... *Do we Christians clearly see and understand the tragic drift of our culture?*" (p. ix). Two decades ago, Henry saw where trends were heading—and he correctly anticipated where we actually are today—but how many listened?

In *The Marketing of Evil*, journalist David Kupelian relates how radical liberals have taken over the media, the universities, courts and political parties to promote secular values that are corrupting America—teaching that homosexuality is praiseworthy, same-sex marriage is a right, sex in grade school is healthy, marriage is obsolete and that abortion and euthanasia must be made legal in a mature and tolerant society. Although most Americans are adamantly against these social and cultural changes, they are being enforced through the courts in a manner that is dangerously dividing our society. Similar dramatic changes are also occurring in other Western nations (see *The Abolition of Britain* by Peter Hitchens and *The Death of Christian Britain* by Callum Brown).

Perhaps the most sobering indictment of the sweeping social changes underway in America and the Western "Christian" world comes from a former German soldier who now lives in the United States as his adopted country. Octogenarian Hilmar von Campe warns in *Defeating the Totalitarian Lie* (2008)

about *dangerous parallels* between what is happening today in Western nations and what happened in Nazi Germany—and the *dire consequences* of removing God and Christian values from our culture. He writes, "The Nazi government had excluded God from their consideration. To exclude God

sane road for America and humanity is to obey God's Commandments... if you keep God from the political process you *invite disaster*" (p. 221). He concludes, "Today in America we are witnessing a *repeat performance* of the tragedy of 1933 when an entire nation let itself be led like a lamb to the Socialist slaughterhouse. This time, the end of freedom is inevitable, unless America rises to her mission and destiny" (p. xvi).

Documenting the Decline

In the last quarter-century, dozens of scholars and social observers have noted the shocking collapse of long-standing biblical value systems in the Western nations. A sampling of books on this topic includes:

The Abolition of Britain, Peter Hitchens
The Death of Christian Britain, Callum Brown
The Twilight of American Culture, Morris Berman
The Twilight of a Great Civilization, Carl F. Henry
When a Nation Forgets God, Erwin Lutzer
When Nations Die, Jim Nelson Black

and his Commandments from human government is a *heresy* promoted by the godless in order to gain their own power" (p. 114). He continues, "Nazi philosophy and the Nazi state were *built on lies*... They were dishonest about who they were... The next lie was that there was no God... that human value was subjective with some people being worth more than others" (pp. 46–47). He sternly advises, "*the only*

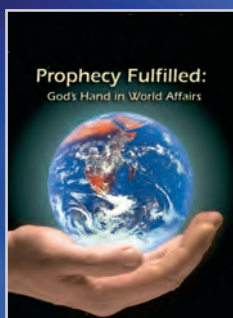
WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

While this sobering "handwriting" has *appeared* on the wall for several decades, what *really does lie ahead* for America, Britain, Canada and other Western nations that are *rejecting* their Christian heritage? What does Bible prophecy *reveal*?

When God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, He made them His "chosen people" and gave them His laws to set them apart so they could be a light and an example to the world (Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 4:1–10; 7:6–11). The covenant God made

Continued on page 29

PROPHECY FULLFILLED: GOD'S HAND IN WORLD AFFAIRS



Our modern nations are in decline, as they face devastating economic and social crises. What can you do to protect yourself and your loved ones from the terrible times ahead?

Write for our **FREE** booklet, *Prophecy Fulfilled: God's Hand in World Affairs*, or download it from the Booklets section of our Web site www.TomorrowsWorld.org.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I read your booklet, *Restoring Apostolic Christianity*. It touched me, because for several years I have prayed that God put in willing minds and hearts how He wants to be worshiped. Not man's opinions or traditions, but His will be done. I have felt something was missing for so long. Your booklet interested me deeply, and I would love to read more.

E.G., Boaz, AL

I want to thank you for helping my mother. She has been receiving your magazine for a couple of issues now. Just last month, my mother lost her job. And if it hadn't been for your magazine, Mom probably would have gone crazy. After she lost her job, she started reading your magazines and studying her Bible. And it has really helped her in her time of need. Mom has really enjoyed your magazine, so I am asking you if you would please send it to me, too.

T.M., Jacksonville, IL

I am truly blessed by *Tomorrow's World* literature that I have been receiving. My prayers were answered when my blinders were taken off by the power of God through our literature. I have just finished reading your booklet, *Is This the Only Day of Salvation?* I often wondered about the unsaved, but could not find any answer that I knew in my heart to be true. Now I know. Please continue to instruct me.

L.M., Farmers Branch, TX

I cannot express my gratitude for the peace and joy your *Bible Study Course* has given me. You do not make "the father's house a house of merchandise." Thank you all for helping me to look more carefully at the Word of God.

J.B., Lakeside Park, KY

Just a note of appreciation for the *Tomorrow's World* booklets, which I have been receiving for some time

now. When I receive a new one, I can hardly put it down until I have gone through it. I really enjoy the instructive information I get from them. Thank you so much. I am a 90-years-of-age mother, who wants her oldest son, 67 years of age, to be introduced to your publications.

The first time I discovered *Tomorrow's World* was when I was just flicking through the Christian channels on TV, and your program caught my eyes. It has been such a blessing to me that things I do not understand in my Bible can be answered on your telecast and Web site. I have ordered various booklets concerning end-time events, and what puzzles me is that practically most of the world nations will have a part to play in the events to come, but why hasn't Africa been mentioned? I would really like to know where as a continent Africa stands.

T.M., Irvine, Scotland, United Kingdom

Editor's Note: Of the more than 200 world nations recognized at present, many will be little more than peripheral players in the final end-time events, when several dominant world powers will have emerged out of end-time economic turmoil. By the time of Christ's return, even the United States, long a dominant superpower, will be no more than a vassal state, subservient to European power. From Scripture we can infer that some nations in northern and eastern Africa will be part of, or allied with, the "King of the South"—but we do not know the exact configuration of that alliance. Of course, we know that African nations will be blessed in the Millennium; we even read in Ezekiel that, "Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, 'Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance'" (vv. 24–25). But even today, all who are "spiritual Israel"—converted Christians from **all nations**, who obey God and live His way—can share in His blessings.

We encourage you to share with us your reactions to *Tomorrow's World*. Please direct your correspondence to "Letters to the Editor" at our United States address, or send e-mail to Letters@TomorrowsWorld.org. Letters may be edited for space and clarity. Remember to include your name, address and daytime phone number.

LONDON CA

A New Age of Austerity

Across the road from where I live in South West England, some 40 new houses are being built. For most of the past year all was hustle and bustle, as workmen laboured hard to get the job done. But not anymore. The building site is now eerily quiet. The company building these homes ran out of cash.

This national building company went into receivership with debts of £60 million, and the jobs of close to 4,000 employees were put at risk. Over half the company's work comes from the public sector, which is now in marked retreat in the face of the Coalition Government's attempts to rein in public spending.

MONETARY WOES

What has happened on our doorstep is but one small example of a much larger malaise. The United Kingdom, mired in a deep recession and overwhelmed by its debts, is in deep trouble. It all began with a collapse in the housing market back in 2007 due to speculative excesses. Since then, many people have lost their homes and many businesses have failed.

