

The International Prophetic Voice for the Endtimes

Midnight Call

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**From Ex Nihilo to Hedonistic
Nihilism – Part 2**
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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- Gratitude
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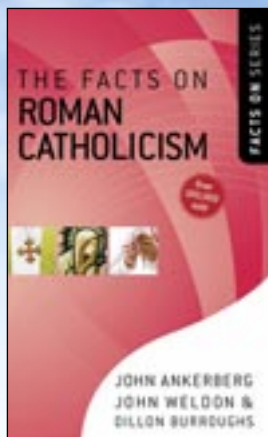
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Seek God, Find Happiness

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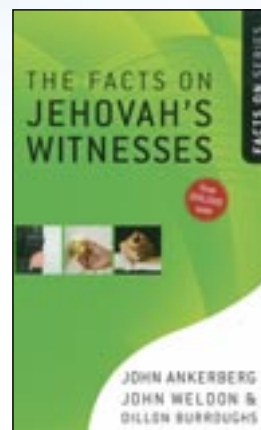
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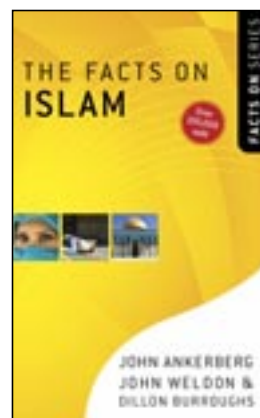
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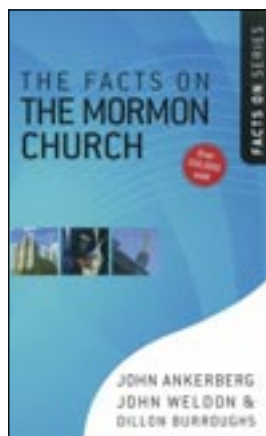
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God Walks with Us



By Norbert Lieth

Director of Missions, Midnight Call International

I recently stayed in lodgings where the following saying was displayed on a wall: “If courage has left you, simply go on by yourself.” Standing in front of it, I gave this some thought, but had to shake my head and ask: “What in the world does this mean? How do these words provide any help or comfort? When I am without courage then I should continue by myself, discouraged and alone? How and where should that lead and end? Where is the encouragement?” Pardon me, but I found this saying to be simply stupid.

This is what a world without God has to offer. Aphorisms without help. Throwing a lifeline of sugar—the words are sweet—but it dissolves in the water of need. How different is the help offered by God! He doesn't let us drown helplessly while calling out pious words to us. No, He is different. He holds out His Almighty hand. “For I, the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee” (Isaiah 41:13). No one has to go on alone, for God comes along.

His Help Bears a Name

This name is Jesus Christ. He is the guarantor that God will save us. Through Him, He seizes us and holds us forever. In His person, the most wonder-

ful promises are realized and belong to us unshakably. Jesus is no empty promise—not a vague hope, not just a bubble, but the highest reality. Jesus is the hand of God stretched out for us to grasp. I am allowed to travel with Him. Jesus is God's comfort for all situations in life. Jesus is the guarantee of salvation certainty. He is the restoration of all that is lost, the encouragement for all who are disheartened. He is the one who enters our hearts, lives within us, and stays with us forever. In all difficult and discouraging times, I know I am safe by His side.

His Help Is for Everyone

God's Word tells us: “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Romans 10:13). Elsewhere it is written that God doesn't want anyone to be lost (2 Peter 3:9). However, we are not only told what God does *not* want, but also what He *does* want: “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim 2:4). Further, the Bible states that God is not far from each of us (Acts 17:27), that He is accessible to everyone. No one has to think that he or she is too unworthy, has gone astray too far from God. Jesus Christ died for all

and rose from the dead for all, so that everyone who calls upon Him may be saved.

His Help Is Always There

When courage has left you, the Lord doesn't leave you but stays by your side and walks with you. His word encourages us to look to Him. If we have fallen and shown ourselves to be weak in faith, the Bible tells us in countless places to get up again and continue in His strength. The Lord does not leave us alone in our discouragement, whether due to our own failure or that of others.

During a hurricane at sea, when all attempts to save the ship had failed, the crew on board had to admit that all hope of salvation was gone. Then God sent an angel to encourage the Apostle Paul, and he in turn encouraged the crew, saying: "And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship ... Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me" (Acts 27:22, 25).

Courage doesn't mean walking the path alone, or trusting the unstable promises of a world that doesn't believe in God. New and real courage is based on God's promises, on our trust that God's Word remains valid and will bring us to our destination.

Wishing you renewed courage in Him. (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
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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 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 pre-tribulational appearance of Jesus 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.

Seek God, Find Happiness



René Malgo

The Psalmist says that fullness of joy is in His presence (Psalm 16:11). But what does it mean when we're earnestly seeking after this blissful fulfillment in the Lord, and it seems nowhere to be found?

Augustine of Hippo knew, "It is the decided opinion of all those who use their brains, that all men desire to be happy."

The great life skill is to search for happiness and fulfillment in the right place. Only one person can make us com-

pletely happy; namely, He who alone is perfect—God. In other words, "Seek God, find happiness."

But that's easier said than done. The valleys can become very dark when we're reaching out for fulfillment from a God we can't see, hear, or feel. Finding

AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

“It is the decided opinion of all those who use their brains, that all men desire to be happy.”

happiness in God is a struggle, not a walk in the park. Why?

We find an answer in one of the Apostle Paul’s prayers. He confesses the longing burning in his heart, revealing how we can still find true happiness despite all the struggles, afflictions, and darkness that may be plaguing us. He writes, “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead” (Phil 3:10-11).

What does he mean by that, and what does that mean for “Seek God, find happiness”?

Knowing Christ

All true and divine bliss begins with Jesus Christ. Anyone who wants to know what God is like needs to go to Jesus (cf. John 1:18). We are given insight into Him when He states, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls” (Matt 11:28-29).



Paul says he wants to know Christ. “Seek God, find happiness” begins with our will. God has already said “I’m willing” to us through Christ. But it can be difficult to reply “yes” to God in return; we can’t see or feel Him,

because He’s above everything that exists. He is God and we’re not. Many people imagine God as being on the highest rung of the ladder, so we approach Him as we would any other being. But that’s incorrect; He’s standing high above the ladder and surrounds it on all sides.

How large is the distance between an ant and a human? Very. Even a small child can crush an ant. The ant is far below us on the ladder of existence. And yet we’re on the same ladder: both humans and ants are creatures.

How large is the distance between an angel and a human? Most people would say that it’s very large, because we can’t see angels. They’re much more powerful than we are. But, interestingly enough, Hebrews suggests that in truth, we’re only “a little lower” than the angels (cf. Heb 2:9). Be that as it may, the distance still exists, and angels seem unapproachable because of their different

Seek God, Find Happiness

In our life, in our day-to-day routine, we should strive for what is true, good, and beautiful. Why? Because that is God. He is love, goodness, peace, purity, and every perfect virtue.

nature. When the prophet Daniel saw an angel in its glory, his response was, "...there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength" (Dan 10:8). And yet, we exist on the same ladder. Angels and humans are both creatures.

How large is the distance between God and a person? Even bigger? Maybe a trillion times bigger than the one between angels and humans? No. The distance can't be measured because God and man aren't even on the same ladder. He is Creator, we are creatures. The distance between us is infinite, an immeasurable and uncountable eternity. God is God, and that's why it's so difficult for us to recognize Him. He isn't on our ladder at all. He simply exists.

Therefore, in order to find happiness, we have to say, "Yes, I'm willing." I want to know this God that I can't see. I want to know this God, with whom no being can compete. I want to know this God, that I cannot possibly manipulate or influence. I want to know this God, who is so different from me.

In practice, our assent means that everything we do (or don't do) is done for the Lord's sake. Our whole life should, like Paul, exclaim, "Yes, I'm willing!"

But how is that possible, when God is beyond all creation and all being? We usually know how to get other creatures to respond to us, but what about a God whom we absolutely cannot fool? Jesus said we shouldn't babble in our prayers like the Gentiles, who thought that they could "persuade" God to eventually move in their direction for the sake of their many words.

Paul gives the answer in the context of a call to true joy: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil 4:8).

In our life, in our day-to-day routine, we should strive for what is true, good, and beautiful. Why? Because that is God. He is love, goodness, peace, purity, and every perfect virtue. Our "yes" should be oriented toward this.

"That I may know Christ," says Paul. And Christ isn't just an idea, an ideal, an abstraction, or a lofty thought. No, He is everything that is true, right, pure, lovable, appealing, and worth living for; everything that is considered virtue. That's why we want to say with our whole being, "I'm willing." Not just

Many people imagine God as being on the highest rung of the ladder, so we approach Him as we would any other being. But that's incorrect; He's standing high above the ladder and surrounds it on all sides.

because we want to become better people; because we want to gain what's better.

The bliss of eternal life consists of knowing the perfect One: God the Father and the Son Jesus Christ, in communion with the Holy Spirit (cf. John 17:3). Knowing is more than familiarity. It is union, intimate community—a connection that permeates our whole being. Jesus Christ is the One who tells us about the invisible God in heaven, where bliss is: being hidden with Christ in God. The more we come to know Christ in practice, and not just in theory, the happier we will become.

The Power of His Resurrection and the Fellowship of His Suffering

However, it's impossible for us to search for God perfectly, and to find happiness, in our current state. We often fail, stumble, and make mistakes, even when we don't want to. With our limitations, we simply don't have the strength to dwell nonstop with a boundless God. It's like a bow that is continuously drawn: it will break under the tension. It is the same with us in our imperfection, when we are constantly having to reach for perfection.

We just can't endure it; we'll break (figuratively speaking). Death's poi-



son is raging within us, but God is the source of life. Death and life can't coexist. As long as we are earthly, we cannot stand before the heavenly. That makes perfect bliss inaccessible to us in this body.

That's why it's so important to know Christ. Deity joined with humanity in Him. He became what we are, so that we could become what He is. He devoured death from within for us. He rose from the dead on the third day. As God-man, He lives forever. He is the founder of a new humanity that has conquered death and is joined with God. He wants to give us this power: the power of His resurrection. He wants to free us from

death and everything that separates us from God.

This is why Paul also prays to see the power of His resurrection. This power that raised Him will make our hearts suitable for perfect bliss. Christ is everything to us: “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (1 Cor 1:30).

Wherever we go or remain, we appeal to Christ and the power of His resurrection. And yet, we quickly realize that we’re just not feeling this bliss that we’ve been awarded. Darkness remains our confidante (cf. Psalm 88:18), even if we’re saying—even screaming—with our whole essence, “I’m willing!”

This brings us to the great and terrifying mystery of the Christian faith: the Cross. The God who leads us to happiness doesn’t reveal Himself through *any* Jesus, but through Jesus who was crucified (cf. 1 Cor 2:2). On the Cross, we see what the invisible God is really like, in all His glory (cf. John 17:1ff.). That means, as Paul prayed, we know our Lord in the fellowship of His suffering.

Fellowship is more than a connection; it requires participation. Whoever wants to gain more of God (whoever increases in fellowship with Him) will also receive a greater share in his Lord’s sufferings.

When Jesus died on the Cross, His disciples were devastated. They had

imagined their incarnate God’s journey very differently. After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to two of His disciples and explained to them why He had to die. But they didn’t recognize Him. The eyes of these two men were only opened to their Lord when He was sitting at the table with them and breaking bread.

This fellowship with the breaking of bread is an illustration of the Lord’s sufferings. It shows that our eyes are opened to Him when we suffer with Him. It’s when we’re in the dark valley that He is with us. It is in the presence of our enemies that He prepares a table for us. “For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Cor 4:16-17).

God works mysteriously for our happiness through the crosses He places on us. He calls us to be brave if we want to know Him for who He is. Paul accepted this call; not halfheartedly, but wholeheartedly. He didn’t stop at the power of His resurrection (which we’d love to have), but further prayed for fellowship with His sufferings.

Being Conformed to His Death

When we’re seeking God, every experience serves one purpose: we are to live and die with the Son of God, as Paul

says: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me” (Gal 2:20a).

He prays for fellowship with his Lord’s sufferings, so that he may be conformed to His death. Only when we die can we live. Finding happiness means giving up oneself and being crucified with Christ. But why?

The less-than-thrilling answer is sin. Sin is missing the target. Sin is the sting of death. Sin is the absence of all that is good, true, and beautiful. Sin is what poisons our whole being. We do not develop to our full potential, because we are bound and restricted by sin.

All humanity is plagued by sin, like an incurable, contagious, deadly disease. We become its victims and perpetrators in equal measure. God cleanses us of this sin whenever we ask; that’s what Jesus died for. His blood flowed so that sin’s consequence—death and separation from God—would be destroyed and no longer threaten us.

Despite the purification, redemption, and sanctification that God gives us freely and without reproach, sin’s traces remain in our body. It’s like having a doctor who can cure us of a terrible cancer. He’s glad to do it, and at no cost! The cure is certain, and there will never be a bill to pay. But we still have to undergo the painful chemotherapy. The sick cells must die in order for us to be restored to life.

When we seek God and find happiness, salvation causes us to undergo a similar process. God is doing work in us to prepare us for His unspeakable glory. That is the way through the desert: into the darkness, where He becomes incomprehensible to us and where His love wounds us so that we can be healed.

Dying isn’t pretty. It isn’t associated with comforting feelings. We naturally defend ourselves against it. We rant that we don’t understand the world anymore, when we experience death in our lives by losing a loved one. But the fruit of eternal life blooms from that very painful process.

Hebrews speaks of the saints of God. Some of them knowingly accepted suffering and death, and rejected deliverance for a better resurrection. God transforms us here on earth for eternity with Him, for the perfect life in the resurrection. The more we embrace His work in us, the bigger He in turn makes our vessel, with which we’ll see and receive Him in unspeakable glory. Ultimately, this means that God’s love wounds us in order to increase our happiness.

Paul writes of the transformation that God wants to accomplish in us: “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Cor 3:18).

Seek God, Find Happiness

Sin is missing the target. Sin is the sting of death. Sin is the absence of all that is good, true, and beautiful.



These wonderful words weren't written in a vacuum. Afterward, the apostle begins to speak about the fellowship of suffering with Christ (cf. 2 Corinthians 4:7-10). It is there we behold the glory of the Lord with bare faces, as in a mirror. That is the mysterious logic of the Cross.

The fact is, everyone who loves God and seeks Him will also see Him. Every vessel in heaven will overflow. But some who courageously accept the fight during their time here on earth, are making their vessels bigger than others. They will get more from God. That's what the fellowship of His sufferings means, and being conformed to His death. The more we recognize Christ and His power now, suffering and dying with Him, the more we will live, rule, and be glorified with Him for eternity (cf. Rom 8:17-18).

Therefore, don't be discouraged if you're not finding happiness immedi-

ately; if your desire for God isn't being fulfilled the way you'd imagined it would; and if you even have to exclaim, "Darkness is my closest friend" (Ps 88:18, NIV). The resurrection's power leads you into fellowship with His sufferings, where you ask yourself "Why?" and feel compelled to lament with the bride in Song of Solomon:

"I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had turned and gone. My soul failed me when he spoke. I sought him, but found him not; I called him, but he gave no answer. The watchmen found me as they went about in the city; they beat me, they bruised me, they took away my veil, those watchmen of the walls. I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, that you tell him I am sick with love" (Song of Sol. 5:6-8, ESV).

If you have opened the door to your beloved, and want to only act on His Word; if you can't seem to find Him; if instead the watchmen on the walls beat you, then think of this prayer from the Apostle Paul and its deep meaning: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Phil 3:10-11).

(MR0721/1173)



FROM EX NIHILO TO HEDONISTIC NIHILISM – PART 2



The reader likely may be wondering, “Just what is really going on in the financial world? And why are so many financial precedents unfolding now?” Where do we find the prophetic connections in the Bible to these days?

By Wilfred Hahn

The ripening of humanism brings with it enormous consequences. In this writer’s opinion, the massive shifts in human values and beliefs today, likely play a major role in creating the conditions to reach full catharsis later in the Tribulation period.

This being the case, what then are the most critical “human” proclivities and lusts that are contributing to the ongoing development of an end-time money snare? We will examine just two such human tendencies: 1. Epic human demographic shifts and 2: ingrained behavioral biases of humans. This latter factor refers to the responses and reactions that are seemingly hardwired into the fleshly brains of mankind. Experts have come to call this field of study

“neural finance” or “neural programming.”

We begin our examination of the role of these two “human change factors” with the latter—demographics. We must then first ask the question: Just what is demographics? Demographic analysis is the study of a population, based on factors such as age, race, and sex.

Just what is unfolding today that demographic trends reveal? In short, there are two main contributing trends—one good, the other bad. First, human longevity (length of life) has continued to increase for much of the world ... to the continued surprise of actuaries. This trend is largely the outcome of advancing medical technology



Increasingly, households are deciding not to have children (or cannot have more children). This is partly attributable to post- or anti-familialism. More and more, people choose not to have children or to marry. Families are under increasing attack.



and prosperity. Its main impact is revealed in the aging of the population.

Lengthening longevity has traditionally been considered a beneficial development. This past century, people have lived longer than ever before. A “good old age” was once considered a blessing according to the Bible. But sadly, today, a long life has begun to be regarded as a curse. To understand this, we must also connect another demographic trend—plunging fertility. It is a highly malignant factor that will continue to accelerate worldwide.

Increasingly, households are deciding not to have children (or cannot have more children). This is partly attributable to post- or anti-familialism. More and more, people choose not to have children or to marry. Families are under increasing attack.

Shockingly, not only are female fertility rates at new lows, male fertility is also decaying rapidly. In the case of males, we must point out that the decline in fertility is not entirely the result of human choice. For some (still unexplained) reason, sperm counts have declined at a steep pace over recent decades.

Lengthening longevity and post-familialism are the major causes of slowing population growth and the aging of the world’s population. Critically, these factors are accelerating.

But how do these demographic trends connect with Biblical end-time prophecies? The main conduit is through the worldwide money trap.

Today, the future has arrived—the chickens having come home to roost. And so, the demographic trends and human values shift have now become more widely evident to most. This has unleashed desperate responses.

People are clamoring to save for their retirement years and to find sufficient future financial income. With interest rates so low and investment prices so high, this is virtually impossible. A very large cohort of older people will experience difficult retirement years. They will not be able to afford a comfortable

Should Christians worry about end-time financial challenges? How can they avoid the world's fixation with money and wealth?

retirement as they may have once anticipated.

At the same time, workforces and pension systems must rely on the support of a young cohort of the population. However, that will not be sufficient. Consider the shattering scale of this age shift. We quote a report by Fabius Maximus (a respected political research organization): “The 2nd generation after the present one will be only 40% as large as today’s. The 4th generation will be only 15% as large. These are astonishing numbers. The worst large-scale pandemics killed 1/4 to 1/3 of the affected population. Only the most severe inflicted such damage.”

There can be no doubt: The scale of these demographic trends is unprecedented ... even dwarfing the impact of previous pandemics (most certainly also the impact of Covid 19).

The resultant financial and social pressures upon the world will truly be profound (as is already happening). Eventually, as simple math will confirm, financial markets will become greatly distressed. Seen overall, pension funds, for example, cannot deliver adequate future income if succeeding generations are less populous than the previous one. (We had dubbed this trend the “global income crisis” some three decades ago.)

These impacts are already evident. But here emerges a surprise. At the outset, financial markets will soar ... not crash as most will expect ... at least for a time. How so? Policymakers see an oncoming demographic disaster, and therefore will aggressively seek to delay the consequences (even though this will worsen world affairs later).

In a sense, policymakers have no choice. They must pump up the value of stock market prices ... real estate ... and keep interest rates low.

We therefore witness a great deception. On the one hand, the global income crisis worsens. Yet, asset markets continue to rise for a time. Therefore, the negative underlying developments are being masked to appear as a wealth-enhancing environment. Many will be caught unawares. After all, if asset prices are going up in value, then how could anything negative occur? Or so people will think.

In our view, the deceptions that are unfolding are already well established globally.

Finding Peace in an Upside-down World

Should Christians worry about end-time financial challenges? How can they avoid the world's fixation with money and wealth?



As it is, one cannot love Mammon and God at the same time (Luke 16:13). Therefore, one must not mix up or merge these realms!

Jesus had a practical answer to this question, though somewhat unrelated. He said to leave earthly matters (of the spiritually dead) to the dead. He told them, “Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead” (Matthew 8:22).

We see parallels here in these statements. Let the world worry about financial crises. These are matters for the dead (spiritually), which do not lead to Life. Therefore, of course, churches and preachers should only focus on the important spiritual matters ... and not dwell on financial and economic crisis.

As it is, one cannot love Mammon and God at the same time (Luke 16:13). Therefore, one must not mix up or merge these realms! It cannot be done without great harm. Trying to sit on the fence between these two opposing forces, can only lead to a compromised testimony for Christians. One cannot be concerned about spiritual matters and worry about financial matters at the same time.

Beware of False Prophets

None of our perspectives here denies the veracity of Bible prophecy. All Bible prophecy has been and will be fulfilled. But even with the inviolable foreknowledge of prophecy, we are admonished, “Do not go beyond what

is written” (1 Corinthians 4:6). While prophecy provides a light in a dark place (2 Peter 1:19), it provides no guidance as to short-term events.

Sadly, though teachers and preachers may be well-meaning in their warnings and prophecies about predicted financial, geopolitical, or economic trends, they are on thin ice.

In our view, they are at risk of causing much harm, as many of their views are unbiblical and simply plain wrong. Moreover, they play an unwitting role in the facilitation of a worldwide, end-time trap.

Not only do they discredit the pulpit, but also, they are inadvertently aiding the agenda of the Destroyer, who uses fear and greed as his agents to bring about advances in his master plan.

This writer has witnessed many ill-advised financial and economic predictions from the pulpit. As it is, secular professionals who may specialize in geopolitics or currency markets, for example, are also often wrong in their predictions (if not almost always).

We must conclude that such types of “crisis” prophecies are likely to be unreliable. It is no surprise that some securities market regulators these days, require that wealth advisory profession-

Says Isaiah: “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost” (Isaiah 55:1).

als declare whether they have influence over their congregations.

To repeat, what we observe today is a worldwide shift in human values ... a shift like none other in history in terms of scale and rapidity. It surely is symptomatic of a godless end that is coming “like a flood” (Daniel 9:26).

Thoughts to Ponder

Today’s financial perversions are attributable to worldwide godlessness, denial of Truth, and transgressions against God. A final and inevitable financial collapse, should be seen as part of God’s wrath and judgment upon mankind, which will unfold in the Tribulation period. The exact timing one cannot know, and in any case, would not be of concern to Pre-Tribulation Christians.

This is yet one other unscriptural aspect of the “doomster business” ... what is being fomented in pulpits, newsletters and elsewhere. The advice and solutions found there only cater to those that can afford it. Only people with financial means are eligible to be offered such solutions and survival services. To the extent that such services are offered as an accredited Christian activity, this would not be Biblical.

The exact opposite holds true: Says Isaiah: “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have



no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost” (Isaiah 55:1). The spirit of prophecy gives testimony to the thirsty that they will be given “water without cost from the spring of the water of life” (Revelation 21:6).

God’s salvation is free. God would not allow that only the wealthy be given access to His deliverance. The building up of supplies to survive the Tribulation period is not needed (nor will this be possible in any case).

God has a better plan.

Salvation is for ALL without cost. So is the Rapture. All Premillennial Christians have equal access to the rescue of the Rapture. As such, Christians need not fret. Purchase of survival supplies is not necessary. ^{MC}



What Constitutes Greatness and Success?

DR. RON J. BIGALKE

It should be noted that the commendation of the church in 1 and 2 Thessalonians did not include things that people in modern times would necessarily consider as important.

For example, Scripture does not refer to things such as a good leader and good organization, good mentorship or a good outreach, which are generally considered evidence of a model church. Certainly, it is true that these things are important; for example, evangelistic outreach was occurring in Thessalonica, and

the Pastoral Epistles (1 & 2 Tim; Tit) give great emphasis to pastoral qualifications and church organization. However, the necessary virtues that are outlined in Scripture indicate what truly constitutes greatness and success. Without these qualities, a good leader, good organization, good mentorship, and a good outreach are meaningless.

Scripture repeatedly emphasizes three virtues as essential to the Christian life. In 1 Corinthians 13:13, they are combined in one as the things that “abide”: faith, hope, and love.

Paul summarized the three virtues that are necessary for exemplary behavior: “But now abide faith, hope, love, these three: but the greatest of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13:13). Scripture repeatedly emphasizes three virtues as essential to the Christian life. In this verse, they are combined in one as the things that “abide”: faith, hope, and love. Occasionally, if appropriate, Scripture will mention one or more of these virtues as evident among a body of believers. For example, in Romans 1:8, the saints in Rome were praised for their faith, which was “being proclaimed throughout the whole world.” Philippians 1:9 mentions prayer for the love of all the saints in Philippi to abound (which, of course, assumes a love worth multiplying). The Colossians were commended for their faith in Christ Jesus, the love they had for all believers, and the hope they had of heaven (1:4-5). In other New Testament letters (written by Paul), there may not be any reference to the presence of these virtues, but this does not necessarily imply that the virtues were absent in the other churches. For instance, the fact that there is no reference to the love and hope of the church in Rome, or the faith and hope of the church in Philippi, is not to indicate that these virtues did not exist there.

However, the mention of all three virtues in the opening text (vv. 1-4) of this First Epistle to the Thessalonians, strongly implies that these virtues need to be manifest for a body of believers to gather and serve to the glory of God. Whenever God’s people assemble, it is to be in a spirit of



faith, hope, and love. Christians are expected to work both corporately and individually in a spirit of faith, hope, and love.

Faith That Works

(1 Thess 1:1-3) Every believer is justified by faith alone, but it is a faith that produces works (Rom 6—8): as John the Baptist proclaimed (“bring forth fruit as evidence of repentance”), as taught by Jesus, and as James did in the second chapter of his epistle. Faith is the initiator of works.

James 2:14: “What use is it, my brethren, if a man says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him?” This passage gives additional help for differentiating between labor and work. The Greek word for “works” is *erga*. The same Greek word is translated either “works” or “deeds.” In James 2:14, it is translated “works” because the context of helping meet the needs of a fellow believer is given as an example of faith by James. The point is that “works” of faith demonstrate obedience to God’s com-

What Constitutes Greatness and Success?

mands, purposes, and will for His people. This would include obedient works such as “making disciples” of all the nations (Matt 28:19), or living a pure, godly life (as described in 1 Thess 4:1-12).

Love That Labors

(1 Thess 1:3) The phrase “labor of love” (“labor prompted by love”) is similar to the Greek construction for “work of faith.” Whereas faith is related more to obedience to God, love is related more to uncompromising, sacrificial labor for fellow believers. An example of a laboring love is the kind of sacrifice involved in caring for someone who needs recovery, or simply meeting the needs of others.

Hope That Endures

(1 Thess 1:3) The phrase “steadfastness of hope” is literally translated “endurance inspired by (from) hope.” The steadfastness is based upon the reality that one firmly believes (knows) the future is ultimately assured; it means one continues pressing “on in order that” he/she “may lay hold of that for which also” he/she is “laid hold of by Christ Jesus” (Phil 3:12). Steadfastness is to “press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (v. 14). One keeps persevering when he/she can see the goal at the end of the race. For this reason, Paul exhorted, “Run in such a way that you may win” (1 Cor 9:24). The desolate present can be endured if one is certain of the future.

The genitives “of faith,” “of love,” and “of hope” are characterized by the generating principles of “work,” “labor,” and “steadfastness,”

which set their mark upon each of the genitives. Therefore, work is produced by faith and is characteristic of faith. Labor is prompted by love and is characteristic of love. Steadfastness is characterized by hope and is characteristic of it. Here in verses 3-4 is the great triad of Christian graces that are evident for exemplary behavior.

With his/her conscience captive to God’s Word, a successful Christian must possess three virtues: faith, love, and hope. Success is rarely evaluated in terms of these virtues. Perhaps one reason is that the virtues are difficult to measure. Another reason may be that these virtues are the sovereign work of God, and no believer can receive recognition for their existence. The three virtues are the environment from which authentic quantitative and qualitative growth and service emerge.

Change That Has Specific Results

(1 Thess 1:4-7) In verses 4-5, one finds attention to the fact that the transformation of the believer’s life is confirmation of God’s choice of him/her. “Knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you” (v. 4). The doctrine of divine choosing is taught here (or doctrine of election, in accordance with the archaic English meaning of the Greek word *eklogen* [“calling from”], from *eklegomai*, as in the King James Version of the Bible).

The essential dynamics in spiritual transformation are “in power and in the Holy Spirit.” When God the Holy Spirit does His work, He applies the gospel message with power. The Spirit’s “power” works within the evangelist in addition to the one who is being evangelized. Based upon what we can learn about evangelism in the Book of Acts and the nature of humanity’s

The exemplary believer is busy serving God, which also means “to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you” (1 Thess 4:11).

total depravity, the evangelist receives power from the Holy Spirit to speak clearly and boldly; and the one being evangelized receives power to overcome any resistance to the gospel and to understand the truth of the message. God’s biblical means for impacting humanity is the proclamation of the propositional truths of Scripture, and offering fervent prayer for the power of the Holy Spirit, which exhibits that we are entirely dependent upon God. Moreover, the power applied by the Holy Spirit creates a transformation that has specific results, as revealed in verses 6-7 (and also 2 Thess 1).

Lives That Reverberate (1:8-10)

(1 Thess 1:8-10) “For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you” (v. 8). The language of verse 8 suggests the sound of a trumpet or of thunder, as if to reverberate like an echo. The Greek word for “sounded forth” is *exēcheomai*, which is a perfect passive and therefore implies a continuing sound from Thessalonica like music from an amplifier. The idea seems to be that a lively faith reverberates with energy or activity from one person to another. Such activity is not the model for obeying the Great Commission, but it is one way that God will see that it is fulfilled.

Paul further stated, “but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything.” What was the reason for this marvelous testimony? Paul explained in verses 9 and 10. He revealed, “you

turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God.” Idols today may differ in form, but they still epitomize all that people believe constitutes a good life in the absence of God. In modern terms, this would indicate a completely different purpose of life from those who set the world as their example; and as a result of this difference, we would have the glorifying of the Lord as our purpose in this world.


Lastly, verse 10 indicates that the exemplary believer is waiting for God’s Son, Jesus Christ, from heaven. There is no indication that a believer is to be idle and simply looking into the sky. To wait (Gk. *anameno*) is a present infinitive in Greek and means “to be continuously waiting”; it is the idea literally “to wait,” with the fuller meaning “to remain alert” or “expect.” To “wait” conveys the idea of expectation. The exemplary believer is busy serving God, which also means “to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you” (1 Thess 4:11). Attending to one’s own business and working with one’s abilities, is having a mindset that is hopeful concerning the future. Another meaning of “wait” is to realize that all you do will be rewarded or rejected by the Lord Jesus Christ when He returns for His people. Such realization provides the highest purpose for everything. Nothing is wasted or useless in terms of eternity. Everything done in life counts for something, regardless of how tedious a task may seem. (1201)

WORLD FOCUS

 USA

Using DNA to Store Data

Scientists say they have made a major step forward in efforts to store information as molecules of DNA, which are more compact and long-lasting than other options.

 Using life's preferred storage medium to back up our precious data would allow vast amounts of information to be archived in tiny molecules.

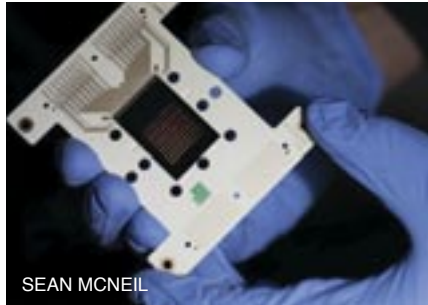
The data would also last thousands of years, according to scientists.

A team in Atlanta, US, has now developed a chip that they say could improve on existing forms of DNA storage by a factor of 100.

"The density of features on our new chip is [approximately] 100x higher than current commercial devices," Nicholas Guise, senior research scientist at Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI), told BBC News.

The technology works by growing unique strands of DNA one building block at a time. These building blocks are known as bases—four distinct chemical units that make up the DNA molecule. They are: adenine, cytosine, guanine and thymine.

There are different potential ways to store this information in DNA—for ex-



SEAN MCNEIL

The microchip will be used for growing multiple strands of DNA in parallel

ample, a zero in binary code could be represented by the bases adenine or cytosine and a one might be represented by guanine or thymine. Alternatively, a one and zero could be mapped to just two of the four bases.

Scientists have said that, if formatted in DNA, every movie ever made could fit inside a volume smaller than a sugar cube.

The high cost of DNA storage has so far restricted the technology to "boutique customers," such as those seeking to archive information in time capsules.

With DNA, "as long as you keep the temperature low enough, the data will survive for thousands of years, so the cost of ownership drops to almost zero," Dr. Guise explained.

The work has been backed by the Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity (IARPA), which sup-

ports science geared towards overcoming challenges relevant to the US intelligence community.

-www.bbc.com, 1 December 2021

Commentary: The improvements that have been made in storing data in the last few decades, are nothing short of mind-boggling.

We recall the old times, when the data of each subscriber to the magazine was stored on an index card. If one card was misplaced alphabetically, then for all practical purposes it was lost.

Computer science to the rescue! With available technology, comprehensive data of an individual would not need more space than the dot of an ink pen—almost invisible to the naked eye.

There is no doubt that computer science has tremendous benefits for people of all walks of life. Doubtless, this has also contributed to a significant crime rate reduction globally. In Israel, for example, information is available not only about its citizens, but also about much of the surrounding population in other Arab countries. The result? Almost incomprehensible: Israel, a country threatened with destruction

(continued next page)

DNA *(continued from page 22)*

from several neighboring nations, is considered one of the safest in the world.

We note specifically the statements, “last thousands of years” or “survive for thousands of years.” This is unheard of, but it’s real; it’s in the works now and will continue to progress until every single person on planet earth is registered. Why? Because Antichrist is coming.

He is the one who mimics Jesus Christ, the Jew born in Bethlehem. Each Christmas we read the story, for example, in Luke 2:1: “And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.” That was the old-fashioned registration system, which required all citizens to return to the place of their birth. So it will be in the future, as Revelation 13 reveals. The propaganda minister of Antichrist has been working for 2,000 years, but is now racing toward the final point. Verse 13 reads: “And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of

men.” Computer science will in the end produce “great wonders.” 7672

(See Who Is the Antichrist?, Item #2254, \$13.99.)




 **UGANDA**

World’s Longest School Lockdown Ends

Uganda’s schools reopened their gates to students, ending the longest school disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic anywhere in the world.



 Uganda’s schools have been fully or partially shut for more than 83 weeks, the world’s longest disruption, according to figures from the U.N. cultural agency. The shutdown affected more than 10 million learners.

The East African country of 44 million people first shut down its schools in March 2020, shortly after the first coronavirus case was confirmed on the African continent. Some classes were reopened to students in February 2021, but a total lockdown was imposed again in June as the country faced its first major surge.

For many parents, the reopening was long overdue.

“Inevitably, we have to open up schools,” said Felix Okot, the father of a 6-year-old kindergartner. “The

future of our kids, the future of our nation, is at stake.”

The country’s schools cannot “wait forever” for the pandemic’s end, he warned.

Uganda has received foreign support toward the reopening of schools.

The U.N. children’s agency and the governments of the U.K. and Ireland announced financial support focusing on virus surveillance and the mental health of students and teachers in

40,000 schools. They said their support was key for Uganda’s school system to remain open.

-www.abcnews.go.com, 10 January 2022

Commentary: Previously, it was reported that the state of Victoria in Australia had the longest lockdown. Thus, the question: how effective are lockdowns, including mask and vaccination mandates? Figures by Statista.com reveal coronavirus-related deaths per 1 million population:

76	Uganda
95	Australia
822	Canada
913	Israel
2,590	USA

Will the return to school skyrocket Covid-19 rates? Only time will tell.

(continued next page)

Lockdown (continued from page 23)

In the meantime, the medical world is up in arms. Politicians the world over herald their opinions, but the bottom line remains: Covid-19 is a dangerous, even life-threatening virus. Our World in Data reports over 310 million infected, with 5.5 million deaths globally.

Here a sampling of historic pandemic deaths:

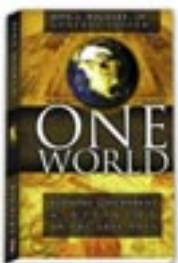
200,000,000	Black Death (1347-1351)
56,000,000	Smallpox (1520)
45,000,000	Spanish Flu (1918-1919)
35,000,000	HIV/AIDS (1981-present)

Comparing this data with Covid-19, one has to admire modern medical science, which has caused many countries to take this dreaded disease seriously.

We also learn how defenseless the nations of the world really are, despite amazing medical advances. The little, tiny coronavirus—not detectable to the naked eye—has caused the world to come closer together. That process must be expected,

because unity of the nations is the prerequisite for a truly global government. 7675


(See One World, Item #2203, \$15.99.)



SLOVAKIA

Flying Car Takes to the Sky

A flying car capable of hitting speeds over 100mph (160kmh) and altitudes above 8,000ft (2,500m) has been issued with a certificate of airworthiness by the Slovak Transport Authority.

 The hybrid car-aircraft, AirCar, is equipped with a BMW engine and runs on regular petrol-pump fuel.

It takes two minutes and 15 seconds to transform from car into aircraft.

The certification followed 70 hours of flight testing and more than 200 take-offs and landings, the company said.

“AirCar certification opens the door for mass production of very efficient flying cars,” its creator, Prof Stefan Klein, said.

“It is official and the final confirmation of our ability to change mid-distance travel forever.”

The three-wheeled PAL-V Liberty, which flies like a gyrocopter, is road legal in Europe and working towards European Union Aviation Safety Agency certification.

-www.bbc.com, 24 January 2022

Commentary: Not much world news comes from Slovakia, but this nation of only 5.5 million people has quite an impressive report card when it comes to inventions.

Slovakia was or still is a place where many inventions of world importance have been invented. The most important are inventions of the



parachute, helicopter, modern optics, compressed air pump, water pump, artificial human hand...

Will this air car fly? Well, it does; it’s even certified by the Slovak Transport Authority.

While there is a future for flying cars, the real obstacle to be bridged—when the vehicle is in mass production and becomes popular—is aviation regulations. Doubtless, a quasi-pilot license will be required.

We are reminded of the words of Solomon: “For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it” (Proverbs 8:11). Wisdom is the key; it comes from God and dwells with God, as the next verse states: “I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.”

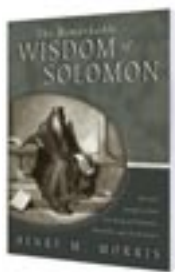
What we do know is that there is no end to inventions. From the site www.popsci.com, we find a list of the 100 greatest inventions for 2021: the BioNTech/Pfizer Covid-19 vaccine is one of the most important in the area of health. It is of interest that this vaccine was developed by Pro-

(continued next page)

Flying Car (continued from page 24)

fessor Uğur Şahin, MD, a Turkish immigrant to Germany, in cooperation with his wife, the daughter of immigrant parents from Turkey. The original discovery was made by Hungarian Katalin Karikó.

What comes next? As for planet earth, we really don't know. But nothing changes regarding the eternal resolution found in Scripture: "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" (Amos 3:6). Isaiah 45:7 adds: "I form the light, and create darkness:



I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." 7683

(See *The Remarkable Wisdom of Solomon*, Item #2223, \$12.99.)

CHINA

Israel's Largest Import Partner

China became Israel's largest source of imports in 2021, surpassing the United States, according to data released by Israel's National Bureau of Statistics.

Last year, Israel imported \$10.7 billion in goods from China, compared with \$7.7 billion in 2020, a nearly 40% increase.

The new data comes shortly after Israel vowed to keep the Biden administration in the loop on any major trade

deals with China, in an effort to avoid further tensions. According to a *Haaretz* report, the United States has not made explicit demands, but Israeli officials have begun discussing the state's policy toward China.

Both the Biden and the Trump administrations have expressed concerns about the warming relationship between Israel and China as the latter's ties with Europe and the United States have soured.

-www.jpost.com, 25 January 2022

Commentary: China has the largest population in the world, with almost 1.4 billion people.

Religiously, about 52% of China's population is listed as "unaffiliated," with 22% for folk religions, 18.3% Buddhist, 5.2% Christian, and 2% Muslim. Life expectancy is now 77 years. They are the world's fastest growing major economy, yet their GDP individually is way below the Western rate, at just \$16,400 USD per capita (2020).

Increased imports from China to Israel is not surprising. The new Haifa Bayport Terminal, built at the cost of \$1.7 billion, has a 25-year contract under state-owned Shanghai International Port Group. This Chinese-operated port will doubtless bring much-needed improvement to the country's standing as a regional trade hub. Another new port on

the Mediterranean coast is to be opened in Ashdod, operated by the Swiss-based Terminal Investment Limited.

Here the words apply, "racing toward globalism," and there is no way out. The whole world is now more or less a giant, interconnected factory, manufacturing and selling merchandise from one continent to another, from one country to another.

For investors, this seems to be only the beginning. The world is well on its way to being even more united, despite some hurdles to be overcome, such as the Russia-Ukraine crisis to name one. As we learn from recent history, negotiation and compromise will have the last word, with manufacturers and merchandisers having the upper hand.

This corresponds to Revelation 18, where we read of the nations of the world bemoaning the loss of their merchandise.

7685

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



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WORLD

Denmark, New Zealand, Finland Least Corrupt Nations

Denmark, New Zealand and Finland were joint first in a list of the least corrupt nations in the world, while South Sudan was at the bottom, an anti-graft watchdog found in its annual report.

 Transparency International's 2021 Corruption Perceptions Index, which measures the perception of public sector corruption according to experts and businesspeople, ranks 180 countries and territories on a scale of a 'highly corrupt' 0 to a 'very clean' 100.

Norway, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Germany completed the top 10, while the U.K. was ranked 11th with 78 points.

In Western Europe, the best-scoring region overall, the pandemic has given countries 'an excuse for complacency in anti-corruption efforts as accountability and transparency measures are neglected or even rolled back,' Transparency said.



In some Asian countries, it said, COVID-19 'also has been used as an excuse to suppress criticism.' It pointed to increased digital surveillance in some nations and authoritarian approaches in others.

In the rankings, the U.S, which slipped over recent years to hit 67 points in 2020, held that score this time but fell a couple of places to 27th.

-www.dailymail.co.uk, 25 January 2022

Commentary: Transparency International is headquartered in Berlin, Ger-

many. As a non-profit, non-governmental agency, their aim is to combat global corruption, prevent criminal activity, improve international understanding, and support sustainable development solution networks.

While the TI ranking is not legally binding in any way, shape, or

form, it does reveal the progress of a more united world. This is essential when viewed from the Biblical prophetic point of view. After all, prophecy must be fulfilled. Revelation 13:3b reads: "and all the world wondered after the beast," leading to verse 8: "And all that dwell upon the earth

shall worship him." That is the image of the beast that is yet to come. 7686


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



ARAB WORLD

Re-embracing Its Jews

The slogan of the Houthi rebels, who control northern Yemen, is blunt. "Death to Israel, curse on the Jews," it reads in part.

 So it was no shock when the group chased Jews out of its area of control. What might be surprising is where some of those Jews ended up. Yusuf Hamdi and his extended family

were rescued in a mission organized by the UN, America, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in 2021. Mr Hamdi and company then passed up a chance to go to Israel, instead becoming the first Yemenite Jews to settle in the UAE.

From Morocco to the Gulf, a surprising number of Arab countries are welcoming back Jews and embracing their Jewish heritage. The reasons vary. The

failures and excesses of Arab nationalism and Islamism have forced many countries to rethink chauvinist dogmas. Modernizing autocrats have jettisoned communal tropes and pursued multicultural agendas. And the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is no longer seen as a priority in the region. "The Arab world has too many problems to still care about Palestine," says Kamal Alam, an expert

(continued next page)

Jews (continued from page 26)

on Syria and its Jewish diaspora. “Instead they look at Israel and Jews as models for running a successful country that feeds itself without oil.”

In recent years, the mood has drastically changed. Most Arabs have no memory of the big Arab-Israeli wars of the last century. Milder opinions have been encouraged by leaders who see the Jewish state as a potential trade partner and ally against Iran, and who seek more acceptance in the West.

-www.economist.com, 18 January 2022

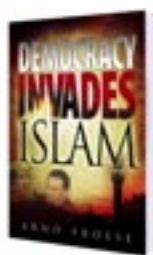
Commentary: We are pleased to see a tempering of the animosity the Arab world has had for Israel since its founding in 1948. Yet, we are reminded that in the last days, the Antichrist will make peace in the Middle East. It will be a temporary, false peace that will “destroy many,” as we read in Daniel 8:25: “And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.”

It is also interesting to note the reason these Arab countries are warming up to Israel; namely, commerce and merchandise. They see Israel “as a potential trade partner.”

7686 (By J. Froese)

(See *Democracy Invades Islam*,


Item #1072, \$12.95.)



ISRAEL

Cybersecurity Firms Raised \$8.8 Billion

Israel’s cybersecurity industry has had an outstanding year, setting new records in a number of fields, the Israel National Cyber Directorate (INCD) reported. The sector raised a record \$8.8 billion in 2021, tripling the amount raised in 2020. The money was secured in 131 deals.

 The data also showed the annual 2021 figures account for 40% of the total funds raised by cybersecurity firms worldwide this year. According to the Israeli Export Institute data, overall cyber experts were \$11b. in 2021, according to the INCD data.

Israeli venture capital firm, Viola Ventures, announced the closing of a \$250 million early-stage investments fund. This will be the company’s sixth fund.

The company will focus on backing start-ups in sectors like fintech, vertical AI, deep tech, digital health, next-generation enterprise infrastructure, SaaS 3.0, Web 3.0 and cybersecurity.

The collective value of the capital firm’s assets under management (AUM) is now over \$1.25b.

It also comes on the heels of a record-breaking year for Viola Ventures as eight of its portfolio companies have reached unicorn status.

US semiconductor giant Nvidia announced that it was expanding its R&D activities in Israel.

The company said it would establish a new design and engineering group that



The logo of Nvidia Corporation is seen during the annual Computex computer exhibition in Taipei, Taiwan (photo credit: REUTERS/TYRONE SIU)

would lead the development of next-generation Nvidia central processing units for the next technology revolutions in AI, robotics, autonomous vehicles and virtual world simulations from Omniverse, Nvidia’s new platform.

-www.jpost.com, 25 January 2022

Commentary: It is no longer a surprise and often not newsworthy when one hears of Israel’s high-tech successes; in this case, in the field of cybersecurity.

Since all nations on the planet are concerned with this type of security, Israel has taken the lead: harnessing 40% of the total investment in the cybersecurity industry last year.

It is even more remarkable when one considers that this small nation has less than 10 million in population.

When it comes to the future, we read in Isaiah 45:11: “Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.” What will be the end? “In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory” (verse 25). 7684

(See *Miracle of Israel*, Item #2303, \$13.99.)



BRAZIL

New Connections, Thanks to YouTube and Instagram

About special projects, a new book series, and encouraging contacts with Brazilian pastors.

BY MARKUS AND ELLEN STEIGER, PORTO ALEGRE

In June 2021, we contributed to a special missionary project: printing a book about the founder of Word of Life North Brazil. The print run of 3,000 copies was financed by a Christian from the United States. The book's goal is to encourage young Brazilians to go on missions. The proceeds from the book sales will be invested in work along the Amazon River. We're increasing our prayers for this type of project; we have the capacity thanks to our new four-color printing press.

Since there aren't many good Bible commentaries in Brazil, we've decided to do our own series. We've already published Ezekiel, Proverbs, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, and Hebrews. We keep receiving interesting and grateful responses from readers, who have been blessed by studying them. We know that it will take years before we're able to offer a commentary on

every book, but we've made a start. Currently, Philipians, John, and 1 & 2 Corinthians are underway.

Recently, I stumbled across two pastors online whose YouTube and Instagram followers total almost 100,000. They've repeatedly introduced our books on their channels, so I got in touch with them and a collaboration developed. Sebastian was even asked to speak about the commentary for 1 & 2 Thessalonians on one of their programs. Now we all send each other copies of our new books. It's a wonderful way to reach new circles. Neither pastor receives anything (apart from the books) for this ministry; they do it because they have a burden for the prophetic Word. And with a special coupon, viewers can purchase the featured literature at a 15% discount. We're also in contact with two other pastors offering similar programs. (MR1121)

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The Monkey Man

Norbert Lieth

Scientists have begun breeding human/monkey hybrids. What does this mean from a biblical and prophetic perspective?

The headline spread worldwide: an international team of researchers was able to breed hybrid creatures from monkey embryos and human stem cells. They survived in a petri dish for nearly three weeks. You can't help but be reminded of what God's Word says about the Tower of Babel: "And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do" (Gen 11:5-6).

At that time, a line was being crossed, and God intervened from



above. Will that soon be necessary again? The signs certainly point to it. Hello *Frankenstein*, *Planet of the Apes*, and *King Kong*.

Injecting human stem cells into long-tailed macaque embryos is a different way of building a Tower of Babel. And humans aren't letting themselves be slowed down by either ethics or earthly laws. "This is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them" (ESV).

And so, stem cell researchers have bred embryos containing both human and monkey DNA. The news sparked doubt, admiration, and outrage in the

The Monkey Man

We're experiencing firsthand how world events are hastening the fulfillment of biblical prophecy in almost every area. This is precisely what we want to keep in mind: God loves His creatures and is exercising a great deal of forbearance. He doesn't want anyone to be lost.

media. Humans are well aware that an ethical line has been crossed, and that this kind of approach goes against nature. But will that stop us? A total of 132 human/monkey chimeras are said to have come into being, of which 103 were still alive after 10 days, and 3 on the 19th day. Human/animal embryos could never have survived this long in a lab before. Even if the whole project proves unfeasible in the long run, the attempt is appalling enough. Ethicists are calling for society and legislators to finally address the creation of chimeras. But God knows man better than he knows himself. In the name of scientific progress, mankind will work tirelessly in order to advance. In doing so, we're not just overstepping a natural boundary, but also a divine one. That is because God created every being after its kind. We are interfering with God's creation, elevating ourselves to the role of Creator.

We can refer to Jude for yet another example of this: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving

themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (vv. 6-7).

What had happened? Angels abandoned their God-given boundaries (their dwelling), and the Almighty intervened in judgment. Likewise, the inhabitants of Sodom abandoned their natural boundaries by indulging in fornication and pursuing "strange flesh." That too had its legal consequences. Aren't the current scientific developments another example of abandoning natural boundaries, and shouldn't they also be subject to consequences?

We're experiencing firsthand how world events are hastening the fulfillment of biblical prophecy in almost every area. This is precisely what we want to keep in mind: God loves His creatures and is exercising a great deal of forbearance. He doesn't want anyone to be lost. If the Lord hadn't been patient with me, I don't know whether I'd even still be alive, let alone have eternal life. We don't just want to expose the works of darkness, but above all, point out the great light of redemption in Jesus. And we pray: Maranatha; come, Lord Jesus!

(MR0721/1174)

“And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end” (Daniel 12:8-9).

BY ARNO FROESE

The faithful prophet Daniel receives very peculiar instructions: the sealed book is not to be opened until the end times. We read in verse 4: “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.” Note the words, “the time of the end.” Question: when is “the time of the end”? The apostle Peter refers to the prophet Joel: “And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God...” (Acts 2:17a; cf. Heb 9:26). While Daniel was commanded to shut up the words, we realize that at Pentecost, the words were revealed. John writes, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us” (John 1:14a). It is the Messiah of Israel, the King of the Jews, the Savior of the world, who opened the end times for us—now for more than 2,000 years.

We notice that Daniel at that time “understood not.” What did Daniel not

understand? “Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand” (verse 10). This is the beginning of the Gospel, prophesying of the righteousness which is in Christ. By it we are purified and segregated from the wicked one, for “the wicked shall do wickedly.” However, the Church “shall understand.” What do we understand? That the world is racing toward independence from God. How? The answer lies in one word: technology. The marvels of science and technology seem endless. Year after year, we read of new inventions—not by the hundreds, but literally by the millions.

This corresponds precisely with the words, “and knowledge shall be increased.” We have ample historic writings documenting the progress of mankind. For the first 1,800 years after the birth of the Church, little change

The world is racing toward independence from God. How? The answer lies in one word: technology. The marvels of science and technology seem endless. Year after year, we read of new inventions—not by the hundreds, but literally by the millions.

occurred with technology. But then, with the Industrial Revolution, technology literally exploded. What was impossible just a few decades ago, is now taken for granted by children in grade school. