

TOONDOR BORNALS November 2014 | TomorowsWorld.org

DEUTSCHLAND

ÜBER ALLES

Multiverse?

CHRISTMAS: Cash and Chaos!

Why Are Things Going

-

"Peace" When There Is No Peace?

very December, hundreds of millions of people begin to talk of "Peace on earth, good will toward men." They say they are followers of the "Prince of Peace"—Jesus Christ. But what do they **do** about it?

Some of you readers may have read about the famous "Christmas truce" during World War I. For one day, after months of deadly "trench warfare," many of the warring soldiers put down their guns. Some even sang Christmas carols together with enemy soldiers.

Then, the next day, they resumed the killing.

Yes, peace among men has always been elusive. Today, even as I write, ISIS guerillas are continuing to slaughter, torture—even behead and crucify—their enemies. Russian troops are eyeing the Ukraine and threatening invasion. In Southeast Asia, smaller nations like Vietnam are concerned about China's push for total dominance in that region. Even larger nations such as Japan and the Philippines are growing uneasy.

And the dangers of disease epidemics continue to grow. Thousands in Africa have been infected by the Ebola virus—which is just a plane flight away from the United States and Western Europe!

Why is all of this happening?

Because of our rebellion against God and His laws, we are coming under the inspired curses described in Deuteronomy 28. Remember, dear readers, Jesus constantly referred to the Old Testament books as "Scripture." He told us: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God" (Luke 4:4). Among His words are the Ten Commandments, proclaimed at Sinai and later magnified by Jesus Christ (Exodus 20; Matthew 22). Human beings without God's Spirit have a tendency to dislike "rules"—and, when there are rules, like to "reason around" their need to obey. Read Mr. Jonathan McNair's thoughtful article on page 26 of this issue, "An Exception to the Rule?" for more on this important topic.

Throughout Scripture, God reminds us that "breaking the rules" brings severe consequences. In the famous prophetic passage containing God's curses for modern Israel, God warns, "The LORD will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed" (Deuteronomy 28:24). Sure enough, major parts of the western U.S. are suffering from terrible drought. This summer, as much as 99.8 percent of California was under what the experts called "severe" drought.



America Humiliated!

Dear readers, Americans and our British-descended brethren are in terminal trouble. The "pride of our power" has truly been broken (Leviticus 26:19). Scores of articles even in our mainstream newspapers and maga-

zines regularly point out that—even though we still have the most powerful military force in the world— America is increasingly regarded as a "paper tiger." So Vladimir Putin of Russia, the rulers of China and the powerful terrorists of the Middle East all "have our number."

It is finally becoming clear to America's leaders that the Islamic terrorists mean business! Because of the gold and cash these rebels took from banks, and because of millions of dollars of military hardware they have seized in recent months, the so-called "Islamic State" is now regarded as the best financed, most heavily armed terrorist group we have ever faced.

We are in **trouble**. And our brethren in the British-descended nations are also in trouble, because we have turned away from the God who gave us our greatness in the first place. We should not be surprised that the citizens of Scotland—for the last three centuries

How Your Subscription Has Been Paid

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. part of the United Kingdom—have roiled that union with their increasing desire for independence, culminating in September's hard-fought referendum, in which—despite the "No!" majority—about four out of nine Scots sought separation from the UK. Even Wales and Northern Ireland have increasing numbers of people who seek greater autonomy, or even total independence, from the United Kingdom and the English.

Who Can But Prophesy?

So the stage is being set. The final collapse of the British-descended and American peoples is at hand—

We are in trouble. And our brethren in the British-descended nations are also in trouble, because we have all turned away from the God who gave us our greatness in the first place.

unless we truly repent and turn to the real God in a way we have never done in modern times! Yet, God will never "forget" His promises. He will always have true servants to warn His people about any major catastrophe just ahead. As His servant Amos was inspired to tell us: "Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets. A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken! Who can but prophesy?" (Amos 3:7–8).

Yes, we who can understand cannot help but speak out! Read my article on page 5 of this issue, "Why Are Things Going Wrong?" It will help you understand the meaning of current events as we come ever closer to Jesus Christ's prophesied return to establish the Kingdom of God on planet Earth!

Also be sure to read Mr. Richard Ames' informative article, "Revelation: A Message of Warning and Hope" on page 10 of this issue. Although this complex book is a mystery even to most professing Christians, if God is opening your mind you **can** understand its message, and take heed before it is too late to protect yourself from the dangerous times ahead.

True Peace

Hundreds of millions of people—perhaps including some of you readers—are becoming increasingly anxious and stressed with the approach of the Christmas holiday this December 25. Millions will go into greater debt, spending money they do not have to buy things they do not need. Why is this so? Many critics urge



that we "get back" to the "real meaning" of Christmas. But what is that real meaning? And where did "Christ-

mas" actually come from? Read Mr. Dexter Wakefield's revealing article on page 18 of this issue-it may open your eyes to the truth about Christmas as never before. I pray that you will study into the matter of God's Holy Days, which Christ kept, and which all human beings will keep during the soon-coming Millennium, ruled by the King of kings and Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ. Yes, a time is soon coming when the world will know that God means what He says! That they are expected to obey their Creator! That they must take seriously Jesus Christ's sobering statement, "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). When the Prince of Peace rules over planet Earth, people will genuinely understand that true Christianity goes far beyond just "believing" on Christ. It involves a genuine surrender to live by every word of God. It involves surrendering our lives for Christ to actually "live His life" within us through the Holy Spirit (Galatians 2:20).

Dear reader, most of the world is completely "deceived" about the true message of Jesus Christ, and about the plan God the Father has put into place to bring ultimate peace to planet Earth and all of mankind. But you are different. God has put you in touch with this Work, and has given you this magazine. Please read it carefully. Study its Scripture references. **Prove** to yourself that what we are writing is the truth! And pray that God will continue to open your mind with the light of His truth, which will bring you peace as you have never had before.

Rodert C Meelith

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Have greed, commerce and consumer debt become "the reason for the season"?



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Why Are Things Going WRONG?

From droughts to floods, from famines to disease epidemics, from school violence to nations at war, is there a reason for the calamities our world is facing? Is there any **hope** for the future?

By Roderick C. Meredith

ery few people nowadays believe in a *real* God. Even fewer believe in the actual God of the Bible. Several decades of emphasis on evolutionary theory, on human reasoning and of the "self-fulfillment" movement have almost totally replaced the concept of serving our Creator. Endless books, articles and well-executed films and television shows have cleverly "made fun" of the idea of a **real** God—the Creator and Governor of the universe. This has taken its toll on untold millions of people. *What about* **you**?

Are you, personally, aware that major prophetic events foretold in the pages of your own Bible are coming to pass *right now*? Are you aware that the *steady decline* in the power and prestige of the British-descended and American peoples was *specifically prophesied* in your Bible? Are you, personally, aware that the **end** of this present human civilization may come within your lifetime?

Right now, as I write this, a massive takeover of much of the Middle East by the so-called "Islamic State" is a growing threat to Europe and even the United States! The recent head of the CIA, retired General Michael Hayden, recently told *CNN* that an attack by this terrorist group on the U.S. or Europe is simply a question of "timing." Notice what he said: "ISIS [Islamic State in Iraq and Syria] is a very powerful local terrorist organization and, probably, a reasonably powerful regional terrorist organization, but it's one that has global ambitions. And it has the tools... American passport holders, European passport holders. It's expressed the intent (to attack the West).... It will come probably sooner rather than later" (August 25, 2014).

The rampaging terrorists of ISIS are already responsible for murdering thousands of men, women and children. They behead, crucify and often horribly torture their victims. Thousands of wives and daughters have been sold as sex slaves or used for other evil purposes by these wicked men. Throughout the Middle East, a sense of **terror** is being generated by this organization. America really does need to **wake up** and act in a **powerful** way or this type of terror will start happening again and again *right here* within the United States.

In the Ukraine, there are continuing reports of Russian troops and tanks quietly extending their influence over parts of that country—and *very little* action seems to take place from the Western powers. A quiet Russian "takeover" is obviously underway—just as recently happened in Crimea. Across the world, China is being very aggressive in the South China Sea. She is constantly harassing naval units from the Philippines and other nearby nations, taking over small islands that were claimed by these other governments, and is obviously preparing for **war** unless someone stops her.

In Africa, the *Ebola virus* is becoming an absolutely *horrible* menace to all of humanity. Even some aid



workers have been infected, and a few have already been brought back to the United States. *How long* will it take before the Ebola virus spreads to *our shores* in the U.S., Britain or Canada?

At the same time, almost every day brings more news of various judges in the United States trying to "make legal" the idea of "men marrying men"! This is something we have warned about for decades. It is something which would have been absolutely inconceivable a few years ago. Almost every religious leader at that time would have solidly condemned this vile practice. But today-because of a "tidal wave" of homosexual pressure and activity-one part of society after another has crumbled under the pressure of these sexual perverts. Even so, Almighty God still calls these practices an "abomination" (Leviticus 18:22). Even in the New Testament, the Apostle Paul was inspired by Almighty God to describe the intellectuals of his day: "Professing to be wise, they became fools" (Romans 1:22). Then he stated, "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" (vv. 26-27).

In the near future, largely *because* of these vile practices, more thousands or tens of thousands will come up with various sexually transmitted diseases—often **AIDS**. With all of this, the traditional family—which is the very *foundation* of the strength of our society—will increasingly crumble. Children will go wild. People will have an increasing sense of emptiness, *a lack of purpose for living*, as more and more vile practices take over and men and women are **cut off** from God by their weird thoughts and actions.

So, because of *all of this*, Almighty God will **soon** intervene—within the lifetimes of most of you!

