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Midnight Call

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WHAT WILL HAPPEN BEFORE APOCALYPSE? PART 2

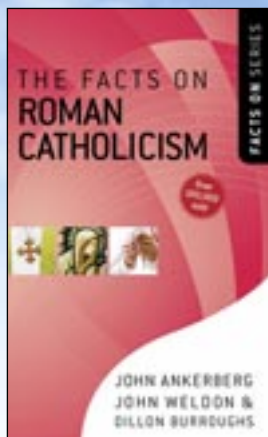
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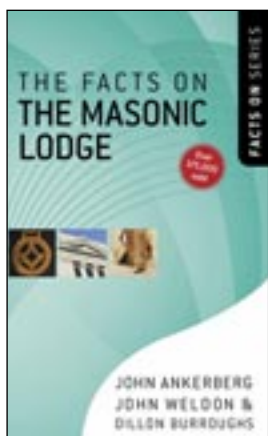
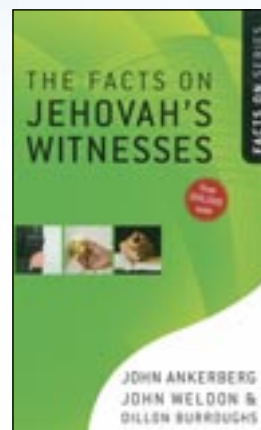
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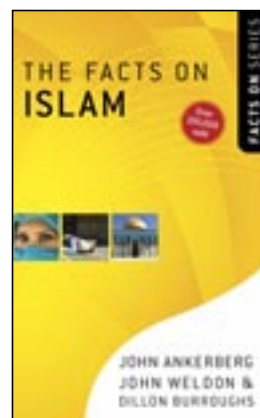
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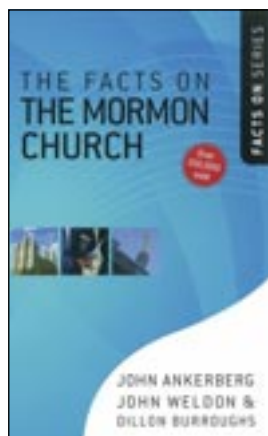
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God Doesn't Need Us, and Yet He Wants Us



By Norbert Lieth

Director of Missions, Midnight Call International

How quickly one can overlook things in the Bible that only become clear upon closer reflection. The Bible is more than just a book to read ... it is, rather, a textbook that reveals the depths of the gospel. For example, the mystery of godliness, which we find in 1 Timothy 3:16: "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Parallel to this verse is 1 Timothy 1:11: "According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust."

God is blissful within Himself. This means He is not more blissful with us, nor less so without us. God has everything within Himself that He needs. He is what He is, the eternal and perfect Yahweh in every respect. If God has everything within Himself, then why would He want us? He wants to bring us into His blessed happiness; we are to take part in it. We are meant to be blissful in Him. And to achieve that goal, God did the following:

1. He was revealed in the flesh: that means the Lord was born as a man. His descent takes us up into heaven.

2. His ministry and life were confirmed by the Holy Spirit at every turn, so that later we might receive the Holy Spirit at our rebirth.

3. Angels watched Him, marveled at Him, and served Him. In Christ, the manifold wisdom of God is made known to the angels during the age of salvation. In light of this, we can only prayerfully worship (Eph. 3:10).

4. His gospel was preached among the nations after His ascension. It has also reached us and led us to faith.

5. It was believed within the world. Think of the many churches that have been established throughout the nations. We too are part of these believers.

6. He was received in glory ... not just "into glory," but "in glory." Jesus was received with all divine honors. The Church today in Christ, sits with Him at the right hand of God the Father (Eph. 2:6).

EDITOR'S NOTE

The mystery is in the magnitude of the revelation of Christ as the source of perfect salvation; as the answer to the question of how God can impart perfect bliss to us. Through Jesus, we are led into the joy of the eternal God; we become partakers of His glory. Consequently, however, we also realize that man without Christ lacks everything. He who does not have Jesus has lost God's blessed joyfulness. He has no relationship with God, and thus no relationship with who He is and what He wants to give us. Such a person *has* lost and is lost. Therefore, we confess with the Apostle Peter: "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6:68).

We must not stop praying for our fellow human beings and lovingly explaining the gospel to them. We must not stop thanking God for the fact that He does not need us, but that He wants us—and that Jesus did everything to bring that about. (MC)

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OUR TASK

Midnight Call Ministries is a nonprofit missionary organization,
dedicated to proclaiming the entire Bible as the unfailing and eternal
written Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and the unerring
guide for the Christian faith.

The object of Midnight Call is to call people everywhere to Christ,
to proclaim the return of Christ, to prepare Christians for His com-
ing, and to uphold the faith and warn of false doctrines. *Midnight
Call* magazine is available in twelve languages. All work done
through radio, literature and missionaries is supported entirely by the
gifts and free will offerings of God's people.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

WE BELIEVE in the divine inspiration of the whole Bible and there-
with the infallibility of the Holy Scripture, which is God's Word, and in
the eternal Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

WE BELIEVE Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was conceived of the
Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, lived a sinless life, and shed His
blood to save mankind. He died and arose bodily the third day, was
seen by over 500, and later ascended into heaven.

WE BELIEVE that the Lord Jesus Christ died in the place of each
individual sinner and that all who believe in Him as their personal
Savior are justified through His shed blood and have become
children of God.

WE BELIEVE that Israel is God's chosen people, and that the
restoration of the Jews to their own land is the fulfillment of the
Word of God.

WE BELIEVE in the imminent, pre-tribulational appearance of Je-
sus Christ for the Rapture of His Church (all born again believers).

WE BELIEVE in the immortality of our souls and the resurrection of our
bodies, and in the resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting
blessedness of the saved and the everlasting punishment of the lost.



WHAT WILL HAPPEN BEFORE APOCALYPSE? PART 2

Arno Froese

“Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall”
(Proverbs 16:18).

Ukraine—Russia

While Europe has claimed to be the continent of peace for the last few decades, the Russian invasion of Ukraine changed this picture somewhat. It is not our intention to give opinions on, reasons for, or predictions about this war. Our concern is exclusively the Church of Jesus Christ. That Church is located in both Ukraine and Russia, as well as the rest of the 200 plus nations of the world. One thing is becoming apparent: open warfare is losing its effectiveness. It will and must give place to merchandise (trade) wars. We

believe that communist China will sooner or later become the preeminent nation globally.

Prophecy Misused

Most of the Christian material coming to my desk has one thing in common: strongly emphasizing, “It’s getting worse ... We are living in the most unstable time in history ... Catastrophe is just around the corner ... Shadows of the Great Tribulation approaching ... The world is near collapse ... America’s last days ... The world in turmoil” ... etc.

Mankind is living longer, is experiencing more peace than ever before, and can purchase food at substantially lower cost compared to a hundred years ago. In plain words, we never had it so good.

Some quote Matthew 24:6-7: “And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.” That indeed is frightfully negative.

Jesus actually states: “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be” (verse 21). It simply means the greatest ever tribulation.

However, when doing just a little research, we find that this does not mean more wars or rumors of wars: no increase in the rise of nation against nation. Nor have there been more famines, pestilences, and earthquakes. History confirms that we’ve always had wars. Actually, today there are less wars than ever before. We have always had famines, pestilences, and earthquakes, but the truth is, today they occur less frequently.

EarthSky.org answers the question, “Are large earthquakes increasing in frequency?”

Scientists analyzed the historical record of earthquakes greater than 8.0 in magnitude and concluded that the global frequency of large earthquakes is no higher today than it has been in the past. Results of the study were published on January 17, 2012 in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

OneEarthFuture.org asks the question, “Is there really evidence for a decline of war?” and responds:



I think we can conclude several things. First, the last two decades have indeed been more peaceful than average. There have been a number of periods where wars were more frequent and deadlier than in recent years. Popular perceptions that the world has gone “to hell in a handbasket” are simply incorrect, at least in terms of war.

Hunger caused by famine has been halved during the last few decades. Macrotrends.net published the World Hunger Statistics, noting that in 2001, 13.3% of the world’s population experienced hunger. In 2018, hunger had fallen to 9.3%.

Pestilences have always been with us, but they are no longer as deadly as they were in the past. One simple comparison should suffice: average life expectancy in the US in 1900 was 43 years; for 2019, it was 78.8 years, and 80.6 years in 2022.

An attentive follower of Jesus takes note of what is going on in the world. Slowly but surely, God's principles are being ignored and replaced with man's ideas. Therefore, we can expect that prosperity, peace, and security will increase globally; even crime will be drastically reduced.

These facts clearly document that mankind is living longer, is experiencing more peace than ever before, and can purchase food at substantially lower cost compared to a hundred years ago. Not to mention, the quality of the food is strictly regulated by health authorities worldwide. In plain words, we never had it so good.

Good Old Days?

Older people can recall the so-called mom-and-pop stores, where you were asked to close the screen door quickly despite the many flies already inside. The smell was often unbearable. Today, the local health authorities would close such a place immediately.

The Great Deception

Now the big question: why does this writer believe that things overall are constantly improving, with highly regulated food and quality merchandise unprecedented in history? The answer is rather simple: you can't deceive someone with a gun to the head. Deception accompanied by luxury galore, fullness of food and merchandise, is the way. Satan's total deception of mankind will be finalized in the end.

Revelation 13:3-4 reveals: "And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is

like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" The sentence, "All the world wondered after the beast," can also be translated, "The whole earth was amazed and followed the beast."

"Who is able to make war with him?" indicates total firearm control—an imitation of the real thing. "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2:4).

Antichrist's Revelation

Finally, a benevolent leader will appear on the world stage, whom the world loves, praises, even worships.

Who is this person? The apostle Paul explains in 2 Thessalonians 2:4: "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

An attentive follower of Jesus takes note of what is going on in the world. Slowly but surely, God's principles are being ignored and replaced with man's ideas. Therefore, we can expect that prosperity, peace, and security will increase globally; even crime will be drastically reduced.

Remember, Jesus is the Prince of Peace, which He gives in abundance. Thus, the great imitator—Antichrist—must mimic the acts of

During the many decades of ministry, one of the great tragedies this writer has observed is the mixing of geopolitical realities with the Church. It matters not who rules which country; all, without exception, are diabolical entities under the authority of the god of this world.

Jesus. He must establish a world society equivalent to the Church, which we may call the real global nation. Galatians 3:28 declares: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” That is true, perfect, genuine unity.

Nationalism’s Deception

When we analyze this truth from Biblical perspectives, we immediately realize how childish and even foolish it is to get involved in the politics of the world. We are in this world, but we are not of this world. It makes no difference where you live, whether it’s in Canada or Mozambique, Argentina or Australia, the UK or the US; the spirit of Antichrist is preparing a prosperous, peace-loving, and secure planet earth for all of humanity. That is what happens before Apocalypse.

Thus, we understand that Jesus’ prophecy does not identify a certain period of time in the future only, but rather applies from the time He spoke even to our days.

A Voice from 1839

“There is no peace here on earth; no peace even among God’s children, no peace in the homes, little peace in individual hearts. That is the sign of the ‘last’ days. Oh, do pay attention, and strive for the holy peace of God in this last, sad time. For it won’t get any better: more and more the enemy will expand his power on earth, until the

hour of the Lord’s return with His saints, to establish a kingdom of peace on earth. He will then be King on earth, and no one will rule but Him alone. Don’t you see the enemy’s cunning, how he approaches God’s children quietly and unnoticed, to rob them of peace and darken their hearts, so that they no longer recognize the light or have clear discernment? Don’t you see how he creeps into hearts and homes? Oh, that none would be tempted, but turn immediately to Jesus, the King of Peace. He overcame that prince of darkness, whom one day He will bind so that he no longer can have any power on this earth.”

– Johannes Gommel (16 October 1811—21 December 1841), from *Lebendiges Wasser* (“Living Water”)

When reading his book, it becomes abundantly clear that one’s concern should not be our life here on earth, but our aim should be focused on heaven. Thus, his urging, “Turn immediately to Jesus, the King of Peace.”

The End-Time Church

While the apostle Paul writes to Timothy, “But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Timothy 3:13), he is not concerned with this world but is speaking about the Church.

In 1 Timothy 4:1, he writes: “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” The

The small flock, the little group, the born-again believers, constitute His body, the living Church of Jesus Christ. That's the real nation. We are in the world, but not of the world. Our citizenship is the real one; it's eternal.

apostle Peter confirms: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts" (2 Peter 3:3). Jude warns: "How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts" (Jude 18). One does not need a theological degree to understand this speaks of the Church, not the world.

During the many decades of ministry, one of the great tragedies this writer has observed is the mixing of geopolitical realities with the Church. It matters not who rules which country; all, without exception, are diabolical entities under the authority of the god of this world.

Who is the god of this world? "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8).

Real Citizenship

Yet, the small flock, the little group, the born-again believers, constitute His body, the living Church of Jesus Christ. That's the real nation. We are in the world, but not of the world. Our citizenship is the real one; it's eternal. We are a totally different nation. Born-again believers have placed their trust in the great Savior, their High Priest who rules the Church. Yes, we are citizens of a country; we have an address. We work, we pay our taxes, and we obey the laws of the land. But that's only temporary, for we

are on our pilgrimage to eternity. Thus, all of our achievements and self-esteem will be exposed as pride and arrogance—foolishness.

18 Un-Christian Characteristics

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Timothy 3:1-5).

According to dictionary.com, the words "perilous time" mean, "involving or full of grave risk or peril, hazardous, dangerous." We must note however, this is addressed to the Church, not the world.

Listen to what the apostle Paul writes in Acts 20:29-30: "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Note the words, "enter in among you ... of your own selves shall men arise." This has nothing to do with the world; it is happening in the Church.

Just briefly look at some of these characteristics: "lovers of their own selves ... boasters

Jesus was not esteemed, and there was no self-esteem in Him. He was humble and “obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

... proud ... despisers of those that are good
... heady [rash] ... highminded ... lovers of
pleasures more than lovers of God.”

Self-Esteem

Now we come to a sore point, because new theological teaching does not quite correspond to these definitions. For example, self-esteem and pride are considered virtuous in our day. “You must recognize your self-worth to be a good Christian,” some declare. That, however, contradicts simple Scriptures such as, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Note, Jesus does not say, “Love your neighbor more than yourself,” because it is a given that a person loves himself beyond measure.

Jesus was not esteemed, and there was no self-esteem in Him. He was humble and “obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” First John 2:16 declares: “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

Charles H. Spurgeon said: “Anything which leads to self-esteem leads to the utmost jeopardy. If you have a lowly opinion of yourself, I congratulate you; for this is a main element of safety.” Likewise, Oswald Chambers once stated, “Shyness is often unmitigated conceit, an unconscious overestimate of your own worth.”

In summary, based on Holy Scripture, we can with absolute assurance determine that pride originates with the father of lies, the devil.



Therefore, the word “proud” should not be part of the Christian’s vocabulary.

A Better World?

In conclusion, the world at large is “getting better.” There will be more luxuries and more freedom; hunger will decrease, and so will crime. Keep in mind that Satan’s masterpiece, his superman Antichrist, is to mimic Christ; he becomes the man of peace to mimic the Prince of Peace. He will produce supernatural miracles, because Christ did so. However, 2 Thesalonians 2:9 states: “Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.”

Finally, good times are ahead for the world, albeit temporarily. For the Church, “we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” However, for us the best is yet to come eternally. (1238)



OXYMORONIC SIGNS: PRE-HISTORIC HUMANS AND JEWISH ATHEISTS



By Wilfred Hahn

One of the more widely used terms that this writer often encounters is “hunter gatherers.” It is a name that applies to the sociologic evolution of mankind. A long way back—even millions of years ago apparently—*homo sapiens* lived like animals. Originally, they did not plant gardens nor store food. Rather, in their loincloths, they ate what they found and holed up in caves.

They were unreasoning, but nevertheless, somehow advanced up the evolutionary ladder to reach the modern sophisticated state of humanhood and its societies today.

But, please wait. None of the statements made in the previous paragraphs are actually based on proven facts. They are mostly conjecture ... fanciful thinking. Yet, the phrase “hunter gatherer” is encountered virtually everywhere and is widely accepted as fact. It is a popular view that is assumed to be true and rarely debated.

The ideas of sociologic evolution, to no surprise, are based on the same lies as evolutionary theory today. None of its major assumptions has been proven; often, in fact, they are actually scientifically disproven. This very same phenomenon applies to the field of anthropology—again, lots of fanciful theories, but no complete proofs. Most scholars in these evolution-related fields of study tilt at windmills, striving to ignore and/or disprove Creation and the existence of God.

Consider this typical “stock” explanation of “hunter gatherer” on the website of the widely watched History Channel: “Hunter-gatherers were prehistoric nomadic groups that harnessed the use of fire, developed intricate knowledge of plant life and refined technology for hunting and domestic purposes as they spread from Africa to Asia, Europe and beyond. From African hominins of 2 million years ago to modern-day *Homo sapiens*, the evolution of humans can be traced through what the hunter-gatherers left behind—tools and settlements that teach us about the hunter-gatherer diet and way of life of early humans.”

And, here an expansive quote about hunter gatherers from Wikipedia: “Hunting and gathering was humanity’s original and most enduring successful adaptation in the natural world, occupying at least 90 percent of human history.”

These statements are presented with authority and deemed certain. Yet again, all of these

The ideas of sociologic evolution, to no surprise, are based on the same lies as evolutionary theory today. None of its major assumptions has been proven; often, in fact, they are actually scientifically disproven.

perspectives are not proven facts. Far from it. As the case may be, modern evolutionary theory claims to be scientific, we are told, but in reality, is mostly myth.

Why is this important? It is key to note that these anthropological statements connect to “Social Evolutionism,” this being the accepted narrative of a ladder of stages progressing from “savagery” through “barbarism” to modern civilization.

Refreshing Perspectives

Given the gross miscarriage of facts and truths in the current field of Evolutionary Sociology, we were elated to read an important new work in this area. We refer here to *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity* (David Graeber & David Wengrow).

The book’s two authors—one a highly respected Assyriologist (David Graeber), the other a high-profile archaeologist/anthropologist (David Wengrow)—make some bold but refreshing statements. They argue that the classic model of human pre-history (i.e., the notion of the progression of “hunter gatherers,” etc.) that has been widely accepted for over a century, isn’t supported by new archaeological and anthropological evidence.

At the outset, the book *The Dawn of Everything* appears to offer some bridges between evolutionist anthropologists and young-earth Creationists. If that were true, it would be exciting indeed. We do enjoy reading research pro-

posed by secular scholars that moves their goal posts closer to Biblical positions. To be sure, the authors had no objective to defend Biblical perspectives. However, as it turns out, the authors nonetheless make some revealing acknowledgments and admissions.

For example, they argue that one can peer only so far back into history by uncovering beads and cranial fragments. There is not much narrative that one can extract from a single tooth found in an archaeological dig. Realistically, just how much will be learned about previous societies from such miniscule and incomplete remnants? Not much, say the authors. Yet, elaborate theories are spun to fill in the gaps of what is not known. To no surprise, of course, these imaginations comply with a priori evolutionary perspectives.

The views of Wengrow and Graeber are refreshing, as already said. The timelines that these researchers found workable were between 10,000 and 25,000 years ago. Of course, as was noted, no effort was made to endorse the Biblical view of a 6,000-year-old earth. That was not their goal, especially so given that they are atheists.

However, shocking to the anthropological community of researchers, the authors conclude that ancient civilizations were comprised of humans with the same sophistication and intelligence as exists today. There has not been any “sociological” evolutionary process at work ... at least not within the last 25,000 years.



Sadly, most declared Christians who do have access to the Truth of the Bible, do not have faith in their Scriptures.



And, before that time, there is no evidence found to support any view at all in their estimation. As already said, “shocking.”

To give credit where due, it is mentioned that Claude Levi-Strauss, a well-known anthropologist of the mid-twentieth century, was one of the very few to take seriously the idea that early humans were our intellectual equals today.

To conclude, not only were the timelines adopted by the authors much shorter than what is the general consensus among pro-evolutionary researchers, but also, they concluded that “ancient man” (who purportedly lived as much as millions of years before) was much more sophisticated than is believed. They were not cavemen nor unreasoning beasts ... nor were all societies solely comprised of the “hunter gatherers” referenced earlier. No doubt, there did exist some hunter gatherers ... as continues to this day! However, one would not therefore conclude that the entire world lives this way today. Likewise, this would have been the case thousands of years ago.

Interesting Olive Tree Marker

When did agricultural-based societies occur on earth—thousands of years ago, or perhaps millions? Consider a recent discovery that leads to the conclusion that olive trees were first domesticated in the Jordan Valley 7,000 years ago. Since olive trees did not naturally grow there, the researchers reasoned that they must have been planted by humans. The leader of the study, Dr. Dafna Langgut, stated that this is the earliest evidence of the olive’s domestication anywhere in the world (*Science Daily*, June 16, 2022).

This discovery raises some inconvenient facts for evolutionary anthropologists, as they have trapped themselves with the a priori view that “hunter gatherers” lived a long time ago ... even millions of years ago. Directly contrary to this, there now is evidence that domestication did not take place any earlier. This archaeological finding greatly shortens the historical timeline ... surreptitiously closing in on the time span of the “Young Earth” view.

When Atheists Support the Biblical View

As already observed, most archaeologists, anthropologists, Assyriologists, and a host of other specialists, must resort to fantasy when seeking support for their long-dated theories.

Why? One must note that these professionals are essentially mostly atheists. They deny metaphysical perspectives ... most certainly Creationism. Therefore, they have open to them only atheism or agnosticism to support their worldview. Most certainly, they will be inclined to adapt their

views to fit their evolutionary model (which is also unproven). Aligning these atheistic perspectives, it is assumed that social prehistory must therefore also fit into the evolutionary models.

It is remarkable the “faith” that these scholars exhibit in holding on to their faulty “existential” views. Sadly, most declared Christians who do have access to the Truth of the Bible, do not have faith in their Scriptures.

Letting the Bible Speak

As already disclosed, it is always enjoyable to observe secular scholars inadvertently disproving unbiblical theories (e.g., evolution) that may have prevailed as “truth” for quite some time. For example, a recent scientific study thoroughly disproved the evolutionary theory that random genetic mutations provide novel code for genetic advances and natural selection. In layman’s terms, this says that accidental (or random) genetic mutations do not benefit genetic advances.

Mutations cannot ... and do not ... lead to creation of beneficial new genetic information. These findings may not change anyone’s mind about the veracity of Creation. Nevertheless, the scientist conducting this study at least allowed science to speak factually and literally.

Thoughts to Ponder

Reading *The Dawn of Everything*, we were struck by the preponderance of references to Jewish scholars. Jews, of course, have more often than not proven to be great and gifted scholars.

However, please ponder this: Why is it that the very recipients of the Scriptures—the Jews—are so often at the forefront of any agnostic theory or God-denying philosophy? At least one of the authors of

The Dawn of Everything is Jewish—Graeber. (We were not able to confirm Mr. Wengrow’s ancestry.)

