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THE MYSTERIOUS MARK OF THE BEAST





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

What Is Really Behind “Climate Change”?

Right after Hurricane Sandy hit New York and New Jersey, New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg spoke out, saying that “climate change” was going to become the “new normal.” Other politicians echoed his comments, making the assumption that increasing numbers of great storms will be just another ongoing consequence of mankind’s poor stewardship of planet Earth.

Really?

What these leaders do **not** know is that the great God who gives us life and breath has *directly prophesied* in inspired Scripture that truly “abnormal” weather would occur just before Christ’s Second Coming. Jesus Christ Himself—describing **end-time** events—stated, “And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near” (Luke 21:25–28).

Most professing Christians have not been taught that the very **real God** *does intervene* in His creation, and occasionally “changes” the weather in order to influence world events or to fulfill His will in a particular situation. So, will there be increasing “climate change” in the years just ahead of us? And, if so, will it be because of the words of Al Gore—or God Almighty?

A very clever Satan the Devil often tries to “front run” God by giving people wrong ideas “ahead of time” about what is prophesied to happen. I hope many of you read Mr. Dexter Wakefield’s excellent article “Unnatural Disasters,” in the November-December 2012 issue of this magazine, where he explained in

detail how Satan is leading so much of popular media to portray massive disasters, alien invaders and “end-time ‘Armageddon’” type wars—so realistically that when the awesome prophesied events *actually happen* it will seem to millions of confused individuals like “*déjà vu*.” For they will have already “seen”—on television or in the movies—similar events, such that the *real thing* will have less meaning and impact. More importantly, a perverse understanding of these events will *already* have been planted in the minds of these deceived people.

For Satan is the most clever and powerful **deceiver** in the entire universe! But the everlasting God is the Creator and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth—certainly including the **weather**! My friends, God proclaims in His inspired revelation to mankind, the Holy Bible, that *He* will *directly intervene* in weather patterns and *bless* people who are obedient to His will, or *humble* and **punish** people who rebel against His will. Our heavenly Father does this in love to administer needed correction when necessary—individually or collectively.

God told His people, Israel: “If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them, then I will give you rain in its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit” (Leviticus 26:3–4). God then warned, “But if you do not obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments. . . I will break the pride of your power; I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze. And your strength shall be spent in vain; for your land shall not yield its produce, nor shall the trees of the land yield their fruit” (vv. 14, 19–20).

So, terrible *drought* and *famine* would ensue if Israel remained disobedient!

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HUGE “REBELLION” JUST AHEAD!

By Roderick C. Meredith

An unprecedented worldwide rejection of God Himself—and His entire Way of life—is *just ahead!* Listen! This is **not** a small “religious” matter. As you will see, this will be a truly **massive** rejection of the God of creation. It will sweep across the world and involve *billions* of human beings. Many *thousands* will be persecuted or **martyred** for resisting this power!

My colleagues and I have discussed at length the real **danger** this final rebellion will pose, and we want to **warn** all of you *Tomorrow’s World* subscribers about a very powerful movement that is beginning to affect *your very lives!* If you have any real faith in the Bible, you should begin to look at world events far more closely than most do—because, *right now*, several phases of **end-time** prophecies are coming together. And the “mainstream” churches of this world have virtually **no** real understanding about these **enormous** events very soon to occur!

Think!

Are you and your loved ones mentally, emotionally and spiritually prepared to be threatened and possibly even assaulted by an unprecedented worldwide **rebellion**? This prophesied rebellion will reject almost every vestige of “Christianity,” then spur a “return to religion” with the virtual worship of a powerful and mysterious figure proclaiming himself the “god” of a religious system that will deceive the whole world. Are you ready? Is your understanding of the Bible firm, accurate and true? Is your personal **faith** in God and His inspired word really strong—or does it “waver” around the edges? *How* will you and your family **react** when a powerful and charismatic religious figure literally brings fire down from heaven? How will you react when the masses of humanity prepare to fight the returning Jesus Christ and His armies from heaven—whom they may even dismiss as “space aliens” coming to destroy mankind?

WHAT YOUR BIBLE CLEARLY PREDICTS

Most students of biblical prophecy understand that the Bible clearly predicts an **end-time** revival of the Holy Roman Empire. In Revelation 17:11, God’s word describes the final “Beast” or super-dictator who will head the entire Roman system within a few years. At that time, ten “kings” or leaders of nations are described as ruling for only an “hour” with the Beast (v. 12). The prophecy continues, “These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast” (v. 13). In World War II, Adolf Hitler—who was a forerunner of this final dictator—was not able to cajole or pressure the other leaders of Europe to submit to him. Rather, Adolf Hitler’s powerful army swept across

most of Europe and conquered these nations militarily. This time, however, through political and perhaps, most of all, **financial** pressure, these leaders of European nations—formerly part of the Roman Empire—will “give” their power and authority to this soon-coming “Beast.”

Why?

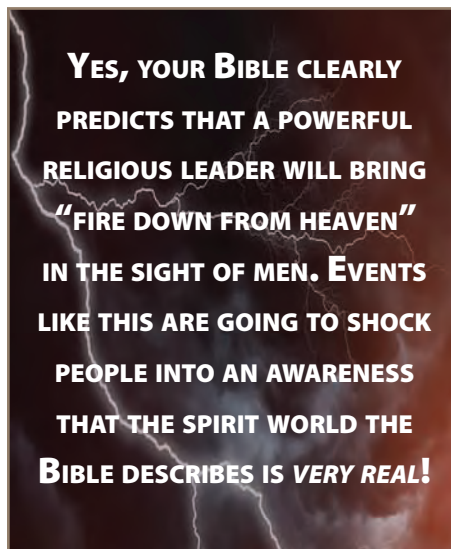
Because, over the last few decades, our so-called “Western” world has almost totally **forsaken** the true God—the God of the Bible. That is why the truly **shocking** events described in verse 14 could even remotely take place. For these entire nations by that time will have turned *so far away* from the true God that they will end up literally **fighting** Jesus Christ at His return! “These will **make war** with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful” (v. 14).

“How could this possibly happen?” you may ask. It is because your Bible also clearly predicts a soon-coming **massive** deception of this world’s population! It will go *well beyond anything* you have ever seen! Returning to Revelation 13, we find that this coming political/military leader called the “Beast” is clearly described. The “deadly wound” administered to the Roman Empire when it fell in 476AD was “healed” when Justinian revived the Empire in 554AD (Revelation 13:3). Roman military power inspired both fear and respect throughout the Dark Ages, and the *true* saints of God were often persecuted or killed by that power (vv. 4–10).

Then, in verse 11, “another beast” is pictured who *looks like* Christ (“like a lamb”), but his message is like a “dragon,” Satan the Devil (see Revelation 12:9)! God tells us that this second beast will make “**fire** come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of

men” (Revelation 13:13). Through such “miracles” the false prophet **will deceive** those who dwell on the earth by those **signs** he was granted to do (v. 14). Will **you** be deceived?

Yes, your Bible clearly predicts that a powerful religious leader will bring “fire down from heaven” in the sight of men. Events like this are going to shock people into an awareness that the spirit world the Bible describes is *very real*! If you believe that God Almighty inspired the many prophecies about this soon-coming time of religious



and political upheaval, you need to fervently ask your Creator for genuine **understanding**.

The Bible also describes this coming time in 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12. Please carefully *study* what the Apostle Paul was inspired to tell us. After warning God’s people not to assume that Christ had already returned, Paul stated, “Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day [the return of Jesus Christ] will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in

the temple of God, showing himself that he is God” (vv. 3–4). Yes, the Apostle Paul makes it clear that **two major events** of global significance will occur **just before** Jesus Christ returns to save mankind from total cosmocide.

AN UNPRECEDENTED REBELLION

Although the *New King James Version* of the Bible, like the *King James Version*, uses the term “falling away” in the above-mentioned passage, **many, many** respected translators render this phrase as “the **rebellion**.” The *Moffatt* translation states, “Let nobody delude you into this belief, whatever he may say. It will not come till the **Rebellion** takes place first of all, with the revealing of the Lawless One, the doomed One, the adversary who vaunts himself above and against every so-called god or object of worship, actually seating himself in the temple of God with the proclamation that he himself is God” (2 Thessalonians 2:3–4). The *Revised Standard Version* has it, “For that day will not come, unless a **rebellion** comes first, and the *man of lawlessness* is revealed, the son of perdition.” Also, the *New English Bible* states, “That day cannot come before the **final rebellion** against God.”

As America and the so-called Christian world increasingly *turn away* from the God of the Bible—as more millions of young people—even churchgoing youth—live openly in fornication, and as 40 percent of all babies in the United States are born to **unwed** mothers, as even now the institution of marriage is under attack and professing “Christian” leaders try to tell us that “same-sex” marriage is just fine, we can begin to realize that virtually **every** single vestige of genuine biblical Christianity is **under attack**. This will continue to build into a



massive rebellion against the God of the Bible, the Creator God!

As this terrible trend continues, a very cunning Satan the Devil will take advantage of this situation by raising up a false religious “savior”—a powerful, miracle-working leader who will absolutely captivate humanity by awesome miracles he will be allowed to perform. The Apostle Paul’s inspired prophecy continues, “And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders” (2 Thessalonians 2:8–9). Notice the **timing** of the “lawless” one, and his appearance and this massive **rebellion** against our Creator! God’s word specifically states that Christ will destroy this wicked man “with the brightness of His coming.” So this could not be referring to some **falling away** that took place 20, 50 or 2,000 years ago! For these events lead right up to the Second Coming of Christ!

Because of the unusual miracles, this charismatic religious leader will sit “as God in the temple of God,

showing himself that he is God” (v. 4). Yet he is called the “**lawless one**” and the entire religious system he heads is called “the mystery of **lawlessness**” (v. 7).

Lawlessness? Is Paul just talking about local ordinances or traffic laws? Of course not! For the entire New Testament shows that those who are willing to actually **believe** what it clearly says understand that a **true “saint”** of God is defined this way: “Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who **keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus**” (Revelation 14:12). Earlier, Jesus told the young man who came asking the way to eternal life, “if you want to enter into life, **keep the commandments**” (Matthew 19:17) and then Jesus named some of the Ten Commandments.

Years after Christ’s death and resurrection, the beloved Apostle John wrote: “He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him” (1 John 2:4). So, to **know** the true God—the God of the Bible—one must actually **obey** the Ten Commandments. It is not that **God’s law** has been “nailed

to the cross”—rather, Christ’s sacrifice allows the sins of repentant Christians to be **forgiven**. A truly converted Christian must **surrender** to let the true Christ of the Bible live within him through the Holy Spirit. As the Apostle Paul wrote, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20, KJV).

So, the “mystery of lawlessness” describes an entire religious system that has denied Jesus’ teaching to **keep the commandments**, and has substituted in its place an emotional belief in the **person** of “Christ”—actually, in fact, in a **false Christ** its leaders have invented. The coming “lawless one” (2 Thessalonians 2:9) will use supernatural **miracles** and truly diabolical methods to turn **most of the entire world** away from the true God, and will install **himself “as God in the temple of God”** (v. 4). Most of mankind will stand in rebellion against the true Jesus Christ of the Bible, having instead given its allegiance to a Satanic counterfeit

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WHAT IS A TRUE CHRISTIAN?



Billions will be deceived by the Beast and the False Prophet, but a few true Christians will remain faithful. Will you be one of them?

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Questions & Answers

Question: Some sources, like *Wikipedia*, claim there are no links between the Catholic Saint Valentine and Roman fertility practices such as the Lupercalia. Is Valentine's Day a holiday Christians should keep, based on this assertion?

Answer: When researching questions like this one, it is important to examine your sources carefully. For example, if you believe *Wikipedia* (as of late December 2012), Valentine's Day has no pre-Christian antecedents. However, a closer look at the various sources reveals a different answer.

Many common general references, such as the *World Book Encyclopedia*, openly acknowledge the connection between Valentine's Day and pre-Christian practice. Notice: "The Romans celebrated their feast of Lupercalia as a lovers' festival for young people... After the spread of Christianity, churchmen tried to give Christian meaning to the pagan festival. In 496, Pope Gelasius changed the Lupercalia festival of February 15 to Saint Valentine's Day February 14. But the sentimental meaning of the old festival has remained to the present time" ("Valentine's Day," Volume 19, pp. 205–206).

