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2012

AND THE

APOCALYPSE



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

Whose Opinion Really Counts?

“Same-sex marriage” is increasingly in the news these days. It seems that practically everyone is being asked to express their opinions. But how do they form those opinions? From what the majority say? From what politicians or activists tell them? Or from God’s inspired word—the Bible?

Today, most Americans, Canadians and Britons are so biblically illiterate that they can be persuaded to believe almost anything about what the Bible says—or does not say—or whether the Bible is even a reliable source for values.

Increasingly, our modern society is coming to resemble the ancient city of Sodom. What was the “majority opinion” in that debauched city? Read it for yourself in Genesis 19. When God’s servant, Lot, entertained two angels—who made themselves appear as *men*—his home was soon surrounded by “the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every corner” (v. 4). The crowd insisted that Lot bring his male guests outside so they could **rape** them (v. 5)! They were obviously the “majority” in this particular city, but did that make their actions “right”? No!

My friends, the United States of America is one of several countries that is acting, more and more, as if the God of the Bible is not real! Millions of young couples are simply “living together”—**without** benefit of marriage. Other millions are pushing for the right to marry people of the same gender! Even the President of the U.S.—a nation that *used to be* called the “greatest Christian country in the world”—has gone on record as supporting marriage between two homosexual men or two homosexual women. And it seems that thousands of super-liberal *media people* are jumping on the bandwagon and rushing forward to add their endorsement.

Some liberal ministers try to explain away God’s word, insisting “the Bible isn’t clear” about the morality

of homosexual unions. Others, however, agree with Billy Graham’s son Franklin, who said that Barack Obama “has shaken his fist at God” by supporting same-sex marriage! Whose opinion counts?

The whole problem goes back to people’s **abysmal ignorance** of the Bible—and their unwillingness to repent and to do what God clearly says in His inspired word! Jesus Christ stated plainly: “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them **male and female**,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his **wife**, and the two shall become one flesh’? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what **God** has joined together, let not man separate” (Matthew 19:4–6).

Christ clearly stated that marriage is predicated on the fact that **God** made them “male and female,” and that it is **God**—not mankind and its laws—who joins a man and woman together as “one flesh” in marriage.

God inspired the Apostle Paul to write: “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor **homosexuals**, nor **sodomites**, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 6:9–10). He also inspired Paul to warn against the foolish philosophers of his day: “For this reason God gave them up to **vile passions**. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, *God gave them*

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How SATAN SEDUCES YOU!

By Roderick C. Meredith

*Have you been deceived by the devil? Are you sure?
How can you know?*

Far more than most people even begin to realize, the entire society around us is being turned upside down. Although the media try to make this all look good on the surface, your Bible reveals that the end result will be **awful!**

When I was growing up, people would have been shocked by the ready availability of abortion on demand. They would never have envisioned condoms being distributed to students by school authorities. “Living together” without benefit of marriage would have been seen as scandalous, and it would have been unimaginable to think of homosexual couples entering into “same-sex marriages” while celebrating their divergence from long-standing values of decency.

Yet, today, these practices and others like them are commonly accepted by countless millions of people around us—even many who call themselves Christian. But even nominal “Christianity” is now under attack, as most of the Western nations are rejecting almost every vestige of their former Judeo-Christian heritage. It used to be that people would at least acknowledge the authority of the Bible, even while going against much of what it teaches. Today, biblical

values themselves are being undermined by a barrage of Satanic propaganda.

Satan, the “god of this age” (2 Corinthians 4:4), is *very* clever, indeed. And he uses clever and even highly educated human beings to assist him in his campaign to make evil *seem* good. The Creator God knew that as the end of the age approached, increasing numbers of vain, rebellious human beings would lend themselves to purveying evil. Scripture plainly warns us: “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!” (Isaiah 5:20–21).

Yet, most average men and women simply do not realize that they are being cleverly seduced by a carefully orchestrated campaign to make evil *seem* good. They do not see the ways in which “mainstream media” cooperates with, and even promotes, the ideas of those who would totally undermine the morality of the Western nations. For younger people today, they can barely—if at all—remember a time when Western society truly upheld the values of respect for the family unit, the sanctity of marriage between one man and one woman, a basic standard of morality as found in the Ten Commandments, and the protection of all human life—including the unborn child in its mother’s womb.

Today, by contrast, the modern God-rejecting slogan is, “If it feels good, do it!” Practically an entire generation of Americans, Canadians and other English-speaking peoples has been educated and propagandized to basically despise the God of the Bible and the standards of conduct to which hundreds of millions of our ancestors at least gave lip service—and frankly followed, at least partly, according to their understanding, in their daily lives. *What happened?*

SOME FEW UNDERSTAND

There are a handful of thoughtful commentators who have recognized this trend and spoken out to expose it, more than I can acknowledge in this brief article. One such exposé is found in a book titled *The Marketing of Evil*. Author David Kupelian, in this fascinating and very important document,

lays bare the reality of the agenda behind those who are—whether knowingly or unknowingly—helping Satan undermine long-held biblical values in the Western nations.

What is going on? Kupelian writes, “The plain truth is, within the space of our lifetimes, much of what Americans once almost universally abhorred has been packaged, perfumed, gift-wrapped, and sold to us as though it has great value. By skillfully playing on our deeply felt national values of fairness, generosity and tolerance, these marketers have persuaded us to embrace as enlightened and noble that which all previous generations since America’s founding regarded as grossly self-destructive—in a word, evil” (pp. 11–12).

Many will find Kupelian’s claims unbelievable, unless they approach his book with an open mind. He goes on to explain the propaganda plan of certain homosexual activists who are “following an in-depth, published plan laid out by professional Harvard-trained marketers” (p. 12). Kupelian asks, “How can this be happening in America? How does child molesting become ‘man-boy love’? How does crushing a baby’s skull and sucking out his brains become a ‘constitutional right’? How does quoting the Bible become ‘hate speech’? How exactly is evil made to appear good, and good made to appear evil? How has America—which still boasts an 80 percent Christian population—seen fit to embrace what can only be called a culture of death, rather than a culture of life?” (p. 13).

TAKE IT SLOW AND EASY?

One of the key tactics often employed by Satan and his emissaries down through the ages is to make changes happen *so gradually* that the average person does not realize the enormity of what is occurring. This is the “frog in the pot” strategy.

When a frog is first placed in a pot of lukewarm water, all seems pleasant and safe. But then, as the water is heated *very slowly*, the unthinking frog is steadily being *boiled to death*—before it realizes what is happening!

Because the above-described changes, though truly massive, are taking place over a number of years—or, in some cases, even a few decades—the vast majority of people do not grasp the **enormity** of these vast changes in “normal” morality, nor do they see the

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danger of what is going on. Most people are lulled to sleep by the constant drumbeat of propaganda messages that insist these massive changes are simply matters of “fairness” or “equality” or “being nice”—and certainly in any case that the shattering of long-held values is not “hurting anyone.”

“Hurting anyone?”

Does the unborn baby girl who has had her brains sucked out get a chance to complain about the loss of her “woman’s rights”? Do children with “two mommies” or “two daddies” have the chance to experience both maternal and paternal love? What message is sent to young people when they see adults in the name of “sexual freedom” becoming “slaves” of their lusts and whims, putting physical stimulation and even “disposable income” ahead of the value of having a traditional family? It should not escape our notice that there are non-Western societies, right now, that are watching this moral toboggan slide of the West. Will they let this evil enter their own societies, or will they do what they can to crush the West before that evil spreads further?

You may be shocked to learn that your Bible clearly reveals that, before the end of this age, the United States and the British-descended nations will actually become “slaves” of nations that have not weakened themselves as we have done.

Meanwhile, for most average people, the Internet and other diversions keep them occupied—often so busy that they simply *do not take time to think*. Of course, if they did sit down and *carefully think through* where

these developments are leading, most sensible people would know better. They would read history and realize that every empire or nation that has followed the current course of the Western nations has come to nothing.

THE “KEY” TO UNDERSTANDING

For centuries, though it was followed imperfectly, the Western nations at least made some show of looking to the Bible as the ultimate standard of morality. But in recent decades, our educators, politicians, and even most of our supposed spiritual leaders, have done their best to abolish the idea of a “real” God, and use *human reasoning* instead to establish their own standard of morality and decide how everyone should live. Increasingly, a hedonistic way of life is being forced on us, through government dictates that regulate our workplaces, our home lives, our medical care, our marriages and so many other aspects of our daily lives.

In all of this, one element is conspicuously missing. In the New

Testament of your Bible, one of the very first commands quoted by Jesus Christ in Luke 4:4 is, “It is written, ‘*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.*’” Somewhere along the line, Americans and Britons who used to *believe firmly* in the idea of a real God—and in standards of conduct based, at least loosely, upon the Ten Commandments—have *lost sight* of any semblance of that God. This is not surprising, as countless of our religious educators and leaders have propagandized our youth—even those who become ministers—with the concept that the Bible is **not** directly inspired by God, that it cannot be relied upon implicitly and that mankind therefore can invent its *own standard* of conduct.

When you understand this one “key,” *everything else* falls into place! For the majority in our Western nations have truly *forsaken God*, and now look to themselves—through the prism of their own vanities and lusts—to decide what is right and what is wrong. Yet Scripture warns us: “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death” (Proverbs 14:12). Millions of aborted babies have experienced this for themselves—and will, at the future resurrection called the “White Throne Judgment” (Revelation 20:11–15), be able to look their parents in the eye and ask, “Why didn’t you obey God’s word?”

AN ANCIENT PROPHECY

In a prophecy given to our ancestors, which certainly refers directly to *our present age*, the Creator God warns, “But if you do not obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments, and *if you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors My judgments*, so that you do not perform all My commandments, but break My covenant, I also will do

this to you: *I will even appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart. And you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it*” (Leviticus 26:14–16).

Indeed, as various mental, emotional and physical diseases become more and more rampant because of fornication, adultery and homosexual activity, the breakup of families, the abandonment of children and other “fruits” of our moral breakdown, there will indeed be “sorrow of heart.” Truly, the way of “sexual freedom” and “easy divorce” leads not just to AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, but to premature death.

As I grew up in the 1930s and 1940s, I appreciated my mother and dozens of her friends as dignified, educated and respected women who led the activities in their homes, bought the food and other needed items, hired maids and gardeners on occasion, taught and nurtured their children, and provided a “haven” for their husbands after a long day of work. These women used their tremendous God-given capacity to assist their families—and the entire society around them—in providing a decent, crime-free and healthy environment for all.

After World War II, however, the “Women’s Lib” movement began to propagandize women with the idea that their roles as homemakers and mothers were “not fulfilling.” Ladies who did not work outside the home were increasingly belittled as “slaves” of men and as throwing away their potential. Traditional marital roles were attacked as “antiquated” and “unhealthy” and as “keeping women down.” Feminist activists recognized that marriage had to be a prime target of their attack against traditional moral

values. As feminist author Robin Morgan stated, “We can’t destroy the inequities between men and women until we destroy marriage” (Kupelian,



p. 112). As feminist author and journalist Jill Johnson stated, “Until all women are lesbians, there will be no true political revolution” (*ibid.*). This may sound extreme, and indeed these ideas are often “watered down” for the average person being “sold” on the idea of feminism, but they are real and are dangerous.

And these ideas have real, often tragic, consequences. Consider the effect on children. Judith Wallerstein, a researcher whose groundbreaking work involved a 25-year study of children of divorce, asks, “What about the children?” As an expert in this field, she has described a terrible emptiness and frustration inflicted upon generations of young people by this newfound “freedom” propagated by the radical feminists.

The Marketing of Evil describes this problem in detail. “Looking back at America’s decades-long divorce ‘experiment,’ Glenn Stanton, Focus on the Family’s marriage expert, summed up its results. While adults suffered terribly, children ‘fared even worse,’ he noted. ‘Many saw the innocence of childhood evaporate the day their parents announced the divorce. Others described being ‘scarred for life.’ They told countless

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Questions & Answers

Question: Your magazine often describes the Ten Commandments and other Old Testament teachings as still applicable to Christians today. So, are Christians supposed to follow the command in the Law of Moses to wear “fringes” or “tassels” on their garments (Numbers 15:38-41; Deuteronomy 22:12)?

Answer: First, we need to understand what tassels signified. Ancient Israel transgressed the Ten Commandments that Moses brought down from Mount Sinai (see Exodus 32). As a result of that transgression, another law was **added** to what God had previously given (Galatians 3:19). That added law is sometimes referred to as the “Mosaic Law.”

Not to be confused with the timeless provisions of the Ten Commandments, the Mosaic Law contained statutes and judgments involving an elaborate sacrificial system and its associated ceremonies—much of which was a physical foreshadowing of Jesus Christ’s ultimate sacrifice for the sins of mankind (Hebrews 9:1–14). A number of the statutes also gave the Israelites physical symbols that hinted at the role of the risen Christ in the lives of true Christians (Galatians 2:20).

The statute prescribing the wearing of tassels, in effect, instituted a physical symbol that stood in place of the Holy Spirit, which God would give to those who obey Him (Acts 5:32). The tassels were put on the four corners of a cloak or outer garment as a reminder to keep God’s commandments.

By Jesus’ day, the Pharisees had already devised basic rules for the shape of the outer garment or cloak (square) and the tying and wearing of the tassels on its corners. This outer cloak was the ancestor of the prayer shawl worn by many who practice rabbinic Judaism today. Rabbinic sources described five of the articles of clothing a Jewish man would wear: his shoes, his head covering, his square outer cloak, his girdle, and his undergarment.

Many Christians do not realize that the New Testament clearly demonstrates that Jesus wore essentially the same clothing that any observant Jewish man would have worn. Scripture describes that the Roman soldiers who crucified Jesus gambled to determine who would receive his seamless undergarment (John 19:23). Four times in the Gospels, the Greek word *kraspedon* refers to the tassels on

Jesus’ garments, which people sought to touch that they might be healed (Matthew 9:20; 14:36; Mark 6:56; Luke 8:44).

So, since today’s Christians are to follow Jesus’ example in their personal lives (1 Peter 2:21), does this mean that we should wear tassels as He did? To answer this question, we first need to understand what those tassels signified.

Ancient Israel showed a consistent “track record” of disobedience to God, displaying both weakness and stubbornness. Drawing on a well-documented custom of the time, God ordained the use of tassels by ancient Israel as a reminder (Numbers 15:38–41). Had ancient Israel proved itself able to obey one of the very first commandments which God gave to mankind—“Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat,” including the tree of life, but *not* including the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:16–17)—then tassels would never have been needed as a physical reminder. God’s commandments would have been written on the hearts and minds of all the ancient Israelites, just as they are presently written on the hearts of true Christians (cf. Jeremiah 31:31–34; Hebrews 8:8–13).

In order to preach in the synagogues of His day, Jesus followed the custom of wearing the traditional attire prescribed by the Jewish authorities. He looked rather “average”—like other Jews of His day, such that the authorities needed Judas’ help to identify Him in a crowd when they sought to arrest Him (Mark 14:45). However, while Jesus wore the tassels commonly used in His day, He never personally needed the “reminder” that the tassels were intended to be (John 2:25; 3:34).

And the symbol of the tassels became unnecessary—redundant—as soon as Jesus Christ had ascended to heaven and sent the Holy Spirit to His Church. One who has God’s Holy Spirit indwelling is “wearing” the spiritual fulfillment of what tassels were intended to picture!

Oh Canada!

Descending into Greed?

Air Canada 143 had made it about halfway to its destination when something extraordinary happened. The Boeing 767, carrying 61 passengers on a routine flight from Toronto to Edmonton, ran out of fuel in midair. With both engines shut down, the giant aircraft began hurtling toward the ground. Though the laws of aerodynamics kept it from entering an uncontrollable nosedive, the plane's fate seemed certain.

Yet, miraculously, over the next few minutes, a series of remarkable events turned certain tragedy into extraordinary triumph. Everyone on board would live to tell about the undaunted skill of the brave pilots who safely landed their powerless jet against all odds.

This incident, which came to be known as the "Gimli Glider," occurred on July 23, 1983, shortly after Canada had begun to convert to the metric system. Before takeoff, ground crews put 22,300 pounds of fuel in the plane instead of the required 22,300 kilograms. No one caught the conversion error, and Flight 143 took to the skies with about half the fuel needed to reach its intended destination.

The airline was found to be at fault in the incident, but what is most remembered nearly 30 years later is the extraordinary skill and composure shown by the Air Canada pilots who managed a dangerous landing that saved the lives of everyone on board.

Far from being destroyed by the near-tragic events that took place over Manitoba, Air Canada has thrived and become one of the world's foremost airlines. In 1988, the former national carrier was privatized. Today, Air Canada is the world's 15th largest commercial airline, employing about 26,000 workers. By number of destinations served, it is the world's 10th largest passenger airline, according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

In 2011, along with its regional partners, its passengers took 33 million trips to more than 180 destinations on five continents.

TROUBLE ON THE HORIZON

Yet, despite such signs of success, warning indicators are going off signaling more trouble on the horizon. Labor problems and fuel prices are taking their toll on the airline. "Air Canada's first-quarter loss was 11 times higher this year than in 2011 as the airline weathered higher fuel prices, work stoppages by some of its employees and the bankruptcy of the company [Aveos] that formerly overhauled its planes. The Montreal company said... its net loss for the three months ended March 31 was \$210 million, including \$55 million attributed to discontinued operations at Aveos. Air Canada's



continuing operations also lost more, as they felt the impact of substantially higher fuel prices and labour disruptions. Its loss from continuing operations rose to \$93 million from \$66 million in the first quarter of 2011. A year earlier, the total first-quarter loss was \$19 million.... The contentious labour situation has been an ongoing issue for months, causing some observers to question whether Air Canada is losing business to rivals because of the uncertainty for travellers" ("Air Canada Q1 Results," *HuffingtonPost.ca*, May 4, 2012).

Calin Rovinescu, Chief Executive Officer of Air Canada, has been quick to point out that recent work stoppages by some of its union workers over ongoing labour disputes is eroding consumer confidence in the airline while also costing it large sums in related flight cancellations and decreased bookings. "Our operations were disrupted by job action by a number of unionized employees, which resulted in a decline in bookings for



travel originating in Canada in the immediate aftermath of these incidents,” he claimed (*ibid.*).

How do Air Canada workers see the situation? Captain Paul Strachan, president of the Air Canada Pilots Association, said, “The corrosive internal environment being created at the airline raises serious questions about its long-term viability.” Strachan accuses Air Canada executives of “taking ‘huge personal financial rewards’ while the company’s shares hit a 52-week low. He asserts that while the airline’s top executives are the best paid in the Canadian airline industry, pilots’ wages are in many cases below those of competing airlines (“Air Canada pilots’ sick calls ruled an illegal strike,” *CBC News*, April 14, 2012).

The ongoing dispute has driven customers away, and is affecting the travel of thousands of customers, costing the Canadian economy more than \$22 million a week. Labour Minister Lisa Raitt spoke out about the feud, stating, “The Canadian public is caught in this and we’re going to act” (“Air Canada Dominates Parliament Hill,” *Post Media News/Calgary Herald*, March 14, 2012).

GIVE VS. GET

A consideration of some biblical principles may help illuminate the situation. Wise King Solomon long ago stated, “He who is greedy for gain troubles his own house” (Proverbs 15:27). Air Canada’s management would be wise to heed such wisdom in dealing with its employees. Scripture admonishes employers to pay their workers a fair wage. “The laborer is worthy of his wages” (1 Timothy 5:18). In God’s eyes, management has a responsibility to treat workers with fairness, respect and dignity. However, greed is not the answer, for management or for workers. The Apostle Paul wrote: “Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have” (Hebrews 13:5). This does not mean that it is wrong to want to provide better for one’s family. However, in times of great economic distress, having **any** job is a blessing that should not be minimized.