The headline figures are truly shocking: the national debt is £960 billion (68 percent of GDP) and rising fast. Over the 5-year life of the present parliament, the interest alone on U.K. debts will total upwards of £263 billion and—despite planning to reduce overall debts by some half-a-trillion pounds—the national debt will still be 70 percent of GDP in 2015. One wonders if such huge debts can ever be repaid.

In its strategy of debt reduction, the government has committed itself to austerity—to tax rises and spending cuts that together spell hard times to come: a sharp rise in unemployment, reduction in welfare payments, a fall in standard of living, and endless scope for social unrest. Efforts to stimulate the economy have included reducing interest rates almost to zero—but, though this helps the cost of borrowing, it has also reduced the value of pensions and savings. The government bailed out banks

to the tune of billions of pounds, and printed some £200 billion “ex nihilo” (out of nothing) in a strategy called Quantitative Easing (QE) in an attempt to soak up government debt and get the banks to lend to business once more (“The world economy: Desperate measures,” *The Guardian*, November 5, 2010). Yet many banks stubbornly refused to lend to those who most needed it. Important parts of the economy remain stuck in the doldrums, so more QE is set for the coming year, should it be needed.

With all this new money sloshing around the system, some fear it will stoke the fires of inflation. Others fear the opposite—that all the cutbacks and extra taxes will choke demand and will push the economy back into recession. Some economists and commentators seriously doubt the efficacy of QE, saying it will merely make matters worse, while others assert that all these measures are wrongheaded, good only for ensuring that the capitalist system will see an even more spectacular collapse ahead.



Mervyn King

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DIFFICULT AND DANGEROUS TIMES

Bank of England governor Mervyn King has acknowledged the severity of the problem. Speaking on the eve of last November's G20 meeting, which brought together finance ministers and central bank governors from 20 of the world's most powerful economies, he gave a strong warning. “Nations must identify a path to shrink trade deficit and bring down surpluses or face even more ‘difficult and dangerous’ times ahead, said the Bank of England Governor. ‘We are very much in the position that we need to demonstrate now that every country is determined to work together to a joint mutual resolution of these imbalances... If we don't do that, then I fear that the next 12 months will be an even more difficult and dangerous period than the one we've been through’” (“Mervyn King urges G20 leaders to agree over trade row,” *London Daily Telegraph*, November 11, 2010). He

LLING

warned that U.K. consumers could expect to be hit by a sharp rise in the cost of living over the following months.

Of course, Britain is also tied financially to other European Union nations, such as Ireland—and, to a lesser extent, Spain, Portugal, Greece and Italy, which are even worse off. Increasingly, these troubles are causing observers to question whether the EU can survive in its present form. And it is not just the EU that is suffering; in one way or another, virtually all nations have been sucked into a worldwide economic crisis accompanied by austerity and pain.

Moreover, it is sobering to consider that this massive worldwide recession could have been avoided. A very few far-sighted economists saw it coming. Oxford-educated Fred Harrison, ridiculed as a “Prophet of Doom” in the early years of this century, is now widely credited for predicting—as early as 1997—the economic boom and bust that first brought us the “housing bubble” and then the implosion of the financial markets. But Harrison, and the few others who gave similar warnings, went unheeded.

Also unheeded was the biblical perspective. Long-time *Tomorrow's World* readers know that the Bible identifies key measures (see Leviticus 25) that would go a long way to resolving the recurring boom/bust cycles of modern capitalism. These measures relate especially to the land, to the disadvantaged—and to the problem of debt.

THE YEAR OF RELEASE

God decreed for His people a system in which all families would be able to own land, and to retain it across the generations. It set strict limits in place against land speculation. How? In ancient Israel, every 50th year was designated as a Year of Jubilee—during which people

could return to their possessions and family (vv. 10–13, 39–43, 47–55), and debts would be cancelled (vv. 23–28, 31–34). In this system, if people were in trouble, their wealthier neighbors could not exploit them, but had an obligation to help them and not profit from their misery (vv. 35–38).

Tragedies could still befall a family. But even if property had to be sold, or a worker had to become another's servant, God's statutes established the right to redeem what had been lost, at a prorated cost based on the time remaining before the next Jubilee (vv. 50–52). Even if redemption were not possible, the land would eventually be restored to its owner in the Year of Jubilee.

By contrast, in our present system, debts tend to grow larger than the ability to pay, such that once people are in debt, they often find themselves in a vicious cycle in which their debt grows larger even while they become less and less able to marshal the resources to pay down the debt. Many workers end up as little more than

“wage slaves”—unable to provide for their families with dignity, forever one paycheck away from total ruin.

A time is soon coming when Jesus Christ will return to the earth to establish the Kingdom of God. At that time, all nations will finally experience the blessings of living by God's humane and practical statutes. Despite periodic calls for debt relief, the likelihood of any present government applying the Jubilee principle is rather remote (“Time for a jubilee,” *The Guardian*, April 23, 2009). In economics, as in many other areas of life, our society systematically disregards and ignores the principles God has provided for our benefit. The result—as the U.K. is now experiencing firsthand—is eventually, inevitably, crisis. God speed the day when Christ returns to establish His Millennial rule, and the days of austerity are past.

—John Meakin



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Is There Hope for Haiti?

By Rod McNair

As this battered land struggles to recover, some troubling questions remain: Why does God allow suffering? When will tragedies end? There is an answer!

On January 12, 2010, the island nation of Haiti was jolted by the worst earthquake in the region in two centuries. The catastrophe caused horrific suffering that defied description. More than 300,000 people perished, with hundreds of thousands injured, and more than a million homeless.

The National Palace—Haiti’s “White House”—collapsed into rubble. Parliament, the United Nations headquarters and virtually every government building was rendered uninhabitable. Churches, schools and banks were destroyed, as was the most upscale hotel in Haiti’s capital. Hospitals and police stations that should have been tending to the victims were instead reduced to ruins.

As the editors of *TIME* magazine put it, “In Haiti, order, safety, comfort, all perished. But the first to die was dignity” (*Haiti: Tragedy and Hope*, March 2, 2010, p. 16). Corpses of the dead were stacked along the roadside where struggling survivors passed by, some looking for missing family members, others wandering aimlessly in shock.

Even a year later, in the midst of a cholera epidemic that had killed almost 2,000 Haitians by early December, it is still hard to grasp fully just how overwhelming this catastrophe was, and the depth of the damage it has done to an already troubled nation.

WHY HAITI?

But why did such a disaster strike a nation already crippled by poverty, unemployment, and corruption? When the January 12 earthquake struck, some were quick to cast blame for the disaster. Some said it was God punishing Haiti for an alleged voodoo-influenced “pact with the devil” made to oust the colonial French at the end of the 18th century. Author Jeanne Pocius notes that some religious leaders were quick to blame other religions. “Sadly, some of the smaller religious sects have taken the tack of ‘accusatory evangelism.’ Spouting the fallacious claims that ‘It is the fault of them not us,’ with various sects accusing... whomever of having caused God’s wrath via the earthquake to strike down sinners. They are forgetting, of course, that every part of society experienced losses: every denomination faced fallen houses of worship, lost members, and suffered from the earthquake and its aftermath” (*Shaken, Not Stirred: A Survivor’s Account of the January 12, 2010 Earthquake in Haiti*, p. 190).

