

TOMORROW'S WORLD

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“And Women Rule Over Them”



Uncle George and Christmas

It's that time of year again, and I am reminded of my atheist Uncle George. In our booklet *Easter: The Untold Story*, I mentioned a connection between Easter celebrations and his rejection of God. I also have an Uncle George story involving the Christmas holiday, now so near at hand.

One day, near the end of his life, my uncle brought up the subject of Christmas. Knowing that I was a Christian minister and assuming that I celebrated the most stereotypically "Christian" of all occasions, he wanted to needle me a bit by explaining the undeniable pagan origins of the holiday. He explained that Jesus was not born on December 25 and that celebrations on and around the winter solstice long predated Christianity. He explained the origin of custom after custom honoring false gods like Mithra, showing that they were associated with the Roman celebrations of Saturnalia and the Calends. He pointed out the hypocrisy of calling the day a Christian holiday when its origins were anything but biblical.

I listened carefully until he finished his unsolicited history lesson, and then replied, "Uncle George, everything you say is true." I explained that he had just listed the very reasons I did *not* keep Christmas, and then I looked him in the eye and asked, "Uncle George, do *you* keep Christmas?" I already knew the answer, but I confess that I enjoyed turning the tables and putting him in the hot seat, so to speak. He squirmed in his chair and explained that he felt an obligation to give gifts to people who gave him gifts. Societal pressure apparently exerted a powerful influence on this avowed atheist.

So here we were, a Christian minister who did *not* keep Christmas and an atheist who did!

At *Tomorrow's World*, we look to the Bible as the infallible source of truth, and it gives direction to our personal lives. Our mission is to warn the world of what will happen if that truth is rejected, as well as to show that there *is* real hope for a better world—but only with the return of the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. In spite of today's relentless assault against biblical values, we will continue to tell you the truth

that is clearly revealed in the pages of the Bible. That is what readers of *Tomorrow's World* should have come to expect—but notice that I said "*should*." Why the qualifier?

Most readers of this magazine recognize and agree that the world around us is going in a dangerously wrong direction. Morality is at a truly disturbing low, many—if not all—nations are badly divided,



and even the forces of nature have turned against us with devastating ice storms, record-breaking heat waves, droughts, and forest fires. But long before these problems, the professing Christian world took a wrong turn that helped further the rejection of God.

Paganism and Deception

My Uncle George is not the only one to see hypocrisy in Christianity and the Christmas celebrations, but Christianity did not begin that way. There was no celebration of Christ's birthday in the early Church. *The Encyclopædia Britannica* states, "As late as 245 Origen, in his eighth homily on Leviticus, repudiates as sinful the very idea of keeping the birthday of Christ 'as if he were a king Pharaoh'" (1911, vol. 6, p. 293).

Virtually every reputable historian recognizes that "the Christian church took over many pagan ideas and images."

From sun-worship, for example, came the celebration of Christ's birth on the twenty-fifth of December, the birthday of the Sun.

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Saturnalia, the Roman winter festival of 17–21 of December, provided the merriment, gift-giving and candles typical of later Christmas holidays.... Some pagan customs which were later Christianized [an act of disobedience to God, as we'll see], for example the use of candles, incense and garlands, were at first avoided by the church because they symbolized paganism (*Eerdmans' Handbook to the History of Christianity*, 1977, pp. 131–132).

These facts have little effect on most professing Christians. Uncle George, at least, never claimed the day to be something it is not. But what is the harm for those who celebrate Christmas? Since no one knows the day of Christ's birth, why not take a time when the pagans celebrated their god and make it into a Christian holiday?

There are at least three problems with doing so. The first is that the proclaimed meaning of the "Christmas" day—with all its associated customs—is unarguably a giant lie. The second is that God tells us *not* to borrow practices from the heathen to worship Him (Deuteronomy 12:29–32; Jeremiah 10:1–4; cf. Mark 7:6–9). And the third is that these pagan celebrations become substitutes for the days *God* set aside as holy.

Joy and Understanding

Members of the Living Church of God, the sponsor of *Tomorrow's World*, observed the Feast of Tabernacles this past September. To many of you, that may sound strange. Who has ever heard of "the Feast of Tabernacles"? Jesus, for one, as He kept it even under the threat of death (John 7:2–10)—and when He returns to become King over all the earth (Zechariah 14:1, 4, 9), He will command *all* nations to send representatives to keep it in Jerusalem (v. 16). He is so serious about all nations keeping this Feast that He will punish any nation refusing to do so (vv. 17–19). That is probably not something you would be told in any Sunday service, but don't take our word for it—look up these verses.

Consider that Jesus kept the Feast of Tabernacles and expects all nations to keep it when He returns. Also consider that nowhere in the Bible do we read of

anyone observing the annual celebration of Christ's birth. Yes, we read of His birth—and by doing so, we see that the popular story has since been corrupted by folklore. The wise men arrived when Jesus was in a house, not a stable—weeks or even months after He was born (Matthew 2:11, 16). They gave presents because He was born to be a king, *not* because it was His birthday. This and so much more is explained in our free booklet *Is Christmas Christian?*

Yes, we live in a confused world, and this does not only apply to current events and politics. Professing Christianity is in a state of confusion, which is exactly what the Bible predicts. The first sign Jesus gave indicating "the end of the age" was false Christianity. "And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name [claiming His authority], saying, 'I [that is, Jesus] am the Christ,' and will deceive many" (Matthew 24:3–5).

God's master plan for mankind is obscured and forgotten when even "Christians" substitute heathen celebrations for the days Jesus, His Apostles, and the early Church kept. Nevertheless, there are still people who follow Christ's example and observe the Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Day of Pentecost, the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Last Great Day. Each Festival spells out a successive stage in God's plan for mankind, and each is a joyous celebration of that stage.

Many people are curious about these days; perhaps you are one of them. I've personally been observing these days with thousands of others for nearly 60 years and have never regretted doing so. The frivolous customs I gave up many years ago are not worthy to be compared with the richly meaningful and joyous days given by God. If you are interested in learning more about the biblical Festivals and Holy Days, you can order a free copy of our study guide *The Holy Days: God's Master Plan* from the Regional Office nearest you (listed on page 4 of this magazine) or read it online at TomorrowsWorld.org.



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“And Women Rule Over Them”

By **Gerald E. Weston**

Who would have guessed that a YouTube video titled “Do Schools Discriminate Against Boys?” would go viral, garnering over 3.2 million views? It is not likely that *Tomorrow’s World* Canadian Regional Editor Stuart Wachowicz would have known how successful his six-minute Viewpoint video would be—nor would any of us have guessed that the overwhelming number of responses to it would come from young men and boys, many still in high school, who felt discrimination in their own educational experiences.

Some responses could be chalked up to excuses and bitterness from personal failures, but is there more to it than sour grapes? Blaming others for one’s shortcomings is easy, but it is just as easy and just as foolish to assume that all complaints fall into this category. While the war on men and boys has been around for decades, it has never been so flagrant as it is today—and young men in the United States, Canada, and elsewhere in the Western world recognize when they are being shortchanged.

A Dishonest Report

Some still remember the 1992 report released by the American Association of University Women (AAUW)

titled “How Schools Shortchange Girls.” It purported to show that boys were favored in the classroom while girls were discounted and ignored. However, the report later proved to be biased and dishonest.

The most widely disseminated finding was that teachers permit boys to speak or participate eight times more often than they do girls, but as with the rest of the conclusions, this turned out to be pure nonsense. Their data was based on an old 1981 study that actually said boys are reprimanded eight times more often than girls, and that three-fourths of both girls and boys said they thought teachers compliment girls more often, think they are smarter, and would rather be around female students. That level of distortion was evident throughout the AAUW report (James Dobson, *Bringing Up Boys*, 2001, p. 172).

The report garnered a great amount of attention in academia and the media and brought about dramatic changes in how schools approached the two sexes. “Although the report has been widely discredited now in the professional community for what it was—a blatant attempt to skew educational resources away from boys and to characterize girls as victims—the damage had been done. It resulted in an unfair distribution of avail-

able resources that continues to this day" (p. 172). Most damaging was when the United States' Congress, responding to lobbying by various women's organizations, passed the "Gender Equity in Education Act, which allocated hundreds of millions of dollars per year to programs designed to redress the [so-called] bias against girls." Money was included in the act to "reprogram" teachers who were 'unconsciously sexist'" (p. 173).

Forty Years Later

So where are we today? This bias in favor of girls in education, starting at the earliest levels, has had its effect. On September 6, 2021, *The Wall Street Journal* published an opinion piece by Douglas Belkin titled "A Generation of American Men Give Up on College: 'I Just Feel Lost.'" The numbers are troubling. Roughly 60 percent of college admissions are women, and schools of higher learning struggle to keep the male population at the 40 percent level. Political science professor Samuel Goldman, in another opinion piece, points out that the ratio between men and women would be even worse were it not for a bit of fudging on entrance requirements.

The burgeoning gender gap is an open secret in higher education. With none of the fanfare that accompanies their pursuit of racial diversity, many institutions give an admissions advantage to men. One reason is that administrators fear women are also less likely to enroll when the male student population drops below 40 percent ("The American elite will be female," *The Week*, September 8, 2021).

That is only part of the disturbing picture. Going to university is one thing—graduating is another. "Among University of Vermont undergraduates, about 55% of male students graduate in four years compared with 70% of women" (*The Wall Street Journal*). To illustrate how significant this is, if the University of Vermont has a typical enrollment split of 60/40, then out of every 100 students, 42 women will graduate in four years, but just 22 men! That should be a wake-up call—but is it?

So what?, some say, as they argue that men still earn more money and hold the power positions in this world. But Goldman points out that this is

"largely a generation effect." He explains that leaders in all fields today, whether in industry, commerce, communications, or government, "began their careers decades ago, when college student bodies were more equally divided (and in some cases, exclusively male). It would be surprising if the gender ratio in upper management remained the same in another 20 years." Goldman further explains what should be obvious to all. "Because elite institutions hire almost exclusively college graduates, campuses are the point of departure for female dominance of publishing, the culture industry, and areas of the corporate world—particularly the massive human resources industry."

The double-standard goes beyond education. For decades, women have sought to invade practically every area that was once reserved for men. Female reporters demanded equal access to men's locker rooms to interview players, and young women aspired to play on boys' baseball teams. Anything that was singularly male became a target—but could you ever imagine males being allowed into women's locker rooms or competing in women's sports?