What was this Lupercalia festival? During this pagan "lovers' festival," the Romans celebrated the legend of the founding of Rome, in honor of the wolf that was said to have suckled the twins Romulus and Remus. Roman priests of this pagan rite would strike women with goatskin thongs in the hopes that this practice would increase their fertility. Couples would also exchange love tokens to "the first of the opposite sex seen that day" (Herbert Lockyer, *All the Holy Days and Holidays*).

What of the claim that Valentine's Day was invented solely in honor of the Roman church's Saint Valentinus, said to have been martyred in the third century AD? Lockyer points out that Valentine's Day observance—with gifts commonly given to the objects of people's erotic love—has no meaningful connection to a Roman saint, and far more in common with the ancient Lupercalia.

Some have asserted that Valentine's Day was established as a simple religious observance and only later took on its erotic overtones, perhaps encouraged by poet Geoffrey Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls*—sometimes called "the first Valentine's

Day poem ever written"—a tale of birds who would pair off with their mates in the late winter and early spring, and for whom Valentine's Day held a special significance. But unless the holiday already had its erotic tone, Chaucer's references and inferences would have made no sense to his readers! Clearly he was writing in the spirit of an already established sense that Valentine's Day was a special day for lovers.

Does it matter that Valentine's Day is a modern continuation of a pagan practice? The Bible is clear on this point. Anciently, God warned against practicing such imitation (Deuteronomy 12:29–31). The Apostle John reinforced this warning when he urged Christians, "keep yourselves from idols" (1 John 5:21). Gentile Christians were urged to abstain from "things offered to idols" (Acts 15:29). This clearly referred to meats offered to pagan deities, but also implied that Christians would distance themselves from observing even a holiday "offered to idols."

Jesus Christ Himself observed the national and civic holidays of ancient Israel, even under Roman occupation. He came to the temple in Jerusalem during the celebration of the Feast of Dedication, also known as Hanukkah (John 10:22)—a holiday that God did not ordain. It is not that we must only observe the holidays found in the Bible. But where our observance puts us into conflict with Christian morality, or includes us (directly or by association) in the practice of pagan customs, we should shun such observance—and thus we as Christians should not observe Valentine's Day.

To learn more, request your free copy of our informative booklet, *The Holy Days: God's Master Plan*. It will help you appreciate the festivals God established for His people, and how they are different from the worldly festivals carried over from pagan religion and appealing to carnal mankind. Order your copy online at TomorrowsWorld.org, or write to the Regional Office nearest you (listed on page 30 of this magazine) to request your free copy.

Oh Canada!

A Crumbling Foundation

Writing anciently to Theophilus, Luke the physician recalls an illustration used by Jesus Christ involving the construction of two houses. One of the houses was built on a foundation of rock. The other house was built on the ground without a foundation. In a similar account, Matthew compares the house built on a rock with a house built on sand. In both accounts, a violent and destructive storm arises and both houses are subjected to its torrential onslaught.

As the pounding continues, the house built on a solid foundation stands strong, from which it can be inferred that its occupants remain safe and secure. However, the house that did not have a solid foundation suffered a different fate. Under the intense pressures of a stormy atmosphere, the structure toppled with a great fall, presumably destroying both the house and its occupants.

While Christ used this illustration to demonstrate that we should not try to navigate life without the solid foundation of His word, it can also provide insight into alarming trends recently revealed in data from Canada's census.

THE FAMILY FOUNDATION

Strong families provide a solid foundation upon which strong societies are constructed. The family unit is vital in preparing citizens of a society for their fundamental roles within the society. Sadly, when one analyzes the startling trends revealed in the 2011 census, it can now be argued that the demise of the traditional Canadian family, and by extension the society as a whole, is well underway.

What is the basis for such a bold claim? For starters, a radically different portrait of a family's composition is emerging. "Social standards and private behaviours and household compositions have deviated so far from the conventional model that it has now become a risky thing

to make assumptions in the schoolyard or the playground about what constitutes someone else's family—let alone the values that go with it" ("Canadian families too complex for a one-size-fits-all approach," *The Globe and Mail*, September 20, 2012). One thing is certain: what was once considered a family unit in Canada is becoming

increasingly rare. "The once traditional mom, dad, and the kids now make up just a quarter of Canadian households" (*Toronto Star*, "Canadian Family Gets Redefined," September 20, 2012).

Not only are traditional families becoming less commonplace, but it also seems that the institution upon which families are built is itself at risk. According to a report at the Web site of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, "In 2008, there were 147,288 marriages in Canada. At 4.4 marriages per 1,000 people, the marriage rate was at the lowest level it has been in the last century." Among various indicators, HRSDC further reports: "Canadians who

marry do so at an older age than ever before. Between 1972 and 2008, the average age at first marriage increased from 22.5 to 29.1 for women and from 24.9 to 31.1 for men" (*ibid.*). By the numbers, it certainly appears that getting married and building a family is becoming far less important to Canadians today.

Another recent statistic may reveal why marriage is declining. In an online report on census data, the respected *Maclean's* magazine reveals, "The number of heterosexual couples in common-law relationships also rose, they now make up 13.8 per cent of all couples" ("Census: What Canadian Couples Look Like," *Maclean's*, September 19, 2012). More and more people are choosing to live together without getting married, revealing an increasing lack of commitment among the Canadian population. Rather than entering a long-term relationship ideal for building a stable and happy family, individuals are choosing to remain unattached,



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seeking the benefits of marriage without the marriage. It is an alarming trend involving individuals espousing the unrealistic and cliché idea that they can “have their cake and eat it, too.”

Maclean's also reports that, while on the decline, the married couple continues to be the most common family type at 67 percent of all families. However, fewer and fewer of those couples seem to be engaged in raising children. “Continuing the new trend from 2006, there are more childless couples in Canada than couples with children” (*ibid.*). Add to this fact that same-sex marriages, from which no children can be produced, “nearly tripled between 2006 and 2011” (*ibid.*). Such statistics cannot bode well for the Canadian family. What does this mean for the future of Canada? If family is an essential building block for society, then what are the implications of these drastic trends related to the demise of the traditional family for the True North?

God's Word

What does God say in the Holy Bible about these matters? From the beginning, God made human beings male and female for the purpose of becoming a family (Genesis 2:24). He did this, because He seeks *godly* offspring (Malachi 2:15). These offspring, after growing and maturing spiritually, will one day have the opportunity to enter into God's own family as His children (Romans 8:15–16). We learn about the process God is using to bring this plan about through practicing the roles of the marriage union (Ephesians 5:22–32). Furthermore, God created the family to provide a nurturing environment in which children can grow and learn about life and the reason for their existence (Deuteronomy 6:6–7). This

was so important that managing a family well was a requirement for leaders (1 Timothy 3:1–5). The family union was created by God, and serves a vital purpose in building successful, functioning societies.

God works through families. In fact, the Old Testament is essentially the story of the family of Jesus Christ. Many great figures in the Bible—including Adam and Eve, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Israel) and even King David—share the commonality of being ancestors of Jesus Christ. God blessed Abraham and told him about the coming destruction of two cities that had forgotten the value of a God-designed family. Why did God show this special affinity to Abraham? “For I have known him, in order that he may command his children



and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice” (Genesis 18:19). While blessing Jacob, God referred to the nations that would arise from him as “your descendants” and stated that “in you and in your seed **all the families of the earth shall be blessed**” (Genesis 28:14). Clearly, God views even the nations as family, and stresses that families are important in providing a foundation for children and for society. However, God also knew that the families of the earth would eventually **forget** the importance of family—bringing on severe penalties for individuals and nations alike (2 Timothy 3:1–5).

Today, Canada has for the most part forgotten the value of the God-designed family. Given the lessons of the past, the nation itself can expect to follow a slow decline to its demise. Only by strengthening the God-designed family and remembering its intended roles can the nation hope to remain strong enough to weather the storms of the future. After all, if the foundation is washed away, the house cannot stand (Matthew 7:26–27).

—James Ginn

THE MYSTERIOUS MARK OF THE BEAST

By Rod McNair

WHAT IS IT? WHO WILL RECEIVE IT? AND HOW CAN YOU AVOID IT? IT DOES NOT HAVE TO BE A MYSTERY!

What is the prophesied “mark of the beast” mentioned in your Bible? Is it a biochip that will be implanted under people’s skin? Or a paper-thin “data tattoo” mounted on people’s foreheads? For citizens of the United States, is it their Social Security Number? Is it a tracking device, or a thought-control implant? Theories abound as to what this sinister mark will be.

The following verse is what makes many shudder: “He [the beast] causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a **mark** on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name” (Revelation 13:16–17).

Scripture warns that this beast, whose followers are identified by a mysterious “mark,” will perform great “miracles” to deceive mankind, in

conjunction with a powerful military and political system. That powerful system will be identified by the mysterious number “666” (Revelation 13:18). Anyone who accepts the beast’s mark will be defying God! The Apostle John writes that those with the mark will “drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation” (Revelation 14:9–10). Surely we should take that warning seriously!

So, what is this mark? And how will it affect you and your family? As we head into the troubled days at the close of this present age, *these are vital questions!*

A FALSE CHURCH WITH ANCIENT ROOTS

A religious system called “Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth” is described in Scripture (Revelation 17:5). This system has its roots in the ancient Babylonian mystery religion. Described as a fallen woman—an apostate church—it is in direct opposition to God. Scripture describes this system exercising great political influence with world leaders, gaining and giving favors (vv. 1–2).

John further identifies Mystery Babylon as a very rich and wealthy church, “adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication” (Revelation 17:4). Jesus Christ sternly warns His people to leave and shun this church: “Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues” (Revelation 18:4).

But why would any church today be called by such an ancient

name as “Mystery, Babylon the Great”? It is because that church has *teachings* straight out of ancient Babylonian mysteries, which were the precursors of many of the world’s pagan practices (*The Worship of the Dead*, Col. J. Garnier, 1909, p. 8). What was one of the key components of these ancient pagan religions? *Sun-worship*.

A HISTORY OF SUN-WORSHIP

In the days of the ancient Israelites, sun worship was “widely diffused throughout the countries adjacent to Palestine” (“Sun, Worship of,” *Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, p. 1049). God expressly warned the Hebrews against this form of idolatry, knowing that it would be a *strong temptation* for them: “And take heed, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, **you feel driven to worship them and serve them**” (Deuteronomy 4:19). God is an invisible Spirit (John 4:24). He made the sun to provide physical light and heat to the earth and its inhabitants, not to be worshiped! God is to be worshiped, not His creation (Romans 1:25)!

Still, despite plain warnings, the Israelites did fall into apostasy and sun-worship. The prophet Ezekiel saw this chilling sight in a supernatural vision from God: “He brought me into the inner court of the LORD’s house; and there, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, **were about twenty-five men with their backs toward the temple of the LORD and their faces toward the east, and they were worshipping the sun toward the east**” (Ezekiel 8:15–16). The 24 courses of God’s priests, plus the high priest, were “bowing toward the rising sun” of the east. Did God consider this a trivial matter? Absolutely not—He

said in the next verse that these and other abominations *provoked Him to anger!* What is the lesson for us, today? Would God be pleased with us if we continued these abominable practices? Of course not!

Through every generation, God’s people have had to battle against compromising with God’s truth. This is true today, just as in Ezekiel’s time. So, do your beliefs really measure up to God’s instructions? The Apostle Paul instructed Christians: “Test all things; hold fast what is good (1 Thessalonians 5:21). If we profess to be followers of Christ, we must obey His commands! We cannot just follow the traditions and imaginations of men. So, ask yourself: where did you get *your* beliefs?”

THE CULT OF THE SUN IN THE CHRISTIAN ERA

The roots of many modern religious traditions can be traced to ancient Babylon. The old Babylonian sun-god was named Shamash. In Roman times he was known by his Persian name, Mithra. The cult of Mithra grew in prominence in the Roman Empire around the time of Christ. Author Samuel Dill observed, “Of all the oriental religions which attracted the devotion of the West in the last three centuries of the Empire, that of Mithra was the most powerful” (*Roman Society*, p. 585). Scholars have noted how closely the story of the god Mithra seems to resemble the story of Jesus. Consider a few examples: Mithra was to be a “king and a shepherd” like Christ. He was to give life and healing to the sick and even raise the dead. He would loose the bonds of the captives, and put an end to wickedness and destroy His enemies (*Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, pp. 71–72).