In another epistle, Paul gave further instructions that would benefit both sides of the labour disputes: “Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows” (1 Timothy 6:6–10).

The labour dispute threatening Air Canada is symptomatic of a larger problem facing Canada. The postal system, public transit systems and the schools are continuously in the news as labour disputes pit greedy parties against one another, threatening to shut down essential services, disrupting Canadians’ lives and costing them millions of dollars. How wonderful it would be if such disputes could instead be conducted according to the instructions of Jesus Christ, who wisely taught that it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35)! If all parties at Air Canada would put the others first, and would practice the “way of give” rather than the “way of get,” this would provide the lift the organization needs to stay aloft, and would save Canada the black eye of having its flag carrier and largest airline crash into bankruptcy.

Will Air Canada glide to a smooth landing, as one of its famed flights did nearly 30 years ago? Or, will the organization continue its internal feuds until it loses too much altitude to recover? Time is running out, and the economic fuel is beginning to run low. Those at Air Canada need to change their heading, leaving the works of greed behind, before it is too late. By following God’s way of give, Air Canada and other organizations like it can slip back into profitability and turn an impending tragedy into an amazing triumph, just as did the fabled Gimli Glider.

—James Ginn



2012

AND THE APOCALYPSE

By Richard F. Ames

What does God's word tell us about "the end of the world" and the times just ahead?

All around us, the world seems to be mired in problems. Can those problems be solved before the human race is destroyed?

Earthquakes continue to cause suffering and loss. We remember the 9.1 magnitude Tohoku quake, which struck Japan on March 11, 2011. Between the quake itself and the tsunami it spurred, this disaster led to more than 15,000 deaths and at least 25,000 serious injuries. According to World Bank figures, which placed the cost of damage at \$235 billion, the Tohoku event is currently the most expensive natural disaster in recorded history. Many observers remain concerned about the lingering effects of radiation release from the Fukushima nuclear power plant that was irreparably damaged by the earthquake and tsunami.

Also in 2011, the United States experienced on May 22 its deadliest tornado since 1947, causing \$3 billion in insured damages around the town of Joplin, Missouri. From April 25–28 of that year, a "super outbreak" of 343 tornadoes across the U.S. Midwest caused an estimated \$10 billion in damage.

As if natural disasters were not enough, financial crisis is looming in many nations. The U.S. is still reeling from effects of the 2008 global financial meltdown, and Europe is poised on the edge of chaos as the stability of the euro currency is in doubt and the European Union

is in danger of losing member nations or breaking up entirely.

Many recent college graduates are having trouble finding jobs, while older workers find themselves without job prospects after layoffs. Immigration is changing the demographics of nations that had for decades—and even centuries—taken shared heritage and values for granted. Long-standing moral and religious norms are being challenged. To many, it seems as though our world is on the brink of total collapse.

So, what will happen? An April 2012 poll by Ipsos Global Public Affairs found, "Nearly 15 percent of people worldwide believe the world will end during their lifetime and 10 percent think the Mayan calendar could signify it will happen in 2012" ("Nearly one in seven thinks end of world is coming," *Reuters*, May 1, 2012).

Will the world end during your lifetime? Will it end in 2012? For several years, "New Age" enthusiasts have pointed to the ancient Mayan civilization's calendar, which ends one of its important cycles on December 21, 2012. Could this be the Mayans' idea of the end of the world? The recent discovery of a ninth-century AD Mayan inscription in Guatemala's Xultun complex suggests otherwise, as it includes dates extending 7,000 years into our future ("Ancient Mayan calendar unearthed," *Irish Times*, May 11, 2012).

Earlier this year, scientists who monitor the threat of nuclear war moved their symbolic “Doomsday Clock” one minute closer to midnight. On January 10, 2012, *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* made this announcement: “It is five minutes to midnight. Two years ago, it appeared that world leaders might address the truly global threats that we face. In many cases, that trend has not continued or has been reversed. For that reason, the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* is moving the clock hand one minute closer to midnight, back to its time in 2007.”

Yes, it is symbolically just five minutes to midnight! So, will we experience the “midnight” doomsday in 2012? Will 2012 be a time of transition or trouble? Will events long ago prophesied in your Bible occur? Your Bible does predict a climactic, catastrophic conflagration that—were it not for the return of Jesus Christ to save mankind from itself—would destroy all life on the face of the earth. But will 2012 be the date?

The book of Revelation—the final book in the Bible—is sometimes called the Apocalypse. The Greek word *apokalypsis* signifies a “laying bare” or “disclosure of truth”—a revealing. In modern English, “apocalypse” has come to refer to a major catastrophe, because of the events described in the *apokalypsis* revealed by the Apostle John in the book of Revelation.

THE FOUR HORSEMEN

Those who understand the symbolism of this mysterious book can recognize the ride of the prophesied “four horsemen” predicted in its pages. The Apostle John describes four horsemen that symbolize great deception and devastation to mankind and life on earth. “And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had

a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer. When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, ‘Come and see.’ Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword. When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, ‘Come and see.’ So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, ‘A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine.’ When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, ‘Come and see.’ So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him” (Revelation 6:2–8).

One of the basic principles for understanding Bible prophecy is that the Bible interprets itself. In this case, Jesus Himself tells us the meaning of these four horsemen, as we will see later. Jesus, the Revelator, wants us to understand this book. Notice the purpose of the book. “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John” (Revelation 1:1).

Since Jesus is the Revelator, did He reveal their symbolic meaning? Yes, He did! He gave an outline of end-time prophetic events in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. These prophetic events explain the four horsemen in the book of Revelation. Putting the Gospel accounts and Revelation together, we see that the famous four horsemen of the Apocalypse symbolize:

- White Horse: False christs and false religion
- Red Horse: War and its devastating effects
- Black Horse: Famine and scarcity that often follows war
- Pale Horse: Diseases and plagues that often follow famine

These four horsemen will cause devastation all over the earth. We read: that “power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth” (Revelation 6:8).

THE GREAT TRIBULATION

Jesus’ disciples asked Him, “what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?” (Matthew 24:3). Jesus explains that Christians will be persecuted (v. 9). The Gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness (v. 14). You are reading that gospel being preached in this magazine!

In the NKJV Bible, the subhead after verse 14 reads, “The Great Tribulation.” In 70AD, Roman armies besieged Jerusalem and destroyed the Second Temple. The Jewish historian Josephus records that more than one million died. This was “a” great tribulation for the Jewish people. But the end-time great tribulation will begin just three and one-half years before the return of Christ. Jesus gives us and the world this warning: “For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened” (Matthew 24:21–22).

The Great Tribulation will be a time unique in human history. There has never been such a time in mankind’s experience. The prophet Jeremiah calls it the “time of Jacob’s

trouble”—trouble for the end-time descendants of Jacob (whose name was changed to “Israel”). This tribulation is prophesied to devastate the Western nations, particularly the American and British-descended peoples. Jeremiah wrote: “Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it” (Jeremiah 30:7). The prophet Daniel described the Great Tribulation: “And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who is found written in the book” (Daniel 12:1). Daniel was told that the fulfillment of the final end-time events will take place over “a time, times, and half a time”—meaning three-and-a-half years (v. 7).

HEAVENLY SIGNS

Notice what comes in sequence after the Great Tribulation: “Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and

the powers of the heavens will be shaken” (Matthew 24:29).

These cosmic disturbances—the heavenly signs—signal God’s intervention and His judgment on the nations. The heavenly signs introduce the Day of the Lord, leading up to Christ’s Second Coming. The heavenly signs also constitute the sixth seal of Revelation. The Revelator, Jesus Christ, opens the sixth seal. “I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place” (Revelation 6:12–14).

DAY OF THE LORD

The Day of the Lord—God’s wrathful judgment on rebellious nations—will begin right after the heavenly signs (Revelation 6:17)! More

than 30 prophecies refer to the Day of the Lord. Isaiah 34:8 and Isaiah 63:4 show that the Day of the Lord in end-time prophecy, the time preceding the Second Coming, is a period of one year!

The three major events we previously mentioned, the Great Tribulation, the heavenly signs, and the year-long Day of the Lord cover a period of about three-and-a-half years. The Day of the Lord is the year preceding the return of Christ!

The Apostle John, author of Revelation, describes the Messiah—Jesus Christ—opening seven seals so we can understand the sequence of prophetic events. You can read about that in chapters 5 and 6 of Revelation. The first five seals, as we have seen, lead up to the Heavenly Signs, or the sixth seal. The seventh seal is the year-long Day of the Lord. This seventh seal consists of seven trumpets. “When He [Christ] opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets” (Revelation 8:1–2). Chapters 8 and 9 describe the first six trumpets. The seventh trumpet consists of the seven last plagues or judgments leading up to the return of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The heading above Revelation 11:15 in the NKJV is: “Seventh Trumpet: The Kingdom Proclaimed.” This great announcement takes place at the seventh trumpet. It is the good news all Christians look forward to. “Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!’” (Revelation 11:15).

This is wonderful news for true Christians, but how will the nations



respond? How will you respond? Notice: “The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come” (v. 18). The nations of planet Earth will try to fight against God’s Kingdom on earth. They will be angry that Christ has come to rule on the earth as King of kings and Lord of lords, assisted by His saints.

God has been warning all of us to prepare for Armageddon. Even General Douglas MacArthur gave a prescient warning at the end of World War II. Addressing the dignitaries gathered on the U.S.S. Missouri for the ceremony marking Japan’s formal surrender, MacArthur famously said: “Military alliances, balances of power, leagues of nations, all in turn failed, leaving the only path to be the way of the crucible of war. The utter destructiveness of war now blocks out this alternative. We have had our last chance. If we will not devise some greater and more equitable system, our Armageddon will be at our door.”

Where did the term “Armageddon” come from? *Har Megiddo* is Hebrew for “the Mount of Megiddo.” Scripture reveals that Satan and his demons will influence the nations to gather together at Megiddo, about 55 miles north of Jerusalem, to fight against Christ at His coming! “For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame. And they [the spirits of demons] gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon” (Revelation 16:14–16).