Well, now we can. What goes around does, indeed, come around; by a bizarre and circuitous route, men and boys are today invading everything female—simply by claiming that they are females trapped in male bodies. Girls and women are being pushed aside as these opportunistic or confused men break record after record in female track-and-field and weightlifting events. Scholarships that rightly should go to girls are funneled to biological boys who can *never* become biological girls. I can only imagine the anger parents must feel when they see their daughters robbed in this way.

Yet there is another twist to the saga of girls wanting to invade everything male. In October 2017, the Boy Scouts of America decided to let girls join their organization. This was implemented in all of the organization's programs in 2019. Not surprisingly, the ones most disturbed by this turn of events were the Girl Scouts!

The problem is not that special programs have encouraged girls in academics, sports, and leadership, but that such resources are predominantly going in one direction. Just as girls have special needs, so do boys—too many of whom, without proper support and motivation, are left adrift, feeling lost. This is evident in so many boys who graduate from high school and don't know what to do next. Boys desperately

The Rise of Women

The numbers are clear, and many signs point to a rising female tide.

If college is any indication, tomorrow's movers and shakers in industry, finance, and education may overwhelmingly be women. The trends aren't moving toward any sort of "balance" between the sexes. Rather, they point to a growing female dominance.



■ Women

■ Men

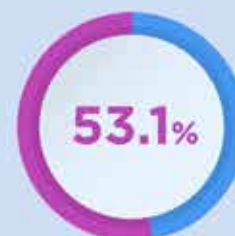
Bachelor's Degrees conferred in the U.S. over time



Bachelor's Degrees
in U.S. in 2020



Master's Degrees
in U.S. in 2020



Doctorates
in U.S. in 2020

Sources:

- National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, *Overview: Spring 2021 Enrollment Estimates*
- *AEI.org*, "Women earned the majority of doctoral degrees for the 12th straight year and outnumber men in grad school 148 to 100," October 14, 2021
- *Statista.com*, "Number of doctoral degrees earned in the United States from 1949/50 to 2029/30, by gender"

need guidance and focus. The *Wall Street Journal* reports, "Social science researchers cite distractions and obstacles to education that weigh more on boys and young men, including videogames, pornography, increased fatherlessness and cases of overdiagnosis of boyhood restlessness and related medication." As civil engineering student Luke Weiss puts it, "I see a lot of guys that are here for four years to drink beer, smoke weed, hang out and get a degree."

What we see is a world turned upside down. Instead of men becoming leaders, we see many floating aimlessly as more and more leadership positions go to women. Some women no doubt rejoice in this turn-

immediate prophecy was for the "house of Judah" in the eighth century BC, but Isaiah's prophecies were dual. They also apply to the end of the age, as we see when Isaiah 2:2-4 defines the prophecy as being for "the latter days." Isaiah's prophecies also applied to Judah's brothers in the "house of Jacob" (vv. 5-6), also known as the "house of Israel," as Jacob's name was changed to Israel (Genesis 32:28). The ten-tribe house of Israel and the house of Judah were two separate nations who even fought wars against each other. To learn more about this amazing truth, request our free booklet *The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy*, or read it online at TomorrowsWorld.org.

IT IS OBVIOUS THAT MEN AND WOMEN ARE DIFFERENT PHYSICALLY AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY, BUT THESE DIFFERENCES ARE OFTEN MINIMIZED

around, but thoughtful women like college enrollment consultant Jennifer Delahunty understand that this state of affairs is not good for society as a whole. *The Wall Street Journal* shared this profound insight from Delahunty: "The stakes are too high to ignore, she said. 'If you care about our society, one, and, two, if you care about women, you have to care about the boys, too. If you have equally educated numbers of men and women that just makes a better society, and it makes it better for women.'"

The Root Cause

None of this should surprise us as the world turns further away from its Creator and His instruction book for mankind. After all, if we are indeed a product of creation and design, the Creator and Designer must know what is best for those whom He created and designed. And, indeed, He does!

The prophet Isaiah gave us God's warning that a reversal of traditional gender roles would take place at the end of this age: "As for My people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O My people! Those who lead you cause you to err, and destroy the way of your paths" (Isaiah 3:12). The

Professor Goldman's prediction that "the American elite will be female" is correct—and Isaiah "scooped him" by more than 2,700 years! Of course, it was not Isaiah, but our Creator who inspired him, who understood this in advance. In a later passage, Isaiah quotes God as saying, "Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end

from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure'" (Isaiah 46:9-10).

God Knows Best

Male and female relations have never been in perfect balance. Far from it. Even today, women are horribly abused in some countries around the world. In some cultures, girls are not allowed to go to school and wives may be beaten mercilessly without any consequences dealt to their husbands. Yet in the Western world, a different extreme has been promoted and embraced, in which men are treated as bumbling fools incapable of fulfilling the leadership role that they were given by their Creator.

Radical feminists, many of whom are man-hating lesbians—perhaps due to abuse or other traumas in their own lives—deny the God-given roles of men and women. And too many men are not being trained to be the loving providers and protective leaders that they were created to be. The Bible lays out these simple facts: "For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man.... Nevertheless, neither is man



independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God” (1 Corinthians 11:8–12).

To anyone with an unbiased mind, it is obvious that men and women are different physically and psychologically, but these differences are often minimized. Today’s media often shows us the woman coming to the rescue of the man. Need a tire changed? Woman to the rescue. Have a problem in business? Woman is there. Being attacked by city thugs? There she is again—a marvel at martial arts who is stronger and quicker than any man. But is this reality? I think we know the answer.

Men and women were made to complement one another, not compete against one another. Men are physically designed to be protectors and providers. It is not that a woman cannot provide—in fact, she may need to in particular situations, such as when her husband suffers sickness or injury. It may be necessary to reverse roles temporarily—or even permanently—and there is no stigma to this. A man can still be the effective head of his household in such situations, but when men *do not prepare* for their proper place of being the breadwinner and leave it up to the wife to go out into the workforce, problems readily arise. A woman especially needs to be loved and a man especially needs to be respected—and these needs are more likely to go unmet when the roles are reversed or blurred.

God instructs wives to “submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord,” instead of fighting over the po-

sition of leadership in the family. “For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her” (Ephesians 5:22–25).

Why Male and Female

Radical feminists have long scorned such passages as “sexist”—not understanding that God’s plan values both men and women to a degree far greater than they could ever imagine. Referring to the marriage covenant, Paul went on to say, “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband” (Ephesians 5:31–33).

The unity of male and female in marriage is essential to a well-ordered society. History shows that as the family goes, so goes the nation. Marriage between one biological male and one biological female can bring children into a balanced, nurturing, and loving environment where both male and female contribute unique qualities. Family is a perfect training ground for learning good manners, care for others, self-discipline, and self-sacrifice. We know that families may not perfectly live up to this ideal, but this does not change the fact that marriage as God intended is the best way to perpetuate the human race.

But is simply perpetuating the human race the purpose for life? Not at all. The Bible reveals that God is building His *own* family into which human beings may be born. The Apostle Paul quoted King David’s question: “What is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You take care of him?” (Hebrews 2:6). In other words, what *is* the purpose of life? Why are we here? Are we merely evolved animals with no purpose and no hope beyond our short span of life on this remote planet?

Paul continues, quoting from Psalm 8: “You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, and set him over

“AND WOMEN RULE OVER THEM” CONTINUES ON PAGE 25

h Canada!

Pandemic Baby Bust



As much of the world shut down in favour of “14 days to flatten the curve,” many predicted that nine months later our hospitals would reach capacity in the most positive of ways—because of a lockdown-engendered baby boom. The logic went that more time stuck inside with significant others would result in a much-needed spike in children born. But now the numbers are in and, sadly, the predicted baby boom has been a complete and devastating bust.

Much of the developed world has been teetering on the precipice of demographic disaster for decades, as birth rates have dropped to shockingly low levels. Replacement-level population growth is often cited as 2.1 children per woman—that is the average number of children that need to be born to each woman in order for a nation’s population to be maintained. Anything below that amount and the population will decrease unless offset by increased immigration. A nation cannot hide from demographics; the effects can be limited for a time, but ultimately the numbers will have consequences and need to be addressed.

As of 2019, Canada was more than half-a-child short at 1.47 children per woman. A baby boom is exactly what the demographer ordered. Perhaps a baby boom would provide a silver lining to the countless challenges of the pandemic and stem the tide of our demographic demise. The problem cannot be solved by a one-year turnaround and a short spike in births, but a pandemic-related baby boom could have provided a bump in the right direction. Sadly, the opposite of what many predicted became the reality, and the baby boom was a staggering baby *bust*.

A Quietly Advancing Crisis

In 2006, Mark Steyn sounded the alarm in an article featured in *Maclean’s*:

The salient feature of Europe, Canada, Japan and Russia that is that they’re running out of babies. What’s happening in the developed world is one of the fastest demographic evolutions in history.... Demographic decline and the unsustainability of the social democratic state are closely related (“The future belongs to Islam,” *Maclean’s*, October 20, 2006).

The problem has not developed overnight, but rather has been growing for decades.

Despite some fluctuations, the total fertility rate in Canada has been below the replacement level for over 40 years. In fact, 1971 was the last year the replacement-level fertility of 2.1 children per woman was reached—meaning that couples, on average, had produced enough children to replace themselves (“Fertility: Fewer children, older moms,” *Statistics Canada*, May 17, 2018).

This problem is greatly amplified by the tremendous debt nations are accumulating to combat the effects of the current pandemic. A nation’s debt is often described as a burden shifted to future generations. This ramification of increased debt is only magnified when an increasing percentage of the population retires and is not replaced with adequate numbers of youth entering the workforce—the amount of debt for every worker increases dramatically.

Cradles Staying Empty?

Canada's population growth did not increase at all during the pandemic—in fact, it decreased significantly, dropping to its lowest level since 1946. According to the CBC, rather than taking this opportunity to start or grow their family, many Canadians chose to adopt a puppy. Loyal and cute as puppies may be, they will not change Canada's soon-coming labour shortage.

Why hasn't increased alone time brought a baby boom? Finances are a major factor for many households, along with the uncertainty of our times. The *National Post* reported an interesting change in behavior observed during the pandemic:

The ovulation- and pregnancy-test company Stix found in a limited survey that 56 per cent of customers who purchased tests during the months of March and April 2020 were trying *not* to get pregnant, compared to pre-COVID times, when the majority were trying to start or extend their family ("The baby bust is here: Birth rates are falling despite our close quarters," *National Post*, March 8, 2021).

The United States was one of the few Western nations to maintain a positive growth rate in recent decades, but the pandemic is also depressing the birth rate there. The Brookings Institution reports that the U.S. could see 300,000 to 500,000 fewer births in 2021 than in 2020.