Mithraism had many apparent similarities with Christianity. And

yet, at its base, it was sun worship—which God calls *an abomination!* How could this be? The answer is that there is a great deceiver, Satan the Devil, who “works in the sons of disobedience” and “deceives the whole world” (Ephesians 2:2; Revelation 12:9). His masterstroke has been to create a *counterfeit Christianity* that would have many apparent similarities with God’s true religion, yet would be marked by paganism (for more information on this topic, request a copy of our free booklet, *Satan’s Counterfeit Christianity*).

Preposterous? Ask yourself: what is the best way for a con artist to deceive unsuspecting victims—by making his product look drastically different from the real article, or by creating something that in many ways looks *almost* like the real thing? That is exactly what Satan the Devil has done by attempting to blur the line between pagan worship and true Christianity.

Mithra was a “god of light” and was worshiped by showing reverence to the source of light—the sun. Jesus Christ called Himself “the light of the world” (John 8:12). He said, “He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life” (*ibid.*). Jesus Christ was “the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world” (John 1:9). Yet Jesus did *not* teach His disciples to worship Him by honoring the sun!

Some try to justify a blending of sun worship and the true religion, saying Christ was prophesied to be the “Sun of Righteousness” arising “with healing in His wings” (Malachi 4:2). But true worshipers of God recognize that the “light” of Christ is spiritual *truth*. The “darkness” of which Christ spoke is spiritual error and deception.

So, is your religion “marked” by obedience to God’s instructions

to worship the Creator, not the creation? Or is it still holding on to the ancient traditions that God called “abominable” millennia ago?

“CHRISTIAN” SUN WORSHIP?

Many professing Christians simply assume that their tradition of worshiping on Sunday comes from the Bible. Yet the Bible clearly commands the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, not the first day of the week! Daniel foretold that a heretical religious power would “persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall **intend to change times and law**” (Daniel 7:25). Shockingly, that is exactly what happened during the early years of the New Testament Church, when leaders transferred their Sabbath observance to Sunday.

Scholars—even the most respected Sunday-keeping ones—admit that the New Testament does not endorse a Sunday “Sabbath”—“**We fail to find the slightest trace of a law or apostolic edict instituting the observance of the ‘day of the Lord,’** nor is there

in the Scriptures an intimation of a substitution of this for the Jewish Sabbath” (*Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, “Sunday,” p. 1050). No scriptural or apostolic authority commanded the New Testament Church to change its day of worship to Sunday!

But if Scripture does not command Sunday worship, why is it the practice of hundreds of millions of professing Christians today? Could it be that the worship of the “venerable day of the sun” was slipped into the traditions of unsuspecting people by a great deceiver?

Authors George Barna and Frank Viola, in the book *Pagan Christianity*, point out perceptively that popular Christianity is filled with many unbiblical elements. They note that Sunday-keeping came about as a result of a compromise between Mithraism and Christianity sought by the pagan emperor, Constantine. The authors report that “it was Constantine, in 321AD that decreed Sunday would be a day of rest—a legal holiday. It appears that Constantine’s intention in doing

this was to honor the god Mithras, the Unconquered Sun... Further demonstrating Constantine’s affinity with sun worship, excavations of St. Peter’s in Rome uncovered a mosaic of **Christ as the Unconquered Sun**” (pp. 18–19). So, if you keep Sunday, on whose authority do you observe it? *A politically savvy Roman emperor?*

H.G. Wells, in his *Outline of History*, noted that “from the [Mithraic cult] it would seem the Christians adopted Sun-day as their chief day of worship instead of the Jewish Sabbath” (p. 543). *Unger’s Bible Dictionary* reports: “Sunday is the first day of the week, adopted by the first Christians from the Roman calendar (Lat. *Dies Solis, Day of the Sun*), because it was dedicated to the worship of the sun” (“Sunday,” p. 1050).

Some assume that John was describing the “Lord’s day” in Revelation 1:10 as Sunday. In fact, however, this is a reference to the visions he saw of the coming Day of the Lord—the prophetic year before Christ’s return. Remember,

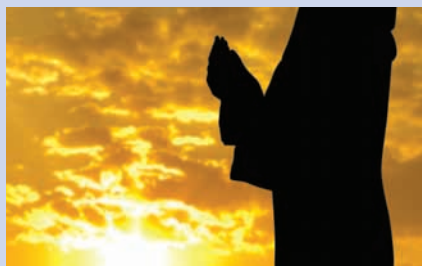
OTHER MARKS OF MITHRAISM

IT IS NOT JUST SUNDAY WORSHIP THAT MAINSTREAM CHRISTIANITY BORROWED FROM MITHRAISM. OTHER TRADITIONS WERE ABSORBED AS WELL. HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHERE THE DATE FOR CHRISTMAS, DECEMBER 25, CAME FROM? IS THERE ANY PROOF THAT IT WAS THE BIRTH DATE OF CHRIST? ABSOLUTELY NOT! JESUS CHRIST WAS NOT BORN IN DECEMBER, BECAUSE SHEPHERDS WERE NOT KEEPING THEIR FLOCKS IN THE FIELD IN THE DEAD OF WINTER (*CLARKE’S COMMENTARY, VOLUME V, P. 370*). BUT DECEMBER 25 WAS A VERY IMPORTANT DAY TO PAGANS, AS THE BIRTHDAY OF MITHRA: “THE 25TH OF DECEMBER... WAS HELD AT THE NATALIS INVICTI SOLIS, ‘THE BIRTH-DAY OF THE UNCONQUERED SUN’” (*THE TWO BABYLONS, ALEXANDER HISLOP, P. 98*).

THINK! IF YOU AND YOUR FAMILY OBSERVE CHRISTMAS, WHAT GOD ARE YOU WORSHIPPING? CERTAINLY NOT JESUS CHRIST! HOW CAN GOD HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH A FESTIVAL HELD IN HONOR OF THE BIRTH OF A PAGAN SUN-GOD?

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE IS ALSO ONE OF THE HALLMARKS OF THE MAINSTREAM CHRISTIAN CALENDAR. CERTAINLY MANY SINCERE PROFESSING CHRISTIANS SEEK TO HONOR JESUS CHRIST BY OBSERVING IT. BUT DID CHRIST REALLY RISE AT SUNRISE? THE SCRIPTURAL RECORD SHOWS THAT THE WOMEN CAME TO HIS TOMB SUNDAY MORNING WHEN IT WAS STILL DARK, YET HE HAD ALREADY RISEN (JOHN 20:1)!

SO, WHERE DID THE CUSTOM OF PRAYING TOWARD THE EAST COME FROM? CONSIDER WHAT THE HISTORIAN F.A. REGAN HAS TO SAY: “A SUITABLE, SINGLE EXAMPLE OF THE PAGAN INFLUENCE [OF PROFESSING CHRISTIANITY] MAY BE HAD FROM AN INVESTIGATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CUSTOM OF TURNING TOWARD THE EAST, THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN, WHILE OFFERING THEIR PRAYERS...” (*FROM SABBATH TO SUNDAY, DR. SAMUELE BACHIOCCHI, P. 256*). CLEARLY, THE MARKS OF ANCIENT SUN-WORSHIP CAN BE FOUND ALL OVER THE TRADITIONS THAT DEVELOPED IN MAINSTREAM CHRISTIANITY!



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the Sabbath-keeping Jesus Christ said plainly that He was “Lord of the Sabbath” (Mark 2:28), which meant the seventh day, not the first!

Scripture shows the Apostle Paul having the disciples gather together to bring an offering on the first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:2). But there is no sign of this gathering as a day of worship. Search the Scripture and you will not find a weekly Sabbath observance on a Sunday. Others justify their Sunday-keeping by pointing to the account of Paul talking with the disciples “on the first day of the week” in Acts 20:7–12. But a careful reading will reveal that this was not a worship service—it was a meeting with the disciples before he departed on a trip.

The book of Acts gives us one of the clearest scriptural references to Christians keeping the seventh-day Sabbath in apostolic times. Paul preached to the Jewish believers on the seventh day of the week, the Sabbath (Acts 13:14). But many rejected him, so he turned to the Gentiles, who begged him to teach them as well “the following Sabbath”—which he did (vv. 42–44)! This is a clear indication that *even among the Gentiles* the Apostle Paul did **not** neglect the Sabbath; in fact, he worshiped and taught on the seventh-day Sabbath, supporting its observance!

WHICH MARK WILL YOU TAKE?

Some say that it does not matter how you worship God, as long as you do. But is that what God says? Clearly, He commanded His people to not adopt the methods of worship of the people around them (“do not learn the way of the Gentiles,” Jeremiah 10:2) but instead to be true and committed to God’s instructions!

Mainstream Christianity has the marks of ancient sun

worship. In contrast, God also gives **marks** by which He identifies His true followers. He says one of the “marks” of His people will be the keeping of the seventh-day Sabbath. Speaking of the Israelites, God said through Ezekiel: “Moreover I also gave **them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me**, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them” (Ezekiel 20:12). In the coming days of vengeance and wrath, what could be more important than being “sanctified” (set apart) by God for special protection? That promise is available for God’s people today!

The mark of the beast of Revelation 13 is really no mystery at all. It has to do with the hand and the forehead—practice and belief (Revelation 13:16).


By contrast, one mark of true Christianity is the seventh-day Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment, which involves worshiping God while resting from work (Exodus 20:8–11; Leviticus 23:3). Certainly, “Sunday” laws forbidding keeping of the seventh-day Sabbath will be a severe test for true, Sabbath-keeping Christians in the coming days ahead. Will they

take the “mark” of disobedience and sun-worship and incur God’s wrath? Or, will they resist man’s traditions and remain true to the God of the Bible—obeying their Savior Jesus Christ in all ways, including the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath—to please God and gain eternal life?

What about you? Will you have the commitment to obey God and His commands? Will you have the courage to stand up for the truth, no matter what your friends or neighbors think? Will you be a true follower of Christ, willing to give up everything, if necessary (Luke 18:22)? Sometimes that “everything” means giving up preconceived ideas of who God is and how to worship Him.


Search the Scriptures. Find out for yourself. Reject the “mark” of disobedience to God. Accept His “mark” of obedience, including observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, and make the decision to obey Him *no matter what*. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you (James 4:8)! If you courageously and obediently serve God with all your heart, you can be assured that when Christ returns soon, you will have the **right mark!** ■

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Moral Meltdown Devastates BBC

Affectionately known as “Auntie” and “The Beeb,” the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) has for decades enjoyed an enviable worldwide reputation for *integrity*. Over the years the BBC has become a *byword for excellence*—a global icon and mainstay of Britain’s national identity. People at home and abroad have learned to *trust* the BBC.

But a series of events this past autumn conspired to bring that trust into serious question, and great shame was heaped on the BBC as it became embroiled in possibly the worst crisis of its 90-year history. This crisis has wide-ranging implications that provide a disturbing commentary on the *celebrity culture* that dominates modern life, and the profound *failure of moral values* revealed at every level of British society.

SAINT OR SINNER?

The crisis exploded with accusations of widespread *child sex abuse* committed by Jimmy Savile, a flamboyant BBC disc jockey and popular TV show host in the 1970s and 1980s.

When Savile died in October 2011, the nation mourned a colorful, larger-than-life personality who seemed to be almost a saintly figure, renowned for his charitable work raising millions of pounds for good causes. But the reality turned out to be dramatically different; Savile was revealed as a very *un-saintly predatory pedophile*, perhaps the worst in UK criminal history.

One might have expected the BBC, known for its journalistic excellence, to have uncovered Savile’s sexual exploits. Yet the august institution demurred, and a late 2011 investigation by the BBC’s flagship news show *Newsnight* was mysteriously dropped. It was a competing television channel that shared the shocking news with a stunned nation almost a year after the BBC chose not to address the issue.

A veritable avalanche of complaints then flooded into the police, revealing more than 450 victims across the country, with harrowing stories of sexual assaults, on an epic scale, spanning six decades of sexual exploits in prisons, hospitals and care homes, and at the BBC itself.

Savile was so well trusted that he could often gain access to young girls as he pleased. As one commentator starkly noted, in retrospect this was like giving Dracula the keys to the blood bank!

At one level, Savile’s activities were an “open secret.” Yet, despite the many dark rumors about his sexual proclivities, and despite attempts by some to expose him, Savile was never prosecuted. His cocky, self-confident celebrity persona, which some saw as endearing and attractive, disguised a swaggering predator committing offenses with impunity—and at will—right under the noses of the BBC and an unsuspecting nation.

Shock, horror and disgust were felt throughout the UK as the welter of evidence began to surface. But there was worse to come. Brave abuse victims, emboldened by the media attention, began to make charges against other celebrities, public figures, politicians and professionals—and, in particular, a senior Conservative politician.

This time, BBC *Newsnight* did run the story—but without adequate investigation and fact-checking. The story went viral on the Internet and a completely innocent retired Conservative politician was wrongly named. The most elementary rules of journalism had been breached, and serious flaws in the BBC’s management and editorial structures were revealed. The result was another national outcry against a BBC that seemed *out of control*. The BBC Director General was forced to resign, and other senior managers were sidelined. Lord Patten, Chairman of the BBC Trust, admitted to “unacceptable shoddy journalism” and promised “a thorough, radical, structural overhaul of the organization.”



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No fewer than nine enquires were rapidly set up by government, police and the BBC, to investigate what had happened, identify where laws had been broken, punish offenders, recommend safeguards and come up with measures to restore *trust* and *integrity* to the dysfunctional BBC.

A COMMON THREAD

So, what went wrong at the BBC and elsewhere to enable such widespread sexual abuse to take place over so long a time? Can the BBC recover trust and integrity? Have Savile's suffering victims been denied natural justice because the truth did not come out until after his death? And what can we learn about the background culture in both the corporation and the nation that allowed things to go so horribly wrong?

At the very root is a widespread moral issue. Corruption in high places, or among celebrities, is nothing new. Sadly, neither is the exploitation of the young and vulnerable. But, in the past 50 years, society has undergone a vast change in culture and standards of personal morality—particularly affecting organizations like the BBC. None of what happened would have been possible without today's *laissez-faire* “do what you feel” culture, which failed to prevent such abuses. To paraphrase the philosopher Edmund Burke, “*All it takes for evil to prosper is for good men to remain silent.*”

Steadily, over the years, the BBC—founded as an impartial and apolitical institution—developed the same humanistic bias that has become commonplace among much of the nation's intelligentsia and ruling elite. The BBC came to reflect the decline in moral and ethical standards that was widespread in British society. The management became bloated and inefficient, and the corporate culture careless and permissive, unable and unwilling to respond to signs of dysfunction. Columnist Peter Osborne has no doubts about where the problem lies: “*The corporation has been colonized and captured by a narrow, greedy, self-interested and self-perpetuating liberal elite, ignorant of ordinary people and contemptuous of ordinary morality.*”

BRING BACK BIBLICAL MORALITY

The overall lesson is simple and powerful. If our way of life were to be based on respect for the moral teachings of the Bible, our culture would be vastly different. The BBC aspired to this high moral standard during its early history, but that aspiration now appears to be a thing of the past. Much of society has abandoned belief in God and the way of life He wants us to live—and the result is confusion. We keep getting things wrong. We keep messing up.

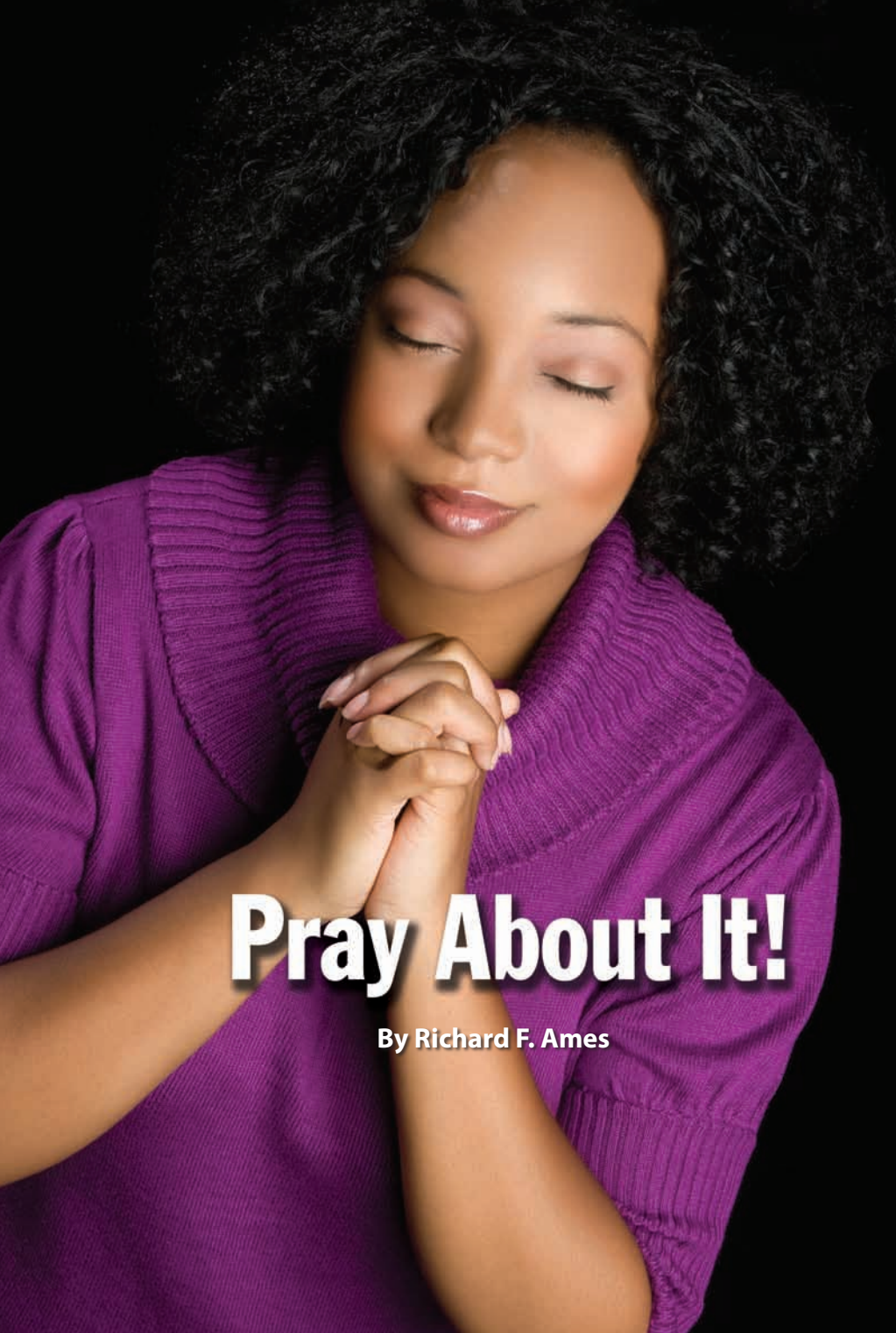
The prophet Hosea gave a stark warning for societies like ours. “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you ... Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children” (Hosea 4:6). Do not misunderstand; God **loves** children. He does not want to see them vulnerable, going astray and falling victim to despicable abuse. He wants parents to teach them His moral values, so they can grow to be upright, protected and strong. That is what God's laws are intended to do. As one politician wisely commented, “everyone, however rich, famous or glamorous, has to *live by the same rules.*”

There is a well-known saying, “*your sin will find you out*” (Numbers 32:23). Savile hinted in an interview that he knew people would view him differently after he died, but by then it would not really matter. Yet God tells us differently.

God will bring all people to judgment (Hebrews 9:27). And one day, Jimmy Savile will have to confront his sins, because “*God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil*” (Ecclesiastes 12:14). We may rest assured that God will provide perfect judgment for the abusers of this world, and perfect justice for the abused.

In the meantime, the BBC will need to work very hard to recover its moral leadership and its reputation for integrity. If not, “Auntie”—at least in her current form—may well cease to exist.

—John Meakin



Pray About It!

By Richard F. Ames

When you face life's problems, there is one vital step you should always take.

What kind of problems do you have? Problems with your health? Your finances? Your employment? Your family and friends? Your mental and emotional stability? Different problems require us to take different steps toward their solution. But every lasting solution has one step in common: prayer.

Yes, we have to do our part. But the Creator God has **all power** in the universe. He can give us dramatic deliverance and help us in miraculous ways!

If God is to help solve your problems and answer your prayers, what does He expect of **you**? The Bible tells us: “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6).

As you read the Bible accounts of how God helped people and delivered them from tremendous stresses and trials, you will come to have more faith. Read the account of Daniel in the lions’ den (Daniel 6); the deliverance of Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego from the fiery furnace of Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon (Daniel 3), and the escape of the ancient Israelites through the Red Sea (Exodus 14). Read about the miracles performed by Jesus of Nazareth—the Son of God—in healing the diseased, the blind, the lame, and the deaf (Matthew 9:18; John 11). Read of how Jesus raised the dead to life! This will help give you faith and hope!

The prophet Jeremiah gave hope to the people of ancient Judah whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken captive to Babylon. After they learned their lessons, God promised to respond to their humble prayer: “For thus says the LORD: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go

and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you, says the LORD” (Jeremiah 29:10–14).

That same principle applies to you! You can have a conversation with the Creator of the Universe! He says you can find Him, if you seek Him with your whole heart. You can pray or talk to Him and He says: “I will listen to you!”

HOW SHOULD WE PRAY?

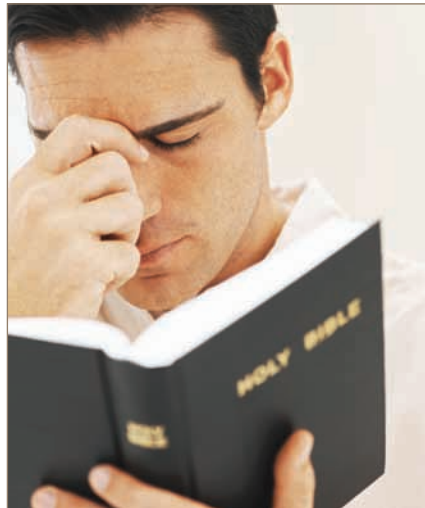
What does the Bible teach us regarding how we should pray? After Jesus chose His disciples, they asked Him to teach them to pray: “Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples’” (Luke 11:1).

What did Jesus teach them? He gave His disciples an outline of subjects to talk to God about. “So He said to them, ‘When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one’” (Luke 11:2–4).

Christ’s “model prayer” shows us that the first important aspect of our prayer is the acknowledgement of who God is! He is our Father. Since God is your Father, He wants you to acknowledge yourself as His son or daughter, and recognize in your prayers the very personal and intimate relationship that He desires to share with you. You may also want to acknowledge God as the Creator, as King David often did in his prayers, many of which are recorded in the book of Psalms in your Bible.

If ever you feel that you do not know what to pray about, just open

your Bible to the book of Psalms. Many of the Psalms are the heartfelt prayers of David. He was very straightforward, open and honest with God about his feelings, his anxieties and his problems. David stood in awe at the heavens and



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the expansiveness of the Creation. You can see this in so many of the Psalms; look especially at Psalm 8, or Psalms 18, 19 and 24 to be inspired by David’s example.

PRAY FOR HIS KINGDOM AND HIS WILL

What is the next subject Jesus shows us we should pray about? “Your kingdom come” (Luke 11:2). You will want to follow Christ’s example by praying for His Work—that the good news, the gospel, will be preached in all the world. Why does Jesus Christ need to come back and rule over the whole earth? When you read your daily newspaper or listen to the news, do you often utter an immediate, heartfelt prayer for God’s Kingdom to come soon? The tragedies of war, violence, disease, poverty and all kinds of human suffering make us yearn for God’s Kingdom.

Our prayers should reflect that yearning. The whole world needs the Kingdom of God. It needs to be

reeducated to uphold godly values—the way of life that produces joy and peace. That is the way of God’s law. In the Kingdom of God, Christ will teach the whole world the true way of living—which includes keeping the Ten Commandments as Jesus magnified them. There is a way of love that produces right results. Every nation on earth needs that kind of education!