It can be easy to cast blame when bad things happen in the world. People want to understand why things are the way they are, especially

when they go wrong. So, why did the disaster in Haiti occur? More broadly, why do disasters happen in *many* places in every corner of the world?

Nearly 2,000 years ago, Jesus Christ posed this same question to His disciples. His answer is helpful today, as we struggle to find answers in times of great loss. Notice: “There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? **I tell you, no...** Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem? **I tell you, no...**” (Luke 13:1–5).

Jesus Christ explained plainly that great suffering is not necessarily caused by greater sin. Sometimes accidents are simply products of “time and chance” (Ecclesiastes 9:11). We certainly need to ask for God’s protection and guidance every day of our lives. And we should learn from Christ’s example not to condemn others when calamity happens, for “with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you” (Matthew 7:2). God is our judge—and our neighbor’s also (Romans 14:4).

But notice another important aspect of Christ’s words in Luke 13. After explaining that the men he mentioned were not *worse* sinners than others, He added this powerful warning: “[B]ut unless you repent you will all likewise perish...” (v. 5). The Galileans, or the victims of the tower of Siloam—or the Haitians who suffered in the 2010 earthquake—are **not** greater sinners than the rest of us are. And unless we **all** repent, we shall all likewise perish!

What is the lesson from Haiti? What can we learn from the great destruction that this tiny Caribbean nation endured? Frankly, what are we to learn from **all** of the suffering that humanity has endured since the dawn of creation? The disaster in Haiti was not the first in history, nor will it be the last. Truly, 6,000 years of human history has all too often been the story of pain, grief, and suffering. But why? Where did it all begin? *Where will it all end?*

THE TRUE ORIGIN OF SUFFERING

When God created the first man, He placed him in the garden of Eden. God told Adam, and later his wife Eve, how to thrive in the world God had created for them. We read: “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being... Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die’” (Genesis 2:7, 15–17).

Those were God’s very simple rules. But then Satan the devil entered the picture. This spirit being had once been the great archangel Lucifer, but became Satan—the “Adversary”—when he rebelled against God (Isaiah 14:12–14; Ezekiel 28:14–17). Satan tempted Eve to ignore God’s warning and eat of the fruit. Through her sin, and her husband’s decision to follow her in this defiant act, sin entered the human family. Through their choice, they brought on themselves pain, grief and suffering. Notice what God told Eve: “To the woman He said: ‘I will greatly multiply your sorrow

and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children’” (Genesis 3:16). To Adam, He said, “Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground” (Genesis 3:17–19).

Adam and Eve tasted the suffering that comes with sin, and earned the death penalty (Romans 3:23; 6:23). And all of humanity has followed that same course ever since, sadly reaping the same consequences (1 Corinthians 15:21–22). That is the origin of the pattern of suffering that has been going on for thousands of years—and continues to this day.

THE ORIGIN OF SIN

But if God is all-powerful, kind and good, could He not stop the pain? Why has He allowed generation after generation to experience horrific grief? This question strikes at the heart of why there is so much suffering in the world—and the answer is that *this is not our Heavenly Father’s world*. Long ago, God the Father gave rulership of the earth to the archangel Lucifer, the being who became Satan the devil through rebellion. Scripture calls Satan—who has blinded those who do not believe the Gospel—the “god of this age” (2 Corinthians 4:3–4). He is also called the “prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience” (Ephesians 2:2). It is Satan who influences mankind to hate, lust, envy and covet, and thus reap consequences of sin. The Apostle John warned us *not* to love Satan’s ways *or his world*, lest we reap the same consequences as others have: “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in

him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever” (1 John 2:15–17).

Your Bible promises a better world coming, when Jesus Christ returns to rule the earth. But that time is not here yet. Remember His words to Pilate: “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight... but now My kingdom is not from here” (John 18:36). Our world is not yet God’s world. It is under the sway of Satan, whom Christ called the “ruler of this world” (John 14:30).

TESTS AND TRIALS

Do not misunderstand—God is still more powerful than Satan. And God loves human beings, whom He created to become His literal children (1 John 4:8, 16). So, why does God allow Satan to cause such harm? The biblical story of Job can be helpful as we grapple to understand the purpose of suffering.

Early in the story of Job, we find Satan presenting himself to God with the other heavenly beings. In the discourse that follows, God gave Satan permission to strike at Job—within certain limits. Satan’s aim was to turn Job against God and destroy him. But God’s plan was to turn Satan’s wrath into a test for Job—an opportunity to grow in faith and spiritual depth.

So, what happened? Raiders stole Job’s oxen and donkeys (Job 1:14–15), lightning killed his sheep and their shepherds (Job 1:16), and Chaldean bandits stole a herd of his camels and killed their guards (v. 17). Job was then told of a great tragedy: “Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother’s house, and

suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead” (vv. 18–19).

Imagine Job’s grief! What an awful tragedy! In **one day**, Job had lost most of his wealth and much of his family. But his suffering had only just begun. God allowed Satan to afflict Job further, but commanded him to stop short of taking his life. “So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head... Then his wife said to him, ‘Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!’ But he said to her, ‘You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?’ In all this Job did not sin with his lips” (Job 2:7, 9–10).

Job’s anguish was so overwhelming that he wished he had never been born (Job 3:1) and that God would go ahead and crush him (6:9). He grappled with the painful question: *Why? Was God unfair?* His was a monumental struggle. He wanted to “call God into court” for allowing all these evils to happen (9:19, 32–33) and he felt bitter because he could not sue God for the injustice He allowed!

What was God looking for? Why did He allow Job’s suffering? *He allowed this great trial to soften Job’s heart, and to lead him to greater repentance.*

Eventually, Job came to realize that he had blamed God unfairly and rashly. He began to understand that God is always righteous, and that he always has our ultimate welfare in mind. Though we may not understand it while we are suffering, God’s aim is to use **all** of our experiences to lead us to repentance. Finally, Job praised God for His wisdom and fairness. He **thanked**

God for helping him repent of his sins more deeply. “I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes” (Job 42:5–6).

As with Job, God wants each of us to obey and trust Him, and to seek deep repentance. Along the way, He sometimes allows us to suffer the consequences of living in Satan’s world, so we will want to resist Satan and reject him! We should understand that our present mortal life is a mere “laboratory” in which God has placed us to learn lessons of character and submission to His will. When we suffer great trials, we can learn to trust in Him ever more deeply (James 1:2–4).

The prophet Isaiah wrote, “Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon” (Isaiah 55:6–7). Our natural human thoughts are not God’s thoughts. The ways that come naturally to us are not His ways (v. 8). So, God is allowing human society 6,000 years to go its own way, to experience firsthand that life without God—life following Satan’s selfish ways—brings only pain, regret and remorse. Yet, even in the midst of Satan’s world, we can be saved if we turn to God with our whole heart! “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).

PREPARING FOR THE KINGDOM

Yes, there is a better world coming—after Jesus Christ returns to

establish His Kingdom. Shockingly, however, rebellious humanity will launch a *massive attack* against Christ when He returns to earth at Jerusalem. Unclean spirits will incite the “kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.... And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon” (Revelation 16:14, 16). These



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gathered armies will try to defeat the returning Christ. Of course, they will not prevail, for “the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle.” (Zechariah 14:3). Christ will utterly defeat all those who oppose His ways and attempt to prolong Satan’s despotism on earth.