This demographic time bomb is not exclusive to the West. China, the most populous nation on earth, is discovering the dangers of declining birth rates.

Analysts estimate the country's labor force will lose 35 million workers over the next five years and that during that same period, the number

of citizens eligible for retirement will surge to more than 300 million. That's almost the entire population of the United States ("China to Raise Retirement Age to Offset Funding Shortfall," *VOA News*, March 17, 2021).

In 2016, China ended its decades-long one-child policy in favour of a two-child limit. However, this change did not lead to a large enough surge in births, so earlier this year the limit was upped to three children.

Nations facing a demographic crunch will need to address the issue through policy changes of one form or another. Legal immigration has historically helped to support population growth in Western nations, but has slowed significantly during the pandemic due to travel restrictions—even while illegal immigration has stayed steady or increased. Immigration policy can be an extremely political subject, and declining birth rates will only draw greater focus to an already complex and divisive topic. There is no doubt that demographic change will be a driving force behind policy decisions on immigration, spending, and taxation in the coming years.

Fading Away—Is There Hope?

The prophet Hosea was inspired to give a fitting description of what we are seeing unfold in many Western nations. The biblical patriarch Jacob had twelve sons, and one of those sons, Joseph, was given a greater blessing, which would be passed down through his own sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. *Tomorrow's World* has long identified the modern-day Manasseh as the United States, and Ephraim as the British peoples, including England, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. It is directly to these end-time descendants of Ephraim that Hosea wrote, "Aliens have devoured his strength, but he does not know it; yes, gray hairs are here and there on him, yet he does not know it" (Hosea 7:9).

Canada and other nations are facing tremendous demographic challenges, yet acting as though there are no such problems on the horizon. These problems cannot be ignored, and will shape governments' policies and actions as their effects become more evident. For further analysis of the problem of population decline, watch Stuart Wachowicz's *Tomorrow's World* telecast "Fewer Babies: Population in Decline," freely available at TWCANADA.org.

—Michael Heykoop



A photograph of two hikers on a rocky cliff. One hiker in a blue shirt is on the cliff edge, reaching out to help another hiker in a red shirt who is hanging off the edge. The background shows a cloudy sky.

Failure: Springboard to Success!

By **Rod McNair**

Running down the basketball court, I felt my feet getting tangled and I began to fall. The concrete, littered with loose bits of gravel and dirt, seemed to rise to meet me. For a moment, time seemed to slow while other players careened past.

I braced for the inevitable crash landing—and then, in a flash, I remembered the coach’s cautionary words for such a moment: “Tuck and roll!” He had instructed us to not try to break a fall, but just “tuck” the elbow and shoulder and roll through it.

I followed the coach’s advice, rolled through the fall, and was surprised by how quickly I was right-side up and back on my feet. I had saved myself from an ugly concrete burn and avoided nasty gravel cuts on my arms and elbows. I may have prevented a broken wrist. It was a powerful lesson; there is a “right” way to fall and a “wrong” way. The right way saves one from unnecessary cuts, bruises, and even serious injury.

“Failure,” according to *Merriam-Webster.com*, springs from an original French root meaning “to fall.” It refers to an omission of occurrence or performance, a lack of success, or a falling short. From time to time, we all fail; everyone living a human life faces setbacks and disappointments. Those who have not can be certain that they *will* fail—or fall—in something eventually!

But how do we react when failure comes? Do we become discouraged, or do we pick ourselves up and try again? As we find ourselves stumbling time after time, it

can be all too easy to let life’s setbacks crush our spirit. But, thankfully, your Bible reveals how Christians can instead use failure as a springboard to success!

Learn from Mistakes

Anyone who attempts anything will make mistakes. This is part of the learning process. The famous American basketball player Michael Jordan is reported to have said, “I’ve missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I’ve lost almost 300 games. 26 times I’ve been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed” (*Nike Culture: The Sign of the Swoosh*, 1998, p. 49).

Political and military leaders also have recognized the importance of dealing with failure with a positive attitude. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill once said, “Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm.” And United States General George S. Patton was known to have said that success isn’t measured by what you do at the top; it’s “how high you bounce when you hit bottom!”

God wants us to have the same attitude. He does not always exempt us from the consequences of our mistakes—but He *does* teach us to deal with problems positively. How can we make sure trials do not destroy us? How can we make failure a springboard to success?

Choose Wisely

Every time we fall down and make a mistake, we must make a decision. We are forced to choose how we will

react. Whether setbacks are small or large, insignificant or life-changing, we have a choice; which path do we take?

In the bitter hours after he denied Christ, the Apostle Peter did some hard thinking. It became a critical juncture in his life. As he came face to face with his own human weakness, he was horrified to discover how vulnerable and fearful he could be. This strong dose of reality shook him to his very foundation. But Peter made the right choice, and we read of it today in the Bible. Generations have been inspired by reading how Peter rebounded from an unspeakable setback to be a powerful tool in the Church of God. In the words of the Apostle Paul, he sorrowed “in a godly manner.... For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death” (2 Corinthians 7:9–10).

Peter’s choice led him to deep repentance, powerful zeal, and a strong desire to overcome his human frailties (v. 11). It enabled God to use him as a dynamic leader in the fledgling Church, changing his life forever. As we face trials and difficulties in life, what can we learn from Peter’s example? How can we learn to bounce back better?

Problems are Normal and Manageable

Before His death, Jesus Christ gave some powerful and encouraging instructions that would inspire the Apostles throughout their whole lives. Having foretold that they would all desert Him, He also said, “You will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation” (John 16:32–33).

The Bible shows that troubles are part of life—even for those striving to obey God. Some, admittedly, we bring on ourselves. Some are caused by our own weakness or pride, or even our own stupidity—but, sometimes, difficulties involve circumstances beyond our control. We will *always* have problems in this life.

The same Peter who denied Christ also wrote, years later, “Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings,

that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy” (1 Peter 4:12–13). Yet how many times do we grow flustered because bad things happen? How often do we think, *This isn’t supposed to happen to me?*

Jesus told us not to be despondent when we face setbacks. “These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble.... Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (John 16:1, 33). Admitting that we have problems does not take them away—but it does help us deal with them instead of denying them or running away from them. If we do not face our problems squarely and courageously, they can spawn new, unrelated problems. Frustration erodes our faith. Running from our problems does not make them go away, but admitting them and confessing our mistakes (1 John 1:9) is the first step to successful bouncing back.

During His final conversation with His disciples, Jesus explained why Christians suffer problems at all: “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine-dresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit” (John 15:1–2). God is in the process of helping His people *grow*, and growth sometimes means cutting away damaged or unproductive branches in our life. That is why we sometimes suffer pain and difficulties.

But do not confuse “pruning” with rejection. Anyone who grows fruit trees knows the joy of planting and working with them year after year. It is exciting to see them healthy and strong, yielding good fruit. Do not assume, just because God allows you to suffer emotional, mental, or physical pain, that He has deserted you! In reality, God will not reject *anyone* who is truly conquered by and surrendered to Him. He allows us to suffer as a part of our growth process and He promises us the help we need.

We Have Help

On the last night of His human life, Jesus Christ encouraged His disciples by telling them they would never be alone; even after leaving them, He would send His Spirit to guide and help them. He said, “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever” (John 14:16, *New International Version*).

The Holy Spirit, the very power of God, would be the vehicle through which God and Christ would live in the disciples. Jesus went on to describe “the Spirit of truth, which the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows it. But you know it, because it remains with you, and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you” (John 14:17–18, *New American Bible, Revised Edition*).

The Holy Spirit would come, and through it Christ would literally live His life in His true followers (Galatians 2:20). Jesus promised that His Holy Spirit would be sent—as it was on the Day of Pentecost—to be His presence in them. He promised that this Spirit would “teach [them] all things” and “bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you” (John 14:26). The disciples would be able to remember, with understanding, everything Jesus had taught them during His ministry. The Holy Spirit would guide them “into all truth” (John 16:13).

If we are really seeking and crying out to God for His understanding, He will give it to us as well. Notice what Christ also said, earlier in His ministry: “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” (Luke 11:13).

Peter remembered the promise of the Spirit, and that encouraged him during the worst days of his life. When the Holy Spirit was sent, God used Peter powerfully as a leader among the disciples on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). When we stumble and have problems, we need to remember that God *can* help us. If we cry out to our Father in humble obedience to Him, willing to forsake our own will for His, He will guide us. And if we are truly repentant and obedient, He will put His Spirit in us (Acts 2:38; 5:32).

Focus on Your Future

When we drop the ball, make mistakes, or suffer from problems, does God want us to hang our heads and feel like failures? Does He want us to slink away in self-pity? No—He wants us to focus on the future. He desires that we recognize the great potential He gives to those who are willing to submit to His will and Spirit.

What is that potential? Shortly before His death, Jesus told His disciples of His coming Kingdom. In


doing so, He was not referring to something abstract “in our hearts,” nor was He describing an organization of carnal human beings vying for worldly power. Rather, He was foretelling the establishment of a *literal* kingdom on earth.

He went on to say, “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you” (John 14:1–2).

Some mistakenly believe that Christ’s reference to “mansions” has something to do with going to Heaven. In fact, Jesus was describing that each would have a place within the “household” or Kingdom of God when He returns. Those “dwelling places,” then, seem to be referring to the saints fulfilling positions of responsibility in His government (Luke 19:17).

This is what was on Jesus’ mind during the last night before His crucifixion. Think about it—in practically the same breath with which He told Peter that he would deny Him, He turned around to tell the disciples of their inspiring destiny, speaking about the *positive* future. He was not just focusing on the suffering He would endure, or on the discouragement they would feel upon His leaving. Instead, He focused on the encouraging vision of what was coming. He fixed their eyes on His Kingdom—and the part He wanted them to play when it would be set up on planet Earth.

Jesus told His disciples, “You did not choose Me, but I chose you” (John 15:16). He extended that calling to those yet unborn, whom the Father would call through the Apostles’ testimony (John 17:20). A calling from God into His truth and His Church is truly an awesome opportunity. God has big plans for us, and they will come to fruition if we are willing to submit to His rule in our lives—if we come to understand the purpose for problems and grow through God’s own correction and pruning, asking Him to empower us through His Holy Spirit.

We will make mistakes. We will stumble and suffer in life. We will have problems for as long as we are in the flesh. But God tells us to face our trials and difficulties positively. In the end, it is not the setbacks that He is most concerned about; it is how well we bounce back! 

Is Christmas Christian?

You might think it is a no-brainer that Christmas is one of the most important Christian holidays! But what if you are wrong?

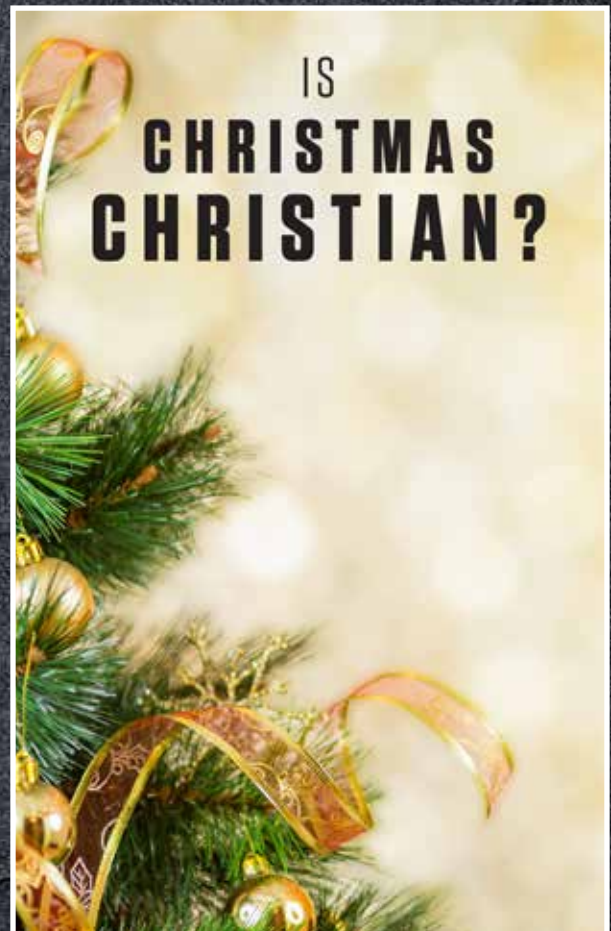
Do a quick Internet search on “the origins of Christmas” and you’ll see that the holiday’s pagan roots are not exactly some obscure secret. You don’t need to consult a dusty encyclopedia or search through the writings of theologians—common sources like *Britannica.com*, *The History Channel*, and *Wikipedia*—along with numerous news articles—clearly show that Jesus Christ was not born on or even around December 25. Nor is Christmastime even essentially religious; Christians, agnostics, and “nones” alike join in the fun of one of the most popular and expensive civil holidays on the calendar. It may be “the most wonderful time of the year” for partygoers, vacationers, and the retail industry, but is Christmas truly a *holy* day, ordained by God for some special, higher purpose? And if not, should you really be keeping Christmas?

Holy Time Should be Holy

“Putting Christ back in Christmas” makes little sense if He was never there to begin with. Partying, spending, hype—what if they’re all more in the spirit of the season than Jesus ever was? In fact, the idolatrous festivals and customs of midwinter are popular *because* it was a time of unrestrained celebration and hedonism.

Is any of this what God truly wants? Can pagan customs and traditions truly be “Christianized”? You may be surprised to learn that the true holidays put forth in the Bible reveal God’s glorious purpose for humankind. They occur *throughout the year*, and neither Christmas nor any other pagan celebrations are among them. They even hold the pure, unaltered truth about what Jesus Christ came to do—and will do—for humanity, and who His true followers are.

Tomorrow’s World strives to help you learn not only the truth *about* false customs like Christmas, but *why* God desires to be worshiped according to *His* laws—and the real joy you can experience from following His instructions! Order the free study guide *Is Christmas Christian?* to find out more. You can order it at TomorrowsWorld.org or contact any of the Regional Offices listed on page 4 of this magazine.



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Many have asked the
question, but few are
sincerely interested
in the answer...



Is Christmas a Pagan Holiday?

By Wallace G. Smith

Hundreds of millions around the world consider Christmas among the most sacred days—a time when they call to mind the birth of Jesus Christ, the promised Savior of the world. Many attend religious services in December where they hear and remember popular narratives of the birth of Jesus, which they celebrate on Christmas Day.

Indeed, many of us have pleasant memories associated with the Christmas season. Our cities and even individual homes are often decorated with reminders of the holiday—such as nativity scenes, Christmas trees decorated with tinsel of silver and gold, and branches or wreaths of holly—all while homes burn their Yule logs, keeping everyone warm against the cold weather outside, at least in the Northern Hemisphere.

Many will have bought or made presents for their friends and family members, who will sometimes travel long distances just to reunite for a few evenings, enjoy Christmas dinner together, and exchange gifts and pleasantries. Many will sneak a kiss from someone standing under a sprig of mistletoe. Some children will be told the night before that their presents are being brought to them from the North Pole by Santa Claus or “St. Nick,” as the adults wink at each other. In the morning,

children will enjoy unwrapping their presents to see what “Santa” brought them, and some families will head to religious services to hear a message related to Jesus’ birth.

And it is also a *stressful* time of year for many. Family gatherings may become a source of stress, not joy. Buying gifts can seem a burdensome chore or obligation—especially when the credit card bill reveals the damage of our attempts at merry-making. Many lament the commercialism that has come to dominate so much of the Christmas season, feeling it is crowding out what they believe is the “real” meaning of Christmas—that God sent His Son to be the Savior of mankind. Despite this, most who call themselves “Christian” take comfort in the many positive feelings and memories they associate with Christmas.

In the end, too many are unwilling to face the truth and explore whether Christmas is *un-Christian*. Is it actually a pagan holiday? We know that many religions have their happy occasions, full of family, music, song, and tradition. So, will we have the courage to look honestly at our own cherished season? Jesus taught us to “seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness” (Matthew 6:33). That’s true even when our search brings us to difficult conclusions—after all, Christianity is not for cowards.

Truth Matters

If we seek truth with an open mind, we must acknowledge that even our warmest memories don't turn untruth into truth. And truth is important.

John 4 relates a famous account of Jesus' discussion with a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. She spoke to Him of the Samaritans' traditions concerning worshipping the God of the Bible—traditions that differed from the commands God gave in the Bible concerning how He wanted to be worshiped. Their acts of sincere devotion were based on falsehoods and half-truths. What did Jesus say to this? Did He say, "Well, that's okay—as long as you are sincere, your worship is equally acceptable before God"?

No, He didn't. Rather, Jesus emphasized the need for worship to be grounded in the truth, not just our intent, telling her that "the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit *and truth*; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit *and truth*" (John 4:23–24).

We must desire not only to worship God sincerely—not only with good intentions—but also to worship Him in truth. Because truth *matters*.

Paganism Past

So, with fresh and honest eyes, let's ask: Is Christmas a pagan holiday?

If we answer this question based on the origins of the day, the answer is very clearly "Yes," because the origins of Christmas as a holiday—its timing, its traditions, and its ancient practices—are unmistakably pagan.

Let's take a moment to consider: What does it *mean* to be pagan? After all, people today use that word rather carelessly. In fact, there is a growing movement of "neo-paganism," which Dr. Douglas S. Winnail discussed in detail in his *Tomorrow's World* magazine article "The Rise of Modern Paganism" (November–December 2019); you can read it online at TomorrowsWorld.org.

As *Merriam-Webster.com* defines it, "pagan" in our context means "of, relating to, or having the characteristics of pagans"—which, we are told, are "follower[s] of a polytheistic religion (as in ancient Rome)." Essentially, paganism represents those religions and cultic practices whose origins are outside of the three religions traditionally associated with

the patriarch Abraham, which are Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.

By that definition of "pagan," there can be no doubt that Christmas and most of its traditions bear thoroughly pagan origins. Decorating a Christmas tree, hanging holly, singing carols, strategically placing a sprig of mistletoe—even gathering together for the purpose of exchanging gifts—all of these practices originated in pagan customs and worship traditions, many of which predate Christianity by centuries or millennia.

For instance, mistletoe is associated with Roman fertility rituals and Frigga, the Norse goddess of love and lust. The timing of Christmas corresponds not to the actual timing of Jesus' birth—which was likely in the fall, not in the winter, as our free study guide *Is Christmas Christian?* explains in detail—but to the observance of the pagan Roman Saturnalia and sun worship. *Britannica* notes the following:

In the 3rd century, the Roman Empire, which at the time had not adopted Christianity, celebrated the rebirth of the Unconquered Sun (Sol Invictus) on December 25th. This holiday not only marked the return of longer days after the winter solstice but also followed the popular Roman festival called the Saturnalia (during which people feasted and exchanged gifts). It was also the birthday of the Indo-European deity Mithra, a god of light and loyalty whose cult was at the time growing popular among Roman soldiers ("Why Is Christmas in December?," *Britannica.com*).

As for the popular Christmas tree, this, too, is a tradition of extra-biblical origin—and one with an ancient pagan precedent. In fact, we can see that precedent condemned in Scripture—look at this passage from Jeremiah with this favorite Christmas tradition in mind:

Thus says the LORD: "Do not learn the way of the Gentiles; do not be dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the Gentiles are dismayed at them. For the customs of the peoples are futile; for one cuts a tree from the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the ax. They decorate it with silver and gold; they fasten it with nails and hammers so that it will not topple.

They are upright, like a palm tree, and they cannot speak; they must be carried, because they cannot go by themselves. Do not be afraid of them, for they cannot do evil, nor can they do any good (Jeremiah 10:2–5).

Our commentary on page 21 explains many more details about this popular tradition. But whether fashioning an image of Baal for pagan worship or decorating a “Christmas tree” on the pretext of honoring God, the principle is the same. The list of connections between these ancient, pagan practices and various Christmas traditions is long and clear. In fact, the pa-

Still, some may wonder, is it *really*? Many assume that while various activities, celebrations, traditions, and symbols *originated* in paganism, they have, in a sense, been “baptized” by Christianity. While the holly branch and its red berries once held pagan meaning—a meaning too vulgar to describe in a family magazine—can we now use them to symbolize Christ’s crown of thorns and the red blood He shed for our sins? Can we conclude that Christmas *was* a pagan holiday, but is no longer?

People can certainly be baptized and have their lives transformed. Can pagan worship practices undergo the same conversion? After all, those who keep

Christmas don’t believe they are worshipping the sun god, or Saturn, or Mithras, or Baal, or Frigga. Most are trying sincerely to worship the God of the Bible—specifically, the Jesus Christ of the Bible. They might ask, *Aren’t Christians free to worship God and Jesus however we want to? Do the pagan origins of Christmas really matter?*

Sentiment aside, the answer is simple: If we desire to worship in a manner that is pleasing to God the Father and Jesus Christ—not just pleasing to us—then, yes, the pagan origins of Christmas matter *very much*.

Again, it is not a matter of opinion, happy memories, or personal feelings, but a matter of truth. And if we want to know the truth about how God the Father and Jesus Christ consider these things, we must go to the Bible, where they have revealed for us *exactly* what they think. In fact, They gave us that Bible to help *us* learn to think like Them.

When we do go to the Scriptures, they reveal the truth of this matter in a way that is absolutely clear.

For instance, speaking of pagan peoples and pagan traditions and customs, God commanded the Israelites *very clearly* that they must “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” (Deuteronomy 12:30–31).

Crucially, we see that the Bible does not just forbid worship of idols or foreign gods. God makes it plain that He does not want His followers to worship *Him* in pagan ways. It doesn’t make a difference if we say we’re not worshipping Mithras, or Saturn, or the sun. God says plainly that we are *not* to worship Him “in that way”—using *pagan* traditions.

MISTLETOE IS ASSOCIATED WITH ROMAN FERTILITY RITUALS AND FRIGGA, THE NORSE GODDESS OF LOVE AND LUST

gan origins of nearly *all* of the most common and honored Christmas traditions are acknowledged as facts of history. Even most mainstream Christians don’t dispute the pagan origins of Christmas’ practices and timing. You don’t need to take our word for that—any encyclopedia or reputable historical resource will confirm it as fact.

For instance, in his famous 1788 work *A Classical Dictionary*, scholar John Lemprière summarized some of the ancient, pre-Christian practices of the pagan holiday called Saturnalia: “The celebration was remarkable for the liberty which universally prevailed. The slaves were permitted to ridicule their masters.... It was usual for friends to make presents one to another, all animosity ceased, no criminals were executed, schools were shut, war was never declared, but all was mirth, riot, and debauchery” (“Saturnalia”).

Does any of that sound familiar? If we are honest with ourselves, surely we will agree that it does—perhaps uncomfortably so.

Paganism Present

Clearly, Christmas and its traditions and customs are not simply related to pagan practices—they are *deeply rooted* in pagan origins. In that sense, Christmas is indeed a pagan holiday.

You may have noticed a very similar command in Jeremiah 10, in which God says clearly, “Do *not* learn the way of the Gentiles” (v. 2). By “Gentiles,” God simply refers to peoples outside the nation of Israel. The biblical commands of God simply leave no room at all to conclude that He accepts worship using other peoples’ customs—even if it is directed at Him.

What Did Jesus Say?

Still, that’s the *Old* Testament, and some might argue that Jesus came to change all of that. Yet, once again, if we go to His *actual* teachings—recorded for all time in my Bible and in yours—we find that this is not how He thinks about these things at all.

In fact, Jesus addressed this very point in front of His disciples and the Jewish leaders of His day. The first-century Pharisees believed their traditions were rooted in Scripture, and that these traditions served God. Yet Jesus told them that their supposedly pious traditions actually violated God’s commands and were to be condemned:

He answered and said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’ For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men—the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.” He said to them, “All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition” (Mark 7:6–9).

To hold on to the tradition of observing Christmas—the tree, the gifts, even the date itself—one must reject the commandment of God, who says plainly that He does *not* want to be worshiped using heathen customs. Keeping Christmas *requires* us to lay aside God’s desires and explicit commands—and Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the very founder of Christianity, condemns this in no uncertain terms.

The Bible says that God does not want to be worshiped using pagan traditions, and Jesus calls us hypocrites if we set aside God’s commands in order to worship Him in our own ways. The idea of being labeled a hypocrite by Jesus Christ, the Son of God, should send chills down the spines of any who call themselves Christians. Nearly 2,000 years ago, Jesus condemned those who would dare to call Him “Lord” while ignoring His commands, challenging them by asking, “Why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46).

The evidence is clear: Christmas is a pagan holiday, God does not want to be worshiped using pagan traditions, and Jesus Christ condemns as hypocrites those who ignore God’s commands in order to keep traditions of any kind.

A Better, More Meaningful Way

So, where does that leave us? Are you one of the few whose hearts are willing to follow God wherever He and His word lead them? If so, you know that following His lead and obeying His commands *never* leads to a worse place—only to a better one.

In fact, *many thousands* of individuals all around the world have left Christmas behind and have instead embraced the Holy Days the Bible clearly reveals as designed and inspired by God for all of His people to observe. These are recorded in His word as days set apart by Him for worship, praise, and instruction. Those who attend Sabbath and Holy Day services with the Living Church of God, which sponsors the *Tomorrow’s World* magazine, would never—not for all the money or comfort in the world—give up the observance of those days in exchange for the false traditions of pagan, man-made Christmas.

Giving up Christmas does not mean letting go of joy, meaning, warmth, and fellowship. Quite the opposite—when we turn away from deceptively attractive traditions and customs that fundamentally contradict the Bible to follow the *real* Jesus Christ, we can experience the great joy, deep meaning, and Christian fellowship of those who worship as He said to the woman at the well almost 2,000 years ago—not only in spirit, but in spirit *and in truth*. ^[TW]

**MAY WE
SUGGEST?**

The Holy Days: God’s Master Plan Cast aside pagan imposters and embrace the days your Bible reveals! Request this **free** printed booklet from the Regional Office nearest you, or order at **TomorrowsWorld.org**. PDF, ePub, and Kindle are also available.



GREEN TREES AND JESUS

Which god does Christmas really honor?

Looking back over the years, it is increasingly evident that the gap between what the Bible says to do and what its alleged followers *actually* do has reached near-absurd proportions.

As an example, God carefully instructed His people not to seek after the ways of the pagan people previously residing in the Promised Land, especially in the matter of worshiping their gods. He was pointedly explicit about not adapting their perverse ways to the worship of Him.

Notice His commands: “You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations which you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree.... You shall not worship the LORD your God with such things” (Deuteronomy 12:2–4).

They were instructed to get rid of pagan places of worship upon mountains, upon hills, and “under every green tree.” Interestingly, the Bible uses this term in ten places—and each instance is in reference to pagan rites, rituals, and perverted acts of pagan worship that the Israelites were practicing (cf. 1 Kings 14:23; 2 Kings 16:4; 17:10; 2 Chronicles 28:4; Isaiah 57:5; Jeremiah 2:20; 3:6, 13; Ezekiel 6:13).

The False “God” of Christmas

What’s the big deal about pagan customs in today’s modern, enlightened world? Does God really mind that the professing Christian church has sanitized pagan worship? After all, they are doing it to honor Jesus, aren’t they?

The historical record is revealing. Here is just one of hundreds of documented pagan practices:

Attis [is said to have mutilated] himself under a pine-tree, and bled to death on the spot.... After his death Attis is said to have been changed into a pine-tree.... [In worship practices] a pine-tree was cut in the woods and brought into the sanctuary of Cybele, where it was treated as a great divinity.... Stirred by the wild barbaric music... they gashed their bodies with potsherds or slashed them with knives in order to bespatter

the altar and the sacred tree with their flowing blood (Sir James George Frazer, “The Myth and Ritual of Attis,” *The Golden Bough*, 1922).

Attis’ bloody act under an evergreen tree, along with—as the historical record points out—subsequent reenactments by Attis worshipers, has provided paganism with its seasonal red and green motifs.

It is obvious that “green trees” and the religious

What’s the big deal about pagan customs in today’s modern, enlightened world? Does God really mind that the professing Christian church has sanitized pagan worship?

rituals that took place under them are of great concern to God. No association between the Christmas tree with its wretchedly rich pagan roots (pun intended) and Jesus Christ is found in the Bible. In fact, no aspect of Christmas, with its traditions of mistletoe, holly, wreaths, pine boughs (all green with blood-red accents), gift exchanging, wassailing, and celebrating December 25 (the time of the winter solstice), is found anywhere in God’s word—except, perhaps, in the reference to pagans serving their gods “under every green tree.”

The Real God of the Bible

What God *did* put in His word is explicit: “When the LORD your God cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess... 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” (Deuteronomy 12:29–32).

God carefully outlined how He wants to be worshiped, but mankind—under the sway of Satan, the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4)—has perverted that worship, stealing the name of Jesus Christ and creating a counterfeit religion. To open your eyes to what is hidden in pagan holiday traditions, request our free booklet *Satan’s Counterfeit Christianity*, or read it online at TomorrowsWorld.org.

—Gary Ehman (1937–2021)



AUKUS: Band of Brothers

By **Timothy Mager**

With mounting Chinese military presence in the Asia-Pacific and the South China Sea, Australia's sense of national security has become increasingly threatened. Lacking the economy or manpower to effectively defend itself unaided while China seeks to dominate the region as a rising superpower, Australia has sought to create and expand alliances beyond the region. One key result of this endeavour was announced on September 16, when United States President Joe Biden announced that a new security partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the U.S. would be formed. It has been dubbed AUKUS ("AUKUS: UK, US and Australia pact signals Asia-Pacific power shift," *BBC*, September 16, 2021). This new alliance will significantly boost Australia's national security as the U.S. and UK contribute key technological infrastructure and intelligence to a nation faced with a rising Chinese threat.

Australia will acquire cruise missiles and insight into quantum technology, and nuclear-powered submarines will be manufactured in Adelaide, South Australia. The Osborne Naval Shipyard will be the primary location for production. This is a significant step for Adelaide, a city that has not played a major role on the world scene historically. The U.S. and UK will provide consultation and quality control guidance to manufacturers in Adelaide as technological knowledge is transferred.

Why is this so important? One key reason is that "nuclear submarines are much more stealthy than

conventional ones—they operate quietly, are able to move easily and are harder to detect. At least eight submarines will be supported, although it's not clear when they will be deployed. The process will take longer due to a lack of nuclear infrastructure in Australia. They will only be powered with nuclear reactors rather than operate as nuclear armed."

Signs of a New World Order?

Backlash from allies and enemies quickly followed the AUKUS deal. France, with whom Australia cancelled a \$90 billion submarine contract of 2016 to make possible the AUKUS accord, is seething at the news. French foreign minister Jean-Yves Le Drian has labelled AUKUS a "stab in the back" and a betrayal of trust by Australia ("Stab in the back': French fury as Australia scraps submarine deal," *The Guardian*, September 16, 2021).

Some see the deal as a U.S. attempt to regain allies' confidence after its controversial withdrawal from Afghanistan. UK leaders insist that it was not meant to challenge France, which remains a valued and close military ally. Yet France interpreted the deal as an attack, and initially responded with diplomatic aggression, recalling its ambassadors to the United States and Australia back to Paris before quickly reinstating them ("Furious Over Sub Deal, France Recalls Ambassadors to U.S. and Australia," *The New York Times*, September 17, 2021).

