

TOMORROW'S WORLD

March-April 2013

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AMERICA CUT
OFF FROM GOD?





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

When Satan Strikes!

Jesus Christ described Satan as a very *real* spirit being. He stated, “Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out” (John 12:31). The New Testament clearly indicates that Satan is now *in charge* of this present human society. Of course, Almighty God can *overrule* Satan at any time, but He is generally allowing the world to go its own way so as *to learn its lessons* for 6,000 years of human history. The Apostle Paul described Satan as “the **prince** of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience” (Ephesians 2:2). Satan is now *in control* of this world’s atmosphere. Satan *broadcasts* wrong attitudes and perverted ideas throughout the earth—sometimes through television, sometimes through the Internet, sometimes through other means.

As a result, we have had constant wars, murders, fights, rape, torture, robberies, starvation—and the breakdown of families everywhere. Satan was a *murderer* and a **liar** from the beginning. Jesus Christ told the religious people of His day, “You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it” (John 8:44). Satan, the master deceiver, cleverly mixes various ideas of good **and** evil to *deceive* this entire world. That is why The Apostle John described Satan as “the Devil and Satan, who deceives the **whole world**” (Revelation 12:9).

As one of the many examples of Satan’s massive deception and his intent to *destroy the family*, we learn that in December, the new *Queen James Version* (QJV) of the Holy Bible was published in the U.S. and made available for sale (*Australian Women’s Weekly*, December 18, 2012). Its cover shows a rainbow cross (depicting “gay pride”) and its purpose is to **edit** Bible verses that condemn homosexuality, so “homophobic”

interpretations become impossible (*ibid.*). In total, eight sections of the *King James Version* were edited to remove God’s clear instructions.

Most of you *Tomorrow’s World* subscribers already know that—from one end of the Bible to the other—Almighty God clearly **condemns** homosexuality in all of its forms! Describing the “human reasoning” behind this perverted practice, even by the ancient philosophers, God’s word states, “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” (Romans 1:26–27). Yes, Almighty God calls homosexual practices “vile passions.” His inspired word describes God’s attitude toward what happened even to bring about the word **sodomy**: “Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries” (Jude 7–8).

Notice that homosexual leaders who “defile the flesh” are also quick to **reject authority**, and they continually *speaks evil of dignitaries*. For Satan—through perverted practices like this—wants to destroy the entire decent way of life which produces happy families, balanced children and brings about human beings as potential members of God’s own Family. Since the true saints of God are to *replace Satan* and his demons in ruling this world (Revelation 5:9–10), *Satan hates this*, so he is filling the world

Continued on page 30

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Tomorrow’s World has no subscription price. It is made possible by the tithes and offerings of Living Church of God members, and by others who have chosen to become co-workers in proclaiming Christ’s true Gospel to all nations. Donations are gratefully acknowledged, and may be tax-deductible.



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INSIDE

- 4 America Cut Off from God?** Few today would call the United States a “Christian” nation. Confused ideas about God are increasingly prominent, and millions even reject God entirely. Why? And what will happen as a result?
- 10 Sex: Is It Sin?** What does God think of human sexuality? Should it be a source of shame? Is it that “anything goes”—or does your Bible reveal important truths regarding Christians and sex?
- 16 Are You a Quartodeciman? Should You Be?** As the annual observances of Easter and Passover approach, a second-century controversy remains relevant for Christians today.
- 22 Yes or No?** Are you following Christ’s admonition regarding your oaths?

MORE

- 8 Oh Canada!** Success Where Others Failed?
- 14 London Calling** Britain’s Religious Demise
- 20 Prophecy Comes Alive** Ominous Trends in Israelite Nations
- 24 Tomorrow’s Youth** “I Was Only Joking!”
- 28 The Works of His Hands** How Old Is the Earth?

7 Questions and Answers

19 Letters to the Editor

31 Television Log

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Postmaster: Send address changes to Tomorrow’s World, P.O. Box 3810, Charlotte, NC 28227-8010.

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AMERICA CUT OFF FROM GOD?

By Roderick C. Meredith

STAGGERING CHANGES ARE JUST AHEAD WHICH WILL SOON AFFECT *YOUR LIFE* AND THE LIVES OF ALL YOUR LOVED ONES. OUR SOCIETY HAS TURNED AWAY FROM THE TRUE GOD—THE GOD OF THE BIBLE.

Before he became President of the United States, then-Senator Barack Obama gave a policy address in which he stated: “Whatever we once were, we are no longer a Christian nation—at least not *just*. We are also a Jewish nation, a Muslim nation, and a Buddhist nation, and a Hindu nation, and a nation of nonbelievers” (June 26, 2006).

How true!

Many—even most—Americans no longer turn to the God of the Bible in times of crisis and tragedy. Instead, they wonder: “Where was God when 20 children died in the Newtown massacre?” “Where was God during the Columbine school shooting more than a decade ago?” “Where is God when one mass murder after another takes place?”

America seems to be a very different nation than it once was. Once the “arsenal of democracy” and the world’s biggest creditor nation, it is now a debtor nation questioning the long-held values that formed the entire “American way of life.”

Does God have anything to do with the plunge in America’s international power and prestige? What about the remarkable changes in weather patterns—including increasingly serious *crop losses* and the specter of food rationing? What about the growing *drought* in America’s

Midwest and Southwest that has become so severe that the government is being forced to dynamite portions of the Mississippi River because the water level has become so low that massive barges containing millions of tons of grains and other food stuffs are often unable to navigate this vital waterway? What about the increasing strain on medical facilities—especially with the threat of prophesied *disease epidemics* on the horizon? What about the record number of *massive earthquakes* coming closer and closer to America’s shores?

CAN YOU “CONNECT THE DOTS?”

The secular news analysts view all of these growing threats as random, disconnected events with *no overall connection*. But those of you who truly *believe the Bible* should realize the real meaning of *all* these events. *You* should “connect the dots.” *You* should realize that as Bible-rejecting judges and legislatures “legalize” even the abominable practice of “men marrying men,” something *awful* is beginning to overtake the American nation. For a former Bible-believing nation should *know better*.

How many realize that the American and British-descended peoples have a special responsibility? *We* are

the ones—far more than any other nations—that have translated, published and distributed *hundreds of millions* of Bibles around the world. We are the people whom the Creator has formerly blessed by granting us the richest parts of the earth, by blessing us with “blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. The blessings of your father have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers” (Genesis 49:25–26).

WE ARE REJECTING THE BIBLE

Increasingly, as we turn away from the God of the Bible, the Eternal God will “shake” our nations until our teeth rattle! For we in America—along with the British-descended nations—*really are* the descendants of the so-called “Lost Ten Tribes of Israel.” And the God who gives us life and breath has predicted *these exact events* to come on us *unless we repent*. In an awesome prophecy referring to *our time*, Almighty God first promised to *bless* our peoples in every way if we would choose to “observe carefully” **all** His commandments (Deuteronomy 28:1). He then promised to set us “high above all nations of the earth.” He promised, “You shall *lend* to many nations, but you shall not borrow. And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail” (vv. 12–13). These awesome blessings *have come* upon the American and British-descended peoples because of our father Abraham’s *obedience* to God’s commandments, statutes and laws (Genesis 26:3–5).

Think carefully.

How were the peoples of England—a comparatively small nation living on an island—even remotely able to gain control over

vast nations and continents all over the world? For, at one time, they controlled the U.S., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa—and major colonies such as India, Burma and many parts of Africa and the Middle East. Did this all “just happen”? Or was it because Almighty God intervened *to keep His promise* to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and *bless* their descendants with such great power even at the time of the end? For God allowed us, together, to win World War I, World War II, the first Gulf War and many other conflicts.

As we have turned away from God and His laws, our victories became more and more difficult, our national prestige in world affairs became less and less and we are no longer the “head and not the tail” as we once were. Now, instead of being the world’s biggest “lender” nation, the United States has become the world’s biggest “borrower.” We have forgotten God’s warning: “The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is *servant* to the lender” (Proverbs 22:7). More than most of you can even begin to imagine, America will soon become the “servant” of other nations—and it is going to be *awful!*

As we increasingly **despise** God’s statutes, He will appoint “terror” and “wasting disease” over us, and slowly but surely “*break* the pride of your power” (Leviticus 26:16, 19–20). This is *now* beginning to happen before our very eyes! For the Eternal God clearly stated in one of His statutes, which a majority of modern Americans certainly does **despise**: “You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination” (Leviticus 18:22). Also, in the New Testament, the Apostle Paul was inspired to validate and even magnify this statute of God when he described the so-called “great” philosophers: “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 over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting” (Romans 1:26–28).

Again, *think!*

Has our so-called “progressive” society progressed so much that—as Paul stated—it does “not like to retain God in their knowledge”? *Exactly!*

So what lies ahead for *you* and for all of your loved ones—if we do not truly **repent** and begin to **seek** the true God—the God of the Bible? After describing the awesome blessings upon our people listed in Deuteronomy 28:1–14, the great God describes *exactly* what will happen if we continue to turn our backs on our Creator: “But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: ‘Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country. Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Cursed shall be the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks. Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out’” (Deuteronomy 28:15–19).

Wow!

Could *this* be an inspired description of the increasing slaughter of young people in places like Newtown, Connecticut? Could *this* be a description of the massive *drought* occurring in the American Midwest and Southwest? Could this be a description of the coming *disease epidemics*—epidemics so severe that they will simply overwhelm our medical system? Could this all lead to

the total military and financial collapse of America, as Almighty God sends His “rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me”? (v. 20).

God help us to **wake up!**

For there is *still time* for millions of our peoples to come to their senses and to be willing to “connect the dots”—and to **seek** and to **obey** the God of the Bible. Will you be one who is willing to do this?

You Must Be *WILLING* TO LISTEN!

As the news commentators and so-called “analysts” describe so many of the events around us, they *utterly fail* to “connect the dots.” Regarding school shootings, they talk about having more policeman around the schools. They talk about arming the teachers. They talk about having better classes in civics or human relations. But they do **not** allow themselves to address the actual **cause** of the problem! In our modern society, we nearly always talk about the **symptoms** of the horrible things that happen, but we are seemingly blinded from understanding the root **cause**.

Why? Most people **do not like** to hear the cause. The truth goes against their modern “progressive” ideology. For it involves a willingness to **obey** the God of the Bible in a way *very few* religious leaders are themselves willing to admit or to do! *Why* are so many so blinded? “Because the carnal mind is **enmity** against God; for it is not subject to the **law** of God, nor indeed can be” (Romans 8:7).

There is plainly a growing *antagonism* in the minds and hearts of hundreds of millions of “modern” individuals—understandably disappointed or disillusioned by various false religions and ideologies—that has turned them against even considering the possibility that a real

God exists and has the **authority** to tell us *what to do!* Put simply, most people are not willing to humbly “listen” to their Creator *or His inspired word*, the **Holy Bible**.



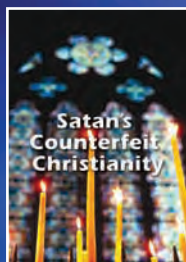
Yet the very prophecies that I just cited in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28—and literally *scores* of other prophecies in your Bible, both in the Old and New Testaments—clearly indicate that people **will suffer** because they are not willing to **obey** their Creator! It almost sounds too simple to be true. But, my friends, it is absolutely true—and this truth will soon affect *your life* as our modern society turns further and further away from God.