Enormous Changes Within My Lifetime

I grew up during the Great Depression and the Second World War. During my youth, patriotism, a *sense of unity* throughout America and a zest for life was obvious among most people. In West Central Grade School in Joplin, Missouri, we were often led in prayer by our teacher at the beginning of the day. Usually, also, the "Pledge of Allegiance" to the flag and to the Constitution of the United States was recited. The respect and reverence to the Ten Commandments as a *way of life* was obvious and often reinforced by our parents, schools and society as a whole. There was a deep respect for the *family*, for the *Bible*, and for the idea that "God is our Father."

Back then, the very mention of men and women cohabiting without marriage was embarrassing. Divorce was looked upon with shame. Even the notion of people performing perverted sex acts with one another was *disgusting* and almost *unthinkable*. Nearly everyone understood that God had created us male and female for the purpose of marriage and family. Millions were familiar with Jesus' inspired instruction: "And He answered and said to them, 'Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning "made them male and female," and said, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh"? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate'" (Matthew 19:4-6). Also, in principle, most people certainly understood and agreed with the instruction God gave our ancestors in ancient Israel: "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination" (Leviticus 18:22).

But now, after being "educated" in many of our liberal theological seminaries—or, perhaps we should say theological "cemeteries"—thousands of professed "Christian" ministers are propounding the theories of the homosexual activists. Apparently, without much real thought or sense of responsibility, hundreds of our legislators in various states and cities—and even Washington, DC—have decided to reject **God's laws** and take matters into their "own hands." They have "gone along" with the modern attitudes of "poking fun" at God and His inspired word. They have increasingly—by their actions and their laws and judgments—"despised" the statutes and judgments of the God of the Bible! And yet many wonder: **Why** are so from the rest of the country. Many in Scotland recently supported a referendum calling for independence from the United Kingdom. People are dissatisfied. All over the world, so many things are "going wrong" for our peoples.

Again, **why**?

Almighty God's Decree

The Creator has foretold that *this very thing* would come upon our peoples **if** we turned away from Him and His laws and statutes: "But if you do not obey Me,

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and do not observe all these commandments, and if you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors My judgments,

so that you do not perform all My commandments, but break My covenant, I also will do this to you: I will even appoint *terror* over you, *wasting disease* and *fever* which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart. And you shall *sow your seed in vain*, for your enemies shall eat it" (Leviticus 26:14–16).

God warned that if we break His "laws and statutes" these judgments would come upon us as a people. The first thing to happen was "terror"—which can be translated **terrorism**! That has already started. It started with the attack of Islamist fanatics on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. It is going to *become much worse* if we continue to break God's laws and statutes.

Next was "wasting disease." One of the most powerful diseases of this type is obviously AIDS, which is *directly spread* by homosexual contact and related

WE HAVE TURNED AWAY FROM THE GOD OF THE BIBLE. WE HAVE GONE INTO INCREASING FORMS <u>of pleasure-seeking and absolute hedonism</u>

many things going **wrong** for America and the British-descended peoples? Instead of being the clearly dominant nations of the entire world—as we were so recently—we are now plunging into the abyss. We are going *down* and **down** in our national power and prestige. Parts of the southwest U.S. want to secede practices. Then, as Leviticus 26 certainly details, we will experience an entire wave of *disease epidemics*, drought and famine. **Mighty earthquakes**—and many other "natural" disas-

ters—will come upon our people **if** we do not sincerely repent and turn to God. If you would like a *complete explanation* of major events *soon to occur*, please write us or call us *today* and request your **free** copy of our powerful booklet, *Fourteen Signs Announcing* **GOING WRONG** CONTINUES ON PAGE 28

Lessons from Winter



After 2014 delivered one of the most chilling weather spectacles in modern history, many Canadians may find it a bit disconcerting to realize that in 2015 we will once again be confronted with that formidable foe known as winter.

In parts of eastern Canada, some may still be wondering when the winter of 2014 ended. In parts of Ontario, the temperatures reached 30°C (86°F) or more only eight days during the entire summer. While the temperatures have remained unseasonably cool throughout the year, the snow did melt and green once again emerged triumphantly from the endless sea of white that had seemingly threatened to stamp the bold color of nature out of the prism altogether. Yes, the winter of 2014 was tough even by Canadian standards.

Canada is a country that traditionally thrives in winter. Armed with an armada of snowplows, snow boots, ice skates, snowmobiles and the like, the True North is rarely slowed by temperatures and wintry conditions that would cripple much of the world. Rather, Canadians get excited about winter and embrace its icy grip. Toughing out the toughest of seasons seems to be a source of pride in Canada. Winter survival stories are routinely shared among Canadians with no need for exaggeration, because the conditions really do get that bad. Those from warmer climates look on wide-eyed at stories of temperatures that will literally freeze boiling water thrown into the air-before it can hit the ground! In a way, winter defines the toughness and grit of Canadians, but the winter of 2014 was brutal even for these frost-hardened warriors.

Another Brutal Winter Ahead?

Wintery weather and consistently cold temperatures set in long before expected, taxing individual supplies of firewood and heating oil. An ice storm hit in December 2013, causing widespread power outages. The damage to the power grid was so widespread that many were without power for three days or more in extreme cold. Many of the downed trees and limbs that littered the landscape from the ice storm remained there well into spring, as the ice did not melt for months making it difficult to get equipment into areas not regularly serviced by snowplows. If the ice was not bad enough, relentless snowfalls regularly compounded the problem. Clearing snow from driveways and sidewalks was made even more difficult and dangerous by the ice underneath. The winter lingered well into months formerly reserved for spring. Even in hardened cities such as Winnipeg, affectionately known as "Winterpeg," Canadians began to get fed up with the season most commonly associated with their homeland.



Fast-forward to the closing months of 2014 and the plains as well as much of eastern Canada are once again facing the prospect of a brutal winter. Due to the El Niño weather pattern, Chief Meteorologist Chris Scott from *The Weather Network* expects temperatures to be "chillier" than normal. While most winter lovers eagerly anticipate the first snowfall, it could be foreshadowing yet another hard winter ahead. With an average mean temperature of -20.3 °C (-4.54 °F) over the period of December to February in Winnipeg last year, the prospect of another unrelenting winter can seem daunting. However, Canadians will do what they have been doing in anticipation of every winter. They will follow the example of the ant *by preparing*!

Prepare!

The Bible reveals an interesting detail about this industrious little creature, which Canadians have adopted if for no

"Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near —at the doors!"

other reason than for the sheer need to survive. "Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, which, having no captain, overseer or ruler, provides her supplies in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest" (Proverbs 6:6-8). Instinctively, the ant prepares for winter. It is essential, because in the winter months opportunities for foraging are sparse and the cold

temperatures can be deadly. In order to survive the harshness of winter, the ant prepares well in advance.

It is no different for Canadians, especially for those living in rural areas. Knowing that winter is approaching, they work hard to prepare. Countless hours are spent gathering and processing firewood and winterizing homes. Fireplaces are cleaned out, seals are replaced, pipes are wrapped, and cars are equipped with winter tires. Snow blowers are serviced and winter jackets are brought out, along with tuques, gloves, scarves and snow boots. The more adventurous even get out the skis or plan an ice fishing adventure—but, whatever the wintry endeavor, they prepare. Scripture reveals this piece of wisdom: "A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself, but the simple pass on and are punished" (Proverbs 22:3). Failure to prepare for winter can be costly—even deadly. Traveling on icy roads in winter can end in disaster. Even a sudden snowfall can be fatal for the unprepared. Some have foolishly failed to put emergency supplies such as warm blankets in their automobiles, only to find themselves stranded along the roadside freezing to death. Some people travel without heavy winter clothing, because they do not believe they will have an accident—even when the forecast calls for whiteout conditions or icy roads! Some have

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paid with their lives for such lack of planning, freezing to death in the snow within feet of their cars as they sought help

at nearby homes. A prudent man anticipates such hazards and prepares for them, as do most Canadians when they see the seasonal winter beast rearing its head.

Watch for the Signs

Knowing the winter season is about to arrive gives impetus to prepare. In the same way, Jesus Christ warned His disciples to "watch" and "be ready" for events that lie ahead (Matthew 24:42, 44). While Christ indicates that no one knows the exact date of His return, He also indicates that there will be "seasonal signs" letting us know that the time is near, just as the changing colors of autumn leaves warn us of winter's imminent arrival.

"Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near-at the doors! Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place" (Matthew 24:32-34). While this parable provides hope for Canadians by virtue of the fact that it refers to the arrival of spring, it also provides hope for the return of Christ under whose reign nations will have opportunity for balanced weather ("rain in due season") and the blessings that go with it (Leviticus 26:3-5). Further, this parable reveals that there are certain keys that will tell us when Christ's return at the end of the age is near. As this long-prophesied season looms, we should be mindful of its indicators and do all we can to prepare. —James Ginn

Overburdened by "first-world problems," are we as thankful as we ought to be?

J esus Christ said in Matthew 6:25: "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?"

If the Savior of all mankind says that, why am I always worried about these things? Another house payment; the furnace is getting older; food prices are getting to be ridiculous; my best suit is getting a bit frayed (have you seen what the new ones cost?). Did I mention the car?

My house. My furnace. My food bill. My suit. My car. We have these things in abundance in a world where half the population lacks even the basics to sustain life. Statistically, nearly three billion people live on less than two dollars a day. According to the United States Census Bureau, median household income in the U.S. was \$51,371 in 2012—a little more than \$140 per day. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services defines the "poverty line" as \$11,670 for a single person; about \$32 per day. For a family of four, poverty is defined as a household income below \$23,850, or about \$65 per day.

On November 27 this year, millions across the U.S. will sit down to a national meal that in much of the world would be compared to a king's banquet, and in terms of calories, would feed the average family in world poverty for a week.