However, crucially, the writings of the two authors certainly imply that they are atheists. As mentioned, in their book the authors also reference a large number of researchers and scholars who are Jewish and endorse atheism.

One would think it natural that those who identify as Jewish would not be atheistic. This would seem a contradiction in terms—an oxymoron. Apparently not. By some estimates, more than 50% of identifying Jews are atheists. They do not believe that there is a God. Their “Jewishness” may be defined ethnically or culturally ... but not as an adherent of Yahweh.

We appreciate good scholarship. However, no matter how highly regarded, if one does not have a fear of God and does not believe that He exists, one is a fool. So the Bible says ... no matter that one might be an academic of great renown. “The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God’” (Psalm 14:1a).

Says Paul, “[...] The people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption to sonship; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of the Messiah, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen” (Romans 9:4-5).

What prophetic significance should be drawn from this incredible situation with today’s Jews? Could it really be possible that 50% or more of all declared Jews are atheists? Several surveys yield similar results.

Satan is certainly rapidly advancing his strategy to annihilate the Jews and prevent the return of Jesus Christ—the Messiah. (MC)



The Resurrection Body

DR. RON J. BIGALKE

Extreme Makeover featured Ty Pennington and his design team helping families—who were experiencing some type of ongoing or recent difficulty—by completely remodeling their home to meet their needs in a better manner.

When a family was identified to receive a home renovation, the race against the clock would begin. Sometimes it would seem impossible for Pennington and his team to transform a house with so many problems into something desirable.

In a similar manner, it can be difficult to imagine “a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,” when “the earthly tent which is our house is torn down” (2 Cor 5:1). Continuing the closing thought of the previous chapter, Second Corinthians 5 contrasts the mortal “outer” person with the

glorified “inner” dimension of human existence (4:16).

For the present, a paradoxical situation exists for the one trusting in Christ Jesus for salvation. For instance, salvation has been granted to those believing the gospel message of God’s grace through faith. The Holy Spirit permanently indwells the believer as “a pledge” of his or her “inheritance,” resulting in “every spiritual blessing” (Eph 1:3, 14). However, the fullness of salvation has not been granted, which includes the resurrection of the body at the Messiah’s coming. For this reason, the outer being “is decaying, yet” the “inner” person “is being renewed day by day” (2 Cor 4:16). As the believer awaits the renewal of his or her physical existence at the resurrection, there is much comfort and joy in the present transformation of the inner person by the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Second Corinthians 5 uses the common ancient metaphor of a house in reference to the human body, for the purpose of assuring believers that their earthly constitution—though subject to decay and eventually death—will “be clothed with our dwelling from heaven” (v. 2). For the present, “we groan, longing” for the redemption of the body (cf. vv. 2, 4; Rom 8:23). Nevertheless, there can be apprehension in dying because one does “not want to be unclothed but to be clothed” with the immortal (2 Cor 5:4).

Presently, the believer groans (sighs) in anticipation of the heavenly dwelling. The reason is that God “has set eternity” within the heart (Eccl 3:11). Similar to a monetary down payment, God gives the Holy Spirit “as a pledge” (i.e. deposit, promise)—the first payment—thus guaranteeing the reality of the resurrection (glorified) body. Although one can only imagine or ponder the dif-

ference between the earthly and the heavenly, the desire “to be pleasing” to the Lord is certain (2 Cor 5:9).

Romans 8:1 assures, “Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” “The judgment seat of Christ” (2 Cor 5:10), therefore, is concerned with a believer’s evaluation in terms of reward (cf. Rom 14:10; 1 Cor 9:24-25; 1 Thess 2:19; 2 Tim 2:5; Rev 22:12). While the idea that a person “may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (2 Cor 5:10), may not be the most pleasing of biblical topics, the Bible does certainly teach that the use of the human body is important to God. One never earns salvation through works; rather, a person’s good deeds give evidence of faith (trust) in God.

Having mentioned the present weak condition of the human body (4:16), in contrast to the “eternal weight of glory” (v. 17), Scripture gives attention to the tremendous changes that will occur with the resurrection (glorification) of the body. Life in the physical body is similar to living in an “earthly tent” (5:1). Paul was a tent-maker (Acts 18:1-3), and thus was well aware of how appropriately the “tent” metaphor reflected the present human body. A tent is a weak, impermanent structure without much external appeal; the glorified body, however, will be “eternal” and never suffer decay or weakness (cf. Phil 3:20-21). The eternal body “from God” will lack all the imperfections of the earthly body.

As a result of infirmities and pains associated with one’s mortality, there are groans until the redemption of the body (2 Cor 5:2, 4). Groaning is not wrong if the appropriate result is achieved. Present sufferings should cause one to long for the glorified body that God has promised. Death is

The Resurrection Body

All people will live forever somewhere, yet the destinies of the lost and the saved are vastly different.

separation of the soul (spirit) from the body, resulting in the cessation of natural life. Scripture refers to death in a threefold manner. *First*, physical death is separation of body and soul (Jas 2:26), and this is the most common use of the word “death.” Adam began to die physically (“return to the ground,” Gen 3:19; cf. Eccl 12:7) when he violated the prohibition to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam’s sin is imputed to all humanity (Rom 5:12-21), and thereby every person incurs the penalty of physical death as a consequence (Gen 2:17; Rom 5:12; 6:23; Jas 1:15).

Second, spiritual death is the separation of unregenerate humanity from God as a result of the sin nature. Adam’s soul was separated from God the moment he rebelled and his body began to die. Both physical death and spiritual death entered the world when Adam sinned. Physical birth results in physical life; however, only the second birth (rebirth) results in one being made alive (regenerated) spiritually. Spiritual death is overcome by spiritual regeneration (John 3:3-8; 1 Cor 2:12-13; Tit 3:5-7; 2 Pet 1:4).

Third, eternal death is the ultimate separation from God of those who die physically without ever being regenerated, or born again. In their natural state, human beings are “dead in trespasses and sins” (Eph 2:1) and are progressing toward this ultimate spiritual death, unless made alive together with Christ Jesus (v. 5). Eternal death is contrasted with eternal life (John 5:28-29; Rev 20:6), and is imposed as the “second death” subsequent to the judgment at the “great white throne” (Rev 20:11-15). The eternal destiny of the unregenerate is deter-

mined at the time of their physical death; they are lost in hell (hades) and will remain there until the second resurrection (v. 13), when they will eventually and eternally be confined to the lake of fire.

All people will live forever somewhere, yet the destinies of the lost and the saved are vastly different. While the unbeliever is confined to hades (a place of torment according to Luke 16:23), the believer is immediately united with Christ (2 Cor 5:1-10) in a place of bliss, known as heaven (2 Cor 12:2; Heb 12:23) or paradise (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor 12:4). Presently, if a believer dies, he or she will experience what is termed the intermediate state, which is a person’s condition between physical death and the resurrection of the body. The intermediate state is unnatural, because God created humanity to function and live within a body. For the believer, the intermediate state is an experience of conscious bliss in the presence of the Lord; however, for the unbeliever, it is a state of conscious torment. Contrary to popular thought, Christians do not become angels during the intermediate state, nor will they ever become angelic beings.

Believers will “inherit the imperishable” at the future resurrection of the body (1 Cor 15:50, 52). Presently, however, believers who have died prior to that time will be in a disembodied state. Scripture reveals that this intermediate state is preferable to earthly life (2 Cor 5:2-5) because, presently, the believer groans, “being burdened” not only with the stresses of life, but also with physical ailments and limitations. Scripture describes this disembodied state as being “naked” (v. 3) and “unclothed” (v. 4), which implies that it is an imperfect and tem-

There is no terror in death while believers long for the eternal body, since one of two possibilities exists: resurrection after death, or translation at the coming of the Lord.



porary existence; yet it is still preferable “to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord” (v. 8). To be “at home” with the Lord is “pleasing to Him” (v. 9), which is meaningless if the soul is in a state of unconscious sleep. The immaterial being of the believer will never lose consciousness: though the intermediate state is a disembodied, incomplete condition, the believer is conscious of being “at home with the Lord” and enjoying the bliss of that experience. Truly, “to depart and be with Christ . . . is very much better” (Phil 1:23).


Those who have died in Christ are not disembodied spirits (“found naked,” v. 3), because the Bible consistently regards humanity as unified beings. The body is not merely a house for the soul (the real person), as in Platonic thought. Platonic teachings are sometimes said to have unduly influenced the idea of a disembodied soul. Plato did believe in the immortality of the soul and the mortality of the body. At death, the body released the imprisoned soul for eternity. Christianity and Platonism agree that the soul continues to exist with-

out a body, yet the Bible distinctly teaches that humanity is incomplete without a body. The doctrine of the intermediate state is derived from the revelation of Scripture, not ancient Greek thought. Moreover, the human soul is not to be regarded as naturally mortal, as if a human being is a radical unity with no components (viz. when a person dies, so does the entire person: body and soul). God created humanity with immaterial and material components. To lack material substance is to be less than a complete human being.

There is no terror in death while believers long for the eternal body, since one of two possibilities exists: resurrection after death, or translation at the coming of the Lord. To die at present is to be temporarily disembodied (vv. 3-4, 8: “found naked,” “unclothed,” “absent from the body”). The believer’s hope is to receive the eternal body without having to experience death, which will be the reality of those who live until the coming of the Lord.

The believer’s anticipation is expressed as “longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven” (vv. 2-4), which is not wishing thinking because the Holy Spirit is given “as a pledge” for all that is needed in the future (v. 5). “To be clothed” means being translated from an earthly mortal body to an eternal immortal body. The disembodied state is superior to existing physical life, for “to be absent from the body . . . [is] to be at home with the Lord” (v. 8). The greater preference is to be “clothed” with a new body at the coming of the Lord.

(1242)

A man in a light-colored shirt and dark pants is climbing a white staircase. He is carrying a large, heavy, light-colored rock on his back. The staircase is made of white steps, and the background is a plain, light-colored wall. The overall scene suggests a journey of struggle or a heavy burden.

Suffering Tribulations and the Great Tribulation

Johannes Pflaum

Societal developments are worrying. Christians are consoling themselves with the fact that they'll be raptured before the situation gets really bad. Why this is a fallacy, even for those who believe in a pre-Tribulation Rapture.

John 16:33 contains an insightful message: "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

His conversion, the mercy of God he experienced, would become a model for everyone who would come to faith in the future: through grace alone, without works. In his own body, however, Paul not only

represented perfect grace, but also the suffering inherent to the Church experience. He repeatedly urged the believers: "Be imitators of me" (1 Cor 4:16).

The word "tribulation" could also be translated as "distress, need, fear," or "being under pressure." "World" doesn't refer to an amazing sunset in the Bahamas, or the beautiful snow-covered Alps. "World" represents humanity in its revolt and rebellion

This new tolerance no longer permits people to say that they find something bad or evil.

against God. Satan is the world ruler of fallen creation. The Lord Jesus didn't tell His disciples, "In the world you might have tribulation," or, "There might occasionally be tribulation." Rather, He unequivocally predicts that among a humanity separated from God, you will be "in need" or "under pressure." It's inescapably tied to being His follower.

This is the exact term used in Revelation 7 and Matthew 24 for the Great Tribulation, apart from the adjective "great." In other words, even if the Rapture should occur before the Great Tribulation, in this world Jesus' disciples can expect tribulation, fear, hardship, and distress for Christ's sake. That should protect us against a naïve expectation, a world seen through rose-colored glasses. It's also likely to mean that as we face the developments occurring around us, we shouldn't expect that freedom of belief will continue as before.

A reliable source reported on the circumstances of the Christian Church in China:

"This Western missions movement had brought many gifts to the Church, but they had also promoted the idea that the Church would escape the final period of tribulation. When the missionaries were



expelled [during the Cultural Revolution], local Christians believed that God had 'raptured' these missionaries to heaven and left the local Christians to suffer the Great Tribulation by themselves. Happily, God then used them to evangelize their own people.