When young people—and, indeed, people of all ages—are not taught to properly reverence the Creator God and **obey** the Ten Commandments as a *way of life*, their moral and social values will **naturally** tend to deteriorate more and more with each passing decade. The family increasingly breaks apart and breaks down. Violence and crime become more common. Even people’s willingness to work together for the common good begins to fall apart—*just exactly* as we today see in the parliaments of Europe and in the U.S. Congress as political leaders seem totally unable to cooperate with one another to come up with sensible solutions to lead our peoples to peace and prosperity.

Again, *why?* Because the vast majority of people today are **cut off** from God! They have **banished** God from their schools, from the public square and—whether you are willing to admit it or not—have even banished the true God and His *inspired word* from the *very churches themselves* that profess to be “Christian”! What does it mean to be “Christian”? Christ Himself taught: “Man shall not live by bread alone, *but by every word of God*” (Luke 4:4).

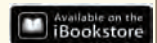
Continued on page 26

SATAN’S COUNTERFEIT CHRISTIANITY



DO NOT LET YOURSELF BE DECEIVED BY A FALSE RELIGION MASQUERADING AS THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST!

Request a *FREE* printed copy from the Regional Office nearest you, or order at www.TomorrowsWorld.org. PDF, ePub and Kindle are also available.



Questions & Answers

Question: The cross is one of the most recognized Christian symbols in the world, but where did it come from? Did Christ's disciples use it?

Answer: While it is true that the cross has long been held as the quintessential Christian icon, the real origin of the cross has nothing to do with early Christianity. Although the common assumption is that Jesus Christ was nailed to the t-shaped cross so commonly used today, there is no real evidence of this. The Bible contains **no description** of the actual wooden stake to which Christ was nailed. The actual word used in the Bible is *stauros* (Acts 5:30; 10:39; 13:28–29), which simply meant an upright pole (sometimes with a cross-bar, sometimes not), stake or even a tree. The Romans used several variants to execute the condemned.

Nowhere in the Bible do we find the cross or crucifix being described or assigned as an object to be carried, worn, worshiped, canonized or given any other kind of significant treatment by Christians or those claiming to follow Christ. History and archaeology are also largely silent on this point, with many accounts concerning the cross and its use appearing only in apocryphal writings or sources several centuries after Jesus' death.

History shows us that the symbol of the cross pre-dated Christianity, and variants of it appeared in pagan art and religion all the way back to ancient times. For example, the British museum holds an Assyrian statue of the son of King Samsi-Vul wearing a near-perfect Maltese cross. Greek gods like Diana and Bacchus appeared with crosses, and share much in common with later medieval portrayals of the Virgin Mary.

Crosses in the form of ankhs, upright crucifixes, and even swastika-like depictions have been found from Latin America to Egypt and the Orient, and one letter of the Semitic alphabet even appears as a cross dating to about 1500^{BC}. However, because the laws of God and the teachings of Jesus Christ and His disciples flatly condemned the use of icons and graven images to represent God or Christ, faithful Christians and honest adherents to these teachings would not have used such icons for their worship.

Although there were many professing Christians throughout the first centuries ^{AD} who took the name of Christ but were in actual fact guided or became apostates by the influence of pagan religion, it is reasonable to assume that variants of the cross may have been carried in reverence to Christ, but the first official "Christian" use of the cross did not begin until 312^{AD}, under the rule of the pagan Roman Emperor Constantine. Constantine claimed to have had a vision of some type of cross (probably the Chi Rho or similar object, consisting of a P and an X-shaped symbol merged together to stand for Christ's name in Greek) and a command to place it upon the standards of his army so as to conquer his enemies! In what seems to be a purely politically motivated move to take control of the increasingly popular **apostate system** of "Christianity" in Rome at the time (*Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, "Cross"), Constantine used this symbol to associate himself with divinity and to make his version of Christianity the state religion of the Roman Empire.

Even the Chi Rho cross, however, had tie-ins to ancient pagan sources, and assertions of its use by early Christians before the fourth century are not supported by concrete evidence.

With no description found in the Bible of the specific type of *stauros* or cross used in Christ's crucifixion, Christians today should focus on the meaning of Christ's sacrifice, what He is doing **right now** and why. The fact that the traditional cross came out of pagan religion should give us pause. The Bible prohibits the use of icons and images as part of our worship of God

In Exodus 20:3–5, God specifically commands His people not to bow down before a carved image—a warning ignored by those today who genuflect before a crucifix in their religious observance. This instruction is reemphasized in the New Testament; the Apostle John exhorts Christians to "keep yourselves from idols" (1 John 5:21).

Oh Canada!

Success Where Others Failed?

For many years, Canada was made up mostly of people whose ancestors came from England or France, along with indigenous peoples. But this demographic has changed dramatically over the last half century. As with the United States, Canada is a nation of immigrants. Prior to 1961, more than 90 percent came from Europe. That number is now down to 16 percent. Today, Canada is a mosaic of peoples from all inhabited continents of the world.

Canada's 2011 census recorded more than 200 different ethnic origins, with more than 200 languages reported as a home language or mother tongue. British, French or Canadian ethnic origins account for less than half the population. Immigration now comes from the Middle East and East Asia, more than from Europe. With lowered birthrates and an aging population, these immigration trends will surely continue to increase the diversity of Canada's peoples.

The creation of a multicultural society is a point of pride with most Canadians, and it is celebrated in government, in the media, and in polite conversation. You will often find articles extolling how Canada has succeeded where others have failed in this experience. Typical is this report by journalist Haroon Siddiqui, comparing failures in Europe to Canada's success: "While French President Nicolas Sarkozy, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and British Prime Minister David Cameron pronounced multiculturalism dead, no serious national politician in Canada dare suggests it... We are now the envy of the world, for having expanded our legal, political and social space to include all citizens, regardless of culture, religion, ethnicity or colour" ("Happy birthday to Canadian multiculturalism," *Toronto Star*, October 8, 2011).

And then there was the article chiding Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany after she declared multiculturalism a failure in her country: "Canada stands

apart as not only being multicultural, but as a country that has actively encouraged multiculturalism through its laws and policies for decades. Let's invite Chancellor Merkel and the members of her government to Canada... let's invite our German friends to discover the benefits of a 'real' multiculturalism policy" ("Canadian multiculturalism vs. German 'multikulti,'" *Toronto Star*, November 7, 2010).



In the wake of Norway's horrific July 2011 mass killings, carried out by a man disgruntled over his nation's immigration policies, a *CBC News* article explained that it is different here in Canada, but included a caveat. While generally praising Canada's success with people of many cultures living together peacefully, Barbara Perry, an associate dean of faculty at the University of Ontario

Institute of Technology warned: "There's no reason for Canadians to be smugly confident... Pockets of resistance to changing demographics exist in Canada... Everyone doesn't welcome it. It's not universally loved, this notion of being open to all comers" ("Multicultural Canada: a haven from Norway-style violence?," August 4, 2011).

BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY

Canada's population now tops 33 million, of whom 12 million live in the province of Ontario. Half of those live in the greater Toronto area. In many newer neighborhoods, there is so much diversity that *everyone* is a minority! My family's closest neighbours in our Mississauga neighborhood, where we live among 720,000 other suburban residents, are Pakistani, Indian, Vietnamese, Eritrean, Kenyan, Chinese, Ghanaian and Greek. Christians and Muslims interact routinely, and we all get along.

One benefit I have felt from this diversity is that, by having the opportunity to meet people from all around the world, I have gained a new level of understanding



and compassion. When a disaster occurs way off somewhere, my wife and I can put a face to it. One lady in the congregation I pastor has a sister in Sri Lanka who was literally up to her neck in water when the Indian Ocean tsunami hit her town in December 2004. A security guard in a hall where we meet is from Egypt, and we often discuss how her Coptic Christian family is managing after President Mubarak's departure.

Most immigrants to Canada are profoundly thankful to have left their troubled homelands for a land of peace and opportunity. Yet, for all the positives, there are concerns. Already one can hear grumbling as employment discrimination becomes more apparent, when some new immigrants hire only those of their own ethnicity. Though many individual immigrants are not interested in politics, some ethnic groups are very politically active and there are concerns as to what might happen if less tolerant elements gain significant political power someday. Despite the official culture of tolerance, the appliance repairman may not speak with political correctness in private, yet you will not hear his voice in the official media.

Sometimes, however, these concerns do find a voice. "Studies show that visible minorities, including those born in Canada, suffer job discrimination. Quebec rejects multiculturalism, preferring its 'interculturalism,' with its presumed supremacy of not only the French language but also French culture" (Siddiqui, *op. cit.*).

NATION AGAINST NATION

Jesus Christ, when asked about signs that would indicate the end of this present age, warned that "nation [Greek *ethnos*, "people" or "ethnicity"] will rise against nation" (Matthew 24:7). Could this trend spill over and spoil peace-loving Canada? Already, the precedent is there for Canada to be caught up in these worldwide trends. We remember that Sikh extremists in June 1985 blew up an Air India 747, with Canadians accounting for 268 of the 329 killed. Investigations into the incident took 25 years and cost taxpayers \$130 million.

Yes, Canada's peaceful ideal is already under attack. *CBC News* reported: "Despite Canada's ingrained multicultural policy, the threat here is real, say experts, pointing to a jump in the number of hate groups operating on the web and the spike in hate crimes... In 2007, an Orthodox Jewish boys school in Montreal was attacked by a firebomb, damaging the facility. It was the second incident in two years... In 2004, the library at another Jewish school in Montreal was destroyed by fire. A note left at the scene said it was in retaliation for the Israeli army's killing of a Hamas leader in the Middle East" ("Multicultural Canada: a haven from Norway-style violence?" August 4, 2011).

Regular readers of *Tomorrow's World* know that the British-descended peoples are descendants of the so-called "lost ten tribes" of ancient Israel. This includes many of today's Canadians (to learn more, read our vitally important booklet, *The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy*), who are mostly descendants of the Israelite tribe of Ephraim. The prophet Hosea calls end-time Ephraim "a silly dove, without sense" and describes its peoples this way: "Ephraim has mixed himself among the peoples; Ephraim is a cake unturned. Aliens have devoured his strength, but he does not know it; yes, gray hairs are here and there on him, yet he does not know it. And the pride of Israel testifies to his face, but they do not return to the LORD their God, nor seek Him for all this" (Hosea 7:11, 8–10).

God blesses those who follow His laws, even if they do so unknowingly. Canadians have been blessed for many years in following the scriptural admonitions to love the strangers among them, and to treat them with kindness (Deuteronomy 10:17–19). Yet that kindness is being challenged by another scriptural principle, the consequences of trying to absorb religions and customs that in important ways go against the God-given principles for a healthy and cohesive society (Exodus 20:3–4, Nehemiah 13:23–27). As we approach the end of the age, Scripture warns that this tension will lead to increasing discord. Today's Christians must be sure to stay close to God to be protected in the trying times ahead.

—Gerald Weston



SEX: Is It Sin?

By Richard F. Ames

idea that some sexual practices are inherently immoral—however pleasurable some may find them in the short term—is dismissed as antiquated by millions today.

Even the ancient institution of marriage is under attack in our modern society. Old standards are crumbling as millions live in “open” marriages—while others strive to redefine the meaning of marriage itself. “Gay marriage”—unthinkable even 20 or 30 years ago—is increasingly becoming accepted. The Gallup Poll reported in May 2011 that 53 percent supported same-sex marriage—a startling increase since 1996, when just 27 percent favored such unions (“For First Time, Majority of Americans Favor Legal Gay Marriage,” May 20, 2011).