Jesus next taught us in the outline prayer the importance of seeking to do God’s will and not our own. Jesus taught us to pray: “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Luke 11:2). This is an extremely important key to answered prayer. Human beings are by nature extremely selfish. The worldly view is one of lust and greed. We all have had, and maybe you still have, the “get” motive! Many people just want their lusts to be satiated. They want their own way. We read in Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25: “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (KJV). But God’s way, exemplified by Jesus of Nazareth, is the “give” way! Is that the way you pray? Do you pray for others before you pray for yourself? Pray for God’s will to be done in your life—He knows what is best for us!

When Jesus prayed in agony the night before His crucifixion, He asked that the cup of suffering be passed from Him if it were God’s will! Notice that Jesus prayed: “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.’ Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (Luke 22:42–44).

Jesus was willing to suffer for you! He surrendered His will to

His Father's will! When you are struggling over some problem or trial, ask for God's deliverance, but also pray that His will be done. Do you fear that this is too much to ask? Are you afraid that you cannot handle a trial? Notice that God the Father even strengthened Jesus Christ to endure the sacrifice He was to make.

CLAIM PROMISES THROUGH PRAYER

God also makes His will known in the thousands of promises He gives us in the Bible. You can claim those promises! Let us look at a couple of them. "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19). What do you need? Do you need food or clothing? Do you need a job? Ask! God promises to provide your every need, but you must do your part! What did Jesus say? "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7). As long as you are asking God's will to be done, not your own, He will provide your every need as He has promised!

We have other needs that we sometimes do not really recognize, such as being put back on the right spiritual track when we have gone astray. Sometimes we need correction. We can be comforted by realizing that our Lord will give us the guidance we need to get back on the right track. Sometimes this can be painful, but it is always for our benefit (Hebrews 12).

If we are to experience the power of prayer, we must have our priorities in order. What are your priorities in life? Do you know what your goal in life should be? In the sixth chapter of the book of Matthew, Jesus emphasized that God will provide our needs, but that we also have a role to play: "But seek first the kingdom

of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33). To what "things" was Jesus referring? He was speaking of all the physical things humans need and often worry about because they do not trust God! Jesus chided these fearful people for their anxieties: "Now if God so clothes the

WE HAVE OTHER NEEDS THAT WE SOMETIMES DO NOT REALLY RECOGNIZE, SUCH AS BEING PUT BACK ON THE RIGHT SPIRITUAL TRACK WHEN WE HAVE GONE ASTRAY. SOMETIMES WE NEED CORRECTION. WE CAN BE COMFORTED BY REALIZING THAT OUR LORD WILL GIVE US THE GUIDANCE WE NEED TO GET BACK ON THE RIGHT TRACK.

grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?" (Matthew 6:30).

There is no need to fear—God has made the wonderful promise that as we seek first the Kingdom of God, we will also be establishing a close relationship with our Father in Heaven, and with His Son—our Savior—Jesus Christ. God knows what we need, but He wants us to learn to trust Him and to be dependent upon Him.

Most Americans know that their country's currency has imprinted or engraved upon it: "In God we trust." Can we as Christians live up to this simple but profound motto?

PRAY FROM THE HEART

Another very basic principle for experiencing the power of prayer

is this: Just speak from the heart. You need not become caught up in memorized prayers that become vain and meaningless. Jesus warned us about useless repetitions: "And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him" (Matthew 6:7–8).

Many religions emphasize repetitious prayers—saying the same few words over and over again, or using prayer wheels or prayer flags that supposedly send a message from practitioners to their unseen god. God says all of that is in vain! Remember, God expects you to seek a **personal** relationship with Him. Since He knows your needs, simple requests may be all that are necessary, but you must be sincere and heartfelt as you would be in dealing with a loved one! And when you reflect on the blessings God has given you, physically and spiritually, as well as answered prayers—do not forget to thank Him in your prayers (Ephesians 5:20)!

Jesus said, "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Christians do suffer and experience many trials in life. But they have the power of Christ to help them endure. They also have the opportunity to recapture the true values of life and abundant living. So in addition to God's promise that He will provide our every need, there is a special promise concerning the desires of our heart. "Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4). What an amazing promise! Obviously these must be lawful desires, in harmony with God's will. And if you are in harmony with God's will, there are so

Continued on page 23



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I have really been blessed by the prophetic messages I was privileged to read in the *Tomorrow's World* magazines. God bless you!

T. A., Bale, Ethiopia

I thank God with all my heart for the wonderful gift of Bible teaching that He has given you. I am of Sudanese background and nationalized as an Australian. While watching you presenting the good news about the soon-coming Kingdom of God on *Tomorrow's World* telecast, I got convicted so much that I had tears flowing in my eyes.

R. M., Armidale, NSW, Australia

I have just read your booklet, *The Ten Commandments*. What a beautiful thing it was to read. I can't express in words what an eye opener it was. I feel I have learned so much from that booklet and I don't want to part with it. I intend reading one of the commandments each day for the rest of my life. I am 87 years old and have been receiving your magazine for years and it has made a huge difference in my life and my family's lives. Again, I thank you for all diligence in trying to teach people the real reason to live good lives. I know how sincere you are in trying to get the world to read and learn of God our Father and His beloved son, Jesus Christ. Many thanks for everything you do. I know God will bless you.

G. H., Fremantle, WA, Australia

This is my third week watching the *Tomorrow's World* program on television. I liked the topics about "The Ten Commandments" and "Your Ultimate Destiny." I would like to learn more. I have already requested several of your free booklets. Thank you very much for your ministries.

W. L., Santa Maria, Philippines

I need to tell you how much I enjoy and appreciate your ministry. I thank God daily for not letting me

continue to wander in the wilderness and for leading me to your literature. I am finally in position to read, understand and accept His word in my life.

C. D., Prince George, VA

In the September–October 2012 issue of *Tomorrow's World*, Roderick C. Meredith made some unwise recommendations in "How Would Jesus Vote for President?" He basically wrote that believers in Christ not only shouldn't vote, but should abstain from the entire political process in this country. The system would be far worse if men humbled by Christ didn't hold political office or run for such office. Abandoning government authority to the rule of evil men is the height of folly. Hopefully not many who read Mr. Meredith's article will follow his dangerous recommendations. How about voting for Jesus Christ for President? Now there's someone I (and I think Mr. Meredith) will enthusiastically vote for!

K. R., Bronx, NY

Editor's Note: We at *Tomorrow's World* trust in God's judgment as to whom He places as rulers over the nations (Daniel 5:21). True Christians understand that they are, in effect, "ambassadors" of God's coming Kingdom (2 Corinthians 5:20; Ephesians 6:20), called to live peaceably among the nations of this world. Just as other nations' ambassadors cannot vote in U.S. elections, Christians understand that their primary citizenship is in heaven, making it inappropriate for them to vote in this world's political contests (Philippians 3:20).

I have been reading your booklets. I was reading in *The Ten Commandments* about the Fourth Commandment, and it made me want to read more, so I ordered the booklet *God's Church Through the Ages*. The more I read the more I want to know. Please keep up the good work. God bless you all.

R. M., Baton Rouge, LA

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.

PROPHECY Co

Famines and Food Shortages Ahead!

News reports from around the world proclaim that record heat waves, major droughts, floods and on-going violence have seriously reduced harvests in normally productive regions of the United States, Australia, South Africa and Russia. As a result, millions are facing dangerous food shortages, and countless thousands dependent on these crops have died of starvation and malnutrition-related conditions. Yet, in our increasingly secular world, few realize that Bible prophecies have *long foretold* that these very conditions would dominate the news just before the return of Jesus Christ to this earth. These ancient prophecies are *coming alive today*—right before our eyes!

FAMINES FORETOLD

Jesus was asked by His disciples, “What will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?” He listed a number of specific events that would become obvious on the world scene, including “wars and rumors of wars... *famines*, pestilences [disease epidemics], and earthquakes in various places” (Matthew 24:3–7; see also Mark 13:8). The Apostle John recorded in his famous prophecy about the Four Horsemen that the times just before Christ’s return would be marked by wars (a red horse) and *widespread food shortages* (a black horse), in addition to violence, *hunger* and disease that will claim the lives of *one quarter* of the world’s population (Revelation 6:1–8). Jesus referred to these increasingly severe global catastrophes as “the beginning of sorrows” that will precede *even greater* calamities that will strike sinful and rebellious nations of the earth (Matthew 24:8). The Bible reveals the sobering *prophetic significance* of dramatic, weather-related events that will announce the return of Jesus Christ is near.



GLOBAL HEADLINES

The United Nations recently warned of a “looming worldwide food crisis in 2012,” stating that “the global food supply system could collapse” because world food reserves have dropped to the lowest levels in decades, and the world’s population is consuming more food than is produced each year (*The Observer*, October 13, 2012). Record droughts and floods, combined with depleted food reserves, leave “no room for unexpected events” in the years ahead. Agronomists realize that another major drought in food-producing regions of the U.S. will cause serious food shortages, and that a major worldwide drought will trigger widespread starvation because long-relied-upon surpluses are now gone. Put simply, we may be one bad harvest away from a **major catastrophe!**

However, chronic hunger is already a fact of life in many areas of the world.

A recent report by the Stockholm International Water Institute stated that, “Nine hundred million people already go hungry and 2 billion are malnourished” (“Food shortages could force world into vegetarianism, warn scientists,” *The Guardian UK*, August 26, 2012)—primarily in developing countries in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, the Caribbean and Latin America. Each year, hunger kills more people than AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined—including about 5 million children. Malnutrition interferes with brain development in children and seriously reduces the ability of the immune system to protect individuals from infectious diseases.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

But why is the world moving towards serious food shortages and widespread famine? How could Bible



FAMINES ALIVE

prophecies foretell that these *specific calamitous events* would occur at the end of the age?—because the God of the Bible understands the physical laws of Creation and human nature. Famines arise from natural, man-made and supernatural causes. The relentless pressure of population growth, dwindling amounts of arable land and the physical limits of food production were foreseeable. Severe weather events can be due to natural factors, but may also be caused by God’s direct intervention (see Exodus 9:18–26; Joshua 10:8–11; Judges 4:15; 5:21). Mankind’s tendency of violence toward other human beings is also a factor as warring factions within nations disrupt and destroy crop harvests, causing dislocation and starvation for hundreds of thousands living in war-torn areas of the world.

Poor planning—lack of vision and bad government—can also lead to serious food shortages and famines that affect millions of people (see Proverbs 29:18). Forcing developing countries to accept surplus food from developed countries has put many local farmers out of business. Countries dependent on food imports face serious budgetary issues when the cost of imported food increases. While most Americans spend less than 10 percent of their income on food, people in developing countries may spend 50 to 60 percent of their incomes on food. When food prices increase, the poor are hit the hardest and are most prone to go hungry.

Food production systems built on profit-seeking motives and greed can lead to serious inequities in food availability. Government-legislated biofuels programs—that use corn to produce ethanol to power automobiles and soybeans and palm oil to produce biodiesel fuel—can also contribute to food shortages. The United States currently uses about 40 percent of its corn crop for ethanol production—which has increased the price of corn more than 20 percent. Yet corn is a major food source for much of the world. As the demand for corn and the price of corn increases—driven by the demand for ethanol—corn importing countries are hit hard.

PROPHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

Scientists have identified numerous human and physical factors that threaten the world with widespread

famines, but only the Bible provides a *vital perspective* that is *totally missing* from secular news analysis. Scripture reveals that a time of judgment is coming on the earth—especially upon nations that have turned their backs on God. The Bible explains that serious consequences occur when physical and spiritual laws designed by the Creator are violated (see 1 John 3:4; Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28). The God of the Bible condemns greed and the exploitation of the poor (1 Timothy 6:10; Ephesians 4:17–19; Amos 2:6–7; Zechariah 7:7–11)—factors that are causing millions to go hungry today. The Bible condemns fornication, adultery and homosexuality (1 Corinthians 6:18; Exodus 20:14, 17; Leviticus 18:22), yet the so-called “Christian” nations of the West that were so abundantly blessed by God are now actively promoting these evil behaviors. Scripture plainly states that God hates divorce (Malachi 2:16), yet these same nations lead the world today in divorce and conceiving children out of wedlock.

Tragically, millions have been deceived into believing there is no God and that the laws of God are a “strange thing”—antiquated, done away and no longer relevant (Hosea 8:11–14). However, God will dramatically intervene in human affairs to straighten out the terrible conditions that have caused so much human suffering. He will bring extreme weather conditions on sinful nations that despise His laws and oppress the poor. He warns, “if you do not obey Me... if you despise My statutes... I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze... your land shall not yield its produce... I will lay your cities waste... I will bring the land to desolation” (Leviticus 26:14–33). The prophet Joel foretold that, just before Christ’s return, food supplies will be cut off and storehouses will be in shambles due to extreme weather conditions and other catastrophes (Joel 1:8–20).

When God begins to intervene in world affairs and judge the nations (Isaiah 24:1–6), human beings will come to know that the God of the Bible is real, His Way is true and that He cares for the welfare of His children (2 Peter 3:9; Hebrews 12:6).

—Douglas S. Winnail

Ask Not?

Fifty-two years ago—a little more than two generations ago—on January 20, 1961, in his only inaugural address, United States President John F. Kennedy called on his audience to support him in advancing the ideals of freedom and common prosperity. As the U.S. prepares for the second inaugural address of President Barack Obama, how have the U.S. and other Western nations fared in achieving President Kennedy's goals?

In his famous address, President Kennedy stated: "To those new states whom we welcome to the ranks of the free, we pledge our word that one form of colonial control shall not have passed away merely to be replaced by a far more iron tyranny. We shall not always expect to find them supporting our view. But we shall always hope to find them strongly supporting their own freedom—and to remember that, in the past, those who foolishly sought power by riding the back of the tiger ended up inside. To those people in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves, for whatever period is required—not because the Communists may be doing it, not because we seek their votes, but because it is right."

Where do we stand today? Consider this assessment by political analysts Samuel Chi, Kevin Sullivan and Gregory Scoblete, in their essay *The State of the World in 2012*: "Several key questions hang over the world... Will the Eurozone collapse? Will the Arab Spring yield a new and generally more stable and benign Middle East or something worse? Will the U.S. and NATO find a satisfying off-ramp in Afghanistan? Will Iran's nuclear program trigger an arms race, or worse? Will China avoid a political or economic crisis?"

The grand ideals put forth in President Kennedy's address are certainly worth pursuing. However, they are not new, as mankind has since the very beginning sought their fulfillment. Nearly two millennia ago, Jesus Christ came to the earth preaching a message of peace and prosperity for all, which would be found through the coming Kingdom of God. Christ came to a world that then, as now, had not known such

peace and prosperity for most of mankind. Bringing a message from the very Author of peace and prosperity, He told His listeners that He came "that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

Jesus Christ exemplified by His life the only sure way to freedom and prosperity, showing by example the path of benevolent leadership and personal sacrifice. He said, "You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet" (John 13:13–14). Even now,

He is training Christians to take up future roles serving under Him in the coming Kingdom of God, where they will play a vital part as "kings and priests" in a future that will be wonderful beyond anything President Kennedy—or anyone alive today—could imagine: "And they sang a new song, saying: 'You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; 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'" (Revelation 5:9–10).

In his inaugural address, President Kennedy made another famous request—calling on his listeners to make personal sacrifices for the good of others: "And so, my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country. My fellow citizens of the world, ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man..."

To learn more about the amazing future God has planned for mankind, read our booklets *Your Ultimate Destiny* and *The World Ahead: What Will It Be Like?* Order your own free copies from the Regional Office nearest you (listed on page 30 of this magazine) or go online to TomorrowsWorld.org to order or read online.

—Brian Pomicter



Pray About It!

Continued from page 18

many ways in which God is eager to enrich your life and fulfill your hopes and dreams!

WHAT ABOUT THE UNREPENTANT?

God wants you to pray to Him and to share your life with Him. Prayer changes things; it is your lifeline to God. But does God hear the prayers of unrepentant sinners? We need to understand that we cannot expect God to hear and answer our prayers if we willfully continue in the deliberate practice of the ways of sin.

What is sin? Notice: “Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4). But, for the repentant, God can and will save! “Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear” (Isaiah 59:1–2).

God will not hear the prayers of hardened, unrepentant, practicing sinners. But what if you really, deeply, want to change your life? What if your heartfelt desire is to be delivered from your sinful habits? If you really want God’s help to repent and change, and if you exercise the courage to step out and confess your sins personally and privately to God, then God will help you.

How can you know He will? Scripture illustrates this with Christ’s story of the Pharisee and the publican: “Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: ‘Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: ‘God, I thank You that I am

not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying: ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (Luke 18:9–14).

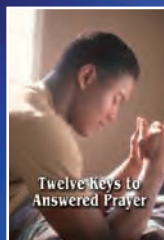


God will not hear the prayer of an unrepentant sinner—but He will hear your prayer if you are deeply and sincerely sorry, and if you acknowledge your sinfulness, just as God heard the humble confession of the publican. As the Apostle John wrote: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). That is God’s promise. It takes courage to admit our sins. But we must all humble ourselves and seek God with all our heart.

What will happen when we do this? God tells us in Isaiah 55:6–7: “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.”

God wants to share eternity with us. As a loving Father, He promises to give us our basic needs. He promises to give us “good things.” And He promises to give us the desires of our heart. But we must be willing to seek Him, trust Him and obey Him. So, when you have a problem or a need, pray about it! You will be on your way to forgiveness, mercy, understanding and indescribable blessings and victories over sin. Remember the promise that God “is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think” (Ephesians 3:20). So, claim God’s promises! Establish that lifeline of prayer! It will change your life now, and prepare you for the coming Kingdom of God, under the loving rule of our living Savior, Jesus Christ! ■

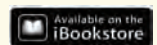
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TOMORROW'S

Consequences Rendered

In the first four verses of the book of Proverbs, we find Solomon's purpose for writing the book. "The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel: To know wisdom and instruction, to perceive the words of understanding, to receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity; to give prudence to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion" (Proverbs 1:1–4).

Although anyone can learn from the lessons contained in this book, Solomon repeatedly addresses young people. It is clear that this wise king realized the importance of teaching responsible behavior, in the home, in preparation for the time when children would grow up and have to face the world on their own. That is why he wrote, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).

SEX AND CONSEQUENCES

Dealing with sexual impulses is one of the greatest challenges that nearly all young people will face. The consequences of failing to meet this challenge successfully are serious, with far-reaching and life-changing effect. We know that, if we repent of our sin, God will forgive us and wash us clean of that sin. But He does not always remove the consequences of our actions.

Solomon's warnings give us an opportunity to learn the lessons he learned, but without having to go through the physical, emotional and mental pain that results from violating God's law regarding sex outside of marriage. We have a choice, and God warns us of the results of

choosing the immoral path: "My son, pay attention to my wisdom; lend your ear to my understanding, that you may preserve discretion, and your lips may keep

knowledge. For the lips of an immoral woman drip honey, and her mouth is smoother than oil; but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death, her steps lay hold of hell. Lest you ponder her path of life—her ways are unstable; you do not know them. Therefore hear me now, my children, and do not depart from the words of my mouth.

Remove your way far from her, and do not go near the door of her house," (Proverbs 5:1–8).

Also notice Proverbs 6:23–28: "For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light; reproofs of instruction are the way of life, to keep you from the evil woman, from the flattering tongue of a seductress. Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, nor let her allure you with her eyelids. For by means of a harlot a man is reduced to a crust of bread [meaning that, to her, you are just another way to make a living]; and an adulteress will prey upon his precious life. Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one walk on hot coals, and his feet not be seared?" And: "Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; he who does so destroys his own soul. Wounds and dishonor he will get, and his reproach will not be wiped away" (vv. 32–33).

DECIDE AHEAD OF TIME

Of all the decisions you will make as a young person this may be the most important one. The choices you



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make regarding dating, sex, and marriage affect not only you but everyone around you. It is important that you decide ahead of time what kind of people you will and will not date. Decide now, based on God's law, what you will and will not do—and stick to your decision! The greatest form of protection against pregnancy, disease, heartbreak, and mental and emotional scarring is to know the boundaries God has set—and to adhere to them! Abstain from sex outside of marriage! Do not cave in to pressure, and do not compromise your values! Never allow yourself to get into a situation where you are tempted to sin. But, if you find yourself in a compromising situation, flee (1 Corinthians 6:18)!

That is what Joseph did. Notice: “Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, ‘Lie with me.’ But he refused and said to his master's wife. ‘Look, my master... has committed all that he has to my hand. There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?’... But it happened... when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house was inside, that she caught him by his garment, saying, ‘Lie with me.’ But he left his garment in her hand, and fled” (Genesis 39:6–13).

It is a fact that, for a young healthy person, the sex drive is strong. It is also true that without it, the human race would cease to exist. It just needs to be used with the right person, at the right time, within the confines of a marriage. Sex outside of marriage is sin! It will lead to the destruction of the individual, the family, the community, and ultimately the nation as a whole. It takes

discipline and character to do the right thing, but it's well worth it.

Did You Know?

If you are a sexually active teen, you have a one-in-four probability of picking up a sexually transmitted disease this year. If you find that shocking, consider that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that half of all sexually active young Americans will contract a sexually transmitted disease by age 25.

“In 1950 there were two well-known types of STDs. Today there are more than 25. In the U.S. alone, more than three million teens pick up an STD annually. Given that there are only about 28 million teenagers, that's a bunch! The effects of these STDs are as ugly as their names; gonorrhea, syphilis, crabs, warts, chancroid, chlamydia, pelvic inflammatory disease, human papilloma virus, herpes.... STDs can cause cervical cancer, genital warts, sterility, infertility, and diseases that



can be passed on to unborn and new babies. They are a source of pain and depression, and can ultimately kill you! The younger you are, the more susceptible your body is to picking something up, because teens have a lower level of antibodies, which fight infection, than adults” (*The Six Most Important Decisions You'll Ever Make*, Sean Covey, p. 202).

Some STDs are incurable, including herpes, the human papilloma virus and AIDS! Consider also the emotional impact of sex, and the fact that sexual immorality is linked to guilt and depression.

Do the right thing! Uphold godly standards in this area of your life and be richly blessed for doing so. Heed the advice given by wise king Solomon and avoid the negative consequences rendered.

—Sheldon Monson

Huge “Rebellion” Just Ahead!

Continued from page 6

that makes a mockery of—and in fact proclaims doctrines entirely contrary to—the true teachings of Jesus Christ.

The *Expositor’s Bible Commentary* explains: “The man of lawlessness will occupy the holy precincts in order to accept and even demand worship that is due God alone. This evidently is a Jewish temple to be rebuilt in Jerusalem in the future. Dependence of these words on Daniel 9:26, 27; 11:31, 36, 37; 12:11 (cf. Matt 24:5; Mark 13:14) demands such a reference” (p. 322).

Wow!

Can we begin to imagine the truly shocking and awesome events coming upon this world within about the next 10 to 15 years? I would now like to give all of you a likely scenario as to **how** these startling events may develop. Jesus Christ commanded His true followers to **watch** these **end-time** events and to “pray” (Luke 21:36). Here is what you should “watch” for over the next several years. Coming events are likely to develop in the **three** phases I will now describe.

THREE PHASES OF REBELLION

In its *first phase*, we will see this massive, worldwide **rebellion** against the Creator continue to grow and spread as we witness the increasing rejection of the Bible and of virtually *all* formerly understood religious truths throughout much of the Western world. We will see more and more homosexual activity and the glorification of sexual relationships other than traditional marriage. We will see more women murdering their unborn babies, more young people and others living in fornication and *flouting* every formerly understood principle of decency in the way they act—and we will see the accelerating collapse of all the norms of decent society.

But **then**, there will be a powerful **reaction** against modern Western secular tendencies, as people become frightened by the breakdown of society and by the increasing growth of militant Islam and other religious movements that begin to rise into prominence as the former “Christian” influence over the Western world diminishes. Crucially, at some point, a powerful religious leader—described in your Bible as the “false prophet”—will come forward and quickly begin to perform astounding **miracles** that cannot be explained scientifically. He and the religious system with which he is connected will begin to take control of **all** religion in the Western world. This man will also heavily influence and cooperate with a strong political leader—the “Beast”—as Revelation 13 clearly describes. For, as the Apostle John

was inspired to tell us about this false prophet who looks like a “lamb”: “He exercises all the authority of the first beast [the Roman Empire] in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed” (v. 12).