Christ and His army will conquer the rebellious and evil nations. The Prince of Peace will win this battle between good and evil. The King of kings, along

with the resurrected saints, will establish the Kingdom of God on planet Earth, and will teach all nations the way of peace, love and godly prosperity (Isaiah 2:2–4). In the “model prayer,” Jesus taught Christians to pray, “Your kingdom come” (Matthew 6:10). This is the kingdom for which we are praying!

PROTECTION FOR TRUE CHRISTIANS

God promises protection for His spiritually alert people in the dangerous times ahead! Jesus exhorts us, “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). How can we do this? We need to trust the Bible’s “sure word of prophecy” (2 Peter 1:19, *KJV*).

During the Great Tribulation, Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles for 42 months, and the two witnesses will prophesy for 1,260 days (Revelation 11:2–3). God’s most faithful people will be taken to a safe place in the wilderness for three-and-a-half times—three and-a-half years—and the Beast power will continue through these 42 months (Revelation 12:13–17).

Yes, we can know from the Apostle John’s visions, recorded in Revelation, that the Messiah will not return to planet Earth until these prophesied events have taken place! We can know that Christ will not return in 2012—or in 2013 or 2014!

Even so, true Christians must always be in a state of spiritual readiness. We cannot “wait until later” to repent and obey God. If we die as rebellious sinners who have knowingly rejected the Truth, our next moment of consciousness will occur when we are resurrected to the judgment of the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:15). But if we die as true and faithful Christians, our next moment of consciousness will be at the resurrection, when the seventh trumpet sounds—the “last trumpet” as described in 1 Corinthians 15:52—when today’s faithful Christians will be born into the Family of God as Spirit-beings.

God promises that we will be blessed if we read, hear and keep the truths revealed in this powerful book (Revelation 1:1–3). So, study the book of Revelation, stay close to its Revelator, Jesus Christ, and be prepared for what is ahead! ■

REVELATION: THE MYSTERY UNVEILED!



Troubling events are prophesied to occur in the near future, but Christ’s message reveals a way of escape that will protect true Christians. Will you be protected from the dangers ahead?

Write for our **FREE** booklet, **Revelation: The Mystery Unveiled!**, or download it from the **Booklets** section of our **Web site** www.TomorrowsWorld.org

LONDON CA

Oil Wars in the South Atlantic?

We usually think of “oil wars” as something confined to the Middle East. Yet a war of words, focused on potential oil wealth in the Falkland Islands, is raising concerns of an “oil war” in the Southern Atlantic.

Occupied by British farmers for nearly 200 years, the Falkland Islands are an archipelago roughly 300 miles east of the southern tip of South America. Though they are a hundred miles of ocean beyond the accepted 200-mile limit, the nation of Argentina claims these islands—which they call the Malvinas—as their own. Argentina asserts its claim on the basis that Pope Alexander VI’s Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494 granted to Spain all the lands west of a mid-Atlantic meridian, and that when Argentina declared independence from Spain in 1816, the rights to those islands thus passed to Argentina.

Britain bases its claim to the islands—among the last vestiges of a defunct British Empire—on Sir Richard Hawkins’ 1594 declaration that the islands were a British possession, even though it was not until 1833 that a settlement of British sheep farmers, employed by the Royal Falkland Island Company, arrived on the islands.

Argentina did hold the islands for a total of 74 days in 1982, during the Falklands War, but Britain regained possession. Though the 1994 revision of the Argentine constitution further reiterated Argentina’s claim to the islands, the Argentine government has stated that it has no plans to militarily reoccupy the territory.

So, what will become of the Falkland Islanders? Do they need to take a crash course in Spanish or prepare to drive on the other side of the road?

British Prime Minister David Cameron said recently, “The absolutely vital point is that we are clear that the future of the Falkland Islands is a matter for the people themselves, and as long as they want to remain part of the

United Kingdom and be British they should be able to do so” (“David Cameron accuses Argentina of ‘colonialism’ over Falkland Islands,” *The Telegraph*, May 14, 2012).

OIL WARS?

Rather than attempt military action, Argentina has focused its efforts on wresting sovereignty from Great Britain by pursuing a legal claim through the United Nations, accompanied by a well-oiled media campaign. “Well-oiled” may indeed be an apt pun to describe the current situation, now that a British company has announced its discovery of oil in the seas around the islands. British oil exploration company Rockhopper believes there could well be 1.2 billion barrels of oil ready for exploitation.

Rockhopper is seeking partners to pump the oil at an estimated cost of US\$2 billion, with expectations of healthy profits.

One potential partner that has been discussed is the American firm Anadarko Petroleum. However, because of the diplomatic sensitivities, partnering with an American firm could tip the balance of geopolitical pressure in favor of the British. Argentine President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner has expressed concern, along with her foreign minister Hector Timmerman who has warned British banks not to become involved, and has threatened legal action against any firm wanting to join in the grab for oil.

If a United States oil company were to become involved in Falklands oil drilling, much of the South American continent could erupt in anger, charging the U.S. and Britain with “economic imperialism” against Argentina—a relatively poor fellow member of South America’s Mercosur trading bloc. Yet, without the realistic threat of military force behind expressions of anger, any



Falklands Coastland ©Hemera.

LLING

sabre-rattling is simply “hot air.” British oil explorers are relying on their sense that reality is far more powerful than rhetoric.

So, how much oil may there be within the territory of the Falkland Islands? About 400–500 million barrels of oil have been confirmed, but estimates indicate that an oilfield known as the “Sea Lion” field could produce up to 1.2 billion barrels, with another field further south bringing the total to 8.5 billion barrels. Yet, despite the forecasts, the area has not yet proved economically profitable, and a recent report revealed that “Desire Petroleum and Border & Southern Petroleum, two of five London listed exploration businesses with interests in the archipelago, recently announced annual pre-tax losses of \$42.5 million and \$1.7 million” (“UK explorers struggle to strike Falklands oil,” *The Guardian*, April 2, 2012).

Is there precedent for a peaceable solution to conflicting Argentine and British oilfield claims? Some experts argue that a resolution to the problem could parallel the amicable handling of the Bonaparte Basin oil and gas fields claimed by Australia and East Timor. In that case, Australia made generous concessions to East Timor, one of the world’s newest and poorest countries. The terms of the 2002 Timor Sea Treaty gave East Timor 90 percent of revenue from the Joint Petroleum Development Area (JPDA) and a 50 percent share of the Greater Sunrise gas reservoirs. Would such a negotiated settlement work in the Falklands? Only time will tell.

SEA GATES IN PERIL

Some three hundred years ago, Great Britain began to accumulate its strategic naval interests. The geographic and commercial importance of these “sea gates” meant that the Royal Navy would not only “rule the waves” but also would hold a key strategic advantage over its enemies in times of war, and a key commercial advantage in times of peace.

As the British Empire grew, the Suez Canal, Singapore, the Cape of Good Hope, Aden, Malacca,

Ceylon, the Falkland Islands—and, of course, the most important of all, Gibraltar—became British possessions. Access to the Mediterranean was controlled by British military power, and ships travelling around all of the world’s southern capes were under the watchful eye of the Royal Ensign. Meanwhile, the U.S. held the Panama Canal as a strategic “sea gate,” as well as the Philippine Islands.

What most people do not know is that it was God who gave these important gates—“choke points” of the world—to the descendants of Joseph, son of Jacob (Israel). To the patriarch Abraham, God promised that “in blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gates of their enemies” (Genesis 22:17). These “birthright” promises were passed on to Isaac and Jacob, and were eventually given to Joseph’s two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. It is the descendants of these two sons of Joseph who have today become Great Britain and the United States. To learn more about this important key to understanding Bible prophecy, read our free booklet, *The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy*. You can read it online at www.TomorrowsWorld.org, or request a free copy from the Regional Office nearest you (listed on page 30 of this magazine).

However, God warned that the nations would lose these blessings if they were to disobey Him—that, as punishment for disobedience, enemies would “besiege you at all your gates” (Deuteronomy 28:52). And, indeed, this is what we see happening. Great Britain, despite some remnant of a nominal “Christian” culture, is in large measure rebelling against God and His ways. The same is true of the United States. As a result, it is no surprise to see these nations lose each valuable “sea gate,” one by one. Today, just two remain—Gibraltar and the Falkland Islands. The time will come when even those two are wrested from British control. Controversy over the Falklands is just one more sign that end-time Bible prophecy is rapidly being fulfilled!

—Rod G. King



THE BIG PUZZLE

By Dexter B. Wakefield

Have you been able to put the Truth together from the pieces you have found?

Have you ever tried to put together a large picture puzzle—the kind that comes disassembled in a box with hundreds of pieces? Usually, on the cover of the box, there is a picture of what the puzzle will look like when it is completely assembled, so you know what the final outcome will be as you labor to put each of the differently shaped pieces into its proper place. This can be quite challenging, because every piece needs to be in exactly the right place or the picture will not turn out as intended. But it can be very satisfying as each piece snaps firmly into its proper location, forming a complete picture.

In assembling such puzzles, it is possible to put the edge pieces together first, establishing the boundaries of the picture, but after that, you can rely on knowing what the picture looks like in order to put the myriad of pieces in their proper places. But what if you had to assemble the puzzle without seeing a picture on the cover of the box? It would be very difficult. Imagine,

then, how much more difficult it would be if another complication were added—if someone had removed some of the original pieces, then added to the box an assortment of pieces from a *different* picture puzzle? Those new pieces would not fit anywhere. Either you would assemble a partial picture full of holes, or you would force together a jumbled image in which many pieces would not seem to fit well at all. You might never know what the originally intended picture was supposed to look like.

ANOTHER KIND OF PUZZLE

Today's world is filled with religious confusion, and people often feel as though they are putting together a difficult puzzle. If you watch television on a Sunday morning, you will see preacher after preacher presenting different doctrines. It seems that there are as many different “gospels” as there are preachers. Their diverse doctrines offer different pictures of what God supposedly expects of us, as well as all sorts of ideas about our future. You may hear a message about “eternity in heaven,” or “the social gospel” or “the prosperity gospel.”

Listening to the different ideas, you may wonder: will Christ really return to establish the Kingdom of God on the earth, as the Bible teaches? Or is that merely an allegory for a “kingdom” in men's hearts, as some allege? Will the Kingdom of God have its headquarters in Jerusalem? Or is it an existing organization with its headquarters in Rome? The many contradictory ideas cannot all be true, and this can be very confusing to those who are seeking the truth. Thankfully, we know from Scripture: “God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints” (1 Corinthians 14:33).

God does not want His people to be in confusion. So, we should be able to “put the puzzle together” and see the picture God wants us to see.

But will most people be able to do this? Scripture says that they will not. God inspired the prophet Isaiah to describe the world's situation: "Whom will he teach knowledge? And whom will he make to understand the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just drawn from the breasts? For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little... But the word of the LORD was to them, 'Precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little,' That they might go and fall backward, and be broken and snared and caught" (Isaiah 28:9-13).

PIECES REMOVED, ADDED AND ALTERED

Historians know that false teachers changed many pieces of the "Christian" puzzle greatly in the years after Jesus Christ's resurrection. Protestant writer Jesse Lyman Hurlbut acknowledged the fundamental change that took place in the Christian Church. He wrote, "For 50 years after St. Paul's life a curtain hangs over the church, through which we strive vainly to look; and when at last it rises about 120AD with the writings of the earliest church fathers, we find a church in many aspects very different from that in the days of St. Peter and St. Paul" (*The Story of the Christian Church*, p. 33).

Changes accelerated over the next two centuries, to the point where in 364AD, at the Council of Laodicea, several fundamental core beliefs of Christianity were declared *anathema* by the succeeding Roman church. In many cases, original doctrines and practices taught by Christ and the apostles were replaced by "Christianized" versions of pagan Gentile practices, which

then became the new "orthodoxy." This period of history saw many who held on to "the faith which was once for all delivered" (Jude 3) being persecuted and killed.

As respected historian Will Durant wrote, "*Christianity did not destroy paganism; it adopted it.* The Greek mind, dying, came to a transmigrated life in the theology and liturgy of the church; ...Other pagan cultures contributed to the syncretist result. From Egypt came the ideas of a divine trinity... and a personal immortality of reward and punishment; from Egypt the adoration of the Mother and Child, and the mystic theosophy that made Neoplatonism and Gnosticism, and obscured the Christian creed; there, too, Christian monasticism would find its exemplars and its source. From Phrygia came the worship of the Great Mother; from Syria the resurrection drama of Adonis.... *Christianity* [as most people understand it today] *was the last creation of the ancient pagan world...* Christianity became the last and greatest of the mystery religions" (*The Story of Civilization*, Vol. III, pp. 595, 599).

THE BIBLICAL SABBATH

One major "missing piece" that few today recognize is that Jesus and His first followers observed and taught the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath (Luke 4:16; Acts 17:1-2). Observing Sunday does not follow Christ's example. It is a matter of history that the original, first century Church of God observed **all ten** of the Ten Commandments, including the one that reads: "*Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.*" That commandment goes on to tell us precisely *when* to do so, reminding us that "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God." We are then told to keep the day holy in a particular way: "In

it you shall do no work" (Exodus 20:8-11). To work on the Sabbath profanes something that is holy.

Is this a New Testament teaching? The Apostle Paul, in the New Testament book of Hebrews, taught Christians: "So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God" (Hebrews 4:9, NASB). *Nowhere do the Old or New Testaments teach that the Sabbath day was ever un-sanctified.* In fact, Paul kept the Sabbath holy after Jesus' death and resurrection (Acts 13:14, 27, 42), and Scripture shows that the seventh-day Sabbath will be kept holy in the Kingdom of God by all peoples (Isaiah 66:23).

What changed? Historians know that, particularly after Roman armies destroyed the Second Temple in Jerusalem in 70AD, many who called themselves Christians increasingly sought to avoid being identified with persecuted Jews. One way to do this was to adopt a different day of worship. As a result, as historian Edward Gibbon writes, "The serious temper of the Jewish Sabbath was transferred to the Christian Sunday that replaced it in the second century" (*The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. 1, p. 599). The first century Church kept the Sabbath holy, but by the second century increasing numbers were turning away from what Christ and the apostles had taught and practiced.

By what authority could the day of worship be changed from what Jesus Christ Himself had taught? The Roman Catholic Church readily acknowledges that by its own authority the change was made. Notice this excerpt from *The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*: "Question: Which day is the Sabbath day? Answer: Saturday is the Sabbath day. Question: Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday? Answer: We observe Sunday instead of Saturday



because the Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea [ca. 364AD] transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday” (3rd ed., p. 50).

The Council of Laodicea declared *anathema* those who refused to work on the seventh-day Sabbath or the annual biblical Holy Days, which are also Sabbaths of rest (Leviticus 23:1–4). This declaration intensified persecution of those who had been holding fast to Christ’s original teachings, and those who were not executed as heretics were scattered. Sunday observance became the new orthodoxy, and a vital “piece” of the true Christian picture had been exchanged for a new piece that presented a very different picture.

THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Another vital piece of the puzzle involves Christ’s very message. “Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the *gospel of the kingdom of God*” (Mark 1:14). So, what is the “gospel of the kingdom of God?” Modern preachers offer a variety of “gospel” messages.

Why such confusion? The Apostle Paul warned of this situation. “I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, *to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want*

to pervert the gospel of Christ” (Galatians 1:6–7). This is the gospel upon which our salvation depends. What is it? Christ’s gospel—His “good news”—proclaims the coming Kingdom of God, which He will return to establish and rule from His throne on the earth.

The Old and New Testaments both describe the Kingdom of God as a *government on earth*, though most professing Christians rejected this view in the first few centuries after Christ. Historian Gibbon wrote: “The ancient and popular doctrine of the Millennium was intimately connected with the second coming of Christ. As the works of the creation had been finished in six days, their duration in their present state, according to a tradition which was attributed to the prophet Elijah, was fixed to six thousand years. By the same analogy it was inferred that this long period of labour and contention, which was now almost elapsed, would be succeeded by a joyful Sabbath of a thousand years; and that Christ, with the triumphant band of the saints and the elect who had escaped death, or who had been miraculously revived, would reign upon earth till the time appointed for the last and general resurrection.... But when the edifice of the church was almost completed, the temporary support was laid aside. The doctrine of Christ’s reign upon earth was at first treated as a profound allegory, was considered by degrees as a doubtful and useless opinion, and was at length rejected as the absurd invention of heresy and fanaticism” (Gibbon, ch. 15, pp. 403–404).

This was not some obscure teaching; even the Apostle John had recorded the prophecy of the establishment of God’s Kingdom on the earth: “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms

of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!” (Revelation 11:15). Speaking to His disciples, Jesus said, “But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Luke 22:28–30). Clearly, Jesus was describing a literal kingdom—on earth—the good news of which He and His disciples preached. The Bible speaks of this Kingdom from cover to cover.

RESURRECTION OR IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL?

The nature of the human soul is another missing piece in most people’s picture of Christianity. We have all heard descriptions of people’s supposedly immortal souls ascending to heaven or crashing down to a fiery hell at the moment of death. In this view, the disembodied souls, floating among clouds or burning eternally in flames, never cease to exist or lose their consciousness.

Given this common picture, you may have wondered why the Bible so plainly and consistently describes the dead being resurrected from a kind of unconscious sleep. History shows that many professing Christians, steeped in Greek ideas of the immortal soul, introduced this belief into the changing panorama of belief that they called “Christianity,” though such belief is nowhere taught in the Bible.

The term “immortal soul” is not even found in the Bible, and many respectable scholars have recognized that the immortal soul is not a biblical teaching. Even

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I just wanted to let you know that I was spending a Saturday (Sabbath) resting. I was feeling a little anxious and distracted, so I walked around the kitchen area of my house when I found the May-June 2012 issue of *Tomorrow's World* magazine. My husband had inadvertently left it on a pile of papers intended to be tossed out, but I found it just in the nick of time, and I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart! Especially touching is the message in your article entitled, "Have You Surrendered to God?" Step by step I'm learning this simple but not always easy process.

S. Y., Higashimatsuyama, AP, Japan

Thank you so very much. The *Tomorrow's World Bible Study Course* has helped me clear up a lot of misconceptions. I really appreciate your great literature. Keep up the great work!

P. B., Russell Island, QLD, Australia

I'd like to give my special thanks to everyone for the January-February and March-April issues of *Tomorrow's World*. You have always striven to be both clear and accurate, and in a world that needs to understand the truth of the Bible more than ever, that is commendable indeed! Keep up the good work in Jesus' name.

J. W., Houston, TX

Thank you so much for sending me your literature. Above all, thank you so much for sharing the truth through the Holy Bible. I want to serve God with all my heart. I was raised in churches that keep the Sabbath as Sunday instead of Saturday. Also, they observe Christmas and Easter, bringing trees, sleighs, bunnies and eggs into the church. I began to question these things and what they could possibly have to do with the birth or resurrection of Jesus Christ. My answer came to "absolutely nothing." It is really sad that so many people have been deceived. I was deceived most all my life. I thank the Lord for showing me the truth. I started to have all these questions, and I prayed and asked Him to help me find the truth. I started to do some research, and that is when I came across your website. I really enjoy the literature that you send me.

M. W., Salisbury, NC

I just finished reading *The Ten Commandments* and *The Middle East in Prophecy*. These are the absolute best booklets I've ever read on these subjects and I suggest them to anyone seeking to know the truth! God is truly using you to spread His Gospel around the world! God bless and keep up the great work!

R. W., Warren, OH

I saw your telecast on Sunday evening and I was absolutely stunned and amazed. I am not religious at all and watch religious shows from time to time for a laugh at the ridiculous claims. Your show amazed me, as I always thought that if God does exist He is the greatest "scientist" and a sort of "biological artist." I thought if God exists He created the stuff like laws of gravity, sub and super sub atomic particles, DNA, speed of light, nuclear attraction/fusion and various other laws of physics. Basically that everything was by design and your telecast was the first time I have ever heard it said by a religious show or person. Take a tiny apple seed cover it with soil, add a little water and sunlight and it explodes into a huge tree for decades, year after year producing apples which are just perfect for our bodies to continue life. How does that little seed know how to do that? Why does it do it? It is just a little too perfect to be by chance. Fascinating.

B. H., Vancouver, BC, Canada

I would just like to thank you kind folks for the literature that you have available. I get the magazine every other month and the reading in there is true, and right on with what the Bible has to say. I have been receiving the magazine since 2007. It has all the things I am looking for. The story of the resurrection of Jesus, from a magazine a few years ago, really opened my eyes and finally explained things to me so I could understand them. If I cannot see your show on the TV weekly, then there is always the Internet so I can then watch it when the time is more convenient. Thank you all so much.

R. H., Cambridge, Canada

Folks: I enjoy your television programs, have subscribed to your magazine and, frankly, have learned many important and not-widely-known things from your presentations and booklets about what actually is in scripture.

A. B., Victoria, Canada

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

The Great Rebellion Against God

Bible prophecy lists numerous signs that will precede Jesus Christ's second coming, but the Apostle Paul specifically notes *two major events* that will occur just before Christ returns. He writes, "that Day will not come unless *the falling away* comes first, and the *man of sin* is revealed, the son of perdition" (2 Thessalonians 2:3). Paul tells us that the appearance of this "man of sin" on the world stage will be accompanied by "signs, and lying wonders" performed by a false religious leader using Satan's power (2 Thessalonians 2:9). This display of supernatural demonic power will deceive millions into following this Satan-inspired individual and the system he is promoting.

Meanwhile, the Western nations are rapidly abandoning any former pretense of nominal Christianity. "Mainline" churches that for centuries upheld "traditional biblical values" now champion same-sex marriage, practicing homosexual clergymen (and clergywomen), and open denial of the inspiration of Scripture. Backlash against these trends is driving some Episcopalians and Anglicans into the Roman Catholic Church, even while many Roman Catholics are leaving their church, citing dismay and disillusionment at the way the "pedophile priest scandal" has been handled. In many Western nations, Islam is now the fastest-growing religion.

What has happened to the long-held assumption that Jesus Christ would return to establish His Kingdom? Despite liberal trends and false teachings, the fact remains that Jesus will "come again" (John 14:1-3), that His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives by Jerusalem and He will reign over all the earth (Zechariah 14:1-9). The Bible also records that specific "signs" will precede Jesus' return: increasing violence and wars, frequent floods, droughts and

famines, disease epidemics, earthquakes and other natural disasters (see Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21). However, a major sign will be *widespread religious deception* promoted by false religious leaders who perform "*great signs and wonders*" (Matthew 24:3-5, 11, 24). The Scriptures state that the return of Jesus Christ will *surprise* the world because

people will not be watching for the warning signs that will indicate that His return is near (Matthew 24:36-41; 25:1-13; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6).

In the book of Revelation, the Apostle John describes a beast, coming up out of the sea, that is influenced and given power by Satan (the dragon—Revelation 13:1-5). This beast will be a political leader who will gain power in Europe over a final revival of a political system

that has links to the ancient Roman Empire (see Daniel 2; 7). John then foretells the appearance of another beast who "performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven... and he deceives those who dwell on earth by those signs" (Revelation 13:11-18). This miracle-working false prophet will be in league with the first beast and bring pressure on the peoples of the world to become part of this revived Roman system. Together, the political leader and the miracle-working false prophet will lead the world into a Satan-inspired system that will be totally contrary to the laws of God. This will be the ultimate fulfillment of the "falling away" or "great apostasy" against God that the Apostle Paul described in 2 Thessalonians 2:3. Bible prophecies reveal *this is coming* in the years just ahead!

MISTAKEN ASSUMPTIONS

As many readers of this magazine know, the organization led by Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong for more



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TIMES ALIVE

than 50 years underwent a terrible crisis in the early 1990s, as his successors abandoned long-held doctrines of God's Church and tried to bring the organization into "mainstream Christianity." Scores of thousands left the Worldwide Church of God as its doctrines were changed. That organization even changed its name, acknowledging openly that it no longer considers itself a "Church of God."

So, could that have been the "falling away" prophesied by Scripture? No less an authority than Mr. Armstrong himself would disagree with that assertion. On many occasions, Mr. Armstrong plainly taught that the "falling away" mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 would be an event affecting the vast mass of human beings around the world. He wrote in a co-worker letter, "Christ foretold a turning away from His message... [Paul] prophesied there would be a Great Falling Away from Christ's true message...the *popular churches would turn away* from the Truth and believe fables" (November 11, 1949). Later, in a 1982 radio broadcast, he asked, "Has that falling away happened? That doesn't mean a few people, it doesn't mean a few radicals or fanatics. The *whole world* was to be deceived!"

Was the "whole world" deceived when Mr. Armstrong's successors split their church? Though this was a traumatic event, it affected only a relatively small number of people, and the church's leaders displayed no powerful miracles to gain the loyalty of followers. There is no scriptural way to identify the prophesied "man of sin" with either of the men who succeeded Mr. Armstrong as the head of that organization.

Notice that the phrase translated as "falling away" in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 in the NKJV comes from the Greek word *apostasia*. Although English-speakers may be inclined to translate this word as "apostasy," and "falling away" has become a commonly accepted phrasing, these are actually not the best translations. Consider how several other translations render this word: "the great revolt" (*Williams*), "the rebellion" (*Moffatt*), or "the final rebellion against God" (*NEB*). No credible translation gives any indication that this massive global event could in fact involve just a

few thousand members of one organization. Rather, it involves an outright worldwide rebellion, of unprecedented proportion, against any semblance of belief in the God of the Bible. Here is how the *Expositor's Bible Commentary* describes this momentous event: "Conditions will be ripe for people, especially those who call themselves Christian... to turn their backs on God... This **worldwide anti-God movement** will be so universal as to earn for itself a special designation: 'the apostasy'... the presence of such an apostasy and counterfeit god **will not escape international observation**" (volume 11, pp. 320–323).

We are living in an age in which the so-called "Christian" world is drifting further and further away from God and the moral principles found in the Bible. Nations that once claimed to be Christian are now promoting homosexuality and same-sex marriage—and even persecuting those who quote the Bible! What about the United States? President Barack Obama, while running for office, famously observed, "Whatever we once were, we are no longer a Christian nation—at least, not just. We are also a Jewish nation, a Muslim nation, a Buddhist nation, and a Hindu nation, and a nation of nonbelievers." Some nominal believers were offended, even outraged, by his words, but he was correct—the U.S. no longer looks to biblical principles as its anchor.

This trend will continue. Within the lifetimes of most of you reading this article, two Satan-inspired individuals—a miracle-working religious figure and a charismatic European political leader—will appear on the world stage and lead the masses of humanity in rebellion against the true God. Finally, near the very end of this age, this blasphemous religious figure will declare himself to be God, commanding the allegiance of billions who will join him in a final rebellion against the returning Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:4).

You need to *be alert* and *watch* for these significant end-time events so you can avoid being deceived when the prophecies *come alive!*

—Douglas S. Winnail

The Big Puzzle

Continued from page 18

Martin Luther, the renowned “father of the Reformation,” commented on this matter. “It is probable, in my opinion, that, with very few exceptions, indeed, the dead sleep in utter insensibility till the day of judgment... On what authority can it be said that the souls of the dead may not sleep... in the same way that the living pass in profound slumber the interval between their downlying at night and their uprising in the morning?” (Michelet, *Life of Luther*, Bohn’s edition, p. 133).

The Lutheran church, however, (like most other Protestants) does not accept this perspective, and instead accepts the unbiblical idea that an “immortal soul” goes either to heaven or hell at the moment of death.

What did the Jews of Jesus’ day teach on this matter? “The belief that the soul continues its existence after the dissolution of the body is a matter of philosophical or theological speculation rather than of simple faith, and is accordingly nowhere expressly taught in Holy Scripture... The belief in the immortality of the soul came to the Jews from contact with Greek thought and chiefly through the philosophy of Plato, its principal exponent, who was led to it through Orphic and Eleusinian mysteries in which Babylonian and Egyptian views were strangely blended” (*Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1906 ed.). In other words, Jews who adopted this belief took it from the surrounding pagan religions.

What does the Bible teach about the soul? In the Old Testament, we read, “For the living know that they will die; but the dead know nothing” (Ecclesiastes 9:5). The New Testament teaches, “But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we

believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 4:13–14). Scripture teaches that the dead “put on immortality” (1 Corinthians 15:53) at their resurrection into the Kingdom of God at the return of Jesus Christ—“the King of kings and Lord of lords, *who alone has immortality*” (1 Timothy 6:15–16).

Notice how this “puzzle piece” connects to other pieces. Resurrected Christians do not possess immortal souls that will “float around in heaven with nothing to do”—they will assist Jesus Christ in the Kingdom of God!

YOU CAN “GET THE PICTURE”

The first century Church of God was taught “to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). They had to “contend earnestly” because it would be a struggle to hold on to what Jesus Christ and the apostles had taught. They had already received “the whole counsel of God,” (Acts 20:27), so they had what they needed to hold on to when false teachers began to remove pieces of the puzzle and even to change the picture.

We, too, can see the same picture that God gave to the first Christians.

But, to do so, we must be willing to toss out the pieces that do not belong, and to re-insert the original pieces. The true Church of God still has those original pieces, and they can be documented in the Bible and in history.

What does the picture reveal? As we have seen, it culminates in the Kingdom of God, which Jesus Christ will return to establish. While we await that Kingdom, God has revealed to us His plan for humanity, of which we are reminded every year by observing the Passover and the annual Holy Days that are listed in Leviticus 23. These days picture the putting out of sin from our lives, the receipt of the Holy Spirit, the return of Christ, the binding of Satan, the coming Millennial rule of Christ, and the final judgment of all who have ever lived. The early Church observed these festivals (Acts 2:1–4; 18:21; 1 Corinthians 5:8), and the Church of God—“spiritual Israel”—observes them today. The weekly and annual Sabbaths are part of the “faith once for all delivered” and are vital for our understanding.