Jesus Christ will set His feet on the Mount of Olives, and it “shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley” (v. 4). There will be a massive earthquake such as has never occurred on earth—one that makes even the tragic Haiti quake seem small by comparison. Cities of the nations will fall, islands will disappear, and mountains will be leveled (Revelation 16:18–20). Why? To show once and for all that human society apart from God cannot stand, and will not last.

Even after this terrible plague, some—unfathomably—will for a time still blaspheme God (v. 21).

But as the dust settles, debris will be cleared away to make way for a worldwide rebuilding program. Survivors will be comforted, cared for and taught God’s ways. “And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing,

with everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isaiah 35:10).

A peaceful and harmonious new society will arise, with its foundations based on God’s laws and ways. God’s Spirit will be poured out on all humanity (Joel 2:28–29). A new world will be built, filled with joy and happiness. Think of it! Neighbors will care

for neighbors. Husbands will love their wives, and wives will love their husbands. Parents will bring up their children “in the training and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). Peace will reign, and wild beasts “shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:9). Yes, a wonderful world is coming!

You can prepare for that Kingdom now. You can ask God to grant you repentance and understanding, to truly walk in His ways as never before. And you can help build this new society, coming soon! The prophet Isaiah says to those who truly seek God, “The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and strengthen your bones.... Those from among you shall build the old waste places; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations” (Isaiah 58:11–12). The time is coming when the suffering and destruction we now see all around us—in Haiti as well as around the globe—will only be a distant memory. May God speed that day! ■

FOURTEEN SIGNS ANNOUNCING CHRIST’S RETURN



Will Christ return tonight? Will He return a thousand years from now? No! Your Bible makes clear the signs faithful Christians should watch for to know that His return is imminent. You need to know these signs!

Write for our FREE booklet, *Fourteen Signs Announcing Christ’s Return*, or download it from the Booklets section of our Web site www.TomorrowsWorld.org.

PROPHECY Co

Forgotten Lessons!

For many people, the Old Testament is *just that—old*, outdated and of little or no relevance to our present world. Because of this misguided and misinformed perspective, vital lessons recorded in the Scriptures and verified by the facts of history are being *overlooked, ignored and forgotten!* In the days just ahead, the tragic consequences of our modern social and historical amnesia will *shock and surprise* the United States and other modern Israelite nations, as ancient biblical prophecies continue to *come alive!*

THE BIG LESSON

One of the most important themes that runs through the Old Testament is that *obedience* to God's laws will bring blessings, and that *disobedience* will bring serious consequences. The God of the Bible promised that Abraham would be blessed if he obeyed God's instructions (Genesis 17:1–8). When God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, He promised to make them His chosen people, “if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant” (Exodus 19:5–6). In sealing the covenant with Moses and the Israelites, God promised blessings for obedience to His laws—and curses if they would disobey His commandments and “despise” His statutes (Leviticus 26:3, 14–15). God warned the twelve tribes of Israel that, because of their disobedience, He would “break the pride of your power” and bring curses including terror, wasting disease, plagues, defeat by enemies and captivity in foreign lands (see Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28).

When Joshua succeeded Moses as Israel's leader, God told him to “be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you... that you may prosper

wherever you go” (Joshua 1:5–9). Regrettably, after Joshua's death, Israel “*forsook the LORD... they followed other gods... and they provoked the LORD to anger*” and their enemies rose up against them (Judges 2:7–15). When David turned the kingdom of Israel over to Solomon, David told his son to “be strong... keep the charge of the LORD your God... walk in His ways... keep His statutes, His commandments... that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn” (1 Kings 2:1–4). However, when Solomon prospered, he *turned away from God* and followed pagan gods. As a result, he incurred God's anger—and his son Rehoboam lost most of his father's kingdom (1 Kings 11:1–13).

The book of 2 Kings records the gradual demise of the nations of Israel and Judah, and their drift into moral decay and idolatry—as they *forgot God, rejected His laws* and adopted the immoral and perverted lifestyles of their pagan neighbors. As a result, God *removed* these “chosen people” from His sight, and sent them into captivity in Assyria and Babylon after they had suffered crushing defeats at the hands of their enemies (2 Kings 17:5–11; 25:1–12). The *tragic lesson* that runs through the Old Testament is that when God's chosen people obeyed Him they were *blessed*, but when they forgot God and disobeyed His laws, they *suffered*—from disease, environmental calamities, military defeat—and, eventually, captivity. *The record is there for all to read*—in the Bible and in the annals of history! Considering this record, it is hardly surprising that Jesus said, “If you love Me, *keep My commandments*” (John 14:15) and emphasized that *breaking the laws of God is sin* (1 John 3:4)!

DANGEROUS PARALLELS!

But what does this ancient history have to do with the modern inhabitants of the U.S., Canada, Australia,



MES ALIVE



New Zealand, South Africa—and other locations, such as Scandinavia and Western Europe, where the modern descendants of the Israelites dwell today? Are these Old Testament lessons *still relevant* for Christians today? **According to the Bible, they still apply!** Many professing Christians *overlook* that the Apostle Paul wrote, “Now all these things happened to them *as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come*” (1 Corinthians 10:1–11). According to Paul, these Old Testament events are recorded so we can *avoid making the same mistakes* that our forefathers made *and suffering the same consequences* that they experienced!

Sadly, these vital lessons are being *ignored* and *forgotten* in our modern (and supposedly enlightened) world! Today, we live in an age where belief in God is becoming a subject of ridicule. Loud voices claim that the laws of God are not only outdated, but evil, discriminatory and even “homophobic”! Paganism is making a comeback in the so-called “Western, Christian” world and the numbers of witches and Satan-worshippers are growing. In fact, many so-called “Christian traditions” such as Christmas, Easter and various saints’ days can be clearly traced to pagan, pre-Christian origins—that the Bible prohibits and condemns (Deuteronomy 12:29–32; Jeremiah 10:1–5).

Although Scripture forbids homosexual conduct, same-sex “marriage” is *now legal* in many Western nations, and many once-forbidden sexual activities (e.g. homosexuality, transvestitism, cohabitation, prostitution and abortion) are now promoted as normal in school classrooms—and even blessed by some churches, even though the Bible *condemns* them as perversions and abominations (Leviticus 18:22; Romans 1:25–28). Many nations that once claimed to be Christian have not only *lost their moral compass*, they have *absolutely rejected* fundamental values that have set “Western Christendom” apart from the “non-

Christian” world. And this has all happened within the last 40 years or so!

TROUBLES AHEAD!

What will the consequences be for nations that once claimed to be “Christian” but are now turning away from fundamental Christian teachings? Students of history know that if nations do not learn from the lessons of history, they are bound to *repeat past mistakes*! Long ago, Moses warned the children of Israel, “I know that after my death you will become utterly corrupt, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you. And *evil will befall you in the latter days, because you will do evil* in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands” (Deuteronomy 31:29). Moses told the Israelites that because of their disobedience, aliens within their midst would become more assertive and the Israelites would wind up borrowing from foreign nations—who would then begin to dictate policy to them (Deuteronomy 28:43–44). These prophecies accurately describe the very situations that are confronting the “so-called Christian” nations of the Western world today.