As Revelation 18 clearly explains, this entire system is called “Babylon.” In the *second phase*, as these two individuals—the “Beast” and the “False Prophet”—gain power, this system takes over and controls virtually **all** the business and commerce of the entire world! They will impose the “mark of the Beast” on all those who want to live peaceably in their system. Only those with the mark of the Beast will be permitted to engage in commerce. “He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name” (Revelation 13:16–17). What is that mark? To learn more, read “The Mysterious Mark of the Beast” on page 10 of this issue.

But this powerful religio-political combine will not last forever. When God brings this modern “Babylon” down, “the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore” (Revelation 18:11). God’s word describes the industrial titans, the big merchants and the ship owners of the earth in *absolute dismay* as this system comes crashing down: “For in **one hour** such great riches came to nothing.” And: “They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate’” and again, “For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery **all** the nations were **deceived**. And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of **all** who were slain on the earth” (vv. 17–19, 23–24).

It should now be clear to all of us that this is definitely **not** just a **small** turning away from some church or particular religion! It is, rather, a massive **takeover** of **most of the world** by two individuals under the influence of and using the power of Satan the Devil! Frankly, these two individuals will be so powerful and influential that *thousands* of “mainstream” ministers will join in and bring their flocks with them. For they will be **deceived** by the most massive deception of the world in its entire history! Will you go along? Or will you begin to actually *study* these prophecies, ask God for **understanding** and have the faith and courage to **obey** your Creator?

The *third phase* will see the final outcome of this shocking rebellion! At the height of their powers, influenced and even possibly possessed by Satan the Devil and literally **filled** with vanity, the leaders of this

coming system will directly **fight** Jesus Christ at His Second Coming! “These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful” (Revelation 17:14).

Later, John was inspired to inform us, “And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse [Jesus Christ] and against His army. Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone” (Revelation 19:19–20).

So, there will come a time when you will see many of your friends and loved ones decide to escape persecution and even martyrdom by **going along** with this system as it rises to power. **However**, the **end** of the leaders of this system is very clearly stated: the **lake of fire**! And their followers “were **killed** with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse” (v. 21).

At the end of this age, the *vast majority* of mankind will be **deceived** and led into an unprecedented **rebellion** against the very Creator. However, there will be a “little flock” (Luke 12:32), which follows the genuine teachings of Christ and His original apostles. Within this little flock of commandment-keeping Christians, some will be protected in a place of safety, spared the martyrdom that will be required of others. These are the Christians pictured by the Church in Philadelphia, to whom Christ said, “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). To these Christians, God gives

the promise, “But the woman [the Church] was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent” (Revelation 12:14). For three and a half years, this most faithful group of Christians will be kept protected, on the earth, while terrible persecutions continue.

Satan, during this time, will “make war” against those Christians who were not fully zealous before the Great Tribulation had begun (Revelation 12:17). I pray that those of you reading this article will be among the faithful who are protected. But, if you are not, I pray that you will have the courage and conviction to stand up against the Beast and the False Prophet, even when it means martyrdom.

Gloriously, both those protected in the place of safety and those who die as faithful martyrs during the Great Tribulation will be blessed with eternal life in the Kingdom of God. They will be given the opportunity to **rule with Christ** and bring peace to the entire world. They will have part in the **first** resurrection at Christ’s return. The Bible clearly states: “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).

As these startling events begin to unfold—slowly but surely, all across the world—will you exercise the faith and courage to fervently “seek” the true God of the Bible and to be one of His saints forever? Will you stay **alert** and “watch” carefully for what Bible prophecy reveals will happen before Jesus Christ returns? Will you choose the Way of God, or the way of rebellion? May God give you the understanding, the *faith* and the *courage* to make the right choice! ■

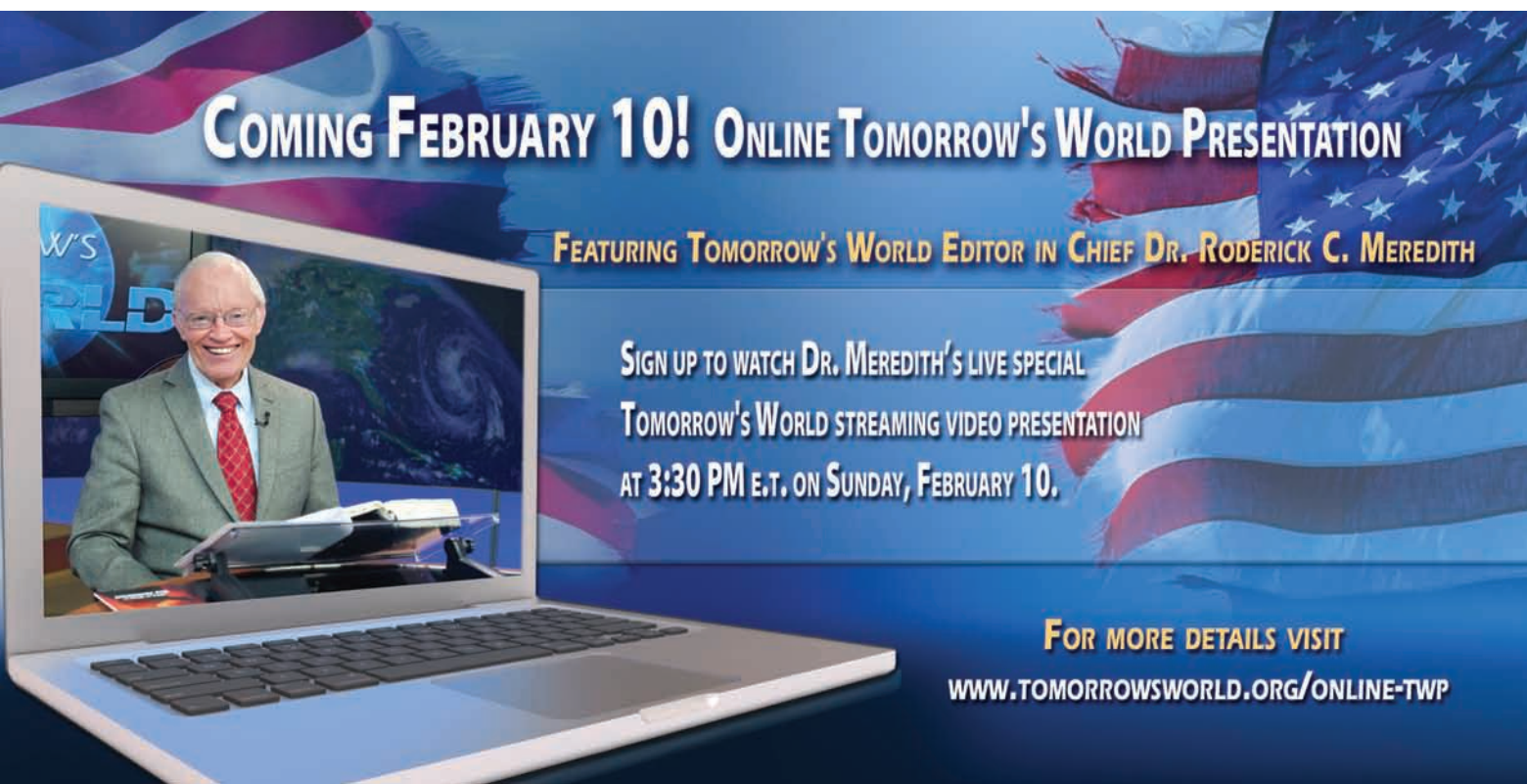
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WATCH AND W

Do You Believe “the Lie”?

The Bible warns, “In the last days, *perilous times* will come.” Today, we see perils of every sort increasing all around the world. But we also see a *lie*. To believe the lie is to deny the clear warnings of Scripture *and* the reality of world events. To accept the lie is to put ourselves and our loved ones in *danger*.

Scripture foretells that, at the end of this age, these “*perilous times*” (2 Timothy 3:1) will be marked not only by traumatic *worldwide calamities*, but also by increasing immorality and sin (cf. vv. 2–4)! God inspired the prophet Isaiah to describe the attitudes and conditions that would be prevalent at the end of this age. Isaiah records *the lie* that many believe today: “Come,’ one says, ‘I will bring wine, and we will fill ourselves with intoxicating drink. Tomorrow will be as today, and much more abundant” (Isaiah 56:12). Isaiah is describing the attitude that says, “Eat, drink and be merry, and life will only get better as we go along.”

In these *perilous times*, will we “take heed, watch and pray” (Mark 13:33)? Or will we occupy ourselves with the *carnal distractions* of this world, ignorant of the prophetic signs around us? Will we believe *the lie*, or will we face *the facts*? Will we be overcome *by* the world, or will we overcome the world?

WEATHER AND ECONOMIC PERIL

The **fact** is that the global economy is in peril. The United



States is heading toward a *fiscal cliff* and painful austerity similar to what countries such as Greece, Spain and Portugal have experienced. The **fact** is that Europe has fallen back into *recession*. “European shares dip as euro zone sinks into recession,” Reuters, November 15, 2012). Over the coming years, painful *austerity* measures, strikes and riots will intensify and will also spread to other European Union member states.

Bible prophecy has long foretold that, at the end of this age, the American and British-descended nations will move from a time of prosperity to a

time of peril. The **fact** is that we are in that end time. “Today America lacks the financial strength, political courage and social will” to do much to attempt to return to greatness. America is a superpower in economic and moral decline, heading toward a potential “nightmare scenario” in which “all hopes for America’s future could disappear” (“Notes on the Decline of a Great Nation,” *Der Spiegel*, November 5, 2012).

Beyond the imminent economic crisis, the U.S. and other nations are also being buffeted by increasing *weather disasters*. *Grinding droughts* persist throughout the central U.S., the United Kingdom and elsewhere. Last year’s deadly “Superstorm Sandy” will cost the Northeast U.S. at least “\$50 billion in damages and lost economic activity” (“New Jersey officials mum on amount of Sandy economic damages,” *CNBC.com*, November 13, 2012).

MORAL PERIL

The **fact** is that a massive *moral degradation* is also underway, as the Apostle Paul warned in 2 Timothy 3. A continuing trend toward more violent, demonic and occult entertainment is accompanied by an equally *unbiblical* attitude-shift toward sexual immorality and the role of the family. As our Editor in Chief, Dr. Roderick C. Meredith, reminded us in the November-December 2012

issue of this magazine, Satan and his demons are very real forces that seem “very fascinating to some people” yet “the Eternal God commands us, ‘Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God’ (Leviticus 19:31)” (“Resist Demons,” p. 4).

In the November 2012 U.S. elections, voters for the first time approved “same-sex marriage” in two states, and elected the first openly homosexual U.S. Senator, and mainstream media took notice: “Rarely do popular votes reflect such *dramatic social changes*” (“Voters approve same-sex marriage for the first time,” *CNN.com*, November 11, 2012).

Similar developments are occurring in other Western nations. French legislators in January are expected to vote on a bill that “would mark the biggest step forward for French gay rights advocates in more than a decade” and would be a major step toward unprecedented marriage and adoption rights to lesbian and homosexual couples (“French ministers back draft bill on same-sex marriage,” *CNN.com*, November 7, 2012).

Many want to ignore the fact that, all too often, *sexual immorality* and selfishness lead not only to emotional pain and physical disease, but also to the *abortion* of unborn babies. According to a recent global study, about *one in five* pregnancies end in abortion—more than 40 million abortions worldwide *each*

year! Though there have been an estimated 50 million abortions in the United States since 1973, it is in Europe and Latin America where the abortion rates are the highest (“Induced abortion: incidence and trends worldwide from 1995 to 2008,” *The Lancet*, January 19, 2012). The *astronomical* number of aborted babies is another sign of our living in “*perilous times*”—when, instead of being *faithful* within marriage, and showing real love to unborn babies, far too many people are “lovers of themselves” and are “lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God” (cf. 2 Timothy 3:2–6).