When we assemble all the puzzle pieces, we can see what first century Christianity was really like, and understand what God’s Church should be doing today. If God has opened your mind to His truth, what was once a puzzle can become a clear picture that will change your life forever! ■

DO YOU BELIEVE THE TRUE GOSPEL?



The “good news” Jesus Christ proclaimed is far more meaningful than most people today realize. It will change our world—and you can play a vital part!

Write for our **FREE** booklet, *Do You Believe the True Gospel?* or download it from the Booklets section of our Web site www.TomorrowsWorld.org.

TOMORROW'S

Do It With Your Might!

Wise King Solomon was inspired to write: “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going” (Ecclesiastes 9:10).

Regardless of what we do, we can do it well or poorly. We can do it heartily or grudgingly. The way in which we do things is up to us. It is a matter of choice.

Of course before we can do things well we must learn **how** to do them. This is why obtaining an education is so important. We must be taught how to complete even simple chores like making a bed, preparing a meal, washing and drying dishes, doing the laundry or caring for pets. When parents show their children how to perform these tasks, they teach by example not only the way in which the tasks must be done, but also the attitude that goes into performing them neatly, efficiently, effectively and cheerfully.

It is important that parents teach not only the value of hard work, but the importance of doing quality work. This means that parents must be willing to correct their children when a job is done poorly (or is left undone), and it can require a great deal of patience from parents who must give encouragement and show appreciation for their children’s efforts as they learn.

Learning comes about in many ways. One of the main factors in opening up possibilities in a young person’s life is the quality and quantity of education received. Our spiritual education teaches us the fundamental values of “how to live.” Yet we must also learn “how to earn a living.” Consider that the very best craftsmen, engineers, doctors, custodians and teachers all received extensive

instruction before they became successful in their respective fields. No matter what we hope to do in life, we must first obtain education.

Of course, just having a diploma or certificate hanging on the wall does not ensure that we know it all. Continuing education is important, as new tools become available and new techniques are invented or discovered to help improve quality and efficiency in various fields of endeavor. Staying current in one’s profession is vital for those who want to do their best in the fast-moving world in which we live.

And it takes more than education to be successful. Merely knowing how to do something is not enough; we must also have a strong work ethic. Work is effort applied toward accomplishing something. And, regarding work, we can learn a thing or two from the honeybee and

the ant. A honeybee must visit about 125 clover heads to make one gram of honey. That means it takes **three million trips** to make one pound of honey. And the ant? We read: “Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, which, having no captain, overseer or ruler, provides her supplies in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest” (Proverbs 6:6–8). There are more than 12,000 species of ants, many of which can carry loads up to 20 times their body weight. If a typical second grader were as strong as an ant, he or she would be able to pick up a small automobile! Certainly, honeybees and ants know how to work, and they work





hard. And anyone who has missed the joy of hard work has missed something very important.

Another essential aspect of doing things with all our might is learning to do quality work. On my wall hangs a picture with a quote inspired by the words of 19th century art critic John Ruskin: “Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of intelligent effort.” Industrialist John D. Rockefeller Jr. said it this way: “The secret of success is to do the common things uncommonly well.” Regardless of the tasks we must complete, we must develop the habit of doing them well. Nancy Hanks said, “My parents always told me that people will never know how long it takes you to do something. They will only know how well it is done.” We often face limitations regarding the time and money we can allot to a particular project, but this should not keep us from doing the best job we can with the resources we do have at our disposal. Whether we are sweeping the floor or building a skyscraper, stacking firewood or sculpting a masterpiece, we should learn to do our work with all our might!

The Apostle Paul urged the brethren at Colosse, “And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men” (Colossians 3:23). He understood that God is always watching—even when no one else is—and that we should do our work as though we are working for God. And he assured the Hebrews: “For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister” (Hebrews 6:10). Yes, God will reward those who live this way!

Jesus Christ cares very much about how we treat those around us. Notice what He expects of us as His followers: “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the

throne of His glory... Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me’” (Matthew 25:31–40). Are we going “all out” in service to others? Christ expects us to!



When you work, or play—or worship God—put your heart into it! Employers look for hardworking, honest and

dependable people who have the ability to do the jobs they are looking to fill. Coaches look for players who are willing to give it their all—during practice and in the competition—and who are devoted to honing their skills. God, too, is looking for these qualities—in those to whom He will give various positions of responsibility in the soon-coming Kingdom of God!

In the very last chapter of the Bible, Jesus Christ assures us: “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work” (Revelation 22:12). Everything we do in this present life contributes to the strengthening or weakening of our character. Life is short. So, work hard. Play hard. Rest when you must. And, whatever you do, learn to do it with all your might!

—Sheldon Monson

How Satan Seduces YOU!

Continued from page 6

stories of being crippled by anxiety, possessed by anger, disoriented by confusion and immobilized by fear of total abandonment. Their behavior, grades and physical and mental health plummeted. They were different children. In fact, they didn't see themselves as children any longer. Divorce forced them to become adults, even before they became teens. We now know these children carry these problems cumulatively into adulthood" (Kupelian, pp. 115–116).

Again, the results of these "social experiments" increase children's sorrow and frustration, and lead to drug abuse, deadly disease and even suicide. Indeed, the way that "seems" right to a man often does end up in death!

DESTROYING OURSELVES?

By leaving the God of the Bible out of the picture, nations that once at least professed to uphold biblical values are now beginning to destroy themselves. And the results—particularly in the U.S. and Britain which ought to know better—are startling! Yet, millions who have been seduced by the false promises of the secularists and anti-God forces—ultimately led by Satan and his demons—are virtually unaware of the problem, and increasingly are unaware of the God of the Bible and any semblance of Jesus Christ's teachings! I refer to the "God of the Bible" because—as most of you know—there are so many false "gods" out there today. There are literally *hundreds* of concepts of what God is or is not. But the deep "fear" or awe of the true God—the Creator, the One who inspired the Bible—is entirely absent in the minds of most people.

Dear reader, you need to *think about* how the above-described changes have begun to affect the mental health and happiness of millions of people, the stability of homes and families—and the ultimate *survival* of the Western nations. If the U.S. and Britain are to continue and prosper, the restoration of profound respect for **that God** must be recovered—and, frankly, must be increased to where it ought to be!

If any of you reading this have not yet received and *studied* our vital booklet, *The Bible: Fact or Fiction?*, please *take action* and request your **free** copy. It can open your eyes to the *true* revelation of our Creator and His **way of life**—which is being subtly and not so subtly undermined by Satan in the various propaganda campaigns described in this article. You can read it or order it online at *TomorrowsWorld.org*, or request your free printed copy by contacting the Regional Office nearest you (listed on page 30 of this magazine).

Finally, may God help all of us be sure that we face reality. As the end-time prophetic events inspired by the God of the Bible swiftly begin to take place, human beings cannot afford to "hide their eyes"

from the **Truth** much longer. *You, yourself*, need to face the basic issues of life: "Why am I alive? Is there a **real** God? Should I **obey** that God or go my own way?" Most people do not face or even understand these vital questions. Yet the Apostle Paul challenges us: "But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them" (2 Corinthians 4:3–4). Satan is ultimately the one behind the "marketing of evil" through which he seeks to seduce as many as he can. Satan the Devil has indeed "blinded" the vast majority of mankind from understanding the **Truth**. If you are beginning to understand what I have written in this short article, God may be opening your eyes and removing that blindness! May this article help you to *think*, to *take heed*, and to *prove to yourself* the right answers to the key questions of life. This magazine and the *Tomorrow's World* television program are dedicated to helping you gain *true understanding*. May God help you *to understand*—and to **change!** ■

THE BIBLE: FACT OR FICTION?



Do not let yourself fall victim to the wiles of the devil. Scripture reveals the truth that will help you withstand Satan's lies and deceptions!

Write for our **FREE** booklet, *The Bible: Fact or Fiction?*, or download it from the Booklets section of our Web site www.TomorrowsWorld.org.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

“Red sky at night, sailor’s delight. Red sky at morning, sailors take warning.”

For millennia, people have recognized that it would be beneficial to be able to read the signs of the times to predict future events. Sometimes the signs can be wide open for all to see, but only those who are able to put them into the right context can understand what they mean for the future!

Sailors, and others whose lives depended on the sea, learned that a red sky in the morning had a very different meaning than a red sky in the evening. Since most weather patterns move from west to east, a red sky in the evening—when the sun was setting in the west—meant that clear skies were ahead. By contrast, a red sky in the morning meant that the sun was lighting the underside of approaching storm clouds.

Jesus Christ referred to this very phenomenon when speaking to the Pharisees and Sadducees. “When it is evening you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red’; and in the morning, ‘It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening’” (Matthew 16:2–3).

The Pharisees and Sadducees did have a certain level of wisdom, which allowed them (among other things) to read the coming weather patterns. However, they were not as wise as they thought themselves to be. Christ rebuked them for their inability to read the signs of the times in which they were living. “Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times” (Matthew 16:3). They were waiting for the Messiah to appear, but could not recognize that He was standing right in front of them! Later, Christ used a similar saying to teach His disciples to watch for His return (Matthew 24:32–35). He told them of signs that would accompany His return and the end of the age (Matthew 24:3).

Are you watching for the signs of the times? Do you see the gathering storm on the horizon? Paul described that, at the end of this age, “perilous times will come: for men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful,

unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power” (2 Timothy 3:1–5). What age could this describe if not the present one? The prophet Daniel describes the end of the age as a time when “many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase” (Daniel 12:4). Think about the achievements in transportation in the past century, and the knowledge explosion that has come about through the digital age.