Australia has hit back at French accusations, saying it would always put its national interest first and expressing grave concerns that older diesel-powered submarine technology would not be sufficient to de-

fend national borders (“Australia had ‘deep and grave’ concerns about French submarines’ capabilities, PM says,” *CNN*, September 19, 2021).

China has called the deal a military threat equal to the Cold War and has warned AUKUS that it would harm its own interests. Although the U.S. and UK have repeatedly stated that this alliance is not a threat to China, some are not so convinced.

The Chinese Communist Party sees this move as an indirect counterattack against its ambition to take a stronger military approach against Taiwan—a small island standing against mainland China, backed by strong American military support. Theresa May, former UK Prime Minister, expressed concern that this deal would drag Britain into an aggressive war defending Taiwan against China. Current UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson is prepared to defend Taiwan if international law is threatened, giving a direct warning to the Chinese government (“Aukus pact: UK and US battle to contain international backlash,” *The Guardian*, September 16, 2021).

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian hinted that the Chinese government may accuse Australia of violating its commitment under the Treaty of Rarotonga, which prohibits the production, possession, or acquisition of nuclear weapons (“China howls at perceived threat of new ‘AUKUS’ agreement,” *Politico*, September 16, 2021).

Responding to such threats, Australia’s Defence Minister told journalists, “This is not the first time that we’ve seen different outbursts from China in terms of Australia’s position. We are a proud democracy in our region. We stand with our neighbours in the Indo-Pacific to ensure enduring peace, and this collaboration makes it a safer region. That’s the reality and no amount of propaganda can dismiss the facts” (*The Guardian*).

AUKUS will make Australia only the seventh nation in the world to possess nuclear-powered submarines, matching a capability already held by China (*BBC*). The submarines can remain submerged for up to five months and are harder to detect than conventional diesel equivalents—also allowing the U.S. and UK to gain a greater presence in the Asia-Pacific region.

To put any perceived threat into perspective, the first nuclear subs would not be constructed in Adelaide until 2040 at the earliest. In the meantime, U.S. and British submarines may be launched from Darwin in

northern Australia to monitor Southeast Asian activity (“The nuclear technology behind Australia’s Aukus submarine deal,” *Financial Times*, September 19, 2021).

Britain is looking to make new alliances after leaving the European Union, and experts insist that the UK and France will be key pillars of a European security order. The U.S. is seeking to maintain a foothold in the European national security system through this alliance. But will these three nations—the UK, the U.S., and Australia—be able to sustain a strong alliance as a group of globe-leading nations?

The Future of Current World Alliances

Tomorrow’s World recognizes the United States and British-descended peoples as having roots in the Israelite tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim. A time is coming when these nations will be unable to retain their strength; they will lose God’s divine protection and be taken captive by a future European superpower that will bring many nations into submission. The prophet Ezekiel was inspired to write, “For thus says the Lord God: ‘Surely I will deliver you into the hand of those you hate, into the hand of those from whom you alienated yourself. They will deal hatefully with you, take away all you have worked for, and leave you naked and bare. The nakedness of your harlotry shall be uncovered, both your lewdness and your harlotry’” (Ezekiel 23:28–29).

AUKUS may look like an alliance to last a lifetime, much like the 1949 formation of NATO (North American Treaty Organisation) and the 1951 establishment of ANZUS (Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty). However, because our modern-day Israelite nations have not repented of their sins, a time is coming that the Bible refers to as “Jacob’s trouble” (Jeremiah 30:7). Heated pushback from France and China may create further geographical tension in the Asia-Pacific and Europe. Though modern Israelite nations have yet to face the most devastating period in their history, God will ultimately save them from complete annihilation.

We need to take careful consideration of Jesus Christ’s admonition to prepare ourselves for the soon-coming Kingdom of God, which will replace all world governments and alliances, no matter how small or great. Christ told His disciples, “Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36). TW

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What lessons can we learn from Cain's grave sin?

Question: What prompted Cain to murder his brother Abel in Genesis 4?

Answer: Although Cain is known as the first murderer because he killed his brother Abel, his dispute was fundamentally with God.

The brothers' parents, Adam and Eve—the first human beings—were evicted from the Garden of Eden after they ate fruit from the forbidden Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, disobeying God's instruction. “Then the LORD God said, ‘Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever’—therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken” (Genesis 3:22–23).

When God banished Cain's parents from Eden, He pronounced a curse: “Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return” (vv. 17–19).

Unlike Adam and Eve, who before their sin had not needed to toil for their sustenance, Cain and Abel from the beginning had to work hard to be productive. Abel labored as a shepherd, while his older brother Cain practiced horticulture, tending crops from the ground (Genesis 4:2).

Murder Begins in the Heart

When God required a sacrifice, Abel brought “the firstborn of his flock and of their fat” (v. 4). By bringing the firstborn of his flock for sacrifice, Abel's sacrifice prefigured Jesus Christ's sacrifice for all humanity. Cain, by contrast, simply brought “an offering of the fruit of the ground” (v. 3).

How did God respond? “And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell” (vv. 4–5). God did not accept Cain's offering. However, God did not reject Cain himself; He told Cain that He would indeed accept a proper offering (v. 7).

God warned Cain to rule over his sinful impulses; yet he remained angry, and in his anger murdered his brother Abel, who had pleased God (v. 8).

God Desires Mercy and Obedience

What lessons should we draw from this? It was Cain's *attitude* that made his offering unacceptable; his real problem was in his heart. God, detecting Cain's rebellious and unrepentant attitude, rejected the offering. After all, God has said plainly, “I desire mercy and not sacrifice” (Hosea 6:6; Matthew 9:13). Cain, with a murderous heart—angry that his righteous brother's offering had been accepted—lacked both the mercy and the obedience God desired.

Cain, with a murderous heart—angry that his righteous brother's offering had been accepted—lacked both the mercy and the obedience God desired.

The Apostle John, warning us against Cain's attitude, wrote that “this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous” (1 John 3:11–12).

By contrast, Abel's righteous deeds remain as a memorial even today: “By faith

Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks” (Hebrews 11:4).

Christians are called to be obedient and righteous like Abel, not rebellious and angry like Cain. They are to *love* God and His ways, and willingly obey Him rather than resent living under His commands. Sadly, there is some of Cain's attitude in every mind that is not yet perfectly surrendered to God—but, thankfully, God has offered His Son as a sacrifice for us. If we accept Christ's sacrifice and repent of our sins, we can please God as Abel did, and with the help of His Holy Spirit we can live the righteous lives God desires of us. TW



the works of Your hands. You have put all things in subjection under his feet” (Hebrews 2:7–8). Then he adds, “For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him” (v. 8). Why such authority and responsibility?

Paul then explains why Jesus came and the outcome He intended to bring to pass:

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, *in bringing many sons to glory*, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed *to call them brethren* (vv. 9–11).

Nowhere is this truth clearer than in Romans 8:14–17:


For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption [sonship]. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with

Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him (*New Revised Standard Version*).

Read that slowly and consider its full meaning!

The distinctions between male and female are no accident. God created us with a great purpose in mind. Human marriage pictures the marriage between Jesus and His Church, with His saints collectively becoming the “bride of Christ” as a helper to their Husband. “This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church” (Ephesians 5:32; cf. Revelation 19:6–9). Those who hope to be resurrected into God’s very Family as sons and daughters (2 Corinthians 6:16–18) need to understand God’s purpose for male and female in this life.

Men and women are to build each other up, not tear each other down. Each has a role to play in God’s great purpose for humanity. But there is a spirit being who is doing everything he can to disrupt and turn upside down the family structure God designed (Ephesians 2:2; 2 Corinthians 4:3–4). When boys are left without proper guidance and direction, too many become confused about their expected role in life—the role of a loving leader. This does not only hurt men; it also hurts women. In fact, it hurts the whole of society.

To learn more about this subject, contact your nearest Regional Office (listed on page 4 of this magazine), or go to our website at TomorrowsWorld.org and read or request our free booklets *What Is the Meaning of Life?* and *God’s Plan for Happy Marriage*. 

MAY WE
SUGGEST?

What Is the Meaning of Life? All men and women were created to fulfill the same divine purpose! Request this **free** printed booklet from the Regional Office nearest you, or order at TomorrowsWorld.org. PDF, ePub, and Kindle are also available.





Algorithms of Addiction

Are your children addicted to their phones? Do screens keep them away from worthwhile pursuits? Or, if they are still too young for technology, do you worry about how they will handle these devices as they grow up? Our oldest child is almost a teenager, and my wife and I have—so far—tried to limit our children's access to phones, iPads, computers, and television. Yet we know that, sooner or later, our children will need to master the technology that will be at their fingertips—indeed, technology that might very well be required for school-work or their future careers!

Why do they need to “master” technology rather than simply “use” it? You might not be aware that very intelligent people have put together algorithms that are primarily designed to do one specific task: drive up user engagement (“Social-Media Algorithms Rule How We See the World. Good Luck Trying to Stop Them,” *WSJ.com*, January 17, 2017). Social media pioneered it, but now this data mining of individuals through their interactions with various devices is commonplace. It happens every time we access the Internet—and our interactions with the Internet have also become increasingly common. It's not just our computers and smartphones anymore; even our televisions and radios are now frequently intertwined with the Web.

Always Watching

Every time we use the Internet, algorithms keep track of what we look at, how long we look at it, and whether that interaction can be monetized. How best do you monetize people's time on the Internet? A simple answer is to increase the amount of time they spend

on it; engagement is the key, and the algorithms are very effective at increasing that engagement. When my family has an opportunity to go out to a restaurant, we frequently see the tragic sight of many patrons glued to their phones. People usually stereotype teens as being absorbed by their phones, but, increasingly, every member of the family is interacting with the Internet instead of with each other. They might each have their own age-specific social media apps, but all are interacting with screens instead of family.

I can fall victim to this, too! If I try to put my phone away for a “date night” with my wife, my phone fights back at being rejected for a few hours. It starts buzzing to let me know who scored a touchdown, who liked a status, or what a politician just did. When my fantasy team is at stake or some celebrity I never heard of is embroiled in some scandal, should I really focus on my wife, much as I love her? Describing the addictive nature of smartphones, the Netflix documentary *The Social Dilemma* quoted an expert explaining that there are two types of people with smartphones: those who look at them in the morning before going to the bathroom, and those who look at them in the morning *while* going to the bathroom.

The algorithms that focus on engagement do not care what type of engagement keeps people online. While some level of entertainment can be benign, marketers want to maximize our involvement, and, sadly, the most addictive and engaging content on the Internet is content that causes anger. This is true of both social media and traditional media—even media that might formerly have been described as news outlets.