So, where does sex fit into all this? Should married couples treat sex as something shameful? Is celibacy a higher ideal for true Christians? Is it “sinful” for two consenting adults to share physical intimacy? Are there objective standards of sinfulness that still apply today? Who is qualified to define sinful behavior and attitudes? Is there any reason, in our modern age, to follow what the Bible teaches? If so, what happens to those who disregard the Bible’s standards?

Historically, we see that when men and women have practiced adultery and unfaithfulness in their marriages, the family unit has suffered. At its height, the Roman Empire emphasized strong families, but this emphasis later changed and the Empire declined. Scholars have documented the decline in character and morality that contributed to the Empire’s demise. Historian E. B. Castle wrote that in addition to the problem of businessmen’s absence from their families,

Sex pervades our modern culture. Some consider it a “forbidden fruit,” while others seek to experience it in all its forms. But what does it mean to a Christian—and what part should it play in your life?

There was a time—within the lifetimes of some of you reading this article—when it was considered scandalous for popular entertainment to make light of sexual immorality. Moviemakers adhered to the “Hays Code” and television networks looked to their “broadcast standards” departments to ensure that their programs were appropriate viewing for the whole family. Sexual activity—when it was discussed at all—was portrayed as something meant to be shared in private between husband and wife.

Today, however, sexual perversity is commonly—even routinely—displayed in movies and on television. Numerous studies have documented that pornography is the most popular content available on the Internet. In the media, as in so many personal relationships, infidelity is increasingly taken as a source of humor, and sexual promiscuity is accepted as normal. The

another problem contributed to the decline—"the consequent easy attitude to the marriage tie, the increasing frequency of divorce, and the growing freedom and laxity in women's morals, all of which ended in a loosening of the old family unity in which the best in Roman character had its roots" (*Ancient Education and Today*, p. 119).

Will our modern civilization follow the pattern of Rome's decay? The Roman philosopher Seneca, writing in the first century AD, observed that in his day, "some noble ladies reckon the years of their lives, not by the number of the consuls, but by that of their husbands, now that they leave their homes in order to marry others, and marry only in order to be divorced... Divorce was only dreaded as long as it was unusual; now that no gazette appears without it, women learn to do what they hear so much about. Can any one feel ashamed of adultery, now that things have come to such a pass that no woman keeps a husband at all unless it be to pique her lover? Chastity merely implies ugliness" (*On Benefits*, Book III, xvi).

Men, too, are seduced by the false promises of adultery. With increased access to birth control, and the easy availability of abortion on demand, sexual activity has increased in the last few decades, as men and women alike have come to believe they can avoid the consequences of that activity. Even the mass media contribute to a culture of immorality that brings about many ruined lives. Millions fail to take seriously the simple biblical admonition: "You shall not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14). Yet if everyone kept this precept—the seventh of the Ten Commandments—lives would be far happier and society would be far more stable.

Just as God is the Creator of the physical laws that govern matter,

He is the Lawgiver whose spiritual laws govern our lives. He defines sin (1 John 3:4). We would ridicule someone who tried to "deny" the law of gravity, and risk his life falling from a great height. But how many in our society try to deny the consequences of violating God's spiritual laws?

Our modern Western world increasingly rejects the Ten Commandments and continues its slide into immorality. Just how bad is it? The Barna Research Group surveyed ten moral behaviors among Americans, and gave this startling report: "Of the ten moral behaviors evaluated, a majority of Americans believed that each of three activities were 'morally acceptable.' Those included gambling (61 percent), cohabitation (60 percent), and sexual fantasies (59 percent). Nearly half of the adult population felt that two other behaviors were morally acceptable: having an abortion (45 percent) and having a sexual relationship with someone of the opposite sex other than their spouse (42 percent). About one-third of the population gave the stamp of approval to pornography (38 percent), profanity (36 percent), drunkenness (35 percent) and homosexual sex (30 percent). The activity that garnered the least support was using non-prescription drugs (17 percent)" ("Morality Continues to Decay," November 3, 2003).

What will happen to a society that holds such immoral values? From beginning to end, the Bible reveals that obedience to God's laws brings blessing, while disobedience brings cursing and penalty. This is not just an "Old Testament" concept. Notice: "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows

to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life" (Galatians 6:7-8).

Yes, there is cause and effect in life. When we do what is right, we enjoy a good effect, but when we do what is wrong, our sin causes a painful effect. Even if sin may seem pleasurable for a time, its after-effect will be devastating.

Considering all this, is celibacy the answer? Some professing Christians have the idea that it is somehow more holy to remain unmarried. The Apostle Paul, however, disagreed with this idea, explaining that "it is better to marry than to burn with passion" (1 Corinthians 7:9). We have seen the scandals surrounding thousands of men who—in the name of their religion—pretended to live as celibates, but privately engaged in the most reprehensible behaviors. God does not value such hypocrisy. He gave marriage as a good thing, an institution valued from the very beginning of the human race. It was God who told Adam and Eve, "Be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28).

SEX IN MARRIAGE

Godly sex, in marriage, binds husband and wife together in love and intimacy. The relationship between husband and wife also has a spiritual dimension, as the Apostle Paul explained: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:25-27).

Yes, a husband is to love his wife as Christ loves His Church! Paul continued: "So husbands ought to

love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband" (vv. 28–33).

God values marriage, and gives His blessing to sexual activity within marriage. "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled" (Hebrews 13:4). He even instructs husband and wives to submit to each other sexually (1 Corinthians 7:1–5).

The Bible is clear; God made sex to be shared by husband and wife in marriage. Any other sexual relationship is sin. Note the last part of Hebrews 13:4, that "fornicators and adulterers God will judge." Yes, God is the judge! Sexually immoral individuals need to repent of their sinful "lifestyles"! Further, the Bible describes specific sexual acts that are prohibited, including forms of sexual perversion (see Leviticus 18).

Just one chapter after outlining such prohibitions, God revealed the second great commandment, to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18). Jesus quoted that passage from Leviticus in Matthew 22:39. Of the Ten Commandments, the first four show us how to love God, and the last six show us how to love our neighbor. Jesus said: "If you want to enter into life, keep the

commandments" (Matthew 19:17). Are you willing to obey God and keep the commandments?

Some states and nations are acting as if they know better than God! Support for same-sex unions is becoming more and more common. Consider that in the United States, though many state constitutions contain language defining marriage as between one man and one woman, at least nine states have legalized same-



sex marriage. Around the world, same-sex marriage is legally

recognized in Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, Spain and Sweden. The Middle East state of Israel recognizes same-sex marriages performed elsewhere, as do several states in Brazil and Mexico. What confusion!

In the first century AD, the city of Corinth in Greece was a center of worldwide commerce—and also a center of paganism, idolatry and sexual immorality. Nevertheless, many Corinthians repented of their sinful lifestyle and became Christians. The Apostle Paul warned them against the temptations of their day: "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).

Are you practicing any of those behaviors? God says that none who are will inherit the Kingdom of God! Some of the Corinthians had repented of those sins—and they were forgiven. The Apostle Paul continues: "And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God" (v. 11).

MISLEADING LEADERSHIP

In today's society, many who pose as religious leaders mislead people by telling them that they are not sinning when in fact they are violating the commandments of God. The prophet Jeremiah lamented such false leadership, and foresaw dire consequences. "Shall I not punish them for these things?" says the Lord. "Shall I not avenge Myself on such a nation as this?" An astonishing and horrible thing has been committed in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule by their own power; and My people love to have it so. But what will you do in the end?" (Jeremiah 5:29–31).

People may be deceived, but they "love to have it so." According to the Barna Research Group, many who call themselves "Christian" approve of behaviors the Bible defines as immoral, including cohabitation (defined as living with someone of the opposite sex without being married). Barna reports: "The biggest gaps between Protestants and Catholics were found in relation to cohabitation (deemed morally acceptable by 50

percent of Protestants and 66 percent of Catholics), sexual fantasies (51 percent and 63 percent, respectively), and gambling (52 percent and 70 percent, respectively)” (“Morality Continues to Decay,” November 3, 2003).

Some who are careful to avoid physical adultery think that they can avoid sin by keeping their adulterous fantasies in their minds. Yet Jesus Himself revealed that it is possible to sin in the mind, even without illicit physical conduct. “But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Matthew 5:28).

As our Savior warned: “But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies” (Matthew 15:18–19).

How much sinful sexual fantasy finds its way into your mind? Plenty, if you watch television! With its title *The New Normal*—a title seemingly not meant to be ironic—one television program that debuted in 2012 is a sad example of where our media seems to be headed. Consider the show’s description as promoted by NBC, the network on which it airs: “These days, families come in all forms - single dads, double moms, sperm donors, egg donors, one-night-stand donors... It’s 2012 and anything goes.”

How do these trends affect young people? One report noted: “In the top 20 shows among teen viewers, more than eight in ten (83 percent) include some sexual content, including nearly half (49 percent) that have sexual behaviors, and one in five (20 percent) that have sexual intercourse. The top teen shows average 6.7 scenes per hour with sexual content” (*Sex on TV 3: a Biennial Report of the Kaiser*

Family Foundation, 2003). The report continues: “If you ask teens what role sex on TV plays in their own lives, nearly three out of four say it influences the sexual behaviors of kids their age, and one in four admits it influences their own behavior” (*ibid.*).

Yes, the mass media does influence our attitudes and behaviors. We need to be on guard against those temptations that lead us to sin. Pornography is a booming business around the world and leads many to sexual crimes, including child sexual abuse. In a Canadian study of convicted child molesters, 77 percent of those who molested boys, and 87 percent of those who molested girls, said they were regular users of hardcore pornography (*Report on the Use of Pornography by Sexual Offenders*, Report to the Federal Department of Justice, Ottawa, Canada).

Although our world’s media are filled with sexual images, messages and temptations, a Christian must not give in to these influences. As Scottish novelist Margaret Oliphant famously observed, “As a general rule, temptations come when they are sought.” We must turn away from evil, and stay close to God. Jesus taught us to pray to our Father in heaven: “And do not lead us into

temptation, but deliver us from the evil one” (Matthew 6:13).

If you are indulging in pornography—or any other sexual vice—you need to repent! You need to quit sinning! You need to take decisive action to prevent your easy access to sexual temptations! The Apostle Paul gave this urgent instruction: “Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body” (1 Corinthians 6:18). Some believe that sexual sin is a “victimless crime.” But God says that sexual sin is a sin against your own body!

Paul continues: “[K]now ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy [Spirit] which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (vv. 19–20, KJV).

Will you make the commitment, if you have not done so already, to glorify God in your body and in your spirit? God’s way of life through Christ is the abundant life, as Jesus stated in John 10:10. You can have that life of genuine happiness, if you follow the awesome and wonderful spiritual laws of God! ■

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LONDON CA

Britain's Religious Demise

The facts reveal what most Britons have known for some time—the Christian religion in Great Britain is in decline—and in particular the role of the Church of England as the voice of Christianity in the country.

The results of the 2011 census were published recently and show that in the 10 years since the last census in England and Wales, 13 percent fewer people claim to be Christians. Fewer than three in five people (59 percent) still declare their commitment to traditional Christian beliefs.

Why?