Consider, too, the fact that the world seems to be losing the war against *drugs*. In the November 2012 elections, U.S. citizens in Colorado and Washington voted to legalize the recreational use of marijuana in their states, and although the U.S. has spent at least \$25 billion in the past decade to combat illegal drug possession and trafficking, many experts say this has produced *nearly no positive effect* (“U.S. should honor states’ new pot laws,” *CNN.com*, November 13, 2012).

Interestingly, Scripture warns that at the end of this age, even after the coming Great Tribulation, human beings will not repent of their murders, sexual immorality—or experiments with drugs (Revelation 9:21). Remarkably, the Greek word *pharmakeia*—usually translated as “sorceries”—also connotes narcotic drugs! What a sobering indictment of humanity’s stubborn rebellion!

SALVATION FROM PERIL

Do not accept *the lie* that “tomorrow will be as today, and even better.” We live in perilous times. But there is good news; you and your loved ones can prevail! While they may be humanly weak, Christians understand that they can be *spiritually strong* with Christ living within them (2 Corinthians 12:10, Galatians 2:20). Through the strength of Christ in them, true Christians reject and overcome sin *and the lies and the perils of this world*. They press forward (Philippians 3:12–14), no longer as “lovers of self” or “proud” or “unholy” or “lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God” (2 Timothy 3:2–4).

Faithful Christians are *overcomers*—profoundly *thankful* to have been saved from the penalty of past sins by Jesus’ shed blood (Titus 3:4–7), confident in knowing that as they faithfully run their race (1 Corinthians 9:24; Hebrews 12:1), they *are being saved* now from the perils of this world (2 Corinthians 2:15) by the living Christ (Romans 5:10), and ultimately *will be rewarded* with an imperishable crown (1 Corinthians 9:25) and eternal life in the very Family of God (Revelation 22:5).

We live in perilous times, but Matthew 24:12–13 promises that Christians who endure to the end *will be saved*. Through Christ living in us, we reject the lie, and we are *confident* to receive salvation from sin and from peril!

—Wyatt Ciesielka

What Is Really Behind “Climate Change”?

Continued from page 2

Later, God Almighty inspired ancient King Solomon in the dedication of the temple as Solomon prayed—obviously under God’s inspiration: “When the heavens are shut up and *there is no rain because they have sinned against You*, when they pray toward this place and confess Your name, and turn from their sin because You afflict them, then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, that You may teach them the good way in which they should walk; and **send rain** on Your land which You have given to Your people as an inheritance” (2 Chronicles 6:26–27). Obviously, God certainly *does control* the weather! Literally *dozens* of biblical passages make this very clear—if you take the Bible literally and believe what God inspired in His Word. By the way, if you want more detailed information about this whole topic, please call us or write us immediately and request a **free** copy of our very informative booklet entitled, *Who Controls the Weather?*.

Some people have the idea that since some of these passages are in the Old Testament of the Bible that this is just “Old Testament stuff.” **No!** Even Jesus’ brother James wrote, near the end of his New Testament epistle: “Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and *he prayed earnestly that it would not rain*; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit” (James 5:17–18).

The most important thing you should take away from this article, my friends, is that if you reverence the God of the Bible and want His blessings, you must be willing to listen to what He tells you in the Bible. Be willing to **understand** that when truly **massive** weather disturbances occur in the most unusual manner, it may be much more than just “a change in weather patterns.” As I explain in my article on page 4 of this issue, most of the world will rebel against and entirely reject every vestige of the true message of God. For we are approaching the end of an age. Yet God is using His servants—including this very Work—to powerfully **warn** our peoples before it is too late!

So, when Jesus Christ warns us that, just before His Second Coming, “there will be **famines, pestilences, and earthquakes** in various places” (Matthew 24:7), you had better **believe** that many of these occurrences are a sign from your Creator

that He is about to intervene. You must also remember that as people turn away from God and His laws, when they continually **break God’s commandments**, then it is *most likely* He will intervene and give **loving correction** to those peoples! When massive and unprecedented **earthquakes** begin to occur—*right here in the United States*—will people try to blame *that* on “climate change”? Can they blame *all* of these coming prophetic events on “climate change”? **No!**

Even though the invisible Satan would like to confuse this world—*ahead of time*—from **heeding** God’s warning signs and listening to His true ministers, you must *not let that happen* to you and your family! For we in this Work of the great God have told you repeatedly not only about “weather problems,” but about a coming United States of Europe, about the **fact** that God is *already* taking away most of the great “sea gates” which He gave the peoples of the United States and Britain, about the debasement of our currency and the ultimate **downfall** of the American and British-descended peoples—**all** of these and many other events unrelated to climate change have been given as a warning *through this very Work!* So, for *your good*, please **study** the inspired word of God and what it really says!

As the Eternal God does begin to intervene more powerfully than ever through massive **earthquakes, disease epidemics and upset weather**, please realize that it is **God** who is in charge—not human-induced “climate change.” As you begin to see these events happening on the earth, with “distress of nations, with perplexity, **the sea and the waves roaring**; men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming upon the earth” (Luke 21:25–26)—be willing to **heed** the message your Creator is sending you. **He—and He alone**—is the great God. *He* is the One you must obey as these events **unfold** precisely as He has predicted! May God soften your heart, open your mind and help you be willing to listen to your Creator through His servants. May God help you to **seek** Him with all your heart that you may be **protected** from these coming events as God has said: “Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36).



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Capital Cities & QLD	TV4ME 74	SUN 7:30 a.m.		Macon	WBMN	SUN 8:00 a.m.	NV Reno	KREN	SUN 6:30 a.m.
		SAT 7:00 a.m. AET		Rome	WPXA	WED 6:30 a.m.	NY Albany	WCWN	SUN 8:00 a.m.
COUNTRY VIC & NSW		SUN 7:30 a.m.		HI Kailua-Kona	KLEI	WED 12:30 a.m.	Amsterdam	WYPX	WED 6:30 a.m.
		SAT 7:00 a.m. AET		Kaneohe	KPXO	WED 12:30 a.m.	Batavia	WPXJ	WED 6:30 a.m.
BARBADOS:				IA Cedar Rapids	KPXR	WED 5:30 a.m.	Binghamton	WBNG	SUN 8:00 a.m.
St. Michael	CBC 8	SUN 9:30 a.m.		Newton	KFPX	WED 5:30 a.m.	Elmira	WENY	SUN 8:00 a.m.
CANADA:				Ottumwa	KWOT	SUN 7:00 a.m.	New York	WPXN	WED 6:30 a.m.
BC Vancouver	CHNU	SUN 1:30 a.m.		ID Boise	KNIN	SUN 6:00 a.m.	Syracuse	WSPX	WED 6:30 a.m.
		SUN 4:00 a.m.		Idaho Falls	KPIF	SUN 7:00 a.m.	OH Akron	WYPX	WED 6:30 a.m.
		SUN 5:00 p.m.		IL Bloomington	WHOIDT2	SUN 7:00 a.m.	Lima	WBOH	SUN 8:00 a.m.
BC Victoria	CHEK	SUN 8:00 a.m.		Chicago	WCPX	WED 5:30 a.m.	OK Oklahoma City	KOPX	WED 5:30 a.m.
MB Winnipeg	JOY TV	SUN 9:00 a.m.		Chicago	WGN	SUN 5:00 a.m.	OKmulgee	KTPX	WED 5:30 a.m.
		MON-FRI 10:00 a.m.		Peoria	WHOI	SUN 7:00 a.m.	OR Bend	KTVZ	SUN 8:00 a.m.
NS Halifax	CIHF	SUN 8:30 a.m.		Quincy	WGEM	SUN 7:00 a.m.	Eugene	KMTR	SUN 8:00 a.m.
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		WED 9:00 a.m.		Fort Wayne	WPTA	SUN 8:00 a.m.	Salem	KPXG	WED 6:30 a.m.
		THU 2:30 a.m.		KY Bowling Green	WBKO	SUN 7:00 a.m.	PA Erie	WBEP	SUN 8:00 a.m.
		SAT 5:00 p.m.		Morehead	WUPX	WED 6:30 a.m.	Scranton	WQPX	WED 6:30 a.m.
		SUN 7:30 a.m.		LA Alexandria	KBCA	SUN 7:00 a.m.	RI Block Island	WPXQ	WED 6:30 a.m.
JAMAICA:				Baton Rouge	WBRL	SUN 6:30 p.m.	SC Charleston	WCBD	SUN 8:00 a.m.
Kingston	TVJ	SUN 7:00 a.m.		Lafayette	KLWB	SUN 7:00 a.m.	Myrtle Beach	WVMB	SUN 8:00 a.m.
NEW ZEALAND:				Lake Charles	WBLC	SUN 7:00 a.m.	SD Rapid City	KWBH	SUN 7:00 a.m.
Nationwide	Prime TV	SUN 8:30 a.m.		Monroe	KNOE	SUN 7:00 a.m.	TN Cookeville	WNPX	WED 5:30 a.m.
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO:				New Orleans	WPXL	WED 5:30 a.m.	Jellico	WPXX	WED 6:30 a.m.
Port of Spain	CNC3-TV	SUN 7:00 a.m.		MA Boston	WBFX	WED 6:30 a.m.	Knoxville	WBXX	SUN 7:30 a.m.
UK & NW EUROPE:				Vineyard Haven	WDPX	WED 6:30 a.m.	La Follete	WLAF	WED 6:00 p.m.
Believe-TV	Sky TV 593	SUN 10:00 p.m.		ME Bangor	WABI	SUN 8:00 a.m.	Memphis	WPXX	WED 5:30 a.m.
Gospel	Sky TV 588	MON 7:00 p.m.		Presque Isle	WBPO	SUN 8:00 a.m.	TX Abilene	KTXS	SUN 8:00 a.m.
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		Sky TV 590 FRI 3:00 p.m.		Ann Arbor	WPXD	WED 6:30 a.m.	Arlington	KPXD	WED 5:30 a.m.
		Sky TV 590 SAT 12:00 a.m.		Battle Creek	WZPX	WED 6:30 a.m.	Austin	KNVA	SUN 6:30 a.m.
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Gadsden	WPXH	WED 5:30 a.m.		St. Cloud	KPXM	WED 5:30 a.m.	Harlingen	KSFE	SUN 7:00 a.m.
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Opelika	WLGA	SUN 7:00 a.m.		Joplin	KFJX	SUN 8:30 a.m.	Laredo	KGNS	SUN 7:00 a.m.
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San Jose	KKPX	WED 6:30 a.m.		Glendive	KWZB	SUN 6:00 a.m.	WI Antigo	WTPX	WED 5:30 a.m.
CO Denver	KPXC	WED 6:30 a.m.		Great Falls	KRTV	SUN 6:00 a.m.	Eau Claire	WXOW	SUN 7:00 a.m.
Grand Junction	KJCT	SUN 7:00 a.m.		Helena	KMTF	SUN 6:00 a.m.	Kenosha	WPXE	WED 5:30 a.m.
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DE Wilmington	WPPX	WED 6:30 a.m.		Charlotte	WAXN	SUN 7:00 a.m.	WV Bluefield	WVYA	SUN 8:00 a.m.
FL Bradenton	WXPX	WED 6:30 a.m.		Fayetteville	WFPX	WED 6:30 a.m.	Charleston	WLPX	WED 6:30 a.m.
Lake Worth	WPXP	WED 6:30 a.m.		Greenville	WEPX	WED 6:30 a.m.	Clarksburg	WVFX	SUN 8:00 a.m.
Melbourne	WOPX	WED 6:30 a.m.		Greenville	WNCT	SUN 8:00 a.m.	Martinsburg	WWPX	WED 6:30 a.m.
Miami	WOPX	WED 6:30 a.m.		Hickory	WHKY	MON 7:30 p.m.	Parkersburg	WCWP	SUN 8:00 a.m.
Gainesville	WOPX	WED 6:30 a.m.		Jacksonville	WPXU	WED 6:30 a.m.	WY Casper	KTWO	SUN 10:00 a.m.
Panama City	WJHG	SUN 8:00 a.m.		Rocky Mount	WRPX	WED 6:30 a.m.	Cheyenne	KLWY	SUN 11:00 a.m.
GA Albany	WBSK	SUN 8:00 a.m.		ND Bismarck	KWMK	SUN 7:00 a.m.	Riverton	KGWC	SUN 7:00 a.m.
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