Changing Our Behavior for the Worse

Social media often provokes our anger toward very real people we might otherwise know little about; through technology, we can now be upset about their political views, judgmental attitudes, or humblebrags. Things that would never be said in person are frequently posted for the whole world to read, and, tragically, we love to have it so! How often do you leave social media more upset or frustrated than when you got on it? One site that I use was getting so toxic that I had to back away from it to the point of only looking at it once a month. Many of you might guess what happened next: The website sent me daily reminders about all that I was missing. *Come see the new posts!* The emails tried all the hooks—and once I revisited the site, the emails stopped until I took another break.

Traditional media hooks us with anger about larger issues. When you think of watching the news, do you usually think about positive news stories or about bad news? We already know the agenda of our politicized media outlets, yet they can still tempt us to return! How often does it seem that liberal networks have anything good to say about Donald Trump or anything bad to say about President Biden? We already know what they will say! Moreover, they know that anger sells, so, if their ratings drop, they routinely increase their bashing of Donald Trump or another conservative. And conservative media outlets do the *exact same*, with the obvious difference that they readily bash President Biden or another liberal to drive up their ratings. These outlets have the audacity to call themselves “news

outlets,” though they would more accurately be called “we-make-you-angry-so-you-will-watch-our-ads-so-we-can-make-money” outlets—but that does not exactly roll off the tongue. Proverbs 22 provides a strong warning about media outlets that have this type of effect on us (vv. 24–25).

The Antidote to the Internet?

Let’s return to our original question: How do we help our children avoid becoming addicted to screens? The simple answer is that we must model the behavior of being free from that addiction ourselves! We may preach at young people all day long to be careful about their social media and screen time, but what do they see from their parents and other adults? Do we exercise the control that we want them to have? Or do they see us failing to practice what we preach?

Children will know if their parents are more strongly influenced by “the news” than by the Bible. They will notice if they are more addicted to the anger their screens provoke than the comfort the Scriptures provide (cf. Philippians 4:4–8). Our youth understand that *some* time on screens may be necessary for legitimate purposes—yet they recognize that most of the time adults spend on screens is simply entertainment, a waste of time, or worse.

As parents, we must set an example of interacting wisely with the Internet and screens—controlling them instead of being controlled by them. Our children need to see that we can put down our phones and turn off our screens. A family movie night can be nice, but do we also incorporate family game nights? We can read any number of things on the Internet, but few activities can be as bonding as reading to our children from the Bible or other good books. Most families can greatly benefit from going for walks or playing outside together. The key lesson is simple: The most powerful way we can help our children learn to control their use of the Internet is to set the right example in our own lives.

The algorithms designed to keep our children engaged are also designed to keep adults engaged—and there is a lot of money to be made from keeping you, me, and our children glued to a screen. Let’s do our part to control these temptations in our own lives, so our children can learn how to do so in theirs.

—Mark Sandor



Sunday Laws, the Environment, and the Vatican

For years, the Vatican has promoted Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'* encyclical, issued in 2015. This promotion, “designed to encourage strategic actors to commit to achieving total sustainability with Pope Francis's environmental advocacy as a guide,” kicked into high gear this year (*CruxNow*, May 25, 2021). “Pope Francis said humanity has a duty to future generations to overcome selfishness, indifference, and ‘irresponsible’ habits, asking faithful to respect creation and ‘inaugurate a lifestyle and a society that is finally eco-sustainable.’” According to a Vatican official, the present plan is designed to be seven years long because of the biblical significance of the number seven. Year one is a planning year, followed by five years of environmental action. The final, seventh, year “will be a ‘sabbatical’ year dedicated to ‘praise and thanking God.’”

The idea is to begin with Catholic parishes and organizations and then bring in other churches and organizations, ultimately involving the whole world. Integral to the plan is a mandatory weekly day of rest. “The Pope's encyclical calls for Sunday to be implemented as a weekly day of rest to save the environment” (*OpenPr.com*, December 11, 2020).

Biblical prophecy foretells the rise of an end-time “beast” power in central Europe. This “beast” will be a militarily



and economically powerful political leader who will work in concert with a powerful religious leader (cf. Revelation 13). Ultimately, the religious leader will cause “all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name” (vv. 16–17). Francis' *Laudato Si'* may help bring this about.

Power Vacuum Threatens Europe's Stability

Author Wolfgang Münchau recently wrote for *The Specta-*

tor, “What we are witnessing is the birth of a new breed of Euroscepticism.... This all amounts to a moment of great danger for the EU” (July 3, 2021). Münchau described the plummeting respect for retiring German Chancellor Angela Merkel and current French President Emmanuel Macron—and the impact of their roles on the future of the EU.

Münchau described what he considers many political blunders made by Merkel in the 16 years of her leadership. Hers is a party in turmoil. Münchau asked a significant question regarding the EU's future: “If neither Merkel nor Macron can ‘lead’ Europe, then who can? Look at the field of their po-

tential successors in Germany and France. No one else is on the horizon. So the EU's future depends on weaning itself off the illusion of Franco-German leadership.”

Despite the apparent void in leadership, biblical prophecy reveals that Germany will play a significant role in the future of Europe. While there may be “no one else on the horizon” at this moment, there is—or will be—someone waiting in the wings, unbeknownst to Münchau. There is an old saying that “nature abhors a vacuum”—and nations are always uncomfortable when there is a leadership vacuum. The Bible warns that, at the end of the age, a powerful, self-absorbed leader will arise in Europe, specifically in Germany. This person “shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god” (Daniel 11:36). He will help unify “ten kings” in Europe who will “give their power” over to him for a brief time (Revelation 17:12–13), and he will be supported by a prominent religious leader. Students of biblical prophecy



French riot police use a water cannon and tear gas against demonstrators in yellow vests protesting the rise of fuel and oil prices.

need to watch for a strong leader to arise and pull together a core of European nations.

Fragile New Coalition in Israel

After twelve years under 71-year-old Benjamin Netanyahu's leadership, Israel has a new Prime Minister—Netanyahu's former ally, 49-year-old Naftali Bennett. Winning the office by just one Knesset vote, Bennett now leads a "fragile coalition comprised of eight parties with deep ideological differences" (*Associated Press*, June 13, 2021). However, Netanyahu will not disappear. He is still part of Israel's leadership and aims to return to power as soon as is possible. The extremely close vote demonstrates that he still retains a great deal of support, especially among Israel's hardliners.

Bennett is a conservative Orthodox Jew and a millionaire. He is an "ultranationalist" who opposes Palestinian inde-

pendence and supports Israeli West Bank settlements. He leads a coalition government whose current reason for being is its shared opposition to Netanyahu. Exactly what the future holds remains to be seen. Bennett has made clear that under his leadership Israel will not allow Iran to obtain nuclear weapons, and he is calling for unity and cooperation among Israel's leaders. He is supposed to step down from power in two years to make way for a centrist leader, in what is being called a "rotating plan for the premiership" (*Deutsche Welle*, June 13, 2021).

While Prime Minister Bennett's new position will be very challenging, many wonder what his election portends for Israel's future. How will he interact with other leaders in the Middle East, in Europe, and especially in Germany? Biblical prophecy foretells that Israel's future will be rocky and dangerous (Zechariah 12:2–3; 14:1–2). Europe and even the pope will eventually become

involved in Jerusalem. Bennett might set the stage for such a future.

Millions Starving in Ethiopian Famine

In northern Ethiopia, more than 350,000 are living in a food "catastrophe," according to a United Nations-backed analysis that defines a food "catastrophe" as "starvation and death affecting small groups of people spread over large areas" (*BBC*, June 10, 2021). Since November 2020, 1.7 million people in the Tigray region of Ethiopia have been displaced by civil war. In addition to those in a food "catastrophe," the UN concludes that two million are in a food "emergency" and three million more are in a food "crisis."

Although many are careful not to use the word "famine" until certain criteria are met, UN humanitarian chief Mark Lowcock has "chosen to ignore the rules and insist that 'there is famine now in Tigray,'" concluding that arguing over definitions is counterproductive.

According to the UN, "This severe crisis results from the cascading effects of conflict, including population displacements, movement restrictions, limited humanitarian access, loss of harvest and livelihood assets, and dysfunctional or non-existent markets." Ethiopia's government insists its population has access to food relief, but starving citizens tell a different story, and Lowcock predicts the situation will grow far worse. In 1984, a similar war in the region led to a famine that killed between 600,000 and a million people.

Due to the greed and selfishness of leaders, millions continue to suffer unnecessary starvation. God warned that the end of this age will be characterized by selfish people who despise good and treat others with brutality (2 Timothy 3:1–5). Corrupt and power-hungry leaders do not serve the people they lead; rather, they care only about themselves. That is why people groan when wicked leaders rule (Proverbs 29:2). Our world needs righteous, caring leadership. [TW]



Ethiopian refugees are flooding into the Um Rakuba refugee camp in Sudan's eastern Gedaref province.

LETTERS TO TW

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK



I have read *The Real God: Proofs and Promises* by Douglas S. Winnail. And it is the very best book. Informed, intellectual, knowledgeable. Dr. Winnail is brilliant. His writing skills are excellent.

—Subscriber in Mississippi

As a British grandmother, I just wanted to say I only recently came across your program by chance, on a UK Christian TV channel the other day, and I really enjoyed watching and listening to you. The program was so well presented, articulated, easy to understand, professionally produced, etc., and I really appreciate and thank you all for the telecast, and that you even offered amazing literature for FREE! God bless all that you are trying to do to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to build his Kingdom on earth. With kind regards and many blessings on your ministry.

—Subscriber in Bristol, UK

I'm 16, [and my] spiritual journey really just started "hitting" last year in 2020. I've tried to tell myself to move forward, and I could only realistically do that with the help of the Most High Himself. I couldn't open up to anyone but to Him about these things, and look at where I am now. Being able to read and listen to all these resources from you guys has been so encouraging and has inspired me to study more fervently. I'm praying for your work, and am so grateful to be a part of a work that spreads this hope.

—Reader in New Zealand

I appreciate the articles you send via email. They help keep my mind focused on God. I also watch your Sunday

morning broadcast on TV. Can you imagine if America returned to following God's commandments? Keep up the great work! The LORD bless thee and keep thee!

—Subscriber in New York

Editor's Note: Tomorrow's World offers several email items you can subscribe to, in addition to the monthly magazine. Just click on the tile reading "Stay current with our weekly email" on our home page at TomorrowsWorld.org.