Could it be that Islam is drawing Christians into its orbit? Not really. Although 40,000 Britons have converted to Islam in the last ten years (see *Mail Online*, 5 January, 2011) that is a small number compared to the **seven million English and Welsh** who have opted out of religious belief altogether during the same period. The fact is, many people have simply given up on religion completely—and now declare themselves to be atheists or agnostics.

The exposure of paedophilia within the priesthood has caused many to become disillusioned with the Church. And although this scourge has been found primarily within the Roman Catholic clergy, Protestants have not escaped the disillusionment of the general population either. These churches have lost out because of their acceptance of practising homosexual ministers and the approval of same-sex marriages.

A study conducted over the past ten years by the Henry Jackson Society revealed the decline of the Anglican Church as the country's main religious voice (*Daily Telegraph*, December 30, 2012). The census figures reveal that in ten years, profession of Christianity fell by a whopping one in eight people in England and Wales. This contributed to the rise of the “no religion” adherent status, from 14 percent in 2001 to 25 percent of the population ten years later.

An interesting observation by the Society was that although Muslims represent only 5 percent of the population, their spokesmen were responsible for 31 percent of religious comment. The Muslim Council of Britain made 410 official statements in 2012 as opposed to only 393 by the Anglican Church's leader, the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Catholics (only 5 million in the UK) tend to focus on pro-life issues along with strong statements against same-sex marriage. The Anglican Church however, seems to ignore these issues in favour of statements about social injustice, poverty, foreign policy and overseas aid.

The result is that some conservative Anglican priests have made a shift to become Catholic priests. The Pope has accommodated them by allowing them to continue as married priests and hasn't required them to take vows of celibacy. In January 2011, seven Anglican priests, along with 300 parishioners, “crossed the Tiber” to become adherents to Rome. A year later another 200 worshippers and 20 clergy followed suit. Their complaint against the Church of England was mainly against the ordination of women.



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SECULARISATION

The secularisation of Britain began nearly 100 years ago during and after World War I. People could not understand how a “loving God” could allow the slaughter of 19,000 British soldiers in just one day as the Battle of the Somme began. Millions of British and Empire soldiers, plus French, Russian, German, Italian and Austrians, were to die in the war. Afterwards, a religious wasteland spread across Europe, leaving a population virtually devoid of religion. World War II added to the demise of Christianity, and post-war materialism and secularism have almost brought the death knell to religion in Britain and Europe.

LLING

The decline of religion is not unique to Britain and Europe. The United States of America is also experiencing a contraction of religious belief and worship. This once great bastion of religious freedom is taking a beating from secular zealots in the judiciary and other institutions of influence. According to the National Secular Society's *Journal* (October 2012), a Public Religious Research Institute survey of 3,000 U.S. citizens reveals that 19 percent are religiously unaffiliated.

The *Journal* says that in Ireland, there are four times more people stating they have "no religion" since a similar poll in 1991. A similar trend can be found in Catholic France. The overall number of Catholics who never go to Mass has risen from 26 percent in 1961 to 58 percent today. Christianity is under attack throughout the Western world—amongst both the Catholics and Protestants.

Where is all of this heading?

It is heading to a society that will be ill-equipped to face what is prophesied to come upon the whole world in the next few years.

THE BIBLE REVEALS WHAT IS COMING

What does the Bible foretell? Jesus Christ tells us that, "then will be great tribulation [extreme stress and trials], such has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matthew 24:21). No, we do not know exactly which of today's many crises will ignite the final fuse to bring an end to times of affluence and plenty. It could be any number of things—global diseases or a financial meltdown, for example, or a natural disaster of unprecedented proportion, or political instability in one of the "big" countries, which could precipitate a nuclear world war.

In concert with all of this will be the appearance on the world stage of a man the Bible calls a false prophet. Masquerading as a very holy man, occupying the highest

religious position in the world but a charlatan of the highest order, this personage will deceive and dupe the whole world into believing he is "God"!

Revelation explains, "He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth" (13:13–14). Verse 16 continues, "He causes all both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads." What is that mark? Some mistakenly



think it is a microchip or a bar code; in fact, the hand and forehead symbolize that this mark will be a matter of what people do and what they think. They will choose a way of worship that rejects the true God, and instead places allegiance upon the false prophet, through whose intrigue and deceit the whole world will worship him as a god. A spiritually ignorant world

will be swept away with religious hysteria without any awareness of what the Bible reveals about this evil man and his cohorts.

But you, dear reader, are different. You are coming to know more and more about the differences of what is proclaimed as religion and what is actually true religion. You are able to discern between the true Christianity of the Bible and the "Christianity" that has been manufactured by those who have mixed pagan traditions with the Bible. It is a syncretism of ideas that are like oil and water. They simply do not mix.

Are you ready to seek the true God of the Bible, the true Jesus Christ and the true religion? If so, you only have a finite time to do so. Time is getting short and the false religion is waiting in the wings to be thrust onto an unsuspecting world.

It is time to take stock of your life and request your copy of *Satan's Counterfeit Christianity*. You will be very glad you did.

—Rod King



ARE YOU A QUARTODECIMAN? SHOULD YOU BE?

By Dexter B. Wakefield

Easter bunnies, Easter eggs, Easter bonnets and Easter sunrise services! Back by popular demand! But whose demand—and what should we do about it?

Springtime is the season for one of Christendom's most prominent festivals—Easter. This traditional holiday is called a memorial to the resurrection of Jesus and is practiced by most denominations of professing Christianity.

But even young children ask what rabbits and eggs have to do with Jesus and His resurrection. Parents may be at a loss for an answer, but the history of the Easter traditions is well known. Observance of a springtime resurrection and fertility festival long predates Christianity, and the symbols associated with that festival's

ancient mythologies—including eggs and bunny rabbits—survive in modern celebrations.

In original Christianity, faithful Christians held on to the original practice given by Jesus Christ and kept by His disciples. When others tried to introduce an “Easter” festival to replace the Christian Passover, these faithful Christians were labeled as “Quartodecimans”—and ultimately a whole region that kept the original practice was “excommunicated” by Easter-keeping leaders.

Why should a second century AD controversy matter to us today? *What happened then, and why should we care now?*

From the time they had been taught to do so by the Apostles, particularly by Paul and John, the Asiatic churches had observed the Christian Passover in the evening beginning the fourteenth day of the first month of the Hebrew calendar (Nisan 14). When in the second century AD the Roman church insisted that all keep a Sunday festival called Easter instead of the Christian Passover, a major controversy arose between those called “Quartodecimans”—“Fourteenthers” (the word comes from the Latin “four and ten” *quartadecima*)—and those willing to change to the “Easter” observance.

Understanding the great “*Quartodeciman Controversy*” of the second and third centuries AD sheds a lot of light on the modern traditions associated with Easter—and also illuminates a profound belief and practice of the first-century Church.

NON-CHRISTIAN CUSTOMS

Writer Ted Olsen reminds us that it was the seventh century

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AD English historian Bede (“The Venerable”) who suggested that Easter’s name comes from the Anglo-Saxon goddess Eostre, [also spelled Eastre] associated with spring and fertility, and celebrated around the vernal equinox (“Why ‘Easter’?”, *christianitytoday.com*).

What about the eggs and bunnies associated with the Easter celebration? Spring is the time when trees come back to life, the weather warms up and there is abundant food for birds to feed their broods. So, eggs were plentiful in the springtime and represented rebirth and fertility after the winter’s sterility. The ancient Zoroastrians painted eggs for their celebration of the Spring Equinox more than 2,500 years ago. Hares and rabbits are very prolific, and have long been associated with fertility and the return of life in the Spring in many ancient cultures. The hare was the sacred animal of the Saxon fertility goddess Oestre, who was closely connected with the Germanic goddess Ostara. Modern “neopagans” have reinstated the worship of these goddesses and incorporated the ancient symbols of the egg and hare in their spring rites.

So, how did these customs come to the New World? “Eighteenth-century German settlers brought ‘Oschter Haws’ [the Easter Hare]... to America, where Pennsylvania Dutch settlers prepared nests for him in the garden or barn. On Easter Eve, the rabbit laid his colored eggs in the nests in payment” (*ibid.*). Sound familiar? This practice is typical of modern Easter egg hunts.

CAN MANKIND “SANCTIFY” THE PAGAN?

There was great persecution of Jews early in the second century AD, particularly under the Roman

Emperor Hadrian, and the observance of “Jewish” customs by Christians was distinctly unpopular in that day. Many of the Gentile believers wanted to distance themselves from those practices and to assign Christian meaning to the more popular dates of their local cultures. Religious historians know that both the name and time of Easter had their origin in paganism, but theologians have long reasoned that it is possible to “sanctify the pagan.” In this view, a culture may keep its pre-Christian forms, but the pagan symbols and myths can become Christian in meaning and purpose. The influential Catholic leader, Cardinal Newman, wrote, “We are told in various ways by Eusebius [an early church historian], that Constantine, in order to recommend the new religion to the heathen, transferred into it the outward ornaments to which they had been accustomed in their own.... The use of temples, and these dedicated to particular saints... holidays and seasons... turning to the East, images at a later date... *are all of pagan origin, and sanctified by their adoption in the Church*” (*An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, Ch. 8:6).

So the fact is well known among secular and religious historians that the name of the holiday, many of its symbols and the time of its observance came from pagan practices. What is questionable is the doctrine of “sanctifying the pagan” that is used to justify many practices in Christendom. While this rationale can be attractive for theologians and traditionalists, the Bible condemns it.

God said, “When the LORD your God cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess, and you displace them and dwell in their land, take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from

before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.’ You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; *you shall not add to it nor take away from it*” (Deuteronomy 12:29–32). It is not likely that God changed His mind about this. He said, “For I am the LORD, I do not change” (Malachi 3:6), and “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). God rejects pagan practices and instructs us not to incorporate them into His worship. He tells us *what* days we are to observe, *how* we are to observe them and *why* we are to observe them. There was no instruction by Christ or the apostles to have an annual memorial to Christ’s resurrection, but they did authorize another practice.

IS “EASTER” IN THE BIBLE?

But is Easter mentioned in the Bible? In the *King James Version* of the Bible, the Greek word, *Pascha*, in the original text is rendered as “Easter” (Acts 12:4). But that comes from a mistranslation of *Pascha*, which means *Passover*. This error is corrected in the *New King James Version* and in most modern translations, which render the word correctly as “Passover.”

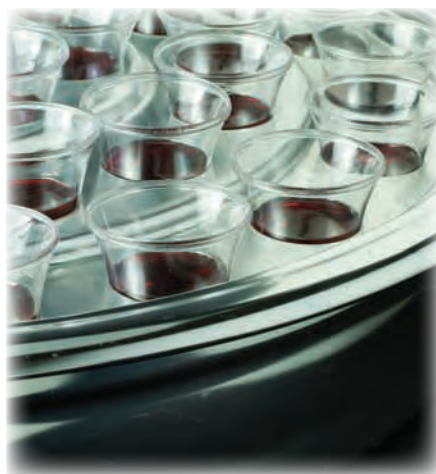
Historically, in the first century—as for centuries thereafter—the original Church of God observed the Christian Passover on the same day and in the same manner that Jesus taught them to do it the evening before His death by crucifixion. The apostles also taught this practice. What many denominations today

call “The Last Supper” was actually *the Passover*—kept by Jesus and His disciples. Remembering that a biblical day begins at sunset, notice what the disciples called it the evening before Jesus’ crucifixion, when they asked for His instructions: “Where do You want us to go and prepare, that You may *eat the Passover*?” (Mark 14:12). And, when He responded, He told them to go to a certain man they would meet, and ask, “Where is the guest room in which I may *eat the Passover* with My disciples?” (v. 14). That was the same night that Judas betrayed Jesus—Passover, Nisan 14. The Bible notes that the evening beginning the next day was the High Day, Nisan 15 (John 19:31; Leviticus 23:4–7), so we know Jesus observed it on Nisan 14.