Tomorrow’s World presenters and writers are hosting a series of informative meetings to help subscribers better understand the dangerous time we are in, as well as God’s wonderful plan to save humanity from what would otherwise be

certain cosmocide. Titled “The Gathering Storm,” these events are being held in cities across the United States and Canada. In July and August of this year, presentations will be held across the United States in Albany, New York; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma; Reno, Nevada; Sacramento, California and Worcester, Massachusetts. In Canada, presentations will be held in Winnipeg, Manitoba and in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, as well as in several Ontario locations: London, North Bay, Ottawa, Sarnia, Sudbury and Thunder Bay. Other locations are being added: check the *TomorrowsWorld.org* Web site for the latest location information.

There is a blistering red morning sky. The signs are there to see, but they cannot be interpreted properly without the context of God’s word—the Bible. The signs are pointing to a gathering storm that would destroy mankind entirely, were it not for the prophesied return of Jesus Christ to set the world in order! Are you prepared? Come to a *Tomorrow’s World* Special Presentation and learn what you and your loved ones can do to be ready.

—Michael Heykoop

The Works of H

Where Did the Universe Come From?

The late Carl Sagan, renowned astronomer and cosmologist, famously began his acclaimed book *Cosmos* with a sweeping statement: “The Cosmos is all that is or ever was or ever will be.” And the grandeur we see as we point our telescopes outward can cause us to feel humbled by such lofty declarations.

Thanks to advances in astronomy and pictures from the space-based Hubble Telescope, a family today can venture out on a dark night, away from city lights, and parents can explain to wide-eyed children the vast realms that lie beyond the innumerable stars they see above—not just stars, but billions upon billions of galaxies, nebulae, quasars, pulsars and other fascinating phenomena—an uncountable collection of worlds in a seemingly infinite variety scattered throughout a universe of vast, unimaginable size!

Awed by such immense beauty, a curious child might naturally turn to his or her parents and ask a simple question: “Where did the universe come from in the first place?”

Where, indeed? In this case, a child’s question is a scientist’s dilemma. As *New Scientist* magazine suggested in its January 13, 2012 issue, one could call it “The Genesis problem”—“Without an escape clause, physicists and philosophers must finally answer a problem that has been nagging at them for the best part of 50 years: how do you get a universe, complete with the laws of physics, out of nothing?”

AN EXPANDING UNIVERSE?

Human beings have been able to gaze upon the edges of the cosmos, and have explored the hidden laws that work in this marvelous, orderly universe, but not even

the most skilled scientist has been able to demonstrate where the universe came from, why it is here, or why it is the way it is.

For some time, such questions were considered the realm of philosophers and theologians. For scientists, the universe could simply be taken for granted, and many assumed it was eternal. But all of that changed in the 1920s, when Belgian astrophysicist Edward Lemaître made a startling discovery.

Working with the Einstein Field Equations—mathematics that the Nobel Prize-winning physicist Albert Einstein derived from his famous General Theory of Relativity—Lemaître concluded that if Einstein’s characterizations of space, time and matter were correct, the universe was not eternally balanced and static. Rather, it had to be expanding over time! Even more startling, the equations showed that the universe had been smaller in the past, and that—if one looked far enough into the past—the universe was an infinitely hot, infinitely dense, infinitely small point, which Lemaître called a “primeval atom.” Understood in this way, Einstein’s equations showed that the vast universe and everything in it, each of the billions upon billions of planets, stars, and galaxies—and even space, itself—had a beginning as an infinitesimal point, smaller than the smallest subatomic particle.

At first, Lemaître’s conclusions were widely dismissed. Famed astronomer Fred Hoyle mocked the idea of a universe expanding from a microscopic beginning, derisively calling it a “big bang.” Even Einstein, himself, reportedly told Lemaître, “Your math is good, but your physics is terrible.” The idea of a non-eternal universe, somehow “brought into existence,” was for some scientists an uncomfortable echo of the opening words of the Bible, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1).



His Hands

That a dusty, ancient tome—widely dismissed as unreliable and unworthy of consideration by science—should have such a head start on modern cosmology was, to say the least, unnerving to “sophisticated” scientists.

Yet, within a decade, hard data and scientific observation had confirmed Lemaître’s conclusions. Astronomer Edwin Hubble discovered that light waves reaching planet Earth from distant galaxies were shifted in a particular manner consistent with Lemaître’s theory. Just as the sound waves of a train’s whistle shift from a high pitch to a lower pitch as the train passes an observer along the tracks, the “red shift” of light waves from distant galaxies indicated that those galaxies were moving away from us in an expanding universe.

By the 1960s, physicists Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson had detected a faint uniform radiation in the universe that fit perfectly with Lemaître’s theory of a cosmos that began a finite number of years ago as an infinitely small “seed” before expanding into today’s universe. Penzias and Wilson had discovered, in effect, an “echo” of what Hoyle had disdainfully called the “big bang”—the moment of the universe’s creation.

SHOCKING IMPLICATIONS

Today, the “Big Bang” is taken for granted as one of the most well-established scientific theories. What once was shocking to scientists is now well accepted—our universe has not always been here, and there was a moment of “creation” when it all—literally all—somehow came into existence.

Yet the implications of this well-documented theory—the “Genesis problem”—have not left physicists feeling any easier. As *New Scientist* noted, “The big bang is now part of the furniture of modern cosmology, but Hoyle’s unease has not gone away. Many physicists have been fighting a rearguard action against it for decades, largely because of its theological overtones. If you have

an instant of creation, don’t you need a creator?” (January 13, 2012).

That “rearguard action” continues today. Many theories have been presented trying to avoid a “creation moment”—ranging from multiple universes to a cosmos that expands and shrinks in endless loops to “cosmic eggs” that give birth to “child” universes—but no other theory fits the facts like a universe that began at a moment in time. In their April 2012 paper “Did the universe have a beginning?” Tufts University physicists Audrey Mithani and Alexander Vilenkin evaluate

three theories that promise to explain how the universe could “avoid a beginning.” Their conclusion? None allows for a universe that “can actually be eternal in the past.”

The facts are still as Dr. Vilenkin reported them to his audience at a “State of the Universe” symposium held in honor of physicist Stephen Hawking’s 70th birthday: “All the evidence we have says that the universe had a beginning.”

For physicists who hope to avoid a “creation event,” the problem is not going away. But the “Genesis problem” is not a problem at all for those who actually believe the book of Genesis! In the very first sentence of the Bible, God claims the title of Creator of the heavens and the earth! Even the expansion of the universe finds an echo in the words of Scripture in its description of a God who “stretches the heavens like a curtain” (Isaiah 40:22; Psalm 104:2).

Beyond the reach of the astronomer’s telescopes and the physicist’s equations, Scripture reveals the eternal and supernatural Creator of all things! As the Psalmist sang to God, “Your heavens [are] the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained” (Psalm 8:3).

When the child—or the physicist—asks the question, “Where did the universe come from?” we can answer with confidence: The universe came from the mind and power of the Almighty God of all creation, for His great purpose and glory and for the fulfillment of His plan for our destiny!

—Wallace G. Smith



Whose Opinion Really Counts?

Continued from page 2

over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting” (Romans 1:26–28).

How clear! God’s inspired word describes homosexual passions as “vile”! Indeed, the Bible is consistent in showing that the Creator *never intended* men or women to indulge in homosexual behavior. *Think!* If *everyone* turned fully to this kind of behavior, before too long the human race would *cease to exist!* Who would want this to happen? Scripture explains that Satan the Devil is the “god of this age” who has “blinded” the vast majority of human beings from knowing the true God or His plan (2 Corinthians 4:3–4). The Bible also reveals that Satan is “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience” (Ephesians 2:1–2).

As I describe in the lead article in this issue (“How Satan Seduces YOU!” on page 4), Satan has convinced millions to revel in unbiblical practices that the Bible condemns. Using “Madison Avenue” techniques, he has been able to convince many that homosexual activity is “normal.” The lie is propounded that people are “born that way” and that this gives them the license—even the right—to practice behaviors that Scripture clearly labels as “vile.”

What does your Bible say? “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13). Yes, those who feel they are inclined toward homosexuality **can** overcome that inclination! With the help of God’s Spirit, all things are possible (Matthew 19:26). Paul reminded the Corinthians that, after one has turned from the ways of the world, one becomes clean in God’s eyes (1 Corinthians 6:9–11)!

Think! Even if someone might feel that he or she has “homosexual tendencies,” those tendencies do not make it “right” to do what is wrong! What about “tendencies” toward alcoholism, obesity, anger—and so many other unhealthy traits? God assures us that those tendencies can be overcome! But increasing numbers of people do not want to hear that simple truth. Why? Jesus Christ said, “Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil” (John 3:19).

Those who love darkness rather than light—who reject the true God of the Bible—are missing the spiritual foundation that should protect them from the “everything goes” lifestyle that Satan is trying to push on mankind. Fornication, drunkenness, drug abuse and more, all appeal to the “carnal” mind that prefers to reject God!

The Apostle Paul was inspired to instruct us: “For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be” (Romans 8:6–7). The word “carnal” in the Bible simply means “fleshly”—the normal way and attitude of mankind apart from God, the human attitudes inspired by the flesh—often under the influence of Satan the devil.

No, the average, unconverted “fleshly” mind of man is “not subject” to the Ten Commandments—the law of God. The unconverted human mind is normally at “enmity” against God—as the above passage shows. People do not like the concept of a **real** God who **commands** them what to do and how to live their lives. Most people want to think of God as something “far off”—a “divine power” or “first cause”—a force that has **no authority** to tell them what to do. The carnal mind deeply **resents** the true God of the Bible, who has a *great spiritual law* that tells human beings **how** to love Him—and **how** to love mankind!

Each one of you reading this should think through carefully and honestly **prove** to yourself the existence of the **real** God of the Bible and of His inspired Word. I strongly encourage you to call us or write us to request your free copy of our booklet entitled, *The Bible: Fact or Fiction?* And also be sure to request the thorough explanation of the **way** of life the Creator laid out in the booklet entitled, *The Ten Commandments*. May God help you to *be sure* of these key issues. For your future happiness in *this life* and your *eternity* depend upon your being willing to obey the God who gives you life and breath. May God give you the **courage** to fear Him—to *deeply respect* Him above and beyond what people think. For it is **His** opinion that truly counts.

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