According to the Bread for the World Institute, 805 million people across the world are hungry. About 1.2 billion human beings live on less than \$1.25 per day. Every day, more than 7,000 children die from hunger-related causes—more than four children every minute.

Jesus' statement "Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?" is not going to

be in the forefront of the average American mind on Thanksgiving Day. For many it will be "the game" and Christmas shopping on the day after business as usual as we partake of the four-day holiday weekend.

How much thankfulness will take place, as families sit down to the meal and recite some memorized little prayer: "Come Lord Jesus, be our guest and let these gifts to us be blest—Amen"?

Abraham Lincoln, establishing Thanksgiving Day, said: "It is the duty of nations as well as of men to owe their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that *those nations are blessed whose God is the Lorp.*" President Lincoln was quoting Psalm 33:12.

In today's America, those words would likely see him hauled into court by the ACLU, and condemned by politically correct politicians and reporters. But President Lincoln was right in proclaiming: "We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has grown. But we have forgotten God.... and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own."

What should we think about and pray for as we sit down to eat this Thanksgiving Day? If I have the opportunity to pray at such a meal, Isaiah 63:7 comes to mind: "I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has bestowed on us... according to His mercies, according to the multitude of His lovingkindnesses."

Why? Because, really, I am thankful. The house, the furnace, the food, the clothes, yes, even the car, did not come by my superior wisdom or virtue. They are wonderful blessings from a loving God, given to me, though I live in a nation that for the most part is not keeping the word of His truth and has denied His name. —Gary F. Ehman

REVELATION: A Message of Warning... and Hope!

The book of Revelation contains mysterious symbols that only a few have understood. Can you unlock the secrets of Revelation? Can you know the future of our world—and your part in it?

By Richard F. Ames

he book of Revelation, sometimes called the Apocalypse, is one of the most important books in the world! Why? Because it reveals the future of humanity, and the future of planet earth! But it contains symbols and secrets that challenge us. What does this final book of the Bible mean—and how will it affect you and your future?

The Apostle John had been exiled to the island of Patmos, off the southwest coast of Turkey, which the Romans were using as a penal colony. John had already written three of the epistles that would become part of the New Testament when God inspired him, around 95AD, to write the book of Revelation.

God told John to write down what he saw, and pronounced a blessing on those who would study what John wrote: "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near" (Revelation 1:3). Yes, Almighty God promises that He will bless you, if you follow His admonition to read and hear the words of Revelation; if you "keep"—take to heart—what is written in this vital book.

John sent the record of his vision to seven churches on a common mail route in Asia Minor. Those churches still have meaning for us today. They were Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea (see Revelation 1:11). Today, you can visit archaeological sites in these cities in western Turkey. The spiritual condition of these seven churches has been reflected in God's Church over the past two millennia.

The Revelator, Jesus Christ, tells us to learn **lessons** from each church. Seven times—once for each church—He tells us: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Do any of the descriptions of these churches describe **your** spiritual condition?

The Seven Churches

Jesus describes the church at Ephesus this way: "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love" (Revelation 2:4). The heading in your *New King James Version* Bible labels Ephesus "The Loveless Church." Jesus warns the Ephesians: "Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works" (v. 5). Have **you** lost your "first love" as a Christian?

Smyrna is labeled "The Persecuted Church." Jesus states in Revelation 2:9, "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich)... Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (vv. 9–10). Have **you** faithfully withstood suffering and persecution?

Pergamos, the third stop on the route, is labeled, "The Compromising Church." Pergamos tolerated doctrines leading to sexual immorality. Jesus warned: "Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth" (v. 16). Have **you** compromised with false doctrines?

Thyatira is labeled "The Corrupt Church." Jesus proclaimed: "I know your works, love, service, faith,

and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first. Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.... Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds" (vv. 19–22). Have **you** fallen victim to corruption?

Sardis, the fifth church, is labeled "The Dead Church." Jesus warns: "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent" (Revelation 3:1–3).

Do You Have Living Faith?

Philadelphia is labeled "The Faithful Church." Christ promises the Philadelphians, "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no Christ's seven messages also reveal the spiritual characteristics and attitudes of the Christian Church, from the time of Christ to the end of this age. We may live in a Laodicean era today, but individually we can have a Philadelphian approach to our Christianity loving our brethren, and giving of ourselves to help God's warning message reach a world that will soon find itself in a time of unprecedented crisis before Christ's return.

A Vision of Heaven

In Revelation 4, John records his vision of heaven. He sees the very throne room of God Almighty, with a **rainbow** around the Father's seat of authority. How awesome and inspiring it is that our Father would describe to us His heavenly throne. Do you think of it when you pray? Christians can pray directly to God in heaven, through their Savior and High Priest, Jesus Christ. "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16). Thank God that you can come to Him in prayer. As you read Revelation 4, be sure to meditate on the majesty and the glory of God and His throne.

Revelation 5 records John's vision of a scroll

"HOLD FAST WHAT YOU HAVE, THAT NO ONE May take your crown" (revelation 3:11). <u>Are you holding fast to the truth of god?</u>

one may take your crown" (Revelation 3:10–11). Are **you** holding fast to the truth of God?

Laodicea, the final church on the mail route, is labeled "The Lukewarm Church." Jesus warns the Laodiceans: "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth" (Revelation 3:15–16). Has **your** faith become lukewarm?

Jesus wants us to listen to all seven of these messages. They reveal the changes we need to make in our lives. Seven times, He tells us: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches"—all seven of the churches. sealed with seven seals. In the first century AD, scribes wrote manuscripts on long strips of papyrus or parchment, which were kept rolled up. John writes: "And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside

and on the back, sealed with seven seals. Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, 'Who is worthy to **open** the scroll and to **loose** its seals?'" (Revelation 5:1–2).

John then weeps, because there is no one worthy to open the scroll—until the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, begins to open the seals. God reveals our awesome future in a momentous message to the risen Christ: "You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have **redeemed** us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth" (vv. 9–10). Jesus, the Lamb of God, shed His blood for the sins of every human being. Those who have truly repented of their sins, and who have demonstrated their faith through the baptism God's word commands, have been forgiven of their sins. They have been redeemed! Perhaps **you** have come to the place in your life where you realize the need for forgiveness. You realize the



need to turn your life around and make a dramatic change. If you are really serious about making such a

change, we invite you to counsel with a true minister of Jesus Christ. Just write to us at one of our Regional Offices, listed on page 4 of this magazine, or contact us online at *TomorrowsWorld.org*.

Those who do repent and turn their lives around, obeying their Savior, can look forward to an awesome future. They will inherit the earth as immortalized, glorified children of God, and during the Millennium they will rule with Christ (Revelation 20:4–6)! God reveals our awesome and glorious future. Faithful Christians will inherit the earth and all things, including the universe (Revelation 21:7). If God is calling you now, you certainly do not want to miss out on that!

Revelation 6 features the **first four seals** of Revelation. These are the famous four horsemen of the Apocalypse. The four horses and their riders symbolize great devastation over the earth. But what is their meaning? Jesus, the Revelator, gave an outline of prophetic events in the Olivet prophecy found in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. These prophetic events explain the four horsemen in the book of Revelation. The famous four horsemen of the Apocalypse symbolize false Christs and false religion, war and its terrible effects, famines that normally follow on the heels of war, and the pestilences and disease that follow after famine.

Shocking times are ahead for the whole world. We need to be prepared. These four horsemen will cause devastation all over the earth. Yes, there have always been wars, famines, and disease. But the four horsemen will intensify their ride in the years ahead, and we will see record deaths and casualties. Not only will major wars cause devastation, but the evils of terrorism will increase against the Western nations unless they repent of their immorality and lawlessness. The

The Four Horsemen Ride!

The Apostle John describes four horsemen that symbolize great deception and devastation to mankind and life on earth.

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

Seven Trumpets:



Seventh Seal Angels prepare to release the seven "Trumpet Plagues" Revelation 8:2-6

First Trumpet Green grass and one-third of the trees burned up.

Revelation 8:7

time will come when all of the past wars, plagues, pandemics, famines and droughts will seem minor compared to the awful terrors that will be visited on the American and other British-descended nations.

Then comes the **fifth seal**. "When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held" (Revelation 6:9). Here is described the martyrdom of the saints—true Christians. In the first century, the Roman emperor Nero severely persecuted Christians and put them to death. The fifth seal also indicates a major end-time persecution of the saints, and the Great Tribulation.

Then Jesus opens the **sixth seal**, revealing the heavenly signs that will shock people all over the earth. What are those signs? "I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place" (Revelation 6:12-14). Yes, Bible prophecy tells of a time when frightening asteroids and meteors will streak through the heavens. Massive earthquakes will also shake the ground beneath us. We have experienced strong earthquakes and tsunamis in recent years, but the ones to come will be far more severe, displacing every mountain and island.

Those heavenly signs introduce the seventh seal, known as the Day of the Lord—the time of God's

Second Trumpet One-third of sea becomes blod; one-third of ships and sea life are destroyed by fire. Revelation 8:8-9



Third Trumpet One-third of waters turn bitter Revelation 8:10-11.

wrath and judgment on an unthankful and rebellious world, when Jesus Christ, the Lamb, will execute God's righteous judgments. The Day of the Lord is also called "the great day of His wrath!" (v. 17).

When the **seventh seal** is opened, we find that it comprises seven judgments. "When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets" (Revelation 8:1–2). With their trumpets, the angels announce plagues that will ravage the earth.

These plagues will cause immense suffering to those who live through this time of tribulation, except for a tiny handful God will protect in a place of safety. But there is good news! Just beyond the Day of the Lord is the glorious Kingdom of God which Jesus Christ will establish on this earth! Yes, Jesus Christ will return with great power and love to usher in a thousand years of His millennial rule over planet earth.

God Promises Blessing

As we have seen, God promises a **blessing** to those who study His word and strive to live by it. You do not want to miss out on God's blessing. Read the book of Revelation, knowing that God will bless you as you strive to understand and practice His way of life. Our world today is in danger and confusion. Bible prophecy warns of more and greater earthquakes, droughts, floods, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, and other natural disasters. Even scientists and geopoliticians are now predicting a tremendous increase in environmental disasters and military conflicts as the 21st century unfolds.

The Day of the Lord



Fourth Trumpet One-third of sun, moon and stars do not shine. Revelation 8:12 Fifth Trumpet "Locusts" wield the Beast's military power.

Revelation 9:1-12





Seventh Trumpet The Kingdom is proclaimed. Resurrection of the Saints. Revelation 11:15-19

There **are** terrible times ahead. But the book of Revelation also reveals God's merciful intervention during the Day of the Lord, and the return of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ, at His Second Coming. We look forward to the seventh trumpet bringing us good news: "Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" (Revelation 11:15).

Genuine Christians will **rejoice** at that announcement, but the deceived nations and military powers will **not** rejoice—they will be angry. Notice: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was and who is to come, because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were **angry**, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth" (vv. 17–18).

The King of kings, Jesus Christ, will win the war against the immense combined military might of rebellious humanity. Then Christ will judge the evil world powers that are symbolized by the beasts of Revelation 13 and 17.

Who is the leopard-like seven-headed, ten-horned beast of Revelation 13, having feet like a bear and a mouth like a lion? And who is the beast with two horns, appearing like a lamb but speaking like a dragon? Who is the woman riding the beast of Revelation 17? Write for your free copy of our booklet, *Revelation: The Mystery Unveiled!*—it will explain their meaning and identity, and what this means for your future and the future of the world.

After "the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (see Revelation 16:14), the Prince of Peace will rule all nations. For the first time in human history, mankind will begin to enjoy genuine world peace. "And the LORD shall be King over all the earth" (Zechariah 14:9). The saints will rule on earth with Christ for a thousand years (Revelation 20:4–6), and then on into eternity.

The book of Revelation reveals that we can look forward to the coming Kingdom of God. As we watch and wait, we should pray daily: "**Your** kingdom come!" Soon after the thousand years of Christ's Millennial rule on earth are completed, the New Jerusalem will come to a renewed heaven and earth (Isaiah 65:17; Revelation 21). God will once and for all have put away Satan the devil, and the universe will enjoy glorious peace for all eternity. Dangerous times are ahead, but the book of Revelation shows us the hope that awaits—the time when God's faithful people will inherit the earth, and ultimately the whole universe. Thank God for the glory He will bestow on us and His creation!

MAY WE SUGGEST? **Revelation: The Mystery Unveiled!** The Apostle John saw in vision the future just ahead of us. What will it mean for you? Request a **free** printed booklet from the Regional Office nearest you, or order at **TomorrowsWorld.org**. PDF, ePub and Kindle are also available.



置London CALLING

Nelson's Call to Duty!



ice Admiral Horatio Lord Nelson is one of Britain's most respected national heroes. His twice-life-sized statue is perched high aloft "Nelson's Column," dominating Trafalgar Square that was named in his honour. His remains lie in the centre of the impressive marble crypt situated directly below the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral in London. His impact on Britain's national pride, with his sense of courage and duty in the face of grave danger, is inestimable. While his character was not without spot, as is true of most who are elevated to national greatness, his influence and legacy are undeniable.

What was it that Nelson possessed that catapulted him to the height of honour and glory, and to his place in the heart and psyche of the British people? What spiritual lessons can we learn from this icon of British Naval warfare?

Horatio Nelson was born at Burnham Thorpe in Norfolk on September 29, 1758, and after a short-lived childhood he began his naval career at only 12 years of age in early 1771.

Nelson's life was spent mostly at sea after 1793, with only a meager 25 months on land in the next 12 years before his death in 1805. In 1794, Nelson lost partial vision of his right eye in Corsica. Three years later, in 1797, during an attack on the Spanish base of Santa Cruz in the Canary Islands, he lost his right arm. In addressing the issue Nelson is quoted as saying, "Let me alone: I have yet my legs and one arm. Tell the surgeon to make haste and his instruments. I know I must lose my right arm, so the sooner it's off the better." Additionally, in 1798 he received a significant head wound during the decisive Battle of the Nile in which Napoleon's fleet was destroyed.

The Battle of Trafalgar

The conflict between the English and the French had been raging since before Nelson's birth, but doubtless the most prominent—and significant—of all of Nelson's battles was that of the Battle of Trafalgar. Cape Trafalgar on the southern Spanish coast was the location of the most famous battle between the English fleet and Napoleon's combined French and Spanish fleets, which essentially ended Napoleon's invasion plans. The British fleet consisted of 27 ships and that of the French and Spanish was 33 ships. Of these 33 ships, 19 were taken or destroyed by Nelson. It is easy to understand why he is regarded as such an effective naval tactician and commander.

In the throes of the battle of Trafalgar, Nelson sent a morale-boosting signal to the English fleet, "England confides that every man will do his duty." In the book, Nelson: Britannia's God of War, author Andrew Lambert writes, "The key word was 'confides', meaning 'trusts': he was not trying to make his men do their duty, but telling them that he had complete faith in them." This statement, however, was changed due to the absence of a simplified flag hoist for "confides." Instead, a single flag was hoisted to substitute the word "expects" and the statement was changed, with Nelson's approval, to "England expects every man to do his duty."

What was that duty? Every one of Nelson's beleaguered and battle-hardened mariners was expected to give his life's blood in defense of England. The hopes of generations to come rested on their diligence, determination and surrender to that clarion call. "Nelson remains a national secular deity, the god of war for troubled times, the last resort against overwhelming odds, guardian against tyranny. In life Nelson met and defeated the greatest challenge to the independence and prosperity of his country, through his genius for war, moral and political courage, and willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice" (*ibid.*, pp. xv-xvi).

Nelson is quoted as saying, "'Duty is the great business of a sea officer; all private considerations must give way to it, however painful it may be." Nelson fell to the deck of *H.M.S. Victory* after being struck on the left shoulder by gunfire from the enemy ship *Redoubtable* at about 1:15 p.m. (*ibid.*, p. 303). The musketball sliced through his chest and spine, causing an unstoppable hemorrhage of his lungs, and Nelson drowned in his own blood in the bowels of his flagship on October 21, 1805. Some of his dying words were, "Thank God I have done my duty!" (*ibid.*, p. 306). He did not ask of others what he was unwilling to give. He gave his life to fulfill his call of duty.

A Spiritual Lesson

The book of Ecclesiastes states, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the **whole duty** of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13, *KJV*). God expects each man, woman and child to do his or her duty: that of living each day within the confines of the law of God codified in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 5). Scripture tells us, "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3). John further explains what all this means in practice: the penalty for breaking God's laws must be paid through Jesus Christ, and we must receive the indwelling of God's Spirit to empower our obedience to God's laws *from the heart* (vv. 1–9).

The duty God has given to each of us, should we accept so great a challenge, will bring to us honour and glory unfathomable—the supreme glory of eternal life in the kingdom of God! When asked what one must do to receive eternal life Jesus responded plainly by saying,

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"if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." Horatio Nelson was willing to give his physical life to

fulfill what he believed to be his temporary human duty. Jesus Christ gave His life to fulfill His duty as Saviour of all mankind. He does not ask from us anything He was unwilling to do. He kept the Ten Commandments perfectly during His physical life. He will live that same obedient life within those who seek to fulfill the "whole duty" God spells out in the pages of the Bible.

Fulfill Your Duty

We see that, just as Nelson galvanised the fleet at Trafalgar in reminding them of their duty, so also we should say "God expects every man to do his duty!" Can we see that in fulfilling our obligation to keep the law of God there is promised everlasting honour and glory?

To learn more about what God expects of each of us, read our free booklet, *The Ten Commandments*. Fulfill the purpose God has given to you and reap the blessings that follow, for it is, indeed, the God-ordained duty of us all. —Adam J. West



Nelson's Column – Trafalgar Square in central London was built in honour of Admiral Horatio Nelson, who died at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805.

THE ECONOMIC OF CHRISTMA

By Dexter Wakefield

Credit Card D Guilt Stress Lying to the child Materialism Disappointment

hristmas creep." That is the 66 term that retailers use to describe the phenomenon of the Christmas retailing season, seemingly starting earlier and earlier each year. Many of us can remember when holiday decorations in the stores appeared only in December. Then the selling season began encroaching into November, and the Christmas music in the stores began around the Thanksgiving holiday in the United States. Then it moved to the week before Thanksgiving. Now we commonly see decorations and hear seasonal music in the mall around Halloween in October. This year, a few U.S. stores even brought out their first Christmas displays right after Labor Day-the first Monday in September! Will Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer soon be competing with the Easter Bunny for consumers' cash?

Would you like to know "the reason for the season" as far as the secular promotion of the Christmas holidays goes? Just "follow the money"!

"Black Friday" is the name retailers give to the day after Thanksgiving in the U.S. and the U.K.—or "Vendredi Noir" in France—all of which occur around the end of November. It refers to the time when retailers traditionally consider that their cash flow goes from a loss—"running red ink" during most of the year—to a profit when they say they are "in the black." This means that most of their profits come from sales in the holiday season—no Christmas, no profits. The Christmas holidays are critical to the retailing economy. Naturally, they would want to extend the buying season as long as possible. There is great financial incentive to maximize retailing activity during that period.

Make It or Break It

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Christmas can be "make or break" for retailers. Each year they have to find ways to maintain or increase their sales volume during the holidays. Creative marketers find numerous ways to create a longer selling season, because it means that more of consumers' hard-earned cash is available to buy their products. If customers are not saving during the year for Christmas purchases—which is the case for most people—they will likely have to finance their purchases with either existing wages or credit card debt. So having a three or four month selling season brings in more sales than marketing in December only—hence, we see what retailers call "Christmas Creep." The holiday marketing season "creeps" into November, October or earlier if merchants can get away with it.

One of the most important marketing tactics is to generate "Christmas spirit" in the stores and shopping districts. Initially, holiday decorations remind shoppers of the season and add to a festive feeling of involvement in it. Soon there is seasonal music—usually of a secular sort to avoid offending the non-religious—and it is a very important element in convincing shoppers to buy more and more. Crooners, some of whom are long gone, sing sentimental renditions of "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" or "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer." After the selling season is over in January, most people are very relieved to escape the constant musical marketing.

Many employers give bonuses at year-end, and the retailers want to capture as much of those bonuses as possible. So, many merchants have big year-end sales to clear out remaining merchandise and to capture those bonuses.

Guilt sells. Parents are made to feel that they are not good parents if their kids don't have "a big Christmas." How often have you been asked, "Did you have *a big Christmas* this year?" A lot of sentimentality is attached to having a lot of presents that you sacrificed financially to purchase, and the main beneficiary of that sentiment may be the merchant who sold the gifts—rather than the recipient. Over-extending financially on Christmas for emotional reasons is a common problem—*as credit repair agencies know*.

Credit Card Debt— The Ghost of Christmas Past

What's in the cards? Credit card debt spikes during the holidays—and then must be paid off during the rest of the year at very high interest rates. Personal finance experts call this accumulation of expensive debt the "Holiday Debt Hangover." *Credit repair firms love it*!

"Consumer counseling agencies see a 25 percent increase in the number of people seeking help in January and February, and most of that traffic is propelled to their doors by *holiday bills that haunt*



consumers like the ghost of Christmas past... 'A lot of people get by, paying the minimums on their credit cards,' said Durant Abernethy, president of the National Foundation for Credit Counseling. 'Add on the holiday bills and all of a sudden, those minimums are more than they can afford'" (Eileen Alt Powell, "Lingering Christmas Bills Can Lead to Debt Woes." *ABCNews.go.com.* March 7, 2014).

Just consider that with a typical 17 percent credit card interest rate, a consumer will pile up \$170 in interest for every \$1,000 of credit card balances carried for a year. Someone maintaining a \$5,000 debt balance for a year will pay \$850 in interest costs annually. And some rates are considerably higher. But making *minimum payments* to pay off credit card debt can be extraordinarily expensive. At a 2.5 percent minimum monthly payment that many cards charge (\$120 on \$5,000), it will take someone 21 years and 2 months to pay off that \$5,000 balance. The debtor will wind up paying \$6,045.45 in interest alone-in addition to the original balance! Credit card companies love the holiday season and the "Holiday Debt Hangover" it produces. It is extremely lucrative for them and extremely expensive for unwise holiday shoppers.

There is plenty of sane advice on dealing with the problems that the holiday season creates. Deborah

Fowles advises on *about.com*, "How to Avoid the Financial Holiday Hangover: Does this scenario sound familiar? You use credit cards to do your holiday shopping, promising yourself you'll pay the debt off within two or three months. Six or eight months later (or more), you're still paying, and those items that seemed like such bargains end up costing you 10 to 20 percent more than you thought, due to credit card interest. For many Americans, this debt pattern is repeated year after year. Personal finance experts call this the 'holiday hangover.' There are times when incurring credit card debt makes sense, but holiday gift-buying is not one of them. Using credit cards often leads to impulse spending, overspending, and increased debt ("Avoid Credit Card Debt During the Holidays").

If the gift-buying of the holiday season is an economic boon to retailers and credit card companies, the months *after* the holidays are a veritable *gold mine* for credit repair firms. Credit repair firms do much of their business as a result of holiday credit card purchases.

The Holiday Season Started Earlier Than Most Think

The custom of gift-giving during the winter festival goes back to Roman times and earlier, and the pa-CHRISTMAS CONTINUES ON PAGE 24

Should a "soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Timothy 2:3) fight in the wars of this world?

Question: Your magazine often writes about United States military involvements, and shows how Bible prophecy foretells of war. The Old Testament is filled with accounts of the Israelites at battle. Is it proper for a Christian to serve his or her country as a soldier in war?

Answer: Jesus Christ set a clear standard for His followers: "But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you" (Luke 6:27–28). He also taught that we are to live by "every word of God"—to guide our lives by every word of the Bible.

Certainly, Christians have a responsibility to obey legitimate government authority (Romans 13:1–7). Christ Himself explained that His followers are to pay taxes to civil governments (Matthew 22:21). We see that Christians must not disregard the duties lawfully imposed by civil society.

However, when the laws of civil government conflict with God's law, Christians must decide to whom they will give their ultimate allegiance (Acts 4:19; 5:29, 32; Romans 6:16). When the Israelites fought wars, they were doing so by the direct command of God Him-



self, fighting for the **human** kingdom God had at that time—the nation of Israel—under the conditions of

the Old Covenant. But Israel **rejected** God's rule, so He put them away and symbolically "divorced" them (Jeremiah 3:8). Later, of course, Jesus Christ came and made the Holy Spirit available to all who were baptized and obeyed Him. Christians today understand that Christ's Kingdom is not yet ruling in this world. Jesus said, "My kingdom is **not** of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here" (John 18:36). Christ promised that He would establish His kingdom on earth when He returns. Until then, Christians have an allegiance that is not of this world (Philippians 3:20). Today's Christians are "strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Hebrews 11:13), and await His kingdom. What should Christians do if they are drafted into mandatory military service? At present, there is no draft in the U.S.; however, the law requires male citizens to register with the Selective Service System within 30 days of their 18th birthday—a requirement that does not violate the biblical principles set out in Matthew 22:21 or Romans 13:1–7. Registering with the Selective Service System does not imply that a person consents to participation in war, and in fact this reg-

"If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight..."

istration can provide an opportunity to state formally one's conscientious objection to military service. Organizations such as the Center on Conscience and War (not affiliated with *Tomorrow's World*; their Web address is www.centeronconscience.org) can provide help regarding ways to document one's conscientious objection. But no matter what other steps a conscientious objector may take, a fundamental point is that one must **live** one's convictions now, so that if a draft comes, it will not appear that a refusal to fight is a matter of cowardice or convenience, rather than longheld deep religious conviction.

Many countries make provisions to allow sincere conscientious objectors to be excluded from mandatory military service, or to be placed in non-military roles of public service to fulfill a national service commitment. The U.S. has historically made these allowances during times when there was a military draft, so Christians can serve their countries without violating God's law.

Christians who live in nations where military service is compulsory must make a decision that can carry severe consequences: by obeying their Savior, they may be risking prison (or worse) for refusing to serve in the military. Christ gave an important principle when He explained that "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21). Those who have their hearts set on the Kingdom of God will make that Kingdom their priority, and will not jeopardize their place in that Kingdom by fighting and killing others in the wars of men.

COMES ALIVE

Deutschland über Alles!

hile world attention has focused on the civil war in Ukraine, the armed struggle between Israelis and Hamas in Gaza, the declaration of an Islamic Caliphate in Syria-Iraq and the expansive actions of China in the South China Sea, prophetically significant events are occurring in Europe.

Much attention has been focused on Scotland, which has shaken the complacency of England and the other regions of the United Kingdom. Centuries-old relationships among the English-speaking Europeans are being challenged as never before.

Meanwhile, quietly—almost out of the headlines— Germany is essentially taking control of the European continent, and asserting itself as the dominant force within the European Union, just as ancient Bible prophecies have long foretold. In the years just ahead, these events will change not only Europe, but also the Middle East and indeed the entire world. You need to understand *why* this is happening and where these events will lead!

Germans Take Leading Roles

The European Union was originally conceived as a mechanism for tying Germany into Europe and reining in Germany's historic tendencies toward aggression. The French saw themselves as a wise French rider on the strong German horse—who together would determine the future of Europe. However, the European financial crisis and Germany's robust economy combined to thrust the financially prosperous Germans (with money to lend to her indebted neighbors) into the dominant position within the EU. As an Irish politician has commented, "The German horse has thrown the French rider and headed to Berlin." Recent events have shown that the marriage of convenience between France and Germany appears to be over. "With Britain drifting away and France on the floor, Germany, however unwilling, is forced to take up the leading role across the board" in Europe (*The Times*, July 6, 2014).

Today, Germans are taking over the EU and Europe. Martin Shultz, a German politician and an advocate of closer cooperation among European nations, is currently serving his second term as President of the European Parliament. Shultz would like to make the EU stronger militarily and less dependent upon the USA. The Secretary General of the European Parliament is another German politician, Klaus Welle, who has used his role to modernize the functions of the parliamentary body. The new Chief of Staff for Jean-Claude Juncker, the incoming head of the European Commission, is Martin Selmayr: "a German lawyer who masterminded Juncker's election campaign... set to be the real force behind Juncker" (The Times, July 6, 2014). Selmayr, a former lobbyist, "is incredibly clever and capable and a true believer in the European project, but also a ruthless steamroller that will stop at nothing... [he] is likely to ensure considerable influence for his country in the new commission" (ibid.). Juncker, a Luxembourger and a staunch federalist, is not favorable to Anglo-Saxons, and has stated that "any opponent of the coming [European] superstate was motivated by petty, squalid, and immoral interests, deaf to historic destiny" (The *Telegraph*, June 22, 2014).