Jesus Himself said that they were eating the Passover that evening. “When the hour had come, He sat down, and the Twelve Apostles with Him. Then He said to them, ‘With fervent desire I have desired to *eat this Passover* with you before I suffer’” (Luke 22:14–15). That night, before Judas betrayed Him, Jesus instituted the symbols of the Christian Passover, the bread and wine symbolizing His body and blood. “And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body.’ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins’” (Matthew 26:26–28).

The Apostle Paul emphasized the meaning of the symbols of the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread. He instructed the Church in Corinth, “Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed *Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us*” (1 Corinthians 5:7).

The Lamb of God became our Passover! Just as ancient Israel was passed over through the blood of the first paschal lamb in the Exodus from Egypt (Exodus 12:1–13), the sins of today’s repentant Christians—spiritual Israel—are covered, “passed over,” by the shed blood of *the Lamb of God* (John. 1:29). The Passover is of great importance to Christians!



In 1 Corinthians 11:23–26, the Apostle Paul gave the “when, what and why” of taking the Christian (Quartodeciman) Passover. “For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus... [when we are to do it] **on the same night in which He was betrayed...** [what we are to do] took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you;... [why we are to do it] **do this in remembrance of Me.**’ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, **in remembrance of Me.**’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, **you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.**” Paul instructed the first century Church to keep a **memorial to Christ’s death—not to His resurrection.** In history, the believers who kept this instruction faithfully were called “Fourteenth-ers”—

Quartodecimans—because they did it in the evening beginning Nisan 14 as Christ and the apostles taught them to. If the bread and wine are taken on another date, *it is not the Passover.*

THE QUARTODECIMAN CONTROVERSY

In the second century AD, a controversy raged in early Christianity. The Roman church under Pope Sixtus I had established the keeping of an early version of Easter on a Sunday. But it had long been the practice of the Middle Eastern (Asiatic) churches to keep the Christian Passover as Jesus and the apostles did on the 14th day of Nisan, the first month of the Jewish calendar (Leviticus 23:5). Around the year 160AD, Pope Anicetus insisted on establishing the observance of Easter on a Sunday. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna (modern Turkey) and *a disciple of the Apostle John*, strongly asserted that the tradition taught by the apostles themselves should prevail. The *Catholic Encyclopedia* reports, “While Anicetus was Pope, St. Polycarp, then in extreme old age, came to confer with him (160–162) about the Paschal controversy; Polycarp and others in the East celebrating the feast *on the fourteenth of the month of Nisan*, no matter on what day of the week it fell; whereas in Rome it was always observed on Sunday” (article: “Pope St. Anicetus”). Polycarp and Anicetus finally agreed to disagree and parted peacefully.

But the peace did not last. Pope Victor I (189–198AD) “now called upon the bishops of the province of Asia to abandon their custom and to accept the universally prevailing [Roman] practice of always celebrating Easter on Sunday. In case they would not do this he declared they would be excluded from the

Continued on page 23



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Just a few words to express how grateful I am for the booklet about *Successful Parenting: God's Way*. This booklet is one of the best you ever sent. It is so encouraging, casting light on such dear relationships, and lovingly written. I am really grateful for the material you have been sending through the years. By this you have made a difference in my life and hopefully to the very end. My very best wishes to you.

H. L., Copenhagen, Denmark

I wish to commend you and your team for the wonderful work you are doing to bring the light of God's word to those who want to know and learn the truth. In my local church we don't get the teachings that you bring to us through your magazines and scriptural references. I want to truly thank you and I pray that God will continue to bless your ministry.

M. S., Clarendon, Jamaica

Hello, thanks to God and thanks to you all. Yesterday I get a New DVD in my postbox. The title was *Claim God's Promises*. I immediately watched it. And there were English subtitles. I thought, "Wow, that's nice!" Now can I better understand what you say. Therefore, thanks!

A. M., Geel, Belgium

We always look forward to receiving the latest issue of *Tomorrow's World* magazine. These are the only periodicals that do not get thrown out when we finish reading them. So! Please continue sending this (in my opinion the best publication of its kind) to us.

J. H., Hastings, MI

I am writing to thank each of you for your service to Almighty God, and for your teaching and guidance to individuals like myself who are less knowledgeable in understanding God's Word. As I read and reread

your articles in the *Tomorrow's World* magazine, and follow up on each subject through related scriptures, I am getting a completely different view from the denomination I was brought up in here in rural Kentucky. I try to follow up on every scripture as God tells us to do.

S. C., Somerset, KY

Thank you for all the booklets you have sent and the *Tomorrow's World* subscription. I found the *Plain Truth* magazine and started watching Mr. Armstrong on *The World Tomorrow* back in 1985. I came across the *Tomorrow's World* magazine in a local optic shop and when I saw articles by Mr. Meredith and Mr. Ames, I took out a subscription card and sent it in. I know you teach the Bible and what God's word really says—you teach the Truth. Thank you!

R. M., Coffeyville, OK

I read a book by Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong back in 1985. It was one of the best books I have ever read. I also watched his television program every week. I lost track of the program when they stopped airing it in my area. I was flipping through the channels on my TV one day and I saw the *Tomorrow's World* and I was delighted to find out that the show taught and was connected with Mr. Armstrong's teaching. I have been watching ever since.

A.J., Fling, MI

I used a search engine and found your site. I am often leery of doing this because there are many sites out there that pervert scripture. I read *Twelve Keys to Answered Prayer*. This is a wonderful, comprehensive, understandable study of prayer. Thank you so much for providing this information. I have been praying for unsaved loved ones. I now have a better understanding of how to pray more effectively. I have bookmarked your site and will be reading more of your studies in the very near future. Thanks again for this outstanding study.

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

Ominous Trends in Israelite Nations

What does the future hold for the United States, Britain, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and the other English-speaking British-descended nations—the so-called “Anglo-Saxon” nations of the world? And what does the future hold for the Middle Eastern nation of Israel? In recent years, news reports have featured dramatic events that have occurred in these regions—events that are not isolated occurrences, but in fact reflect developing trends that do not bode well. While the modern secular media does not recognize a connection between modern trends and ancient Bible prophecies, the truth is that Scripture long ago foretold not only what is happening to these modern descendants of ancient Israel, but also what *will happen* in the future. More importantly, the Bible explains *why*.

OMINOUS WEATHER FACTORS

In the last several years, the Gulf Coast and eastern seaboard of the United States have been devastated by major hurricanes. The same period saw severe flooding and extensive damage to property along the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. Currently, more than 60 percent of the central U.S. is struggling with extreme drought conditions that have depleted cattle herds and seriously reduced crop yields. Dropping water levels in the Mississippi River now threaten to stop barge traffic along this vital waterway. During this same period, the United Kingdom experienced extreme weather conditions: high winds, heavy rainstorms and serious flooding that ravaged parts of the country. Over the last several years, Australasia has seen major flooding, raging firestorms, earthquakes and a prolonged, record-breaking drought. *These are not isolated events!*



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OMINOUS MORAL FACTORS

Over the last few decades, the influence of biblical values has faded from the public scene in the English-speaking nations as well as the nations of northwestern Europe. Church attendance has declined, public prayers have been discouraged or banned, and behaviors once branded as sins are now promoted and praised. Politicians and theologians now support and condone—and in some cases practice—not only cohabitation between unmarried partners, but homosexual conduct and same-sex marriage.

Recently, the National Cathedral in Washington, DC announced that same-sex marriages would be conducted in this most prominent of places. In January, in his second inaugural address, U.S. President Barack Obama said he considered homosexual relationships “equal” to the marital love between a man and a woman. Meanwhile, Australia has become known as a “gay-friendly” country renowned for Sydney’s “Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras.” Similar trends can be seen in the United Kingdom. Pornography and prostitution are widely available, and now spread around the world via the Internet—with much of it produced in the United States. Statistics, unsurprisingly, show that the English-speaking nations lead the world in divorce and in children born out of wedlock. *These are not isolated facts—they are part of a bigger picture.*

OMINOUS GEOPOLITICAL FACTORS

The United States and Britain, two nations that have dominated the world for the last several centuries, are both facing serious financial problems. To reduce deficits, they are making major cuts in defense spending, at a time when adversarial nations are increasing their



MES ALIVE

military expenditures. America's fiscal mismanagement is also threatening the future of the dollar. As the world becomes a more dangerous place, America and Britain—once the world's policemen—find themselves less able to play a stabilizing role or defend vulnerable allies like Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Other nations now act in defiance of America and its Anglo-Saxon allies. Argentina is again clamoring to gain control of the Falkland Islands. In the Middle East, Israel has had to deal with rocket attacks, threats of invasion and ongoing uprisings that threaten to tear the country apart. Leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt—echoing statements from Iran—have stated that “Israel will cease to exist by the end of the decade.”

PROPHECIES COMING ALIVE

Why are so many ominous trends coming together for these nations? The answers are found in Bible prophecy. Few today realize that the Anglo-Saxon peoples of northwest European descent have deep links to the Israelites of the Bible. God gave His laws to the Israelites—not because they were better than anybody else, but so they could be a light to the world and an example to other nations. God said they would be blessed if they obeyed His laws—laws that define marriage as a sacred relationship between a man and a woman (Genesis 2:24), and reveal that He hates divorce (Malachi 2:16). God plainly states that homosexuality is an abomination (Leviticus 18:22) and that fornication—sex outside of marriage—is a serious sin (1 Corinthians 6:9–11, 15–18).

Sadly, the political and religious leaders of the modern nations descended from Israel have largely ignored—or forgotten—these biblical laws from God. In a recent interview, the Dean of Washington's National Cathedral stated, regarding the recent sanctioning of same-sex marriages, “I have studied the Scriptures and I believe this is the right thing to do.”

What most have forgotten is that God warned of *serious consequences* that would befall those who disobey His laws and turn away from Him. We read, “if you do not

obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments, and if you *despise* My statutes... I also will do this to you... Those who hate you shall reign over you... I will break the pride of your power; I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze [drought]... I will lay your cities waste... I will bring the land to desolation” (Leviticus 26:14–15, 17, 19, 31–32). Also: “if you do not obey the voice of the LORD... The alien who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower... He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you shall be the tail” (Deuteronomy 28:15, 43–44). This is what is coming to pass today, yet few are making the connection between the ancient prophecies and the modern trends.

God's prophetic messages to the ancient Israelites certainly have relevance to modern Israelite nations today. Jeremiah proclaimed, “My people are foolish, they have not known Me... They are wise to do evil... The prophets prophesy falsely... and my people love to have it so” (4:22; 5:31). Isaiah warned, “Those who lead you cause you to err” (Isaiah 3:12). Hosea delivers the charge, “The prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is insane, because of the greatness of your iniquity... They are deeply corrupted... They sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind... because they have transgressed My covenant and rebelled against My law” (Hosea 9:7–9; 8:7, 1).

Numerous prophecies warn that “evil will befall” the Israelite nations in the last days (Deuteronomy 31:29) and that the demise and downfall of the Israelite nations will *come suddenly* (Deuteronomy 28:20; Isaiah 9:14; 29:5; 30:13). Hosea also foretold “The pride of Israel testifies to his face; therefore Israel and Ephraim [today the British-descended nations and the U.S.] stumble; in their iniquity; Judah [the Middle Eastern nation of Israel] also stumbles with them” (Hosea 5:5). This will be the outcome of the ominous trends developing in the modern Israelite nations today—unless their peoples, individually and nationally, recognize their sin and repent! For more information on this vital subject, read our booklet on *The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy*.

—Douglas S. Winnail

YES OR NO?

As we walked from the defense attorney's office to the courthouse, where I was to testify in a dispute over an insurance contract, I mentioned to him that when the witnesses were "sworn in" I would not swear. The surprised attorney shot a curious glance my way, and asked: "Is that some religious thing?"

I responded, "Jesus said, 'Swear not at all,'" (Matthew 5:34, *KJV*) and I explained that I take Him at His word. The two of us walked on in silence, and soon we were sitting in the courtroom as the presiding judge began the proceedings.

After a few pleasantries, the elderly judge instructed his clerk to administer the oath to those who were about to testify. The defense attorney tried to speak up on my behalf, but only managed to utter a halting stammer, seeming embarrassed about explaining my situation.

At this, the judge looked puzzled, so I spoke up and said, "Your honor, I think the counselor is trying to explain to you that I will not swear." This seemed to irritate the judge, and he groused in response, "Well, you will stand up, won't you?" As the witnesses rose before the bench, the judge said, "Those who will appear before this court, do you solemnly swear **or affirm** [he spoke those last two words very deliberately, drawing them out while extending a large flourish of his hand in my direction] to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth?"

With that, the trial began. And, by the way, we lost the case.

Oaths—and judicial oaths in particular—are very common in our society. Many official documents require the acknowledgement of a Notary Public—an acknowledgement that usually states that the signer has sworn or given an oath. For example, when filing a claim under most insurance policies, a "Sworn Statement in Proof of Loss" is required. Loan documents, bills of sale, automobile titles and tax assessment documents are among the many that normally require the signer to "swear" that the information given is accurate.

"What's the big deal?" you might ask. "Why is this important?" Those are good questions, especially if one intends to live by every word of God (Matthew 4:4). Jesus Christ, teaching His disciples privately in a

mountain setting, explained it this way: "Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.' But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one" (Matthew 5:33–37).

Jesus' half-brother James reaffirmed this principle when he taught, "But

above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No,' lest you fall into judgment" (James 5:12).

A simple matter? Yes. But obviously one important to God, and thus something that should be important to us. In most jurisdictions, the law allows for simple affirmation rather than swearing, so one can respond "I affirm" rather than "I swear" in court or when signing a document.

James also instructs us, "let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak" (James 1:19). And, when we do speak, it should be plainly and without duplicity, so that people can understand our "Yes" and our "No" without resorting to oaths. To learn more, read our booklet, *The Ten Commandments*. Write to the Regional Office nearest you (listed on page 30) or order your own free copy at our Web site, TomorrowsWorld.org. You will learn how to reap the benefit of God's many blessings by living in a way that pleases Him.

—J. Davy Crockett, III



Are You a Quartodeciman?

Continued from page 18

fellowship of the Church” (*ibid.*, article: “Pope St. Victor I”).

The early church historian Eusebius wrote: “But the bishops of Asia, led by Polycrates, decided to hold to the old custom handed down to them. He himself, in a letter which he addressed to Victor and the church of Rome, set forth in the following words the tradition which had come down to him: ‘We observe the exact day; neither adding, nor taking away. For in Asia also great lights have fallen asleep... Among these are Philip, one of the twelve apostles... moreover, John, who was both a witness and a teacher, who reclined upon the bosom of the Lord... All these observed the fourteenth day of the Passover according to the Gospel, deviating in no respect, but following the rule of faith’ ... Thereupon Victor, who presided over the church at Rome, immediately attempted to cut off from the common unity the *parishes of all Asia*, with the churches that agreed with them, as heterodox; and he wrote letters and *declared all the brethren there wholly excommunicate*” (*Life of Constantine*, ch. XXIV). But the practice continued with the Asiatic churches, and in the year 325AD at the Council of Nicea, those who were faithful to the Quartodeciman Passover were declared *anathema*. The Catholic Pasch—Easter—was set as the orthodox practice of the Catholic Church.

WHERE IS THIS CONTROVERSY TODAY?

Actually, there is less controversy than you might think. The historical facts are well established by scholars, and the only controversy is *what should be done about them*. For example, in *The Apostolic Age in Patristic Thought*, Dr. Gerard A.

M. Rouwhorst, professor in the School of Catholic Theology at Tilburg University, acknowledges the antiquity of the Quartodeciman Passover. Before Easter was introduced to replace it, “it played a central part in the life of early Christian communities and it is highly illustrative of their religious beliefs. Furthermore, celebrating it in the right way was considered by many early Christians as *vital to their identity*... It is quite generally agreed now that the oldest form of Christian Passover was the one celebrated by the Quartodecimans. This group, however, would end up becoming a marginal minority. On the other hand, the celebration on a Friday, Saturday and Sunday which *came into existence in the second century as the result of a liturgical innovation*, was eventually adopted by the majority of the Christians and regarded by them as normative” (pp. 64–65).

Rouwhorst also notes: “Finally, once the battle was won [by the Roman church] and the Quartodecimans did not constitute but a small minority, their opponents availed themselves of another strategy. They tried to play down the argument drawn from apostolic authority and to make it subordinate to a principle they

considered as being of much greater importance, namely maintaining unity, i.e., following the majority. Resorting to apostolic tradition was, as far as the celebration of Easter was concerned, depicted as characteristic of sectarian movements which kept old-fashioned traditions” (*ibid.*, pp. 84–85). But they were not being old-fashioned. They were not trying to be Jewish. They were obeying Christ and the Apostles.

THE REAL CHOICE

The Apostle Jude gave the first-century Church a message that still applies to Christians today: “Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to **contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints**” (Jude 3). That faith, from the beginning, included—and still includes—the Christian Passover. So, will you follow the instructions and example of Jesus Christ and the Apostles, as recorded in Scripture? Or will you be content with the pagan traditions that were introduced to replace them? Will you obey God’s word, keep the true Christian Passover and be a Christian “Quartodeciman”? ■

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TOMORROW'S

"I Was Only Joking!"

"WE'RE INCREDIBLY SORRY"

In the early morning of December 4, 2012, a phone rang in the hospital ward of London's King Edward VII hospital, where Jacintha Saldanha worked. Saldanha, a 46-year-old nurse and mother of two, answered because no receptionist was on duty.

To Saldanha's surprise, the caller identified herself as Queen Elizabeth II of England, and asked to talk to Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, who had been hospitalized due to a pregnancy-related illness. The startled nurse put the call through to the private nurse on duty, who gave the caller an update of the Duchess' condition.

It was later discovered that the call was a hoax perpetrated by two Australian radio personalities, Mel Greig and Michael Christian, who had impersonated the Queen and her son, Prince Charles. After the recording of the conversation was broadcast, a hospital official stated, "This was a foolish prank call that we all deplore. We take patient confidentiality extremely seriously and we are now reviewing our telephone protocols." The radio station issued an apology "for any inconvenience caused by the enquiry to Kate's hospital, the radio segment was done with light-hearted intentions" ("Radio DJs pretend to be queen, make prank call to Catherine's hospital," *CNN.com*, December 7, 2012).

The incident could have ended there, as have so many other "segments with light-hearted intentions" involving radio personalities around the world. Sadly, however, three days after the DJs' prank call, nurse Saldanha was found dead as a result of suicide. What started as a bit of "fun" became a tragedy, and a family has lost a wife and mother.

One lesson from the Australian DJs' prank gone awry is that our careless or thoughtless attempts at humor can go too far. Scripture tells us, "Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death, is the man who deceives his neighbor, and says, 'I was only joking!'" (Proverbs 26:18-19). Of course, no one anticipated the tragic consequences from what many had considered a harmless stunt, yet the damage was serious and permanent. "It was never meant to go that far.

It was meant to be a silly little prank that so many people have done before," Greig said. Christian added, "For the part we played, we're incredibly sorry" (*ibid.*).

This tragic incident also reminds us of the public's thirst for outrageous humor as "entertainment." Many remember the good-natured pranks foisted on unsuspecting "average Americans" on the long-running television series *Candid Camera*. More recently, audiences have embraced the edgier celebrity-focused hidden camera series *Punk'd* on MTV. Indeed, entertainment that endeavors to use humor at another person's expense has long been popular. In the competitive "shock jock" genre pioneered by hosts such as Howard Stern, radio personalities constantly attempt to outdo each other with more outrageous antics that fuel a laughs-at-all-costs culture.

Does it matter that so much of our popular entertainment involves humor directed toward making someone look foolish? Many people have no problem making others the butt of their jokes. But do they stop and ask themselves how they would feel if the tables were turned and they were on the receiving end, suffering the embarrassment of being duped? American humorist Will Rogers observed,



DJs Michael Christian and Mel Greig break silence over nurse suicide. ©NC1 WENN Photos/Newscom



“Everything is funny as long as it is happening to somebody else.” Perhaps fewer people would be hurt if pranksters carefully considered others’ reactions first.

A PERSONAL LESSON

I remember a time when, as a teen, I felt the sting of my own humor backfiring. A friend who had recently married came to church alone one day, and I jokingly asked him if his wife had left him. When he soberly replied that his wife had indeed left him, I felt like I had been kicked in the stomach.

My friend’s response made me realize that I had cultivated a careless attitude toward humor, and much of what I considered funny came at others’ expense. My teenage years had been influenced by the irreverent comedy of the recordings of Cheech & Chong, along with television programs such as *Saturday Night Live*—in which a primary thrust was the general lack of respect toward anyone and everyone. Seeing the hurt in my friend’s eyes because of my cruel attempt at humor caused me to understand that there is a price to pay for this type of levity; real people can be hurt by it. While the consequences were not as serious as the Australian DJs’ prank, my intent had been fundamentally the same as theirs—to get a laugh no matter what.

We can sometimes shield ourselves from the reality of the pain our humor causes, when the people we injure are several degrees of separation removed from our hurtful and callous barbs. However, it is always wise to remember that our careless and thoughtless attempts at humor have the potential to backfire with devastating results.

GOOD ADVICE

Does this mean that we should become humorless people in order to avoid any possibility of harm? Of course not! King Solomon of ancient Israel wrote, “To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven... a time to weep, and a time to laugh”

(Ecclesiastes 3:1, 4). The key is to know what is appropriate to say in the right situation, as Solomon elsewhere observed: “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver” (Proverbs 25:11).

Humor adds to our enjoyment of life, and can even help to make hardships more bearable. Used well, it is an appealing part of a well-rounded personality. What, then, is the difference between an acceptable sense of humor and one that has the potential to hurt? The Bible offers important principles to answer this question.

Jesus’ instruction that “just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise” is the best place to start (Luke 6:31). “How will others receive my humor?” is a question that should be considered from the start, not after the fact. Ask yourself, “Will I demean or embarrass someone with what I’m about to say or do to get a laugh?” If you would not appreciate someone else making you the subject of such humor, this is a good sign that you should not “go there” and risk hurting another person. This principle can be hard for us to remember when we are caught up in the midst of an enjoyable conversation, so it is important to make it a fundamental part of our overall approach—our way of life—so such consideration will come naturally when it is needed.

Consider, too, whether your humor is motivated by love. Even good-natured kidding among friends can be shared in a context of kindness and affection. Notice how the Apostle Paul described love: “Love... is kind... love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own” (1 Corinthians 13:4–5). Is your humor kind, or is it puffed up? Is it rude and self-serving? Much of what our society considers “humor” is in fact the opposite of love.

Finally, consider whether your humor builds up or tears down. All of our communication—including our humor—should be helpful. “Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers” (Ephesians 4:29). If our humor is positive, uplifting and motivated by love, we will not experience regret like those who have to explain, “I was only joking!”

—Phil Sena

America Cut Off from God?

Continued from page 6

Yet many do not like to admit that when He taught this, the “New Testament” was not yet in existence! Jesus was stating plainly that the “Old Testament” was also the word of God to be obeyed! Jesus Christ came to “magnify the law, and make it honourable” (Isaiah 42:21, KJV).

However, most professing ministers of Jesus Christ have “twisted” His words in a remarkable way so that they are not willing to admit that when Jesus “magnified” the law He did not “do away” with it! When one “magnifies” a thing, one sees it as bigger and more clear—like putting a magnifying glass on a snowflake to show it in all of its variety and beauty. Yet ministers today often teach that Jesus, or later the Apostle Paul—or someone, *anyone*—“did away” with God’s law! They seem **frantic** in their desire to somehow come up with a God who *demands no obedience to His law!* Yet the Jesus Christ of the Bible told His followers again and again—in *many* different ways—that “if you want to enter into life, keep the **commandments.**” And then He began to name some of the Ten Commandments (Matthew 19:17–19).

When Jesus “magnified” the commandments in the Sermon on the Mount, He stated: “Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:19). To what commandments was He referring? In magnifying the Ten Commandments, Jesus stated: “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in

his heart” (Matthew 5:27–28). Jesus was clearly talking about one of the Ten Commandments—the one against committing adultery. So, did He “do away” with that commandment? *Obviously not!* For He made it *even more binding* by saying that if a man even “looks at a woman to lust for her” he has **already** committed adultery with her in his heart! How clear!

Today’s “learned” theologians constantly imply that the Apostle Paul somehow “did away” with God’s law. But Paul did *no such thing!* Rather, he wrote: “Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is what matters” (1 Corinthians 7:19).

KEEPING THE TEN COMMANDMENTS BRINGS **BLESSINGS!**

Yes, “keeping the commandments of God” is what **really** matters—to individuals and to society as a whole. *If* we would genuinely **repent** and be willing to let the God of the Bible into our churches, our schools and our entire society, we would begin to teach children from their very youth an entire *way of life* based on the Ten Commandments—which describe *how* to love God and *how* to love neighbor.

If we would do this, so many other actions—providing more policemen at school, putting hundreds of thousands of men and women in prisons at the expense of **billions** of our tax dollars, and all the other “stupid stuff” we have to do because we *break our Creator’s laws*—would be *totally unnecessary*. For your own Bible clearly explains, from beginning to end, that those people and those societies willing to **obey** the Ten Commandments of God are **blessed**. After explaining the commandments about adultery and murder (James 2:11), the Apostle

RAMPAGE KILLINGS ACROSS AMERICA

AMERICA SEEMS TO BE PLAGUED BY AN ONGOING EPIDEMIC OF VIOLENCE. SOME INCIDENTS COME AND GO WITH LITTLE NOTICE; OTHERS SHOCK THE NATION AND REMAIN IN OUR MEMORIES. A FEW OF THE MOST NOTABLE TRAGEDIES FROM RECENT YEARS ARE LISTED BELOW:

December 14, 2012:	26 KILLED BY 20-YEAR-OLD ADAM LANZA	Newtown, CT
July 20, 2012:	12 KILLED, 38 WOUNDED BY 24-YEAR-OLD JAMES HOLMES	Aurora, CO
November 5, 2009:	13 KILLED, 30 WOUNDED BY 39-YEAR-OLD NIDAL HASAN	Fort Hood, TX
April 3, 2009:	14 KILLED BY 41-YEAR-OLD JIVERLY WONG	Binghamton, NY
March 10, 2009:	10 KILLED BY 28-YEAR-OLD MICHAEL MCLENDON	Kinston, AL
April 6, 2007:	32 KILLED BY 23-YEAR-OLD SEUNG-HUI CHO	Blacksburg, VA

James goes on to instruct Christians: “So speak and so do as those who will judged by the **law of liberty**” (v. 12). Yes, the Ten Commandments, if observed, would indeed give us “liberty” from crime, violence, rape, mistreatment of women and children, war, graft and greed—and from enormous sums spent on imprisoning criminals!

God has revealed through inspired Scripture that, when the *entire world* starts keeping the Ten Commandments upon Christ’s return, *peace* and *blessings* will permeate the earth. The prophet Micah describes this soon-coming era: “Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it. Many nations shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.’ *For out of Zion the law shall go forth*, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, and rebuke strong nations afar off; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, *neither shall they learn war anymore*. But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken” (Micah 4:1–4).

Notice that peace will be the result of the **law** going out from Zion, and that **everyone** affected by this prophecy shall “sit under *his* vine and under *his* fig tree.” For prosperity and individual freedom and peace of mind will certainly be the prevailing way of life—all based on God’s spiritual law, which tells us *how* to love God and *how* to love our neighbor.

In describing this coming time of Christ’s rule—a time governed by obedience to the Ten Commandments—God describes the blessings people will receive as they are released from captivity: “Instead of your shame you shall have double honor, and instead of confusion they shall rejoice in their portion. Therefore in their land *they shall possess double; everlasting joy shall be theirs*” (Isaiah 61:7). Yes, God wants all human beings to experience “everlasting joy”—but we must be willing to learn the **way** to that joy. That way is **not** according to “human reason” and human vanity, but rather is based on a willingness to **obey** the way of life outlined clearly by our Creator in His inspired word.

Again, most people today **do not** like this. For they have been “blinded” by the invisible power of Satan the Devil, who—as your Bible clearly states again and again—“**deceives the whole world**” (Revelation 12:9). However, hundreds of thousands of you reading this article may be willing to become **un-deceived**. May God

help us to sincerely “listen” and to *seek* the God of the Bible and be willing to *do what He says*. *This*, my friends, is the *ultimate reality*!

BE WILLING TO ACT ON THE TRUTH!

If you would like to understand more of the details of God’s inspired law—the law of love—and *how* it ought to be kept, be sure to request an absolutely free copy of our powerful and revealing booklet, *The Ten Commandments*. Just write to the Regional Office nearest you, listed on page 30 of this magazine. Or order it online at *TomorrowsWorld.org*. Also, if you are willing to open your eyes to recognize *why* mankind is so confused and has gone so far “off track” from the right way of life, also request a *free copy* of our very eye-opening booklet, *Satan’s Counterfeit Christianity*.

Finally, if you have not already done so, please request your own *free copy* of a booklet that will spell out for you, in informative detail, *how* our Western society has gone “off track”—*how* we arrived where we are today—and what *true Christianity* is all about. This absolutely vital booklet is entitled *Restoring Original Christianity*. It will open your eyes to what the **real** Christianity of Christ and His Apostles looks like! It will help you understand the *way of life* that the **entire world** will soon be living when Christ Jesus returns to this earth as King of kings (Revelation 11:15).

By reading and *studying* these booklets, you will come to a deeper understanding of the real **cause** of our modern ills, and the **reasons** for the troubles increasingly developing around us in our governments, educational institutions, religious institutions—and our entire society. You will become more deeply aware of the exciting *meaning* of the prophecies of your Bible, of exactly *where* we are headed—and of *what you* should be doing to protect yourself and your loved ones in the near future.

God inspired the Apostle James to tell us, “But be **doers** of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves” (James 1:22). May God help *you* to be a “doer” of His inspired word, and so have your mind opened to the real *meaning* of life, the *meaning* of all these prophetic events beginning to occur around us and the *way* by which you may fulfill God’s purpose and have *your part* in Jesus Christ’s soon-coming world government. “Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, *for if you do these things* you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:10–11). ■

The Works of H

How Old Is the Earth?

In our world, science and the Bible seem constantly pitted against each other, and it is true that there certainly are outstanding questions to be resolved. But many such “conflicts” are illusions, arising either from misunderstanding the scientific data or from failing to understand the truth of God’s word.

One example is the *age of the earth*. Must Christians put themselves at odds with the current theories of reputable geologists in order to accept the claims of the Bible? Just how old is the earth?

We can see very clearly in Scripture that the creation of the plants, animals, and mankind, itself—Adam and Eve—took place around 6,000 years ago. The Bible gives us enough information concerning the ages of the patriarchs and their descendants to make this conclusion hard to dispute. On the origins of mankind in the Garden of Eden—nearly six millennia ago—God’s word is clear.

Just as clearly, nearly all reputable geologists looking at evidence of our planet’s age conclude that the earth has been in existence for a *long time*! “Ask any geologist how old the Earth is,” writes American geologist G. Brent Dalrymple, “and the odds are very good that he or she will provide an answer very close to 4.54 [billion years]” (*The Age of the Earth*, p. 305). And, while future discoveries

may overturn this conclusion, 4.5 billion years is very consistent with other evidence of the earth’s age, such as that taken from meteorites and lunar material.



An age of 6,000 years is certainly a far cry from 4,540,000,000!

Still, those who have put the Bible to the test in their lives have learned to trust it as the very word of God. So, what does the Bible *truly say* about the age of the earth? Surprisingly, it says both *much more* and *much less* than many understand!

SIX LITERAL DAYS—BUT WHEN?

It is wonderfully and *literally* true that “in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed” (Exodus 31:17) and that this “creation week” took place nearly 6,000 years ago, just as indicated in Scripture. But, what many miss is that the planet Earth

and the heavens around Earth *were already in existence* at the beginning of that week!

We read in the *very first verse* of the Bible, *before* the events of that week, that: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). As we will see, that initial “beginning” of the earth and the heavens—*before* Adam and Eve, and *before* the animals and plants with which we are familiar—may have occurred long, long ago!

But notice carefully the second verse of Genesis, which many read right over, missing its clear implications, because of its usual translation: “The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep” (Genesis 1:2). A simple statement—but it contains much more than meets the eye! The English words “without form, and void” are translated from the Hebrew words *tohu* and *bohu*. These two words, used together in Scripture just three times, indicate an uninhabitable wasteland—a condition of desolation or destruction. Significantly, the other two passages where *tohu* and *bohu* are used together—Isaiah 34:11 and Jeremiah 4:23—indicate that such desolate states of ruin and devastation were *brought about by sin*.

Furthermore, scholars point out that the Hebrew *hayah*—translated “was” in Genesis 1:2—elsewhere can convey the idea of “became.”

His Hands

Later in Genesis, in the passage describing the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, we read that Lot's wife "became [hayah] a pillar of salt" (Genesis 19:26). Certainly Lot had not married a pillar of salt; she had not always been so! Similarly, Genesis 1:2 could more appropriately be translated literally that "the earth became" a desolate waste—the Hebrew does not imply that it was created in that condition!

CREATED IN BEAUTY, NOT CHAOS

Putting these facts together, we can understand that God would surely have created the heavens and the earth with great order and beauty, yet that through some sinful circumstance they became desolate and devastated—ruined and uninhabitable—in need of renewal (cf. Psalm 104:30) before the creation of mankind! Indeed, Genesis 1:1–2 can accurately be translated: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. But the earth had become a desolation and a chaotic ruin, and darkness was on the face of the deep."

So, does the Bible describe any sin or rebellion against God, *before* Adam's creation, that could have brought such chaos and ruin? Yes, it does! Scripture tells us what Satan had done *before* he met Eve in the Garden of Eden, seeking to lure her into sinning against God (Genesis 3:1–5). God's word makes it plain that angels were present *before* the earth existed, and they shouted for joy when they saw its foundation laid

(Job 38:6–7)! Lucifer—who became Satan the devil—existed at this time. Scripture describes this corrupted, sinful creature leading a prideful angelic rebellion (Ezekiel 28:12–16; Isaiah 14:12–14)—a rebellion that Scripture indicates included a third of the angels (Revelation 12:4). Isaiah 14:14 describes this prideful being's desire to "ascend above the clouds" to take God's very throne for himself—which implies that his assigned responsibilities were below the clouds, and therefore on the earth! Lucifer had the free will either to obey or to disobey God, and by *refusing to carry out God's will* he became Satan—an adversary to God.

As sin always does, Satan's rebellion brought destruction and ruin—in this case devastating the earth that had been his charge to prepare for God's purposes. It is this chaotic and ruinous devastation, *tohu* and *bohu*, that we see reflected in the words of Genesis 1:2, and it is the miraculous six-day restoration of this planet—to a state of beauty and wonder fit for God's creation of mankind—that we see in the rest of Genesis chapter 1!

So, as we can see, there is *ample* room in the words of Scripture to recognize the very ancient age

of planet Earth. The Bible's clear description of the creation of mankind, nearly 6,000 years ago, is not in conflict with its description of angelic activity occurring long before the Genesis 1:2 event—activity long ago when the world had been entrusted to Lucifer and his angels for God's purposes before the creation of mankind.

But exactly how long ago did this occur? How long did Satan's rebellion last? Did the dinosaurs exist at this time?

Was it billions of years ago—close to the scientists' estimate of a 4.5 billion-year-old Earth? Or was it earlier or later? On these details, the Bible is silent. But there is no conflict between the words of Scripture and the general scientific observation of a very ancient planet Earth.

Truly, science reveals many mysteries yet to be solved. But we should never let the changing findings of science—which are sometimes overturned entirely with the next discovery—cause us to doubt what the unchanging God says in His word! The evidence of history and science, properly understood, will always agree with the word of God. As Jesus Christ declares: "Your word is truth" (John 17:17)!

—Wallace G. Smith



When Satan Strikes!

Continued from page 2

with all kinds of vile ideas regarding sex and other forms of selfishness and focusing on human pleasure by *any means* rather than obedience to the Creator.

If we are not careful, Satan the Devil will directly place evil thoughts of every description in our minds. Even when we are thinking about normal things—and have been reading normal books and seeing normal television shows—Satan will sometimes begin to *bombard our minds* with evil, vain or hateful thoughts. He will move us—if he can—to do wrong things in regard to sex and even **violence**. If you look in the eyes of some of the men who have committed some of the horrible atrocities in murdering dozens of young people in schools during recent years, you will often see a strange “wild” look. Often, psychologists will attribute all of this to psychological breakdowns. *Only God knows*. But as these things increase, as the awareness of God’s people and His *true* ministers increases, we will find that many of these situations are caused by *demons* influencing or infesting the minds of these perverted individuals. For Satan is **real**. And we need to realize that we are in a “spirit war”—fighting against the unseen forces of Satan the Devil!

The Apostle Paul was inspired to instruct every sincere Christian, “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:11–12).

Indeed, we are in a *spirit war*. Please recognize this for your own good. Do **not** let your guard down! As the Bible instructs, learn to put on the “whole armor of God” that you may be able to stand in the evil day. May God help all of you readers deeply understand the power of Satan’s deceptions on a personal and national scale in the years just ahead. For the time is coming *soon* when Satan himself will be cast back down to this earth after his final attempt to attack God’s throne. He will come down “having **great wrath**, because he knows that he has a short time” (Revelation 12:9–12).

Will you be ready? Will you be willing to *believe* the Bible and understand the unseen forces that are trying to “mess with your mind”? Will you **resist** the Devil powerfully so he will not be able to *destroy you* and your

loved ones in the spirit battles just ahead?

As Satan continually broadcasts wrong attitudes and ideas throughout this world’s atmosphere, he will put negative and disillusioning thoughts and ideas in *your mind*. He will try to influence you to act *contrary* to the ways and laws of your Creator—if you let him. That is why God inspired the Apostle James to tell us, “Resist the devil and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). You must do *your part* by actively resisting these wrong attitudes when you begin to realize that many of them *come directly* from Satan the Devil.

So ask Almighty God for understanding and for His deliverance and be sure to *really prove* the basics: recognizing that a very real God—the Creator of heaven and earth—does exist and is *in charge* over the major events of this world and of *your life*. You need genuine understanding of these basic issues in order to physically and spiritually *survive* in the coming perilous years. If you do wish all of this, please contact us *right now* to request your *free* copies of our booklets *The Real God: Proofs and Promises* and *The Bible: Fact or Fiction?* These *very* thoughtful and helpful booklets will give you genuine understanding beyond what you have probably ever had before, and they will *strengthen your faith*.

Do **not** let Satan the Devil confuse you. Do not let Satan the Devil “mess with your mind.” As the Bible directly instructs us, “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:3–5).

My friends, we live in turbulent times. Countless millions of Roman Catholics hope that the next Pope, following the February 28 resignation of Pope Benedict XVI, will bring renewal to a troubled institution. Thankfully, true Christians have their eyes on Christ. We must strive heartily **not** to let Satan the Devil draw us even further into modern “Babylon”—that system of religious confusion and self-will guided by Satan the Devil. We must be willing to act on the Truth as God reveals it to us. We must be willing to “come out” of modern Babylon (Revelation 18:4) with a sense of urgency. May God help you to do your part!



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AK Anchorage KIMO SUN 6:00 a.m.
Fairbanks KATN SUN 6:00 a.m.
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AL Dothan WTVY SUN 7:00 a.m.
Gadsden WXPX WED 5:30 a.m.
Montgomery WBMM SUN 7:00 a.m.
Opelika WLGA SUN 7:00 a.m.
AR Fort Smith KHBS SUN 7:00 a.m.
Jonesboro KJOS SUN 7:00 a.m.
Little Rock KASN SUN 10:30 a.m.
AZ Phoenix KASW SUN 7:30 a.m.
Tolleson KPPX WED 5:30 a.m.
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Fresno KFRE SUN 7:30 a.m.
Monterey KION SUN 8:00 a.m.
Palm Springs KESQ SUN 8:00 a.m.
Redding KHSL SUN 8:00 a.m.
Sacramento KSPX WED 6:30 a.m.
San Jose KKPX WED 6:30 a.m.
CO Denver KPXC WED 4:30 a.m.
Grand Junction KJCT SUN 7:00 a.m.
CT New Haven WZME WED 11:00 p.m.
New London WHPX WED 6:30 a.m.
DE Wilmington WPPX WED 6:30 a.m.
FL Bradenton WXPX WED 6:30 a.m.
Lake Worth WXPX WED 6:30 a.m.
Melbourne WOPX WED 6:30 a.m.
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Panama City WJHG SUN 8:00 a.m.
GA Albany WBSK SUN 8:00 a.m.
Augusta WAGT SUN 8:00 a.m.

Brunswick WXPX WED 6:30 a.m.
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Macon WBMN SUN 8:00 a.m.
Rome WPKX WED 6:30 a.m.
HI Kailua-Kona KLEI WED 12:30 a.m.
Kaneohe KPXO WED 12:30 a.m.
IA Cedar Rapids KPXR WED 5:30 a.m.
Des Moines KCWI SUN 7:00 a.m.
Newton KFPX WED 5:30 a.m.
Ottumwa KWOT SUN 7:00 a.m.
ID Boise KNIN SUN 6:00 a.m.
Idaho Falls KPIF SUN 7:00 a.m.
IL Bloomington WHOIDT2 SUN 7:00 a.m.
Chicago WCPX WED 5:30 a.m.
Chicago WGN SUN 5:00 a.m.
Peoria WHOI SUN 7:00 a.m.
Quincy WDEM SUN 7:00 a.m.
IN Bloomington WIPX WED 6:30 a.m.
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LA Alexandria KBCA SUN 7:00 a.m.
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Monroe KNOE SUN 7:00 a.m.
New Orleans WPKX WED 5:30 a.m.
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MI Alpena WBAE SUN 8:00 a.m.
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Lansing WLAJ SUN 8:00 a.m.
Marquette WBKP SUN 8:00 a.m.
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Mankato KWYE SUN 7:00 a.m.
Rochester KTTC SUN 8:00 a.m.
St Cloud KPXM WED 5:30 a.m.
MO Columbia KOMU SUN 7:00 a.m.
Joplin KFJX SUN 8:30 a.m.
Kansas City KPXE WED 5:30 a.m.
Kansas City KCWE SUN 7:30 a.m.
Kirksville KWOT SUN 7:00 a.m.
Springfield KRKB SUN 7:30 a.m.
St. Louis WRBU SUN 9:00 a.m.
MS Biloxi WBGP SUN 7:00 a.m.
Columbus WCBI SUN 7:00 a.m.
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Bozeman KXLF SUN 7:00 a.m.
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Missoula KPAX SUN 6:00 a.m.
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Greenville WNCT SUN 8:00 a.m.
Hickory WHKY MON 7:30 p.m.
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SUN 6:30 a.m.
SUN 8:00 a.m.
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Amsterdam WYPX WED 6:30 a.m.
Batavia WPXJ WED 6:30 a.m.
Binghamton WBNG SUN 8:00 a.m.
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New York WPKX WED 6:30 a.m.
Syracuse WSPX WED 6:30 a.m.
OH Akron WYPX WED 6:30 a.m.
Lima WBOH SUN 8:00 a.m.
OK Oklahoma City KOPX WED 5:30 a.m.
Okmulgee KTPX WED 5:30 a.m.
OR Bend KTVZ SUN 8:00 a.m.
Eugene KMTR SUN 8:00 a.m.
Medford CW11 SUN 8:00 a.m.
Salem KPXG WED 6:30 a.m.
PA Erie WBEP SUN 8:00 a.m.
Scranton WQPX WED 6:30 a.m.
RI Block Island WPXQ WED 6:30 a.m.
SC Charleston WCBD SUN 8:00 a.m.
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TN Cookeville WNPX WED 5:30 a.m.
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Norfolk WXPV WED 6:30 a.m.
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Spokane KGPX WED 6:30 a.m.
WI Antigo WTPX WED 5:30 a.m.
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Kenosha WPKX WED 5:30 a.m.
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Jesus Christ suffered so you could be healed!
- **Will the Beast Rise in Europe?** Airs April 4–10
How can you recognize the prophesied Beast?
- **Why Bible Prophecy?** Airs April 11–17
Ancient warnings are of vital importance today!
- **The Miracle of the Ten Commandments** Airs April 18–24
Learn God's life-changing principles for success!

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