The prophet Jeremiah also foresaw an *end-time period* that he referred to as “the time of Jacob’s trouble” when God would punish the Israelite nations for their sinful ways—stating, “*In the latter days* [the end-times] you will consider it” (Jeremiah 30:5–24).

The sobering lesson of Scripture and history is that when nations **turn away** from the laws of God and despise His instructions, there will be serious consequences! The God of the Bible clearly warns, “Have you not brought this on yourself, in that you have *forsaken* the LORD your God... Your own wickedness will correct you, and your backslidings will reprove you” (Jeremiah 2:17–19). Yet, this same God mercifully states, “When you are in distress, and all these things come upon you *in the latter days*, when you *turn to the LORD* your God and *obey His voice*... He will not forsake you nor destroy you” (Deuteronomy 4:30–31). These are powerful lessons of history that no nation can afford to forget!

—Douglas S. Winnail





Earth: Your Inheritance!

By Richard F. Ames

Jesus said that the meek will inherit the earth, but millions believe that they will go to heaven when they die. What does your Bible say?

Millions—perhaps billions—believe that the bliss of heaven is the reward of the saved. This belief is shared not only by most who call themselves Christians, but also by members of many other religions around the world.

Christians believe in the words of Jesus Christ. Jesus gave some of His most basic and fundamental teachings in what is commonly called the “Sermon on the Mount” (Matthew 5–7). How did He begin His teaching? “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:3–5).

Notice carefully. Did Jesus say that the poor in spirit would go to heaven, while the meek would inherit the earth? No! He said that the poor in spirit would be blessed with the Kingdom of heaven. The Kingdom of heaven will come to planet Earth when Christ returns! That is when the saved will be resurrected, and will inherit the Kingdom.

Jesus taught us to pray: “Your Kingdom come” (Matthew 6:10). Was He asking us to pray for something to come that is already here? If the Kingdom is here, then why has the world experienced such horrors as the two great World Wars of the last century, as well as the terrible genocides carried out against different ethnic groups?

No, the Kingdom of God is *not* already here. Christ must **return** to establish it.

WHERE IS THE KINGDOM?

The Apostle John explained that God has called His servants and redeemed them “out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation” (Revelation 5:9). What will be their destiny? Will they go to heaven? The Apostle John explains in the very next verse: “And have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign *on the earth*” (Revelation 5:10).

God did not offer to save us so that we could rest idly in bliss in heaven. He calls us to become kings and priests, who will assist Jesus Christ—the King of kings—in establishing lasting peace on earth. This is why Jesus said that the meek—those who humbly follow Jesus rather than their own self-will—will inherit the earth. When we pray, “Your Kingdom come,” we are praying for the coming of that Kingdom which will bring peace to all humanity, and in which faithful Christians will serve their beloved Savior, Jesus Christ, as kings and priests under His direction.

Over the years, some have taught that the Church, on earth, is the Kingdom. Others believe that the Kingdom is in your heart. However, the Kingdom of God is a coming literal kingdom, established upon Jesus Christ’s return, with Him as its King!

What, exactly, is a kingdom? Every kingdom has four basic elements: a ruler, a territory, laws and subjects. But how does this apply to the Kingdom of God?

Who is the ruler of God’s Kingdom? The Bible answers this question in many places, Notice what the Apostle John wrote: “Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself” (Revelation 19:11–12). Jesus Christ, wearing many crowns, will return to planet Earth as its conquering King (Zechariah 14:3–4).

Here is another description of Jesus’ appearance at His Second Coming: “He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine

linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” (Revelation 19:13–16).

Yes, the Ruler of the soon-coming Kingdom of God will be Jesus Christ Himself! Are you praying, “Your Kingdom come”? Are you eagerly anticipating Jesus’ return to planet Earth? The Apostle John certainly was. John concluded the next-to-last verse in your Bible with his prayer and fervent hope: “Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” (Revelation 22:20).

When Jesus Christ comes, His territory will be the whole earth! And His subjects will be all of humanity. Scripture describes that the whole world will learn the way to peace. People will come to worship their King, every year, in Jerusalem. The whole earth will learn to observe the same biblical Holy Days that Jesus and the Apostles observed. “And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles” (Zechariah 14:16).

Every nation on earth will worship the King—and will keep the Feast of Tabernacles. Many do not realize that the Holy Days are still filled with meaning for Christians today. The New Testament Church was founded on the day of the Feast of Pentecost, though many today have forgotten that Pentecost is one of the biblical Holy Days that God gave to His people. In the book of Acts, we read that throngs of people were gathered together

to observe the Feast of Pentecost when the Apostles preached to them and converted thousands. The people were gathered together to observe the day because it was commanded in the Bible! As the *NIV Study Bible* states: “Pentecost is also called the Feast of Weeks (Dt 16:10), the Feast of Harvest (Ex 23:16) and the day of firstfruits (Nu 28:26)” (p. 1,645). True Christians today understand that the Feast of Pentecost commemorates that stage in God’s plan of salvation when He calls the “firstfruits” to salvation in this present age, preparing them to rule under Christ in the Millennium.

WHAT IS THE “GOSPEL”?

Jesus Christ, the Messiah, came preaching a message that many may *think* they know, but that surprisingly few actually *understand*. What did Jesus preach? “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel” (Mark 1:15). Jesus taught that it was time to stop sinning, believe His message and prepare for the soon-coming Kingdom of God.

Have you repented? To “repent” means to acknowledge that you have sinned—transgressed the Ten Commandments, God’s law. It means not only to express sorrow, and repugnance at your sin, but to hate that sin so much that you turn from it, and begin to live a new life without that sin. Repentance means that you commit—with God’s help—to change your life. What is sin? John wrote: “Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4). As another translation puts it, “sin is the transgression of the law” (v. 4, KJV).

You cannot *believe* the gospel unless you *understand* it! Many who say that they believe in Jesus Christ do not, in fact, believe—or act—

what He preached. Jesus asked: “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46). If you are truly a Christian, you will do what Jesus commanded. If you truly become a Christian, you will accept Jesus not in some abstract way as a “Savior” whom you do not obey, but as your Lord and Master whom you strive to obey, with the help of the Holy Spirit. As Paul wrote: “Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? And ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body” (1 Corinthians 6:19–20, ASV).

True Christianity is a way of life. Once you repent, believe the Gospel and commit your life to Jesus Christ through baptism, He can live in you through the Holy Spirit. Then, you can grow as a Christian, and transform your life from a life of selfishness into one of service and love toward God and your fellow human beings. Those whom God is calling today are not being called merely for their own salvation; He is calling them to prepare to serve in His coming Kingdom as kings and priests, as we saw earlier. Their first opportunity to rule will come in the Millennium—the thousand-year period described in your Bible, when Jesus will rule a healed planet. As John wrote: “Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” (Revelation 20:6).

FROM WHERE WILL CHRIST REIGN?

From where will Jesus Christ reign? He will reign from Jerusalem. He says: “I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem” (Zechariah 8:3). In fact, when He

reigns, Jerusalem will have another name. The very last verse in the book of Ezekiel states that “the name of the city from that day shall be: THE LORD IS THERE” (Ezekiel 48:35). In Hebrew, that name is *Yahweh Shama*. From there, He will rule His Kingdom: “And the LORD shall be King over all the earth” (Zechariah 14:9).