"Now, after the worst period of suffering was subsiding, missionaries returned, to the astonishment of these local Christians. 'You told us that we were not going to experience the Great Tribulation,' the local Christians accused. 'We thought you had left us behind to endure this on our own. But God has used us. We do not need you here. We can do this task on our own now.' This was not the experience of all Christians in China, but it does illustrate how the idea of Christians escaping tribulation can leave us unready for sufferings we may genuinely face."

This account teaches us to be careful not to harbor unfounded expectations, or let our fear of suffering dictate our belief in the pre-Tribulation Rapture.

We shouldn't allow ourselves to be guided by pious, suffering-averse wishful thinking, and fall into the error of believing that since the Rapture will take place before the Tribulation, we'll probably retain our freedom of religion. Instead, we'd do well

Suffering Tribulations and the Great Tribulation

to prepare ourselves for the tribulations and afflictions of discipleship that our Lord spoke of.

One example from the Islamic world: A few years ago, I spoke with a brother who has good insight into the issue of the Rapture where Islamic countries are concerned. He told me that the question of whether the Rapture would occur pre- or post-Tribulation was typically a Western discussion. He said that the persecuted Christians in Islamic countries didn't concern themselves with it. They only cried out, "Lord, come quickly!" He then wondered what the point would be of telling the suffering church that their suffering wasn't so bad after all, because the Great Tribulation was yet to come. Our fellow believers in North Korea or Islamic states, know how real the word of our Lord in John 16:33 is. And in the liberal West, we must not fall into the piously disguised superstition that our freedom of religion is guaranteed.

Anyone going about their business in the world with their eyes open, can't miss how hostility and societal opposition to the gospel are increasing, while the air grows thinner and thinner under the totalitarian dictatorship of tolerance. Totalitarian dictatorship of tolerance— isn't that an oxymoron? No: Today's tolerance mindset specifies exactly what is tolerable and what isn't. For example: All religions are tolerated, but our Lord's absolute claims are rejected. Tolerance used to mean having firm opinions and being able to say what

you considered good and bad, right and wrong. But if someone else had a different view, you nonetheless accepted that they held that opinion. This new form of tolerance is different, as Josh McDowell and Bob Hostetler pointed out years ago in their book *The New Tolerance*. This new tolerance no longer permits people to say that they find something bad or evil. Instead, we should be affirming everything others choose to do (or at the very least not judging them).

Instead of fighting each other about when the Rapture is going to happen, we should be examining whether we will be in submission to the tribulations that following Jesus will bring into our lives today and in the future—even as we all share the natural reflex of avoiding or suppressing unpleasant things.

In his day, Nikolaus von Zinzendorf took in persecuted asylum-seekers from Bohemia and allowed them to build the village of Herrnhut. Even though they were now living in freedom, he knew that they would still suffer afflictions for Jesus' sake, which he reflected in his hymn *Jesus Guide Our Way*. He took up the theme from John 16:33 in its second stanza:

When we danger meet
Steadfast make our feet;
Lord, preserve us uncomplaining
Mid the darkness round us reigning:
Through adversity lies our way to Thee.

This perspective stands in sharp contrast to the one suggested by modern worship

We can take heart because Christ has conquered the world. The victory is already won!

songs: that we're standing before the throne of God today, being overcome by His glory.

Our Lord has foretold that we will experience hardship, pressure, and fear in this world. We should be praying that the Lord will prepare us inwardly for the time when we will suffer for the sake of the faith: that He will make us stand firm and assent to it. Persevering through suffering and affliction doesn't happen effortlessly. We can't just power through on our own through sheer force of will. Our Lord tells us in John 16:33, that we will have tribulation in this world that remains separated from God. Of course, nobody wants that, which makes it all the more amazing that the verse continues by telling us that we should take heart! Not by being a Pollyanna and downplaying the affliction. Not that pain is enjoyable—God doesn't ask us to be masochists! And not because our plight will be resolved as soon as we want it to, or once we've become strong enough. It's for another reason entirely.

We can take heart because Christ has conquered the world. The victory is already won! In his *Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament*, Fritz Rienecker draws our attention to the fact that the victory is proclaimed as won, even though the disciples' suffering still lies ahead of them: “**νενικήκα** perf. **νικάω** to conquer. The perf. tense denotes an abiding victory.”

Our Lord speaks of giving His disciples His peace at the beginning of our key verse, and He says that they should take heart at the end of it. Because of our prosperity, we're inclined to think that we can only have peace and be of good cheer, so long as we continue to prosper and retain our freedom of belief. If we're doing well, we should praise God and sing psalms, as we're instructed in James. But in John 16:33, our Lord's peace and courage with regard to His victory, are inseparable from the pressures and hardships of a world separated from Him. So, we don't need to despair if our external freedoms should change. In John 16:33 we have a great promise, as well as encouragement that finds its power in the midst of hardships. Christ Himself accomplished the victory; and in the midst of distress, He will share in it with those who belong to Him. Even if the Rapture were to occur before the Great Tribulation, we as members of the Church of Jesus can still face persecution and suffering. In that respect, it appears that we're also facing a turning point. What comes next? Religious freedom's decades-long state of complacency, will give way to conditions more resembling that of the early Church: oppression. But, above all else, there is the great promise of the Lord's peace, precisely in times of distress. We can take heart that He has conquered and overcome the world.


(MR0322/1221)

WORLD FOCUS

UN

Global Population to Hit 8 Billion

The world's population is expected to reach eight billion on November 15, the United Nations forecast in a report that said India will surpass China as the most populous country on earth in 2023. That overall population milestone "is a reminder of our shared responsibility to care for our planet and a moment to reflect on where we still fall short of our commitments to one another," Secretary General Antonio Guterres said, without citing specifics.

 "This is an occasion to celebrate our diversity, recognize our common humanity, and marvel at advancements in health that have extended lifespans and dramatically reduced maternal and child mortality rates," he added.

The forecast by the U.N. Department of Economic and Social Affairs said the world's population is growing at its slowest pace since 1950.

It should hit 8.5 billion in 2030 and 9.7 billion in 2050, peaking at around 10.4 billion people in the 2080s before steadying at that level until 2100.

While a net drop in birth rates is observed in several developing countries, more than half of the rise forecast in the world's population in the coming

decades will be concentrated in eight countries, the report said.

It said they are the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines and Tanzania.

-www.cbsnews.com, 11 July 2022

Commentary: We have heard about overpopulation for many decades. Some prognosticators insisted that, by the year 2000, there would no longer be enough food to sustain the population. Others went off the rails, claiming that most countries will have standing room only. All of that proved to be wrong. Now the opposite is true; Japan, for example, is losing its population at an alarming rate.

OurWorldInData.org shows that in 1960, the world population was increasing at 2.2%; for 2100, the prognosis is less than half a percent. Virtually all developed, rich, industrialized nations are seeing a decline in population.

The arithmetic is very simple: more elderly people will depend on social subsidies, which are earned and paid for by the decreasing younger working generation.

Another important area to consider is the shortage of labor in the indus-



Muslims leave after offering prayers on Eid al-fitr at Jama Mosque in Ahmedabad, India Ajit Solanki/AP

trialized world. The temporary answer is more open borders and easing application systems for working visas in those countries. This results in the integration of multiple nationalities, creating a more global society.

According to WorldPopulationReview.com, in the developed world, here are the top 10 countries with the most foreign-born residents:

1. Luxembourg 47.6%
2. Australia 30.1%
3. Switzerland 28.8%
4. New Zealand 28.7%
5. Israel 22.6%
6. Canada 21.3%
7. Sweden 19.8%
8. Austria 19.3%
9. Germany 18.8%
10. USA 15.3%

(continued next page)

Population (continued from page 24)

What do foreign-born residents have in common? Bringing part of their culture, language, traditions, and customs into the new country. The result? A more truly global society than ever before.

Many ask, is this a conspiracy? The answer is a resounding yes, for we read in Revelation 17:13: “These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.” There are no exceptions; it speaks of the entire world, this very planet that is under the jurisdiction of the god of this world.

Here is what the devil offered to Jesus: “Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me” (Matthew 4:8-9). This pours cold water on slogans such as, “God’s Country ... One Nation Under God ... In God We Trust,” etc. Worship of the devil—in the form of Antichrist and his image—is the target, for which the whole world is now being increasingly prepared. Thus, the question: to whom do I belong? The

world or the Lord Jesus Christ?


7799

(See *How Democracy Will Elect the Antichrist*, Item #1064, \$17.95.)



SOUTH KOREA Adults Want to Work Until 73

Nearly 70 percent of South Korean senior citizens said they want to continue to work until the age of 73, a survey showed, amid rapid aging and a rise in life expectancy.

 When it comes to the main reason for hoping to work, 57.1 percent said they want to earn enough for living expenses. It showed 34.7 percent said they want to work as long their health conditions allow.

South Korea is grappling with demographic challenges from a chronically low birthrate and rapid aging.

The country is widely expected to become a super-aged society in 2025, in which the proportion of those aged 65 and older will hit 20 percent of the total population. The country became an aged society in 2017, as the portion of such people exceeded 14 percent.

The average life expectancy of South Korean babies born in 2020 reached 83.5 years, more than seven years longer than two decades ago.

-en.yna.co.kr, 26 July 2022

Commentary: This puts another nail in the coffin of the assumption that the world is overpopulated. The rich and super-rich countries seem to have the highest life expectancy. Why stay at home if you can work? But, why work? That question deserves multiple answers: one is to earn living ex-

penses, as aged Koreans say. Yet with an excellent social support system, there is little need for such. Another reason is to accumulate money in bank and investment accounts, which in most cases is again, not necessary. An additional reason would be to accumulate merchandise—things often not needed. When younger, people often decide in favor of merchandise, a comfortable life, savings accounts, etc. instead of children.

According to the Worldometers.info life expectancy ranking, South Korea is listed at number 11: 83.5 years (USA is 46th place: 79.1 years).

Speaking of merchandise, our minds are directed to the book of Revelation chapter 18: “And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate” (verse 19). 7805

(See *Exposing Mystery Babylon Part 2*, Item #1080, \$4.50.)

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HUNGARY

Orbán Argues for 'Unmixed Race'

Orbán idealized an “unmixed Hungarian race” while speaking at Baile Tusnad Summer University located in central Romania. He argued that Europeans should not mix with “non-Europeans.”

“We move, we work elsewhere, we mix within Europe,” he said. “But we don’t want to be a mixed race” or a “multiethnic” group, he added.

The conservative prime minister also argued that “the west is split in two,” according to *Daily News Hungary*.

Half, he said, are countries where European and non-European people intermingle. “Those countries are no longer nations,” he said. He did not name any specific nations but pointed to Western Europe, per the *Daily News Hungary*.



Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has objected to the EU's plans to ban Russian oil. SOPA Images/Getty Images

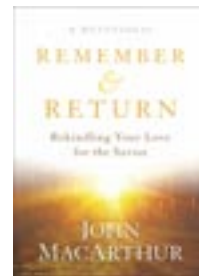
-*www.msn.com*, 24 July 2022

Commentary: These words of the Hungarian prime minister are eerily reminiscent of those of another figure from the past, whom we all know as the leader of the Third Reich.

What is even more disturbing is what appears later in the article, “He has been praised by some American conservatives but is considered an authoritarian nationalist who is vo-

cally anti-immigrant.” Another source states, “Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán will travel to the United States to take part in the 2022 Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in Texas” (*kafkadesk.org*).