In a recent historic move, a German Army general, Markus Laubenthal, former commander of Germany's 12th Panzer Brigade, was named Chief of Staff of U.S. Army Europe—the first non-American ever named to that post ("German officer to serve as U.S. Army Europe's chief of staff," *ArmyTimes.com*, July 31, 2014). The growing preeminence of Germans in top jobs in the EU and other organizations in Europe is becoming "a source of concern to other governments" ("Juncker's 'steamroller' sidekick flattens UK hopes of top EU job," *The Times*, July 6, 2014).

The "Queen" of Europe

However, the most visible and influential German in Europe today is Angela Merkel. The German Chancellor has been called Europe's most impressive politician, the uncrowned Queen of Europe and even the most powerful woman in the world. Merkel is viewed as "a political mastermind of extraordinary cunning, subtlety and ambition" who, "using the European Union as her vehicle... has succeeded where Bismarck, Kaiser Wilhelm II and Hitler failed—turning an entire continent into a greater German Empire" (*dailymail.co.uk/debate/ article-2311874*, April 19, 2013). As the head of the biggest economy in Europe and the fourth biggest economy in the world, "Angela Merkel has made Germany the undisputed master of Europe" and "with a cunning



worthy of Machiavelli, Germany's Chancellor has seized the opportunity that presented itself to her to



restructure power relations in Europe" (*ibid*.). Since Germany "is providing the [financial] safety for the whole

euro zone, no one is going to argue with them running everything... [because] the Germans now own Europe" ("Deutschland uber alles, we are all Germans now," independent.ie, August 8, 2011). Merkel and her allies are determined to push and prod European nations toward a United States of Europe, because "as the euro zone's biggest creditor, Germany has the most to lose if the euro collapses... [and] Germany will be held responsible" ("The Reluctant Hegemon," The Economist, June 15, 2013). Observers have noted that Merkel is planning to hand over her office as Chancellor to a successor who will encourage Germany to play a more assertive role on the world stage. At that point Merkel could move on to be "crowned" as the President of a United Europe ("Why Queen Angela makes Europe dance to Merkel's tune," telegraph.co.uk, July 16, 2014).

Germany in Prophecy

What will Germany's role be in the years just ahead? The prophet Jeremiah indicates that the Israelite nations (America, the British-descended peoples and the peoples of Northwest Europe) will experience a "time of Jacob's trouble" in the latter days because they have turned away from God (Jeremiah 30:1-3, 14-15). The prophets Isaiah and Hosea record that God will use "Assyria" to correct and punish the backsliding Israelite nations (Isaiah 10:5-10; Hosea 5:5; 11:5). The biblical nation of Assyria is identified in endtime prophecy as the modern nation of Germany (see "Resurgent Germany: A Fourth Reich?" Tomorrow's World, September-October 2007). The rise of Germany to a position of dominance in Europe-where nations that once dominated the world stage have been preparing to become a "counter-balance" to America and the Anglo-Saxon world—is prophetically significant. You need to *watch* these developments in Europe as end-time Bible prophecies reveal and the words of the German national anthem proclaim, "Germany above all, above all in the world."

—Douglas S. Winnail

gan origins of Christmas are well-known. Almost all sun-worshipping cultures had an important festival around the end of December to celebrate the winter solstice and the beginning of the slow increase of the sun's arc in the sky. In agrarian societies, this was the promise of springtime to come and was usually associated with the "rebirth" of the sun-god of that

THE **CUSTOM OF GIFT-GIVING** DURING THE WINTER FESTIVAL GOES BACK TO ROMAN TIMES AND EARLIER, AND THE PRE-CHRISTIAN ORIGINS OF CHRISTMAS ARE WELL-KNOWN

culture. As one popular encyclopedia describes: "The celebrations of Saturnalia included the making and giving of small presents (saturnalia et sigillaricia). This holiday was observed over a series of days beginning on December 17 (the birthday of Saturn), and ending on December 25 (the birthday of Sol Invictus, the "Unconquered Sun"). The combined festivals resulted in an extended winter holiday season... The feast of Sol Invictus on December 25 was a sacred day in the religion of Mithraism, which was widespread in the Roman Empire. Its god, Mithras, was a solar deity of Persian origin, identified with the Sun. It displayed its unconquerability as 'Sol Invictus' when it began to rise higher in the sky following the Winter Solsticehence December 25 was celebrated as the Sun's birthday. In 274CE, Emperor Aurelian officially designated December 25 as the festival of Sol Invictus" ("Christmas," New World Encyclopedia).

As a matter of history, the observance of December 25 began as the birthday of the sun-god, *not the Son of God*! There is no biblical or other historical evidence that Jesus was born on that day.

These celebrations were very popular, so after the Roman Empire professed Christianity under Constantine, the existing pagan festival was adapted to a new theology, helping create popular support for Constantine's regime. The winter festival has developed a lot over the centuries, but many elements remain the same, particularly partying, gift-giving and decorating with evergreens.

Can Mankind "Sanctify the Pagan?"

Religious historians know that Christmas had its 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." Chapter 8:6).

The theologian, Christopher Dawson, went even further when he wrote, "The complete *sanctification of the pagan* is the end result of the Christianization of the world" ("The Leavening Process in Christian Culture," August 7, 1955). So in this view, the conver-



sion of the world to Christianity necessarily involves accepting its pagan practices. But which would adopt

which? Would paganism be adopting Christianity or would Christianity be adopting paganism?

So the fact is well-known among secular and religious historians that many of the symbols of Christmas 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, it is contradicted by the Bible.

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).

God has not changed His mind about this. He has told us, "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 birth or to copy the pagans in their festivals—quite the contrary, copying the pagans in God's worship was forbidden. You cannot "sanctify the pagan."

Many Are Opting Out

Should Christmas be a religious celebration for you? The origins of Christmas are well known and are not particularly controversial. It is a traditional holiday that originated in paganism and was incorporated into professing Christianity in the fourth and fifth centuries AD. It is not a biblical feast and was never practiced by the first century Church. Jesus Christ never authorized a memorial to His birth; rather, He instructed His faithful followers to keep a memorial to His death (Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26). And the Bible forbids adopting pagan customs in the worship of the true God-the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. So Christmas is not an appropriate celebration for one who professes Christ!

Furthermore, the *secular* aspects of the Christmas holidays—the costs and hassle that dominate the season—are difficulties many would rather avoid. The seasonal celebrations often involve excessive drinking, and the number of traffic accidents increases dramatically during the holidays. Everyone should be very careful on the highways, particularly at night. *The marketing of Christmas dominates the season*. Shopping can be very stressful, since stores are packed with shoppers trying to finish their shopping for long lists of gift-recipients. And the debts that mount up during the season often stay with shoppers for much of the following year. So, more and more people are opting out of the secular festivities—to their great relief.

God Offers a Better Way

As a matter of history, the first-century Church of God kept the Christian Passover and the seven annual Holy Days as commanded in Leviticus 23. In doing that, they were not trying to "be Jewish"-they were simply obeying God. These days picture the plan of salvation. By commanding their observance, God, in effect, has us act out this great plan by participating in His annual Feasts. The Apostle Jude exhorted the first-century Churchand us 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). Both biblically and historically, "the faith once delivered for all" included the annual biblical festivals. The real choice today is whether to follow the instructions of Christ and the apostles-as recorded in the Bible-or to continue with the familiar traditions that replaced those

instructions. ™

MAY WE SUGGEST? **The Holy Days: God's Master Plan** How can you tell the difference between a faithful Christian and a false Christian? Request a **free** printed booklet from the Regional Office nearest you, or order at **TomorrowsWorld.org**. PDF, ePub and Kindle are also available.



An Exception to the Rule?

TODAY

rom the beginning of mankind's history, we have not liked rules. And we often deceive ourselves, **not by saying a rule is bad**, but by convincing ourselves that we are an **exception** to the rule.

In 1 Samuel 13, we read that Saul knew it was wrong to offer sacrifices to God without Samuel present, but he did it anyway, because of the "special situation." Throughout the Bible, we read example after example of people who broke God's laws because they felt in their hearts that their situations were "exceptions" to the rule.

It is human nature to feel that we are "special" that we somehow deserve that things go our way, no matter what obstacles we might face. Self-will is a powerful force, and can blind us to the reality of our circumstances, so God inspired the prophet Jeremiah to write, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jeremiah 17:9). God knows that the human heart, making decisions without the aid of God's Spirit, is quick to tempt us to justify rule-breaking by convincing us that **our** situation is an exception.

How does this apply to you and to me?

The Basics

As God began working with the Israelites, He taught them to obey basic rules called the Ten Commandments. Those rules have a two-fold purpose. First, they train us to love and honor God. Second, when obeyed, they establish harmony between our neighbors and ourselves.

Yes, "when obeyed." It is instructive that the Israelites, almost immediately after receiving those rules, fell into a situation that illustrates our topic. The First Commandment taught the Israelites to have no other gods before the true God. The Second Commandment prohibited them from making any carved or graven image in order to worship God. Yet, within days, they defied both rules by declaring an "exception." Moses had gone up Mount Sinai to receive stone tablets from God. Scripture tells us what happened next: "Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, 'Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." A few verses later, we read that Aaron received the gold that they offered to him and molded a golden calf. They then said, "This is your god, O Israel,



The Egyptian god **Apis**, often depicted as a calf, was said to be an intermediary between human beings and an all-powerful deity.

that brought you out of the land of Egypt!" (Exodus 32:4).