When Christ comes back to rule, He and the glorified saints will rule over the nations—over physical human beings. Christ will teach the nations the way of life that produces peace. Today’s Christians—resurrected as spirit beings (the “firstfruits”)—will rule under His direction, as the kings and priests who will rule over cities and nations (see Luke 19:17; Revelation 2:26). These kings and priests will educate the world about God’s truth.

Notice this inspiring scripture, describing those who will be taught God’s ways during the Millennium: “And though the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your teachers will not be moved into a corner anymore, but your eyes shall see your teachers” (Isaiah 30:20). *You* could be one of those teachers. And what will the glorified saints—the kings and priests—teach? “Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This is the way, walk in it,’ whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left” (v. 21).

In the Millennium, the teachers will teach God’s law. The prophet Isaiah gives us an inspiring foretaste of what will come. “Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.’ For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem” (Isaiah 2:2–3).

Humanity’s often-contradictory and unjust laws will be no more. God’s laws will be taught and administered from Jerusalem. And the Ten Commandments are the foundation of those laws. Remember, Jesus said: “But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments”—then He went on to list several of the Ten Commandments (Matthew 19:17). Moreover, in His “Sermon on the Mount” Jesus actually *magnified* the Ten Commandments. He made them *more* comprehensive, and more binding, because Christians need to observe the Ten Commandments in the spirit, not just in the letter!

What will be the effect of God’s government? “He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore” (Isaiah 2:4).

When Christ returns, He will introduce the whole world to the way of peace. “The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones

shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:7-9).

In Tomorrow's World, all nations will know the true God—the God of your Bible—and He will bless those who keep His commandments, as He has always done. Notice this inspiring scripture, describing the blessings that come when we obey God's law. "Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him. For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing; a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper. When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you" (Deuteronomy 8:6-10).

YOUR GLORIOUS FUTURE

Can you visualize your part in teaching the nations to observe God's commandments, and helping all people live the abundant life God promises them? If you are among the "meek"—one who seeks God's will rather than your own—God can use you to teach others His ways.

Our planet, even today, stands out like a jewel in the vastness of space. But a time is coming when God will purify the earth with fire,

and renew it, before heaven will come to earth (2 Peter 3:10-13). As the Apostle John wrote: "Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.' Then He who sat on the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new'" (Revelation 21:2-5).

You can have a part in that awesome future. God calls His children His heirs, and "joint heirs with Christ" in Romans 8:17. As heirs of God, faithful Christians will not only inherit the earth—they will inherit the universe. We read: "He who did not spare His own Son, but

delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us *all things*?" (Romans 8:32). Also: "You have put *all things* in subjection under his [mankind's] feet" (Hebrews 2:8).

In these last two verses, the Greek expression translated as "all things" is *ta panta*, which literally means "the all"—in other words, everything that is seen and unseen. Yes, faithful Christians will eventually inherit the whole universe! Today, many of us dream of traveling to the far reaches of the galaxy, and marvel at the beauty of the stars, nebulae and other awe-inspiring and beautiful features of our universe. The time is coming when today's faithful Christians will be able to travel across the universe at the speed of a thought!

Yes, God wants you to inherit the earth—and more! As He tells us: "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son" (Revelation 21:7). May God help us all to seek Him, and His Kingdom, that we may soon inherit the earth, the universe and all things! ■



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THE WORLD AHEAD: WHAT WILL IT BE LIKE?



A time is soon coming when planet Earth will experience a wonderful transformation, and its people will live in peace and harmony under the loving rule of Jesus Christ. Do you want that peace in your life?

Write for our FREE booklet, *The World Ahead: What Will It Be Like?*, or download it from the Booklets section of our Web site www.TomorrowsWorld.org.



WATCH AND W

Modern Warnings from an Ancient Prophet

Pundits and preachers alike are struggling to understand what *really* lies ahead for America and the world. Few realize that an ancient prophet has *already* recorded the precise and sobering answers.

Tensions are high between Western nations and the Muslim world. Iran, China and other powers appear increasingly hostile toward the United States. While many European nations have enacted tough austerity programs, the U.S. continues to print money and to spend, staggering toward hyperinflation and economic collapse—hoping its creditors will continue to float its spiraling debt and weakening dollar, but finding itself *increasingly scorned* by other world powers.

China has largely ignored U.S. pressure to inflate the value of its yuan, and Germany is growing more critical of both U.S. *and* Chinese economic policy. Recently, German economics minister Rainer Brüderle “delivered a robust defense of his country’s economic course... before taking a swipe at the US, France and, implicitly, China.” Brüderle expressed his nation’s growing *pride* in Germany’s robust economic growth, and his nation’s growing *disdain* for both “lax” U.S. fiscal policy and Chinese currency manipulation. He then echoed what many economists fear—the growing dangers of a coming “currency war” or “trade war” (*Financial Times*, “Germany hits back at French and US criticism,” October 21, 2010).

Where will this all lead? Can we *really know* what is ahead for America and the rest of the world in the years ahead?

PROPHECIES NOT YET FULFILLED

Few understand that God gave the prophet Amos warnings not only for ancient Israel and Judah, but also *specifically* for “modern Jacob” (their combined

descendants) in our present day. A common mistake is to assume that Amos’ prophecies were all fulfilled by historic events such as the fall of ancient Israel and Judah, or the destruction of the Temple in 70AD, or the establishment of the modern state of Israel in 1948. But these are *inadequate interpretations* that simply do *not* fit the plain word of Scripture!

Amos was one of the earliest prophets, coming decades before Isaiah and nearly two centuries before Ezekiel, Daniel and Jeremiah. Amos wrote ca. 760–755BC, when Judah and Israel were separate nations under separate kings. Amos was from the southern kingdom of Judah, but he primarily prophesied in the northern kingdom of Israel. He wrote during a time of economic prosperity in Israel under Jeroboam II, and in Judah under Uzziah (2 Kings 14:25–28; 2 Chronicles 26:5–10).

Notice that Amos writes to the entire “house of Israel”—*not* just to “the Jews.” When God inspired Amos to use language such as “the children of Israel” (3:1, 12; 9:7) or “house of Jacob” (3:13; 9:8), He intended this as a message to *all twelve tribes*. Remember, Amos lived during the time of the *divided* northern and southern kingdoms. The distinction between the southern nation of Judah and the northern nation of Israel in Amos’ day was as clear then as the distinction is today between the U.S. and Canada, or North Korea and South Korea!

It is important to understand that “the house of Jacob” is comprised of the *twelve* tribes of Israel. The Jews are only *one* tribe—the family of *Judah*. In modern times, the tribe of *Judah* primarily comprises the Mideast nation of “Israel,” while the rest of the family of *Jacob* includes the nations of northwestern Europe such as France, Belgium and the Netherlands, as well as the United States and the British-descended nations such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand (To prove this



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for yourself, please request *The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy*).

At the end of Amos' prophecy, we should note the clear promise *for the entire house of Israel* that God will "plant them" in their land and they will no longer be "pulled up" by hostile nations (Amos 9:11–15). This applies to *all* of Jacob's descendants—not just the Jews—and will come to pass after Christ's return (see also Ezekiel 34:11–14). At that time, God will make a covenant with His people, will bless them, and they will no longer be a prey for the nations (Ezekiel 34:25–28).