This exemplifies why Christians should steer clear of endorsing a certain political agenda, as it only leads to a compromised faith before a watching world. As Scripture says, “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God” (Colossians 3:1).



7800

(By K. Farmer)

(See *Remember and Return*,

Item #2317, \$14.99.)

ISRAEL

1,877-Year-Old Roman Coin Discovered

A bronze Roman coin dating back 1,877 years with the symbol of the Cancer zodiac sign and a Moon goddess was discovered at Carmel Beach in Haifa by archaeologists from the Antiquities Authority.

This isn't the oldest Roman-era coin discovered. In fact, coins from the earlier Bar Kokhba revolt were found in Jerusalem two years ago. However, this coin was found in the wa-



The 1,877-year-old bronze Roman coin found in Israel's waters is seen being held. It depicts the Cancer zodiac sign and the moon goddess Luna.

(photo credit: DAFNA GAZIT/ISRAEL ANTIQUITIES AUTHORITY, YANIV BERMAN/ISRAELI ANTIQUITIES AUTHORITY)

ter, is in remarkably good condition and its engravings shed considerable light

on its origins and what it is meant to depict.

[...] The writing [tells] us exactly when and where the coin was minted: in year eight of the reign of Antoninus Pius, and where it was minted, Alexandria in Egypt.

Antoninus Pius was Roman emperor from 138 CE to 161 CE, so this would have been minted in 145 CE, 75 years after the destruction of the Second Temple.

Antoninus's image has been found on coins in Israel before. One such

(continued next page)

Roman Coin (continued from page 26)

coin was found in 2021 that also contains the image of Antoninus Pius, with the other side containing the image of the Syrian moon god Mên and the inscription “of the people of Geva Phillipi” and the date of the civic year 217, which would be 158 CE or 159 CE.

“These findings, which sunk into the abyss and disappeared from sight for hundreds and thousands of years, were preserved in an amazing way [...] and their discovery completes pieces of the historical puzzle of Israel’s history,” said IAA maritime archaeology unit director Yaakov Shavit.

“In the last decade, Israel has been changing its perception of the sea,” said IAA director Eli Escozido. “Now it is already clear that the sea is not the border of Israel, but is a significant part of it, in security, strategy and economics—and also in its heritage. It’s home to natural treasures and cultural assets that must be explored and protected.” The finding of this coin, Escozido said, is a “spectacular reminder” of the maritime archaeological survey.

-www.jpost.com, 25 July 2022

Commentary: It is striking that the image features the “Cancer zodiac sign and the moon goddess Luna.” This testifies that heathen nations were in charge of the land of Israel.

Zodiac signs originate with Babylonian astronomy—falsely called so, since in reality it’s astrology. While

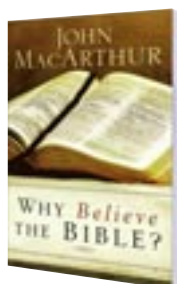
these two terms, astronomy and astrology sound similar, one simple way to remember the difference is that astrology has an “l,” which we can say stands for “lies.”

In over 500 BC, Daniel was commanded: “But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased” (Daniel 12:4). How long should the words be “shut up”? Verse 9 gives the answer: “And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.”

The words were revealed when the Word became “flesh, and dwelt among us”; namely, the Word of God. Jesus proclaimed, “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12). That is the true light; that is true history. The discovery of this coin sheds light on foreign occupation of the Promised Land, but our Lord gives us the real history. Eternally valid are the words: “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36).

7804

(See *Why Believe the Bible?* Item #2292, \$14.)



WORLD

The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse

The powerful Old Testament image of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse has been repeatedly brought back into discussion when humanity has faced peril and war. Ezekiel and Zechariah have often been interpreted as describing the four horsemen as plague, war, famine and finally death.



RUSSIAN PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin arrives at the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics
(photo credit: CARL COURT/REUTERS)

Despite much that has happened, Europe and Russia have risen as powers and then crumbled repeatedly. It seems, finally, that this cycle of plague, war and famine will be the last of Western hegemony and the birth of a new world order, a new world order which will probably bring back the balance of power to Asia and Africa, which were the centers of global wealth and power long before the industrial revolution.

-www.jpost.com, 26 June 2022

Commentary: While these excerpts from the *Jerusalem Post* article emphasize

(continued next page)

Four Horsemen (continued from page 27)

the prophets Ezekiel and Zechariah, our attention is focused on Revelation 6. The Lamb opens the seven-sealed book and reveals “a white horse ... he went forth conquering, and to conquer.” We know this process was implemented throughout human history. The second seal reveals a red horse: “power was given...to take peace from the earth, and ... kill one another.” That too has happened throughout recorded history. The third seal unveils a black horse: an announcement of famine. And, after opening the fourth seal, a pale horse emerges, “...and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth” (verse 8).

While most commentaries insist that this is future, our understanding is that this describes the entire history of humanity from the beginning to the end.

We take particular notice of the revelation of the second seal, the rider on the red horse. What is his given authority? “To take peace from the earth ... that they should kill one another ... there was given unto him a great sword” (verse 4). That indeed is nothing new and applicable to all of human history.

“Take peace from the earth” took place in the Garden of Eden, when Adam and Eve were expelled because of sin. “They should kill one another” is not unusual either; hundreds of millions of people have been killed by wars throughout human history. Where did it all start? When Cain killed his brother Abel.

In our time, the world’s military powers have received “a great sword” as never before in history. What will be the result? The appearance of the Lamb of God, but this time “the wrath of the Lamb” will be evident, as we can read in Revelation 6:16. The leaders of the world, the rich and the poor, the free and the bound, will pray to created material, “mountains and rocks,” to protect them from the wrath of the Lamb.

7784

(See *Are We Really Living in the Last Days?* Item #2277, \$17.95.)



Generous Childcare Benefits

Rich countries contribute an average of \$14,000 per year for a toddler’s care, compared with \$500 in the U.S.



Typical 2-year-olds in Denmark attend child care during the day, where they are guaranteed a spot, and their parents pay no more than 25 percent of the cost. That guaranteed spot will remain until the children are in after-

school care at age 10. If their parents choose to stay home or hire a nanny, the government helps pay for that, too.

The U.S. spends 0.2 percent of its G.D.P. on child care for children 2 and under—which amounts to about \$200 a year for most families, in the form of a once-a-year tax credit for parents who pay for care.

The other wealthy countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development spend an average of 0.7 percent of G.D.P. on toddlers, mainly through heavily subsidized child care. Denmark, for example, spends \$23,140 annually per child on care for children 2 and under.

Among the 38 nations in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the United States is second only to Luxembourg on education spending for elementary school through college. But Americans have long had mixed feelings about whether young children should stay home with family or go to child care.

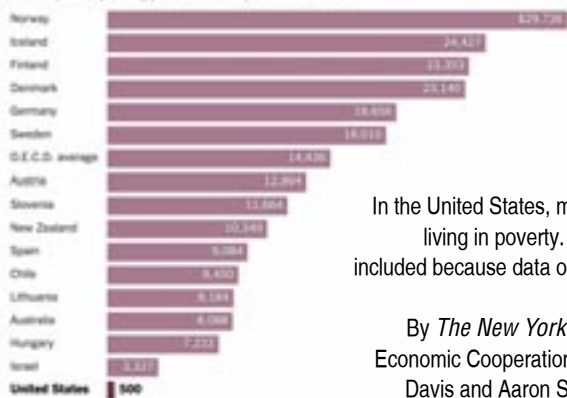
Some states and cities offer public preschool, starting at age 3 or 4. But just seven states (and the District of Columbia) serve more than half of 4-year-olds, and 14 states have no public preschool or serve less than 10 percent of children, according to the National Institute for Early Education Research.

The situation is much different in many rich countries. In Europe, new parents have paid leaves of 14 months, on average, and it’s common for chil-

(continued next page)

How Much Governments Spend on Child Care for Toddlers

Annual public spending per child on early childhood care.



In the United States, most of the spending is on families living in poverty. Some O.E.C.D. countries are not included because data on their spending was unavailable.

By *The New York Times* | Source: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and Elizabeth Davis and Aaron Sojourner for the Hamilton Project.

dren to start public school at age 3. (In the preschool years, the focus is on play—toddlers aren't sitting at desks doing worksheets.)

In Germany, children can attend forms of “kita” [daycare] from early months through elementary school. In some places, parents pay tuition based on their income, and in others, including Berlin and Hamburg, it is free. In France, parents of babies and toddlers receive tax credits of up to 85 percent of the cost of attending child care centers called crèches or hiring home-based “childminders,” before public preschool begins at age 2 or 3.

-www.nytimes.com, 6 October 2021

Commentary: Why, we may ask, are these European countries so supportive of family? One of the often-quoted reasons is the decline in the birth rate. In other words, a few decades down the road, governments will lack the tax base to pay the generous retirement benefits for the aged. However, that may be overcome by

other means such as utilizing robots and artificial intelligence.

In several instances, we have called attention to the population decline in super-rich countries. It is our understanding that this will contribute to the increase of imported labor from other countries—thus molding an even stronger global connection, which ultimately will lead to a one-world society.

7806

(See *Progressive Globalism*, Item #1092, \$5.50.)




USA

Face Scanning at Airport



American Airlines said that customers with PreCheck can go through security checkpoints at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport with a face scan and phone app instead of showing their driver's license or passport.

 The airline said that it intends to expand the test to airports in Miami, Phoenix, Washington, D.C., and elsewhere later this year.

At DFW Airport, passengers will need PreCheck, the expedited-screening service sold by the Transportation Security Administration, and an American Airlines mobile app to use the facial-recognition technology.

Delta Air Lines and JetBlue Airways have used biometric technology for boarding at other airports.

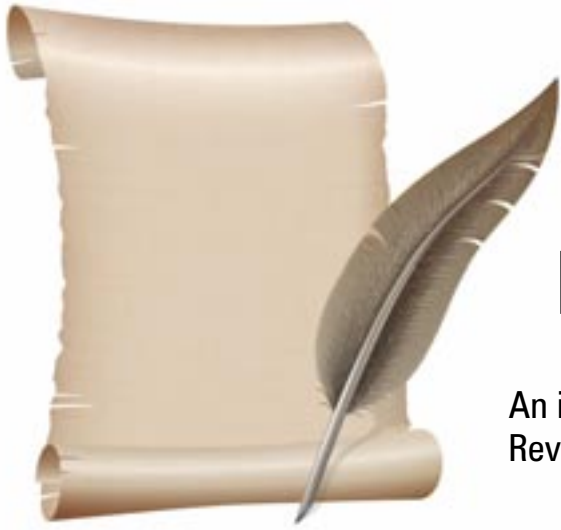
-apnews.com, 22 June 2022

Commentary: We have previously noted the change in government identity methods over the years. It started with the passport. The officer responsible would check the details in the document and compare the picture with the person. That was later replaced by the passport being scanned by a computer. Now it seems those things have become outdated. Face scanning is the future. When every person on earth has been scanned, crime can be virtually wiped out, corruption can be eliminated, and security established as never before.

Where will it lead? Total control. Merchandise, in conjunction with religion, will in the end cause Revelation 13 to become a reality: “And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads” (verse 16).

7782

(See *Revelation 13: Satan's Last Victory*, Item #1067, \$11.95.)



The Purpose of the Letter to Sardis

An interpretation of the last book of the Bible. Part 32.
Revelation 3:1-6.

Wim Malgo (1922-1992)

In the Old Testament, people were given names that were a reflection of their nature, their character, or their mission. For example, Israel was called “prince of God”; Eve was called “the mother of all living,” etc. The name Sardis (“escaping”) indicates a church that has escaped from the world, but in appearance only. If we belong to the Church of Jesus, then our name (the designation “church,” “assembly,” “fellowship,” etc.) communicates that we are both a fountain of living water and a spiritual stronghold against all Satanic powers. The church in Sardis appeared to be these things, and yet they were dead. How terrible!