They did not say that the first or second commandments were bad or wrong, they just said that they had a "special situation." They did not say that they did not say that they did not want to love God. In fact, they considered what they were doing to be showing love towards God! They were simply



using the calf image to "visualize" God more clearly. In verse 5, we read that Aaron built an altar before the golden calf, and made a proclamation, "Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD." They believed that they were honoring God. But in reality, they were **dishonoring** God. They felt they were drawing closer to God. The truth was that they were **moving away from Him**. And it all began with an "exception to the rule." Because Moses was not around, and seemed to be taking way too long to come down from the mountain, they decided that they would worship God as they saw fit.

Modern Culture

We could find dozens, even hundreds of examples of ways in which our modern society follows the regrettable example of ancient Israel.

For instance, God commands us to keep His Sabbath day holy (Genesis 2, Exodus 20). What is the purpose? The objective of the Sabbath is to remind us that God is the Creator and Sustainer, to draw closer to God, and think about the future millennial rest under Christ's kingship in the future. When we observe the Sabbath day, and obey God's command, what is the result? Exactly as intended! We accomplish those objectives. But many who call themselves "Christian" are under the mistaken impression that we can draw close to God without obeying God's rule. They believe that the Sabbath was only for the Jews, and that we in modern times are "exempted." They believe that we can worship God on any day, in any way, and make a habit out of worshipping God on Sunday. They contend that the Ten Commandments are all good, but when it comes to the Sabbath Day, we have an "exception" as to our application of it.

Another example involves God's annual Holy Days. God provided a schedule of Holy Days in Leviticus 23, reinforced by other scriptures throughout the Bible. Observance of these days is a vital part of obedience to God's rules for mankind. As we keep these Holy Days, we gain greater understanding of God's plan for humanity in general and for us individually. Sadly, most modern-day churchgoers believe that their church has the authority to change the observance of those days, or that God somehow exempts Christ's followers from observing the same days He observed and taught His followers to observe.

One mistaken idea, a very common one, is that observance of the Holy Days is only for the Jewish people. Christians, or so the theory goes, have their own holidays. But what holidays have most professing Christians chosen? They have substituted pagan holidays in place of God's annual Holy Days. During those holidays, it is considered okay to lie to children about Santa Claus, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and the Easter Bunny. Of course, for the rest of the year, we teach

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children that lying is wrong—but, when it comes to Christmas and Easter, there seems to be an exception to

the rule! And what is the result? Instead of drawing closer to God and learning more about His plan, the average churchgoer knows little or nothing about the truth of God's plan for humanity.

The Bible gives us rules about marriage, sexuality, finances, economics and a host of other topics. Its rules teach us how to interact with our neighbors, and how to honor God. These rules are not given as burdens to make our lives more difficult, but to make them more successful. So, the earlier we learn those rules and make them part of our thinking, the more successful and fulfilled we will be. In a way, it is like playing a sport. If we learn the rules, play fairly, and learn to play well, others will want to play with us. They will want to be on our team, and even to learn from us and follow our successful example. On the other hand, no one likes to play with someone who will not play by the rules—and the player who considers himself an exception to the rules will surely be frustrated and ultimately unsuccessful.

What about us? Human beings have a long history of the "exception to the rule" mentality. But if we can resist the pull of human nature, and can think as David did when he wrote, "*Oh how love I your law*" (Psalm 119:97) we will be well on the road to success.

—Jonathan McNair



Jesus Christ Himself described many of the "Big Picture" events soon to come—growing number and severity of *wars*, **world wars**, *famines*, *disease epidemics* (or pestilences) and "great earthquakes" (Luke 21:7–11).

GOING WRONG CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

Christ's Return. Please **study** this booklet—compare it with the world news happening every day—and you will realize that the **Creator** truly is beginning to intervene in human affairs *right now*!

Jesus Christ Himself described many of the "Big Picture" events soon to come—growing number and severity of *wars*, **world wars**, *famines*, *disease epidemics* (or pestilences) and "**great earthquakes**" (Luke 21:7–11). Near the end of this prophecy, Jesus stated: "And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (v. 25–27).

Those of you who have come to *truly believe* that there is a real **God** can be very thankful. For He **will** intervene. He *will* finally "rescue" humanity from its sins and problems. At the end of this prophecy Jesus instructed us: "**Watch** therefore, and **pray always** that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" (v. 36). So we are told by Jesus Christ Himself to "watch" these world events and to **pray always** that we may be counted "worthy" to escape these events soon to come!



Take ACTION!

Are *you*, *personally*, beginning to watch and pray? Are *you*, *personally*, preparing your heart to **seek God** with all your heart and all your soul? As most of you know, we *very seldom* make this kind of personal appeal to you readers. But *time is short*. With all my heart, I want **you** to "get the picture" and to **act**! For your *very life* is at stake. And your *eternity* is at stake.

Please remember, my friends, that—as you study God's prophecies about His punishments and trials on His peoples down through history—God *always* tells us that **if** we want to be protected from any tragedy, we must **cry out to God** with our *whole hearts*! Notice how God instructed His people as the seventy years of "Babylonian captivity" were coming to an end: "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:11– 13). He says that He will *hear* His people "when you search for Me with **all your heart**"!

Dear readers and friends, you and I really need to **do that**! *How often* do you, personally, deeply and slowly *study* and *meditate* over the Bible and its **real meaning** with an open mind? How often do you **cry out** to God and beseech Him with words like this, "Father, I don't really know for sure what to do many times, but *please show me*! Please help me to *wake up*! Please give me the faith and courage to **act**!"

In a powerful warning to our forefathers—which *certainly applies to us*—Almighty God warned them that in the "latter days" they would *turn away* from God and "the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD will drive you" (Deuteronomy 4:27). Then Almighty God states: "And there you will serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. But from there you will **seek** the LORD your God, and *you will find Him* **if** *you* **seek Him** *with* **all your heart** and with **all** *your soul*. When you are in distress, and all these things come upon you in the **latter days**, when you turn to the LORD your God and obey His voice" (vv. 28–30).

So in the "latter days" these things *are* beginning to happen! They will come upon our people **very soon** *unless* we truly **repent**. God's word indicates that most will **not** repent until these things actually come upon them. But *you*, personally, **can** repent **if** you are willing. You have to be **willing** to acknowledge that our human ways have been **wrong**. That we *have* turned away from the God of the Bible. That we have gone as a people into increasing forms of *pleasure-seeking* and absolute **hedonism**. Our families are being torn apart. The morals in our public schools and colleges are being ruined. Our entire nation is being destroyed because we **refuse** to honor God and Bible powerfully warned the religious leaders of His day: "**Why** do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?" (Matthew 15:3). And then, "Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men" (vv. 6–9).

My friends, most of *you* reading this are obviously sincere or you would not be willing to consider any

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ideas other than "mainstream" religious concepts. But, just as I had for the first 19 years of my life, most of you

still have ingrained in your mind all kinds of *unbiblical* and even "**pagan**" concepts. *That* is what most of you were taught *all of your lives*. But God *commands* all of His people: "**Prove** all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21, *KJV*). Learn to imitate the Berean Christians who were praised by God because they "were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and **searched the Scriptures daily** to find out whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11).

Your Bible states: "Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7). Somewhere on this earth, the

ARE YOU, PERSONALLY, BEGINNING TO WATCH AND PRAY? Are you, Personally, Preparing your heart to Seek god with all your heart and all your soul?

His ways. So God says that at this time, in this condition: "But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find Him **if** you seek Him with **all your heart** and with **all** your soul" (v. 29).

As the Editor in Chief of this magazine, and as the called and chosen servant of Almighty God, I am now **crying out** to each of you to **act! Do not assume** that your previous religious ideas and practices are pleasing to Almighty God. The *real* Jesus Christ of your

Eternal God has *always* had **true** servants. Somehow, in His mercy, God has brought *you* into contact with His true servants and His true Work on earth in these last days of our human civilization. For your *own sake*, please be willing to *consider* and **prove** what we have to say!

Nearly all you long-time readers know that we **never** press to "get money from you!" **All** of our literature is absolutely free for you to receive, and puts

you under *no obligation whatever*. So, in the light of what I have written above, it is vital that if you do not already have these booklets, you contact us right away to request your **free** copy of the booklet I have already mentioned: *Fourteen Signs Announcing Christ's Return*, along with two other vital and truly "eye-opening" booklets, *Restoring Original Christianity* and *Satan's Counterfeit Christianity*. And **if** you

are willing to devote yourself to some genuine *study* and to **prove** what the Creator says in His



inspired Bible, please contact us to request your *free* subscription to the 24-lesson *Tomorrow's World Bible Study Course*.

Do Your Part

Also, *if you have* a genuine desire to follow through on God's Truth and "check us out" personally, be sure to *request a visit* from one of our ministers or representatives. We will not come to your home unless invited—perhaps a visit in a coffee shop or other public place may be more comfortable for you. And, if you are a woman, we assure you that we will never send one man alone to meet you. Our representative



will be happy to meet with you—perhaps along with his wife, or perhaps with another minister—to visit and

talk over with you the real **meaning** of life. He will *answer your questions* about the Bible and—**if you wish**—tell you in detail about what this Work is all about and *when* and *where* you can meet with other true Bible-believing Christians. He will **not** pressure you in any way—I promise.

So, again, for your sake, take **action**! Because, as I have said, we almost **never** come on so strong as I am doing right now in asking you to act. But as these pro-

phetic events are hurling themselves upon us almost daily, I am moved to reach out to you at this time and pray that God will help you *understand* and be willing to **do** those things you need to do so that you can gain God's protection during these final days of human history and be in God's everlasting Kingdom.

God does not appreciate "half-way" Christians! In His inspired word He specifically **warned** that the

> last era of His Church on this earth would be characterized by what we call the "Laodicean"

attitude. God warned the people of *our time*: "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth" (Revelation 3:15–16). We **must not** reflect that attitude in **our own** Christian lives!