I just want to extend a very deep heart-filled thank you to your organization. The literature and magazines are much appreciated and have answered questions that I have had. I started going to one of your congregations. I was excited to find fellowship with others who believed the same things as myself. I bury myself in my Bible and the literature I receive from your organization, and I am thankful that you make it available to me. I have led some friends to your website and will continue my work to bring others to the truth. Thank you all for your hard work in helping people to understand our world and the things that surround us during these trying times.

—Subscriber in the United States

Editor's Note: We are excited for you and for your spiritual growth! Any readers who are interested in possibly attending one of the weekly Sabbath services of the Living Church of God, sponsor of the Tomorrow's World magazine and television program, can get information at our website, TomorrowsWorld.org, by clicking on "Meet the Church Behind TW." You can also contact the Regional Office nearest you, located on page 4 of this issue.

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TOMORROW'S WORLD

TELEVISION LOG



AUSTRALIA

Nationwide 7two SU 7:00 a.m.

BARBADOS

St. Michael CBC 8 SU 2:00 p.m.

JAMAICA

Kingston TVJ SU 7:00 a.m.

NEW ZEALAND

Nationwide TVNZ2 TH 9:30 a.m.
Nationwide TVNZ2 +1 TH 10:30 a.m.

PHILIPPINES

Nationwide TV5 MO 11:30 p.m.

SOUTH AFRICA

Nationwide CTV/SA SU 11:00 a.m.

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

Nationwide CNC3-TV SU 8:00 a.m.

UK & NW EUROPE

WORD (TWN) Sky TV 590 SU 11:00 a.m.
Sky TV 590 SU 12:30 a.m.
Sky TV 590 FR 12:00 a.m.



CANADA

Nationwide Networks (All times Eastern)

Vision SA 3:30 a.m.

The Cowboy Channel SU 8:00 a.m.

FAITH TV SU 5:30 p.m.
MO-FR 10:30 p.m.
TU 5:00 p.m.

CHNU MO-FR 10:00 p.m.

CTV (Maritimes) SU 7:30 a.m.

CTV (Alberta) SU 1:30 p.m.

V-Télé (en français) SU 6:30 a.m.

UNITED STATES

Nationwide Networks (All times Eastern)

The CW Plus SU 8:00 a.m.
MO 2:00 a.m.

FOLK TV SU 9:00 a.m.

getTV SU 7:00 a.m.

Impact TV SU 11:00 p.m.
MO 10:30 p.m.

NewsNation (formerly WGN) SU 6:00 a.m.
WE 6:00 a.m.

The Word Network SU 6:00 a.m.
SU 7:30 p.m.
FR 7:00 p.m.

The Walk TV SU 10:30 a.m.

Z Living SU 7:30 a.m.

DISH Network* (All times Eastern)

Impact Ch. 268 SU 11:00 p.m.

DIRECTV* (All times Eastern)

Word Ch. 373 SU 6:00 a.m.
SU 7:30 p.m.
FR 7:00 p.m.

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Huntsville WHDF SU 7:30 a.m.

Montgomery WAMY SU 9:30 a.m.

Opelika WBMM (CW) SU 7:00 a.m.

WLTZ SU 7:30 a.m.

AR El Dorado KNOE SU 7:00 a.m.

Fayetteville KHOG SU 7:00 a.m.

Fort Smith KHBS SU 7:00 a.m.

Jonesboro KAIT SU 7:00 a.m.

AZ Tucson KMSB SU 8:30 a.m.

Yuma KEYC (CW) SU 9:00 a.m.

CA Bakersfield KGET (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Chico KHSL (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

El Centro KEYC (CW) SU 9:00 a.m.

Eureka KECA-LD/KVIQ (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Monterey KION (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Palm Springs KCWQ (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Salinas KION (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

San Luis Obispo KSBY (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Santa Barbara KSBY (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Santa Maria KSBY (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

CO Colorado Springs KXTU SU 10:30 a.m.

Denver KWGN-TV 2 SU 9:30 a.m.

Grand Junc. KJCT (CW) SU 7:00 a.m.

CT Hartford WWLP (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

DC Washington DC WDCA SU 7:30 a.m.

DE Harrington WMDT (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

FL Gainesville WCJB (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Jacksonville WCWJ SU 6:30 a.m.

Miami WBFS SU 6:30 a.m.

Ft. Lauderdale WBFS SU 6:30 a.m.

Gainesville WCJB SU 6:00 a.m.

Panama City WJHG (CW) SU 7:00 a.m.

Tallahassee WTLF SU 8:00 a.m.

Tampa Bay WTOG SU 8:00 a.m.

GA Albany WALB (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Albany WALB SU 11:00 a.m.

Augusta WAGT (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Columbus WLTX SU 7:30 a.m.

Thomasville WTLF (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

IA Cedar Rapids MCRG-DT 9.3 SU 9:00 a.m.

Des Moines KCWI SU 7:00 a.m.

ID Boise KYUU SU 7:00 a.m.

Idaho Falls KIFI SU 7:00 a.m.

IL Chicago WJYS SU 8:00 a.m.

Moline MO 5:00 p.m.

Peoria WHOI SU 7:00 a.m.

Quincy WGEM SU 7:00 a.m.

Springfield Insight TU 5:00 a.m.

Springfield Insight TU 1:00 p.m.

IN Fort Wayne WPTA SU 7:30 a.m.

Fort Wayne Comcast SU 9:00 a.m.

KS Parsons TWPAP WE 7:00 p.m.

Wichita KSCW-TV 33 SU 11:00 a.m.

KY Bowling Green WBKO SU 7:00 a.m.

Latonia PEG WE 6:30 p.m.

Latonia PEG TH 10:00 p.m.

Lexington WTVQ SU 7:00 a.m.

Louisville Insight Various

WBNA SU 9:30 a.m.

LA Alexandria KBCA SU 7:00 a.m.

Alexandria KLAB SU 9:30 a.m.

Baton Rouge WBRZ SU 10:00 a.m.

Lafayette KATC SU 7:00 a.m.

Lake Charles KVHP SU 9:30 a.m.

Monroe KNOE SU 7:00 a.m.

New Orleans WNOL SU 10:00 a.m.

Shreveport KSHV SU 6:00 a.m.

West Monroe KMCT SU 11:00 a.m.

MA Malden Access SU 9:00 a.m.

MD Baltimore Community SU 10:00 a.m.

Westminster Adelphia TH 10:00 a.m.

Westminster Adelphia FR 10:00 a.m.

ME Bangor WABI SU 8:00 a.m.

Brunswick TV3 SA 8:30 a.m.

Brunswick TV3 SU 6:30 a.m.

Presque Isle WBQP SU 8:00 a.m.

MI Alpena WBAE SU 8:00 a.m.

Lansing WLAJ SU 11:00 a.m.

Marquette WBKP SU 8:00 a.m.

MN Cloquet MEDCLO SU 8:00 a.m.

Duluth KDHL SU 7:00 a.m.

Minneapolis MTN TH 12:00 a.m.

Minneapolis NWCT SA 10:30 p.m.

Minneapolis NWCT SU 4:30 a.m.

Minneapolis NWCT SU 10:30 a.m.

Rochester KTTC SU 7:00 a.m.

Roseville CTV WE 4:00 a.m.

Roseville CTV WE 12:00 p.m.

St. Paul Nhd. Network SU 8:30 p.m.

MO Columbia KOMU SU 7:00 a.m.

Joplin KFJX SU 8:30 a.m.

Kansas City KCWE SU 7:30 a.m.

St. Louis KPLR SU 6:30 a.m.

MS Biloxi WXXV SU 7:00 a.m.

Columbus WCBT SU 7:00 a.m.

Greenwood WBWO SU 7:00 a.m.

Jackson Spectrum SU 10:00 a.m.

Jackson Spectrum WE 4:00 p.m.

Meridian WTK SU 7:00 a.m.

MT Billings KTVQ SU 7:00 a.m.

Butte KBZK SU 7:00 a.m.

Butte KXLF SU 7:00 a.m.

Glendive KWZB SU 7:00 a.m.

Great Falls KRTV SU 7:00 a.m.

Helena KMTF SU 7:00 a.m.

Missoula KPAX SU 7:00 a.m.

NC Charlotte WAXN SU 9:00 a.m.

Charlotte WMYT SU 8:30 a.m.

Greenville WNCN SU 8:00 a.m.

Hickory WHKY MO 7:30 p.m.

Raleigh WRAZ SU 7:30 a.m.

NM Albuquerque KWBO SU 8:00 a.m.

Albuquerque KCHF MO 7:30 p.m.

Albuquerque KCHF FR 9:00 p.m.

Albuquerque KCHF MO 7:30 a.m.

Santa Fe KCHF FR 9:00 p.m.

NV Reno KREN SU 8:00 a.m.

NY Albany-Troy Spectrum MO 3:00 p.m.

Binghamton Spectrum WE 10:00 p.m.

Binghamton Spectrum FR 8:00 p.m.

Brooklyn WBNG SU 8:00 a.m.

Canandaigua Finger Lakes MO 4:30 p.m.

Elmira WENY SU 11:30 a.m.

Oneida WENY TH 2:00 p.m.

Oneida WENY TH 7:00 p.m.

Queens Access MO 11:00 p.m.

Queens Access TU 4:30 p.m.

Riverhead Public Access SU 7:00 a.m.

Rochester Cablevision SU 7:00 a.m.

OH Cincinnati WSTR SU 9:00 a.m.

Cincinnati Spectrum TH 8:30 a.m.

Cincinnati Spectrum SU 11:30 a.m.

Cincinnati Spectrum TU 1:00 p.m.

Cleveland WUAB SU 8:30 a.m.

Fairborn CAC TU 12:00 p.m.

Lima WBOH SU 7:00 a.m.

Lima WBOH MO 7:00 a.m.

OK Ada KTEN SU 7:00 a.m.

Lawton KAUZ SU 8:00 a.m.

Tulsa KOCW SU 8:00 a.m.

OR Bend KTVZ SU 8:00 a.m.

Eugene KMTR SU 8:00 a.m.

SU 8:00 a.m.

SU 11:00 a.m.

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TH 12:00 a.m.

SA 10:30 p.m.

SU 4:30 a.m.

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Medford KTVL SU 8:00 a.m.

Portland Community SU 12:30 p.m.

PA Erie WSEE SU 8:00 a.m.

Johnstown Atl. Broadband MO 10:00 p.m.

Philadelphia WPSG SU 7:30 a.m.

SC Charleston WCBT SU 8:00 a.m.

Columbia WOLO SU 11:00 a.m.

Greenville WYCW SU 9:30 a.m.

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