This is also our current plight. The big lie has numbed many “Sardis Christians.” If you pretend something is true for long enough, or keep repeating a lie, you start believing it’s true. And then you don’t respond to the preaching of the Word or spiritual rebuke, assuming that it can’t possibly apply to you. This kind of person is very sure of their standing, in the same way that a dead

man doesn’t react when touched or even pushed. “Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.”

But it’s even more moving that the Lord Jesus Christ—who is life itself—confronts this dead and stiffened church as the Lord in whom dwells the fullness of the Spirit. This is how He meets us. He also approaches Israel in the same way, because they are still spiritually dead. Ezekiel 37:9b says, “Come from the four winds, O breath [Spirit], and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.” That is the intention of the exalted Lord for Israel and for us: that the dead would awaken to new life.

This concept has a wonderful parallel passage in Ephesians 5:14, where the Lord says through Paul, “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” So, the intent of the letter to Sardis is to bring the dead back to life. “Strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die” (Rev 3:2a). It’s clear that the Lord means spiritual death.

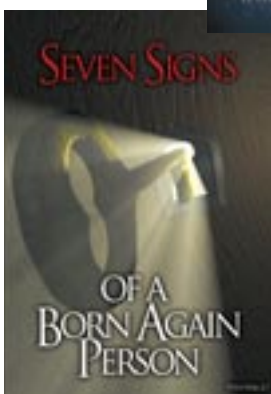
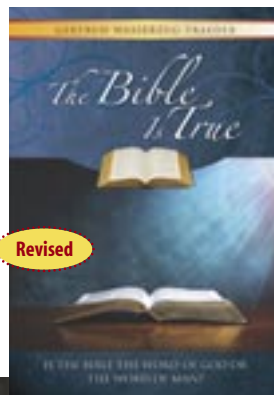
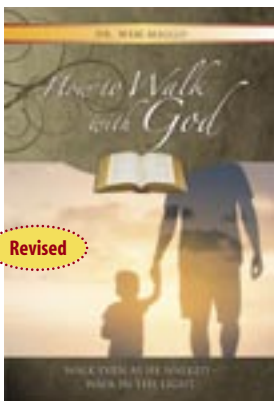
If you pretend something is true for long enough, or keep repeating a lie, you start believing it's true.

Everyone who is born again to a living hope and belongs to the Church of Jesus, is called to reveal life. But for many of us, our true condition is in conflict with the very essence that is life. We often flicker instead of beam, causing people to crash into the rocks instead of finding the safe haven of salvation. People get confused about our nature because the Lord Jesus' gentleness, humility, and clarity aren't visible, but rather our opinionated, ambitious, proud selves.

The church in Sardis was apparently unaware of the big lie they were living, just as many people now don't know that their life of faith is an illusion and thus a lie. Israel is one step ahead of us in its self-awareness

here, as Ezekiel 37:11b records: "Behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts." This is saving self-knowledge; it means, in other words, "We who were redeemed by the blood of the Lamb from Egypt are lost; it's over for us."

The Lord builds on this self-awareness and begins to bring Israel back to life through the Spirit of life from above. Until we know we're at rock bottom, the Lord cannot give us life. But whoever confesses, "I have a name that I live, but am dead," and lowers himself and struggles to enter through the narrow gate, receives eternal life. (MR0322/1224)



HOW TO WALK WITH GOD

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GERMANY

How a Phone Call Changed a Family's Life BY ELIA MORISE

“Nothing can hinder the Lord from saving by many or by few” (1 Sam 14:6b).

A German sister in the faith once asked me to translate for the prenatal visit of a Muslim woman who was three months pregnant. The woman, a mother of three, spoke no German; the doctor spoke no Arabic. But the doctor needed to explain to her that her heart was too weak for childbirth due to her pacemaker. An abortion was advisable from a medical perspective, but the woman definitely wanted to carry her baby to term. I was able to explain the different options over the phone, and then pray with the woman at her request. I also spoke to her husband (as is part of our Middle Eastern culture) and kept in touch with the family afterwards.

Some time later, I was invited to a weekend service in a town in the north of Germany. It included visits to Arab families, and so I had my GPS guide me to one of these addresses. It was Saturday evening by the time I entered the house, where the father, mother, three children, and a baby daughter were waiting for me. The woman placed the baby in my arms, which both delighted and confused me—this is unusual in our culture. Then the husband told me that this was the child

I had been praying for. I was with the family I had translated for during the doctor's visit! I was so happy, especially when I saw some of the literature from our ministry on their table. It was a wonderful evening of delicious physical as well as spiritual food. The next day, the entire family attended the service, and the German sister who had originally contacted me gave a testimony:

“One evening I heard ERF [a German Christian radio station], and for the first time I heard an Arabic preacher speaking German. I immediately wrote to the network, and they put me in touch with Elia. He was willing to talk with me, and long story short, he was the first Arab Christian that this couple had contact with...

“Our congregation prayed that this woman would survive and be able to continue to care for her family, and God answered our prayers. The pregnancy progressed despite major complications (sometimes the bureaucratic ones were worse than the physical ones). The child was able to be born healthy and at full term, and the mother couldn't be doing better ... To top it off, in the midst of this crisis, the parents decided to follow Jesus. That's the most beautiful thing!” (MR0522)



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Just for You!

BONES DISCOVERED IN AFRICA



It appears that mankind's evolutionary history needs to be rewritten: bones unearthed in Africa suggest that *Homo erectus* may not have descended from *Homo habilis*. Evolutionary theory claims that modern man, known as *Homo sapiens*, descended from *Homo habilis*.

By Peter Malgo

But a research group claims that this theory no longer holds up, and that only *Homo erectus* is a direct ancestor to modern man. And so, it turns out that the foundation constructed to support evolutionary theory is severely imbalanced. For that matter, it's preposterous that the whole structure of human development now has to be reformulated because of a single jawbone. How embarrassing for Darwin.

Many scientists privately acknowledge that science cannot explain how life began. Darwin hadn't the faintest idea of the vast complexity that even the most fundamental levels of life possess. In recent years, intensive research has been carried out in the field of human genetics. Comparing the genetic patterns of humans in all parts of the world, resulted in unequivocal evidence that all humans share a common ancestor. That is, all humans who have ever lived inherited their DNA from a common source. The

results were presented in a 1988 *Newsweek* article entitled "The Search for Adam and Eve." The studies it covers were based on a type of mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA), genetic material that is only passed on by women. Reports of research into male DNA in 1995 point to the same conclusion: "Researchers suggest that virtually all modern men—99.9 percent of them, says one scientist—are closely related genetically and share genes with one male ancestor, dubbed 'Y-chromosome Adam,'" as *U.S. News & World Report* put it.

It's obvious that people are trying to find out where they come from. Along with evolution's fatal errors, more serious approaches can also be found, such as research in the field of DNA. It's a remarkable thing that Adam and Eve can be "proven" in this way! But therein lies the problem: Any science dealing with the past, which excludes the possibility of Creation from the outset, won't find the




Just for You!

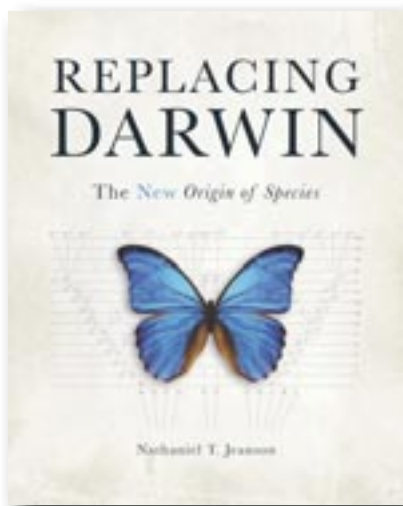
truth but will fall prey to lies. Undeniable truth can only be found in the Bible: “Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image [not *Homo erectus!*]’ ... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them” (Gen 1:26-27).

The lie of evolutionary theory begins with some single-celled organisms. After a number of mutations, apes are said to have been formed from them, from which humans are said to have emerged at some point. The book of Romans describes this lie as follows: “they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator...” (1:25). Homosexual love is one of the things that arose as a direct result of this lie. Scripture then says: “For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and

the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error” (vv. 26-27).

It’s a sad truth that even some Christians become unsure when confronted by people who are critical of the biblical story of Creation. In light of new discoveries of bones and their (supposed) age, skeptical questions suddenly arise such as, “Could there have been other prehistoric people before Adam and Eve?”

Dear friends, the Bible speaks of Adam as the first man in many places. God created him! He also created you and me. Over 3,000 years ago, the psalmist praised the Creator God with the words, “I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well” (Ps 139:14). 



The Origins Puzzle Comes Together

Darwin’s theory of evolution may be one of science’s “sacred cows,” but genetics research is proving it wrong. Changing an entrenched narrative, even if it’s wrong, is no easy task. *Replacing Darwin* asks you to consider the possibility that, based on genetics research, our origins are more easily understood in the context of ... In the beginning ... God, with the timeline found in the biblical narrative of Genesis. There is a better answer to the origins debate than what we have been led to believe. Let the revolution begin!

REPLACING DARWIN ITEM #2331 • 335 pgs. • **Hardcover**

~~\$24.99~~ **Sale \$20** Author: Nathaniel Jeanson



Part 1: The Testimony of Rivka (Rebekah) Lazarocici

*I wrote this testimony in Rivka's words: please understand that her native language is not English.

By David Phillips COO (Chief Operating Officer)

My name is Rivka (Rebekah in Hebrew), and I was born into a traditional Jewish family in Romania during 1944. By the Lord's grace, I accepted Yeshua as my Lord and Savior in 1962.



I didn't know the Bible, as Romania was under a communist regime at that time. So, of course at school they didn't teach us religion, but the socialist/communist doctrine. At home I was taught Jewish tradition, but I never understood the history of my people or anything about the Bible.

Bucharest, where she lived. She only introduced me as being "the girl that is in the same room." She said they were her friends, but I didn't know then that they were from the same church and were also believers.

I had polio when I was one and a half years old. As a result, I later had to go to a sanatorium to receive treatment. During this time, the Lord provided that I was put into the same room as a gentile girl, who was a born-again believer in Yeshua. She knew I was Jewish, and so she didn't dare speak to me about the Lord Jesus; she only gave me some hints, which I couldn't do anything with. One day, she received a visit from some young people from

Beginning Steps in Faith

When I had to go back to my hometown where I was studying, she remained at the sanatorium. But in the winter of 1962, after she returned home, she invited me to spend the winter holidays with her and her family. It was New Year's Eve, and I thought they were going to celebrate it in the typical worldly way: by dancing, drinking and being merry. To my big surprise, they



did something completely different. They didn't drink wine; they didn't smoke; instead, they read the Bible, preached the Word, sang hymns, and were very, very happy! I didn't know how to handle all of this.

I heard them singing about the Lord Jesus in their hymns, and after the service finished, my friend Andriana asked me, "What did you think about what you saw and heard at the gathering?" I answered, "What do you mean?" and she replied, "Well, that we are calling each other brother and sister." So, I told her, "Well, I thought that's what you did in this part of Bucharest." Actually, I was lying because I saw many people came from the surrounding villages, so I thought maybe they did this because they were farmers and not people from the town—but I was ashamed to tell her this.

Then she asked, "What did you think about us talking about the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God?" I told her I thought that was because they weren't Jewish. She followed this statement by asking me, "Do you believe in God?" I told her that yes, I believed there was a God. Then she asked me, "Do you pray to Him?" "Well," I replied, "Sometimes when I have a toothache I ask, 'Oh God, please help me.'" That was prayer to me.

The next evening, her parents came into our room to pray with us. I prayed, but it was a hypocritical prayer because

it was more for their ears than for God's—I didn't know anything at this point. Later, Izzy, a Messianic Jew, came and began speaking to me about the Jewish people and the Lord Jesus Christ. I asked him, "What, do you want to convince me that there is a paradise, hell and all that?" But afterwards, I went to a meeting with them and I started to believe—it was something very simple; not enough, but it was the beginning.

I really wanted to have my own Bible, but I couldn't because it was very difficult to own a Bible in Romania. Someone had a New Testament for sale, but I didn't have money of my own (as I was living with my parents and didn't have an income). So, I left Bucharest to go back to my hometown where I was attending school, but I didn't know where to find believers there. One of the young people in Bucharest had told me there was a certain family by the name Barbun, and they had a daughter who was about my age—but that's all I knew. I knew that in an adjoining class, there was a girl with the name Barbun, so I thought maybe it was her. I wanted to see her, and so I asked a girl who was sitting on the same bench as me to go along, and she agreed. Little did I know what God had in store for me with this request.



God Provides

The girl beside me was Ziforah, and I thought this name was strange. I didn't know then that Ziforah in Romanian was Ziporah, the wife of Moses. Anyway, I went with her to this other girl in the adjoining class, and asked her if she had any brothers or sisters. She told me that no, she was the only daughter, so I knew she wasn't the one I was looking for.

On the way back to our class, God brought to my mind that there was something special about Ziforah. Why? Because being communist, it wasn't fashionable to be religious. I remembered the other students would make fun of her on Sundays when they had to do voluntary schoolwork, but she didn't come because she was religious or something. So, after the Lord brought this to my mind I asked, "Ziforah, tell me, do you have a Bible at home?" She said, "Yes." I asked, "Do you have hymnals as

well?" I knew that in Romania, the believers used to have hymnbooks at home, as they didn't always have the liberty of going to the meetings. She replied, "Yes." I was so happy!! Turns out, the girl sitting beside me on the same bench knew about faith! She wasn't a believer, but she was from a believing family and her parents were believers. They had 10 children, with Ziforah being the youngest. I knew she would know when and where the meetings were, so I asked her to take me to them. She agreed and it was very, very nice!

I then discovered another believing girl at my school, and she used to bring me Scripture verses written on paper. It was such a blessing to me, as I couldn't own my own Bible.

Stay tuned to read what happened with Rivka, a born-again Jewish Holocaust survivor, in the next issue.



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“And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed thereupon: in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening: for the Lord their God shall visit them, and turn away their captivity” (Zephaniah 2:7).

BY ARNO FROESE

Ashkelon (or Ashqelon) harbors an ancient history—Britannica says 2000 BC. Like most cities in the land of Israel, it experienced manifold invasions; for example, the Egyptians, later the Assyrians, and then the Babylonians. The city was also conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 BC.

Much of modern Ashkelon was an Arab settlement named Al-Majdal. After the Israel-Arab War in 1948-49, Arabs left the area or were forced to. It was resettled with Jewish immigrants mainly from the Soviet Union. Today’s population reveals the interesting number of 144,000 (estimate for 2019). Of course, this reminds us of Revelation 7, where 144,000 from the twelve tribes of Israel are sealed, to become untouchable for the enemy. Obviously, this is just a coincidental number, which continues to change day by day and does not relate to the documented sealing that appears in that chapter.

The Remnant

In the above introductory Scripture, we clearly notice that the area is designated “for the remnant of the house of Judah.” This is part of the progressive fulfillment that was proclaimed by the prophet Isaiah: “And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather

together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth” (Isaiah 11:12).

When researching the origin of Ashkelon’s population, we notice that the majority came from the north country—the former Soviet Union. The prophet Jeremiah confirms this when he proclaims: “But, The Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land” (Jeremiah 23:8).

This is not surprising when we realize that 37 signers of Israel’s Declaration of Independence were members of the trade union (Moetzet HaAm). Most came from the former Soviet Union, except three who were born in Germany, one in Israel, one in Denmark, and one in Yemen. It was on 13 May 1948 at 16:00 [4:00 pm] that “Ben Gurion opened the ceremony by banging his gavel on the table, prompting a spontaneous rendition of Hatikvah, soon to be Israel’s national anthem.” We notice the absence of spiritual content.

When the 37 members of the Moetzet HaAm debated the details of the Declaration of Independence, the minority—two rabbis, Shapira and Yehuda Leib Maimon—wanted the inclusion of God in the last section of the document. But it was strongly opposed by the secularist Mapam party, of

which Ben Gurion was the leader. They settled with the phrase “Rock of Israel.”

Progressive Fulfillment

When carefully reading the introductory Scripture, we notice the succession: the Jews come to Ashkelon, they build houses, establish farms, and “lay down in the evening”—that means rest and security. Only then, “the Lord their God shall visit them.” Next comes the direct intervention of God. Here the *Tanakh* reads, “for the Lord their God shall remember them, and turn their captivity.”

This succession corresponds to the prophet Ezekiel, who is commanded by God to “prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord” (Ezekiel 36:1). First He speaks to the topographical land of Israel, and then He gives the reason in verse 8: “ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come.”

Later in verse 26, we see the same succession again, but spiritually: “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.” The Jews experienced a change of heart: they received a new spirit. But that’s not the end, for verse 27 proclaims: “And I will put my spirit

within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.” Israel is destined to receive His Spirit.

While we observe Israel’s progression as a nation and the continuous change they experienced—often for the worse—we must keep in mind the end result; namely, the pouring out of the Spirit of God upon His people.

Modern Ashkelon

This city, located on the coastal plain of the Mediterranean, is 12 kilometers north of Gaza and 2 kilometers from the ancient Ashkelon site. Diverse economic activity has been established, starting with the Trans-Israeli Pipeline, bringing petroleum products from Eilat to the Ashkelon Port. Also, the Ashkelon Sea Water Reverse Osmosis (SWRO) desalination plant is the largest in the world. Many foreign companies have established their industry there, including Coca-Cola, beginning in 1968.

In summary, hope for the future is not limited to Israel, but is even more imminent for the Church, consisting of born-again believers who know their destiny: “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19). (MC)

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Note: All letters will be answered by the Executive Editor, Arno Froese.

WHY MIDNIGHT CALL?... DECEIVE THE VERY ELECT... USA FUTURE

Why Midnight Call?

Dear Sir,

Why do you call your magazine *Midnight Call*? Seems somewhat strange. Actually, my Bible says “midnight ... cry” (Matthew 25:6).

-M. Spradlin, AZ

Answer: It was in 1955 when our founder, Wim Malgo, hosted a 15-minute radio program. The only airtime available, covering virtually all of Europe and beyond, was 12 midnight.

Incidentally, when we started *Midnight Call* in the US in 1968, we knew of a publication called “Midnight Cry”; subsequently, our choice was “Midnight Call.”

Deceive the Very Elect

I have a question that bothers me. In the Bible, it clearly says that even the elect will be deceived: “For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect” (Matthew 24:24). Are these elect

Christians, Jews, or Gentiles? Please answer.

-M. Shamblin, NC

Answer: Matthew 24:24 refers to the people of Israel in the first place. Carefully note the words, “if it were possible.”

The world at large was, is, and always will be deceived, but Satan targets the “elect.” For Israel, it would be the 144,000 (see Revelation 7); for the Gentiles, the Tribulation Church. Both groups are sealed and untouchable for the enemy.

Today, this deception concerns the Church. Satan wants to hinder the completion of the Church; thus, he targets believers. He will fail, because we are on the side of the Victor.

USA Future

Dear Mr. Froese,

Thank you for your inspirational ministry and your many publications, which I’ve enjoyed over the years.

The Bible focuses on the Jewish nation in the Holy Land; the purpose and arrival of the Messiah; and finally, the establish-

ment of God's kingdom on earth for those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

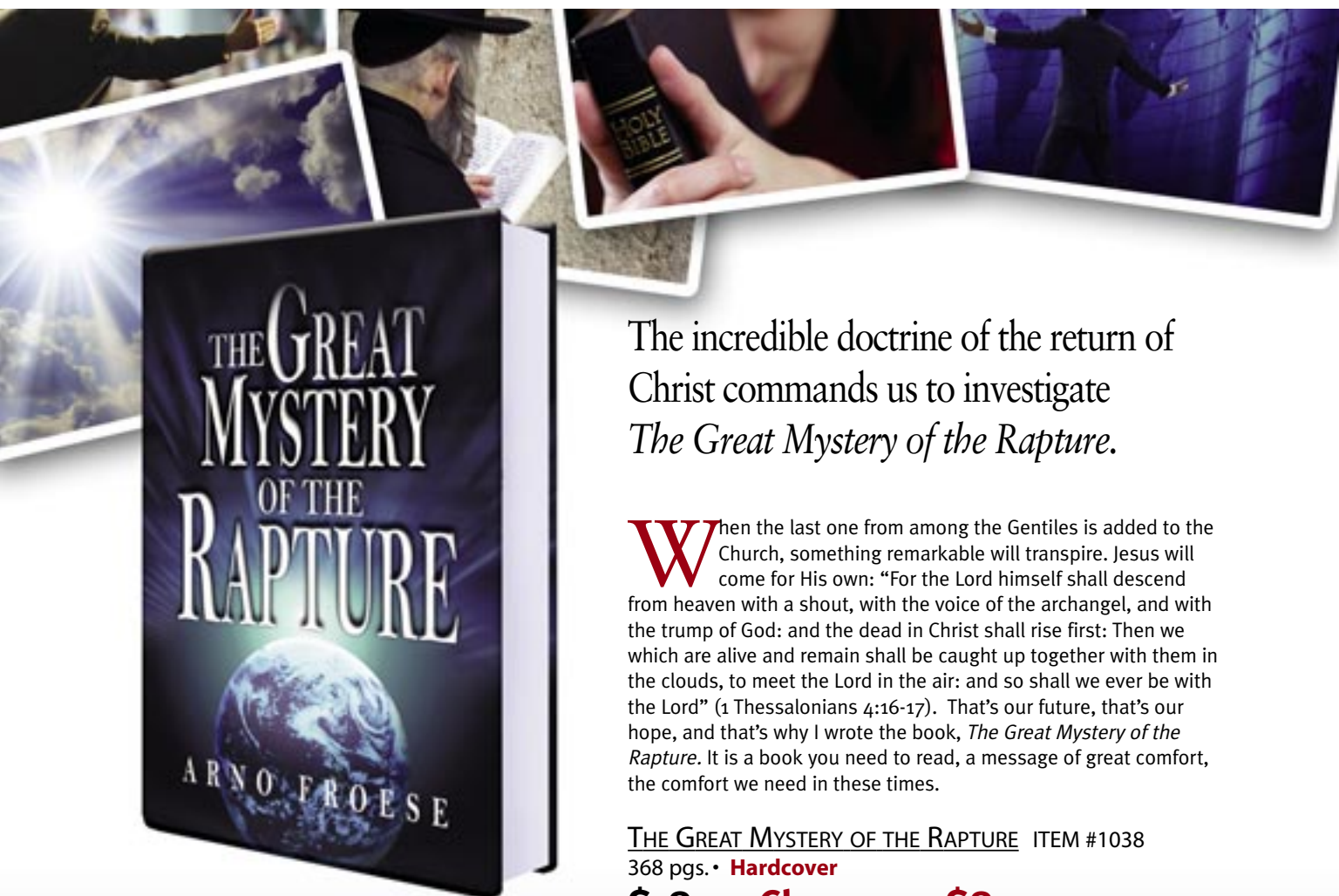
My question is, of all the nations mentioned involving the latter times, why are the United States—the most powerful and evangelistic in all of history—and China—probably the most powerful and fearful nation today—not specifically named in the Bible?

-K.Tarango, UT

Answer: There are a number of countries mentioned in the Bible that are located in Africa, Europe,

and Asia. The rest of the nations of the world are descendants from these three continents; thus, no need to name them in Scripture.

When it comes to the USA, China, or anywhere else, Daniel 2:44 applies: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." That's the end of all nations. Second Peter 3:12 describes the very end, but verse 13 is for believers: "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (MC)



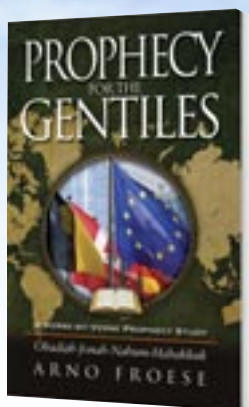
The incredible doctrine of the return of Christ commands us to investigate *The Great Mystery of the Rapture*.

When the last one from among the Gentiles is added to the Church, something remarkable will transpire. Jesus will come for His own: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). That's our future, that's our hope, and that's why I wrote the book, *The Great Mystery of the Rapture*. It is a book you need to read, a message of great comfort, the comfort we need in these times.

THE GREAT MYSTERY OF THE RAPTURE ITEM #1038
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Midnight Call's **September Resource Guide**



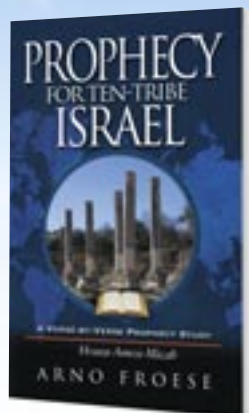
A Message for All People of All Times

We included the following four prophetic books for these reasons: Obadiah primarily speaks of judgment against Edom. There is no question about Jonah; he was sent to the Gentiles, and Nahum likewise thunders his message against Nineveh. While Habakkuk does speak of the deliverance of Judah, he also declares his message against the Chaldeans. However, the message of the prophets is applicable to all people of all times.

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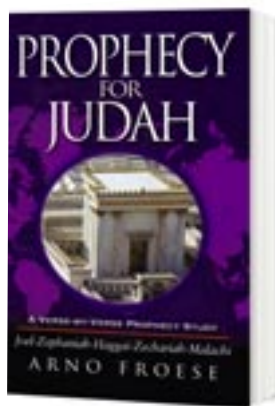
The ten-tribe Israel is distinctly different from Judah-Israel. We read, "So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day" (1 King 12:19). The three prophets, Hosea, Amos and Micah, expose Israel's sin in an unmerciful manner, which leads to God's declaration, "I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away" (Hosea 1:6b).

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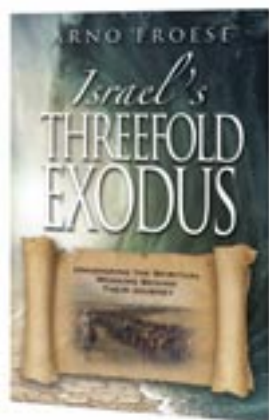
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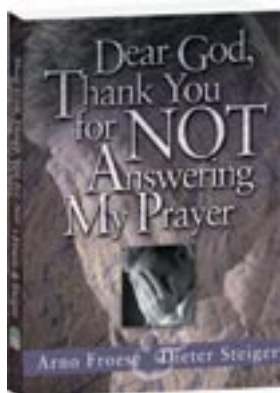
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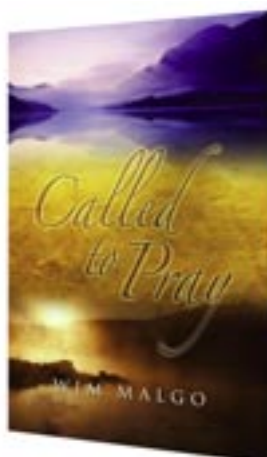
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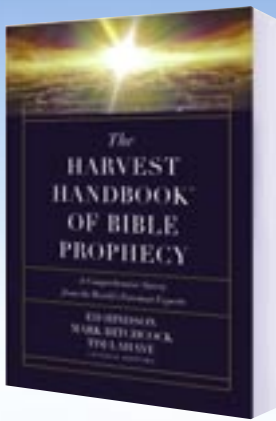
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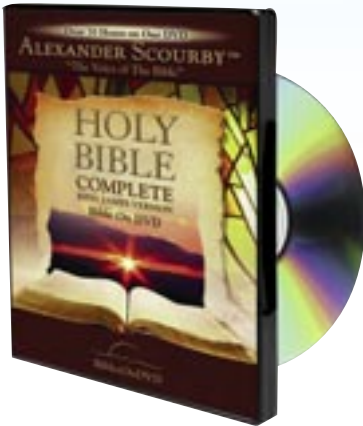
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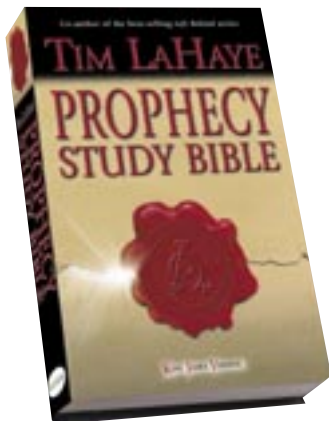


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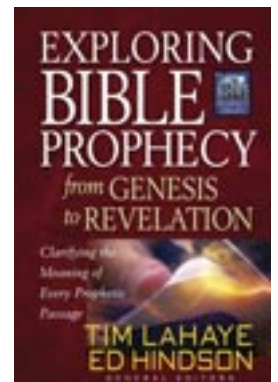
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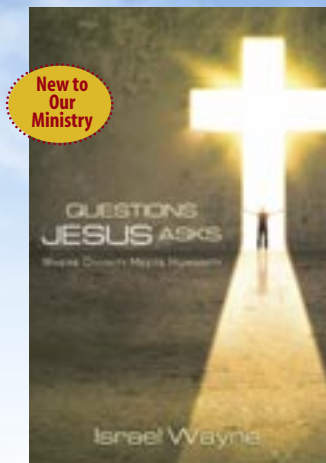
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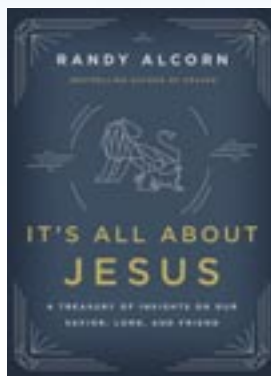
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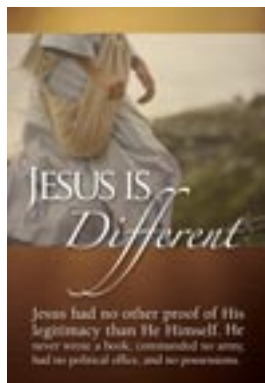
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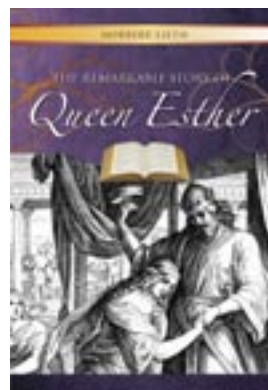
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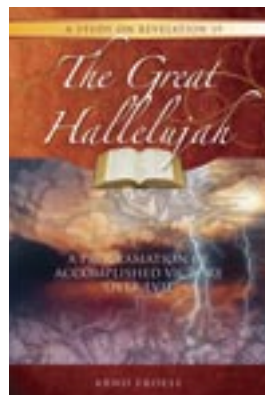


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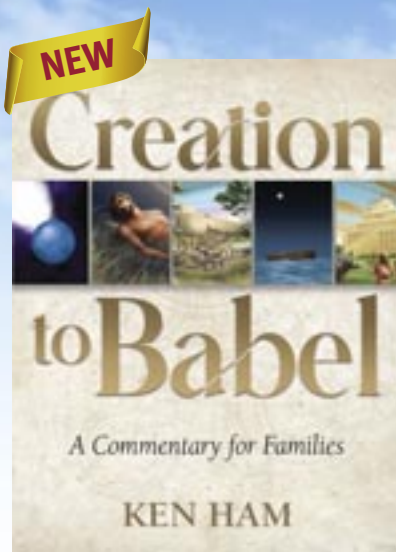
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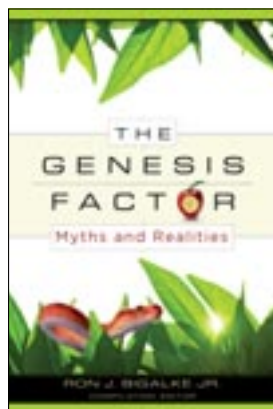
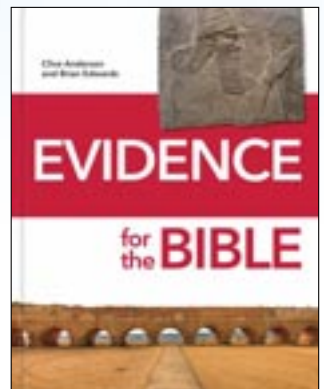
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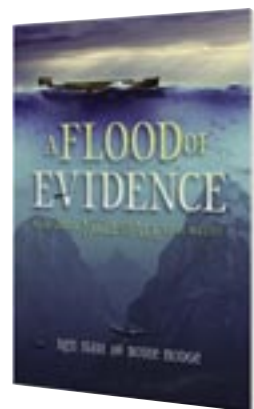
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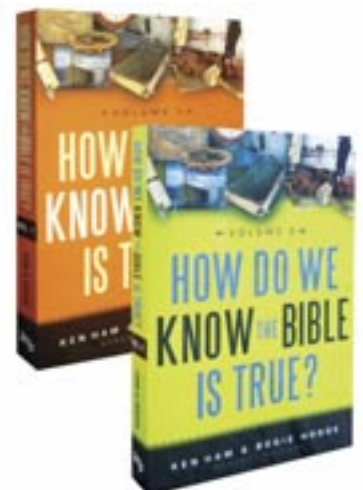
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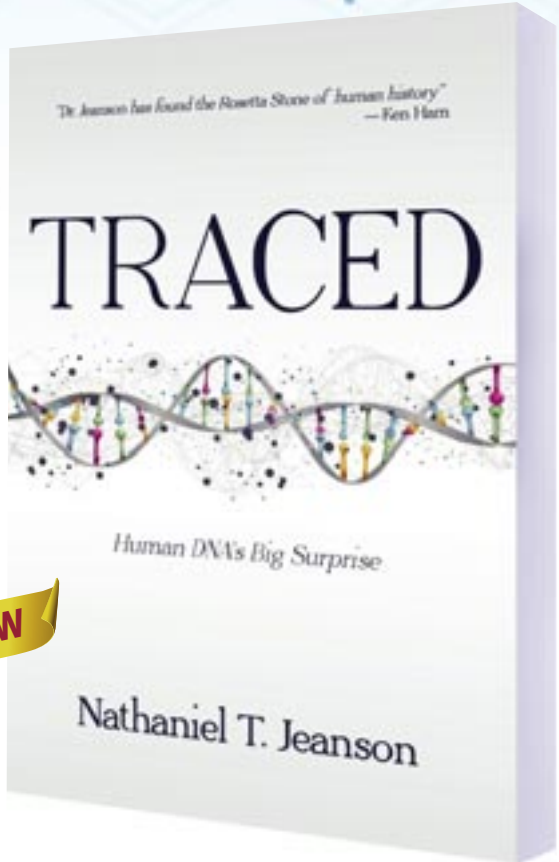
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