My dear friends and brethren, God help all of us to truly learn to "seek Him" with all our heart and all our soul. Let us not be "half-way" Christians. Let us "cry out" to Him and repent-turn around and go the other way. And let us begin to **obey Him** from the *heart* and in our **actions** so that we will, in fact, be taken to a Place of Safety during the coming Great Tribulation. May we learn to grow, spiritually, unto the "measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13). At the end of his life, the Apostle Peter charged his readers: "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).

Again, may Almighty God *stir* each one of us to **take action** that we may truly "seek" His will and "**do** these things" so that we may truly be supplied an entrance into the "everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

MAY WE SUGGEST?

Fourteen Signs Announcing Christ's Return The world will experience unprecedented peace when Christ returns to rule. Will you be ready? Request a **free** printed copy of this booklet from the Regional Office nearest you, or order at **TomorrowsWorld.org**. PDF, ePub and Kindle are also available.



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LETTERS TO TV

I had a bad week. My body was painful and I felt sad and depressed. When I read the article about the Butchart Gardens in the July-August 2014 issue, I looked for pictures on the Internet. I thought: "Can God make the world as beautiful as this garden in the Millennium?" It's hard to imagine but I know He can do even better. This thought made me very happy and suddenly I remembered James 1:2–4. The thought that God has called me, and is preparing me through tests and trials for His incredible purpose, filled me with intense joy and thankfulness. I feel stronger in the faith and know that He'll be with me, always, even to the end of the age. Thanks a lot for your uplifting and encouraging articles.

M. L., Antwerp, Belgium

You folks hit the nail right on the head when it comes to speaking the truth about God and the Bible. You have the answers and tell the truth. You are the first people that have made it clear for me that I can finally understand it and get away from all the confusion that I have had for so many years. Your magazines are great along with the booklets and I keep every one of them.

R. H., Cambridge, Ontario, Canada

I am so thankful for the wonderful work you are currently doing: proclaiming the plain Truth throughout the world. God has given me a privilege through your work that I duly understand Sabbath-keeping, the annual Holy Days, the Ten Commandments and lots more of the teaching of Christ and the Apostles. I now understand my ultimate destiny in life through the Holy Bible. Thank you *Tomorrow's World*!

O. W., Lae City, Papua New Guinea

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Thank you for following the Bible and for your very edifying teachings. I have searched for true Christians since I was a child, without success. The different religions don't have the fruits that the Bible speaks about. In contrast, one can feel that you follow and respect God's commandments. I thank God for having guided me to you. I will finally be able to build my mind and my heart in the truth of God's word.

J. H., Royan, France

Tomorrow's World is a wonderful way for me to learn and grow in God's word, to bring a more full understanding of my existence in this world to prepare for the next. I remember during the early 60s my mother ordered Mr. Armstrong's book *The Wonderful World of Tomorrow*—then, at that time, cable TV, cell phones, video games, instant messaging and Internet did not exist, but I learned how to read and that magazine gave me insight. *Tomorrow's World* corresponds dramatically with those articles of that time—what an eye opener! Thank you!

T. T., Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA

I am like the Bereans and search the scriptures daily to see if what people, especially ministers and pastors, say is true concerning the Bible. I have spent 40 years researching and trying to find the truth the way Jesus and the Apostles taught it. You're a blessing and right on the mark. Believe me, I check what you write also and I am blown away! Thank you, thank you, thank you for showing me the truth in so many areas.

N. A., Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

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Mail your letters to "Letters to the Editor" at our U.S. address, or send e-mail to: *Letters@TomorrowsWorld.org*. Letters may be edited for space and clarity.

DET HE OF HIS HANDS

 $(R+a)\cos(t)$

Do We Live in a Multiverse?

e live in an era when viewing the universe is possible through much more than an inspiring look into the dark, nighttime sky. Tools such as the Hubble Space Telescope have brought to our earthbound eyes images of worlds, galaxies and nebulae—awe-inspiring vistas reminding us that the universe our Father has created is *truly* a vast expanse of variety and wonder!

Yet, increasingly, physicists and cosmologists suggest that, beyond our ability to perceive, there are actually *multiple universes* in addition to our own. Some such theories are more science fiction than science, with an infinite array of universes in which *all conceivable possibilities* occur. In such theories, there is a universe where you are an Olympic athlete and another where you are a notorious mass murder! These ideas may sound absurd, but scientists increasingly see them as plausible.

Such theories claim that our vast universe is merely one of an even *greater* collection of multiple universes commonly called the *multiverse*. So, what are we to think of such claims about the creation? Is there reason to believe we live in a multiverse? And why do so many scientists passionately promote the idea today?

An "Astronomical" Theory

Science fiction aside, one of science's great goals is to discover a theory that describes the entire universe with a simple set of equations. The equations of "string theory" are a popular candidate, but with one major glitch. Instead of having only *one* solution, the equations have 10^{500} solutions—a number so vast that to write it would involve a "1" followed by *500 zeros!*

While this was once seen as a major flaw in "string theory," physicists began to suggest that maybe the vast number of possible solutions should be seen as a suggestion that there are *that many* different universes that exist—with each solution representing a *different* universe, with different laws of physics.

This suggestion, however—although popular with many physicists—nevertheless represents more wishful thinking and fantasy than real science. Discussing its implications in a 2010 radio interview, world-renowned physicist Dr. Roger Penrose said string theory and its supposed 10⁵⁰⁰ universes "isn't even a theory. It's a collection of ideas, hopes, aspirations… [The ideas] have absolutely no support from observation… They're hardly science" (*Unbelievable*, "Stephen Hawking, God & the Universe," September 25, 2010).

Put simply, the many supposed universes of "string theory" have no support from evidence or data. A much more promising indicator of multiple universes lies in a concept sometimes called "Eternal Inflation."

After scientists discovered that our expanding universe began in a cosmic "Big Bang"—a beginning that clearly implies a Creator—they noticed that they needed to assume a brief but intense period of hyperinflation, when the universe grew at unimaginable speeds. While

"If you don't want God you'd better have a multiverse"

this "Inflation" concept solved some problems, it also opened up the possibility that, rather than a one-time event, it might be a continuing

process—where not only did *our* universe "balloon" out of the Big Bang, but other additional universes could

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have done the same thing and may still be doing so. Like one of the many soap bubbles blown by an excited child playing on a summer day, our universe would simply be one "bubble" among many!

Physicists and astronomers have examined measurements of deep space to determine if there are any of these hypothetical universes existing close to our own. So far, however, they have found nothing ("Blow for 'dark flow' in Planck's new view of the cosmos," *New Scientist*, April 6, 2013).

In the song of multiple universes, it seems that each verse is the same as the first: No evidence, no data—nothing but conjecture and speculation. So, with little actual *science* to justify many scientists' religious devotion to the multiple universe idea, *why are so many so attached to a multiverse*?

Scientific Admissions

The answer may be seen in the title of a 2008 *Discover* magazine article: "Science's Alternative to an Intelligent Creator: The Multiverse Theory."

Scientists have long known that they cannot easily explain why our universe seems so *finely tuned* for life to exist. As Tim Folger writes in the article, "Tweak the laws of physics in just about any way and... life as we know it would not exist... In some strange sense, it appears that we are not adapted to the universe; the universe is adapted to us."

Such a fact—that the universe seems designed just for us—implies that there are just *two options*, one of which many scientists simply do not want! As *New Scientist* has explained, "[T]he main reason for believing in an ensemble of universes is that it could explain why the laws governing our Universe appear to be so finely tuned for our existence... This fine-tuning has two possible explanations. **Either the Universe was designed specifically for us by a creator or there is a multitude** **of universes—a 'multiverse'**" ("Anything Goes," June 6, 1998).

That is the ultimate "appeal" of the multiverse! For many, the idea of a multiverse is driven not by data or scientific findings, but rather by a desire to avoid the obvious implication that the universe has a *Designer*.

The matter is summarized starkly but honestly in Discover magazine by cosmologist Bernard Carr: **"If you** don't want God, you'd better have a multiverse." Make no mistake: for many scientists, embracing the idea of a multiverse is far more about religion than actual science.

The Universe and Beyond: Our Destiny?

Of course, those who believe the Bible have no trouble with the idea of a universe finely tuned just for us: "For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens, who is God, who formed the earth and made it, who has established it, who did not create it in vain, **who formed it to be inhabited**" (Isaiah 45:18).

Yet, *could* "the heavens" include invisible realms of creation beyond the boundaries of the known universe?



What if evidence *is* ever found for the existence of countless additional universes? God Almighty tells us

that mankind's destiny is ultimately not just to inherit the world, solar system or galaxy—it is to inherit *all things* (Revelation 21:7), including things that we *cannot yet see!*

Whether our future inheritance is the one, magnificent universe we see around us, or a *vast host* of universes currently beyond our ability to view, the promises of the Creator God who *created all things* stand sure and immovable. "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, *world without end*" (Ephesians 3:21, *KJV*).

-Wallace Smith

TELEVISION LOG

AUSTRALIA				NEW ZEA	LAND				UK & NV	/ 1	EUROPE		
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Sex and Sin

God created sex—and He wants you to enjoy it in a right way! November 20-26

Is God Calling You?

Are you a "religious hobbyist" or has God called you to true repentance and more? November 27-December 3

Counterfeit Christianity

Can you be sure that you are practicing the true Christianity of Jesus Christ? December 4-10

The Second Coming

When will Jesus Christ come again, and why? You need to know! December II-17

You Can Prove That God Exists

In a world filled with skepticism, how can you know the real God? December 18-24

Spirit Battles Ahead

Your Bible warns of evil spiritual forces. How can you protect yourself? December 25-31

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