The 1948 establishment of the small and perpetually assaulted state of Israel **did not** fulfill this prophecy! It was primarily established by just one of the twelve tribes—descendants of Judah—and, rather than live in prophesied peace, it has endured *continuous* terrorist and military attacks, under constant threat of being overwhelmed by its many hostile neighbors. Christ has *not* yet returned! Amos clearly contains prophecies *for our day and beyond!*

AMOS REVEALS OUR FUTURE

Amos warns of a coming *national humiliation* upon a stubborn and sinful people. Though his prophecies were relevant to ancient Israel, their *complete* fulfillment is yet future. Harbingers of this fulfillment can be found in growing anti-Americanism, retaliation over "quantitative easing" policies, and in the economic and political balance of power rapidly shifting away from an increasingly despised U.S. (*Reuters*, "Trade, currency tensions simmer at G20," November 11, 2010).

Modern Israel's plight during the coming Great Tribulation is outlined in Amos 4:6–12 (see also Jeremiah 17:1–4 and Matthew 24:21). Economic collapse, adverse weather and disease outbreaks will bring famine and pestilence (Amos 4:6–10; Ezekiel 5:12). Then will come war (Amos 4:10; Ezekiel 5:12), culminating in national collapse and national captivity (Amos 4:2; 5:3; Ezekiel 5:12). Human life will be bartered on the world market (Deuteronomy 28:64–68; Revelation 18:13). Only a tenth of modern Jacob's population will survive (Amos 5:3; Isaiah 6:13). This

punishment will come *suddenly*, when many do not expect it (Isaiah 1:7; Habakkuk 2:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:3).

Amos provides a tragic warning—but *it is God's warning*. Amos echoes other prophets such as Jeremiah, and Jesus Christ Himself (Deuteronomy 18:15), who plainly state that modern Jacob will be given "as plunder" to foreign nations (Luke 21:24; Jeremiah 17:3–4).

The modern Israelite nations as a whole are sinful and obstinate. This is why the LORD says He abhors "the pride of Jacob" and will therefore deliver the nation to punishment (Amos 6:8). However, God "will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob." Ultimately, He will save them before their complete destruction (Amos 9:8–9).

CHOOSE REPENTANCE OR PUNISHMENT

God also warns through Amos that, prior to the Great Tribulation, He will "send a famine on the land... of hearing the words of the LORD" (Amos 8:11). God desires that each of us *listen to* and *act on* the warnings He gave through His ancient prophets—and that He is giving now through His faithful Church (Matthew 16:18; 2 Peter 1:19)! He desires that we *choose life before it is too late!* (Deuteronomy 30:19).

Many Americans sense peril on the horizon. As *TIME* magazine recently reported, "In the U.S., the mood is sour... Americans are strikingly fatalistic about their prospects" ("How to Restore the American Dream," October 21, 2010). But *you* can heed Amos' warnings *now*. You can have hope!

Amos also anticipates what the other prophets promised—that after this time of terrible national economic and military humiliation, Jesus Christ will return as King of kings to establish His righteous government on the earth. Then, peace and abundance will flourish! Then, the resurrected ancient king David and the saints will rule under Christ (cf. Amos 9:11–15; Revelation 5:10)! This is the Good News of the coming Kingdom of God—the time when today's faithful saints will become "kings and priests" under Christ during His Millennial rule on the earth (Revelation 20:6)!

—Wyatt Ciesielka

EXPECT A MIRACLE!

One of the most popular themes in literature is **deliverance**. We are thrilled by stories of daring and bravery as people are rescued from danger, delivered from harm's way—sometimes at the last moment—while both rescued and rescuer are facing great risk.

The whole world watched with rapt attention when 33 Chilean miners were rescued last October, after being trapped for 69 days in a gold mine nearly half a mile underground. Though at first it seemed they were facing certain death, a team of miners, scientists and technicians worked together, tirelessly, day and night for months, to free the trapped men. It was a truly inspiring example of cooperation, hard work and technological prowess. People around the world rejoiced as the miners were painstakingly removed from the mine, one at a time, until all were delivered.

Countless books and movies feature themes of deliverance, because people are fascinated and inspired by it. The Bible, too, offers many accounts of miraculous deliverance. Consider the account of Noah and his family. It is a great story—and it is true. Think also of Abraham's deliverance of his nephew Lot against overwhelming odds. Later, Lot was also miraculously delivered from Sodom and Gomorrah.

God used Joseph, the son of Jacob, to deliver his people from famine. And perhaps the greatest escape of all time was God's deliverance of the Hebrew people from the mighty nation of Egypt, by the hand of Moses, with signs and wonders.

The New Testament also contains many amazing accounts of deliverance. Remember when Jesus was able to slip through a crowd of enemies who had sought to throw Him off a cliff (Luke 4:28–30). When the Apostle Peter was imprisoned for preaching the Gospel, chained between two guards, an angel freed him—the chains fell off, and the iron prison gate opened of its own accord so he could flee (Acts 12). Early in his ministry, the Apostle Paul had to escape the city of Damascus by being let down the city wall in a basket!

We are all interested in our own personal safety in the face of great danger. The Psalmist wrote eloquently about God's protection in these situations: "You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day, nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday. A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you" (Psalm 91:5–7).

As human beings, we all need physical deliverance from time to time. Ultimately, though, what we need is spiritual deliverance. Why? The answer is simple: because "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). What is the consequence of sin? "[T]he wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

Thank God that deliverance is available—through Him! Paul wrote, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Romans 5:8–10).

In a very important prophecy, Jesus told the Apostle John in a vision, "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth" (Revelation 3:10). Many other scriptures confirm this promise. Although a time of great suffering will soon come upon our world as we approach the prophesied Great Tribulation, God will deliver His faithful people from the worst of what is ahead—if we do our part to make ourselves ready. Our free booklet, *What Is a True Christian?*, can help you understand what to do.

When it comes to deliverance, expect a miracle!

—J. Davy Crockett, III



The Handwriting Is on the Wall

Continued from page 12

with the Israelites included blessings if they would obey His laws, but also serious consequences if they chose to disobey His instructions. God warned that “if you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors My judgments... I will even appoint terror over you, wasting disease... those who hate you shall reign over you... I will break the pride of your power... I will lay your cities waste... I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you” (Leviticus 26:14–33). All these things happened to the ancient Israelites when they turned away from the God who had delivered them from slavery in Egypt. Yet, that same God still exists and He has not changed (Malachi 3:6)!

Moses also wrote about the *future descendants* of the Israelites—who now dwell in northwestern Europe, the British Isles, Scandinavia, South Africa, North America, Australia, New Zealand—and the modern state of Israel (see our free booklet *The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy*). Moses prophesied, “I know that after my death you will become utterly corrupt, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you. And evil will befall you in the latter days, because you will do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands” (Deuteronomy 31:29)—a sobering description of our condition today!

The prophet Hosea recorded a similar warning, that God shall come against His own people. “He shall come like an eagle against the house of the LORD, because they have transgressed My covenant and rebelled against My law... they set up kings, but not by Me... they made idols for

themselves... They sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind... I have written for him the great things of My law, but they were considered a strange thing... For Israel has forgotten his Maker... I will send fire upon his cities, and it shall devour his palaces” (Hosea 8:1–14).

The prophet Isaiah also warned the Israelites, “they have rebelled against Me... They have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked to anger the Holy One



of Israel... The whole head is sick... Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom... you people of Gomorrah... As for My people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O My people! Those who lead you cause you to err, and destroy the way of your paths... Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil” (Isaiah 1:2–10; 3:12; 5:20). Today, it is the leaders in the Western “Christian” world who are watering down Judeo-Christian values and pushing the acceptance of homosexual activity and same-sex marriage—just as Isaiah prophesied!

The prophet Jeremiah warned, “Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture... they prophesied by Baal and caused My people Israel to err... they commit adultery and walk in lies; they also strengthen the hands of evildoers”

(Jeremiah 23). Jeremiah foretold a *future time* of “Jacob’s trouble” (referring to all the descendants of the Israelites) when they would be scattered into captivity in other nations “because your sins have increased” (Jeremiah 30:15). In *both* of these prophecies, Jeremiah indicated that “in the **latter days** you will understand it perfectly” (Jeremiah 23:20; 30:24). In other words, at the end of the age, just before the return of Jesus Christ, *all these prophecies will begin to make sense!* Perhaps this is why, in 1782, Thomas Jefferson wrote, “I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that His justice cannot sleep forever” (*Notes on Virginia*, Query XVIII). The Roman philosopher Seneca—a first century contemporary of Jesus Christ—made a similar observation: “The time will come when our successors will wonder how we could have been ignorant of things so obvious.”

America, and the once “Christian” nations of the Western world are *playing with fire* by turning away from God and the Christian principles upon which our nations were founded. While modern progressive leaders seek to *replace* divinely inspired biblical values with secular humanist creeds, *Bible prophecies* and the record of history clearly indicate that this vain and foolish attempt to construct an alternative culture on humanly conceived values will end as a *dismal failure*—brought down by the same God who inspired the handwriting on the wall that spelled out Belshazzar’s doom and the downfall of ancient Babylon! Today, **the handwriting is on the wall again**—this time for the so-called “Christian” nations of the Western world. Are we watching? Are we listening? Will we heed the warnings? Will we turn back to God, before it is too late? ■

Do Not “Assume” ANYTHING!

Continued from page 2

prophet David—the “man after God’s own heart.” And what about Elijah, whom many assume was “taken up to heaven” in a whirlwind. How could Jesus possibly say that **no one** has ascended to heaven except Himself?

He could say this because He *taught the Truth!* The Truth is that God’s word clearly shows that the patriarchs, the prophets and the true saints of God are to assist Christ in the Kingdom of God that Jesus Christ will establish *on this earth* after the coming resurrection from the dead. The Bible clearly states that, at the last trump, “Then the seventh angel sounded: and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!’” (Revelation 11:15). So, Jesus will soon rule over the “kingdoms of this world”—**not up in heaven!** Earlier, the book of Revelation describes these words of praise to Christ, “for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign **on the earth**” (5:9–10).

The Apostle Paul rhetorically asked, “Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?” (1 Corinthians 6:2). Here we see clearly that the saints will “judge the world”—**not go off to heaven with nothing to do!** This entire passage clearly shows that God’s true saints—members of His true Church—are to be “in training,” preparing now to be those future kings and priests who will assist Christ in ruling over the nations *on this earth* in Tomorrow’s World.

Speaking of His true saints, Jesus Christ states, “And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron; they shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels’—as I also have received from My Father” (Revelation 2:26–27).

If God’s faithful overcomers will rule over the **nations** with a “rod of iron,” it is obvious that they will not be up in heaven. Are there nations in heaven that need to be ruled over with a rod of iron? *Of course not!*

So, how can people possibly believe all of this stuff about “going to heaven” when the Bible continually says

otherwise? The *answer* is obvious. Most people just want to “get along.” So, they almost automatically believe *whatever* they are taught by family and friends. If they had grown up in Nazi Germany, they might have **assumed** that Hitler was a great man. If they had grown up in a Muslim country, they might have **assumed** that their prophet Muhammad was even greater than Jesus Christ.

What is the genuine **solution** to this quandary?

The ultimate solution will come when **all** human beings prove to themselves that there is a **real** God—the Creator and Ruler of all nations. Then, they must also **prove** to themselves that the Holy Bible is, in fact, in its original form the *inspired revelation* from God. And they must then be willing to **believe** the Bible—and **do** what it says!

That sounds very simple. But *extremely few* people on this earth have ever proved, or been willing to act on, those basic facts! *Are you?*

If you are, you will find that the Bible gives clear explanations for the problems facing humanity in the areas of physical, mental and—obviously, most important of all—**spiritual** health. Although it is not a technical book in mathematics or science, the Bible reveals the *foundational approach* to **all** aspects of human knowledge and understanding. It is the **Truth**—for it is inspired by the God who gives us life and breath.

If you will truly learn to **study** the Bible deeply, as the “*foundation of knowledge*,” you will learn much about the *real* origin of nations. You will develop the *correct* understanding of our relationships on this earth as males and females. You will recognize the right form of government that will eventually take over the earth. You will gain precious insight into *how* to treat fellow human beings, *how* to build your mental and physical health and *how* to gain eternal life in the coming Kingdom of God—the very *Family of God* that I describe in my article “What Is the MEANING of Your Life?” on page 4 of this magazine. You will learn how to fulfill the **ultimate purpose** for which God placed you on the earth.

So please do **not** “assume” anything! Learn to **prove** diligently and genuinely what is true—and ask God for the intellectual and spiritual courage to act on that Truth. If you do this, you will *never regret it!*



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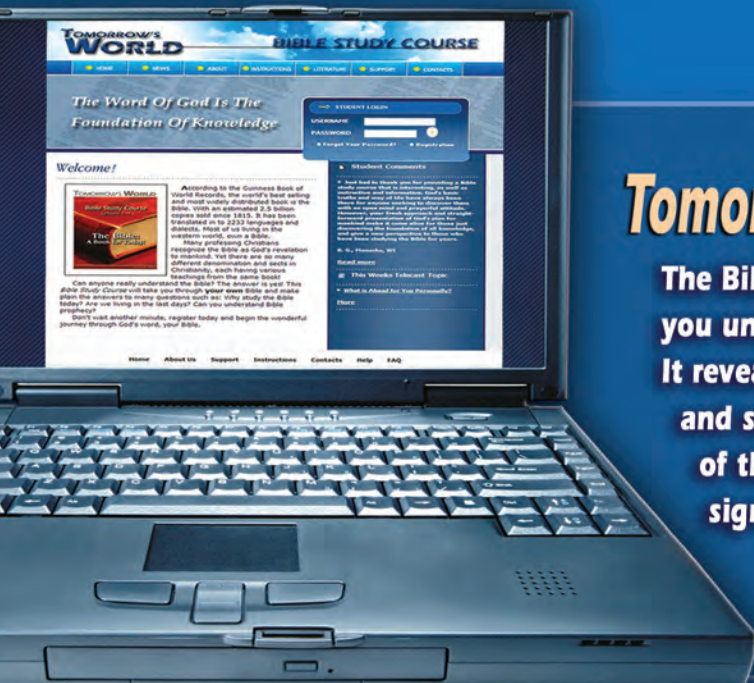
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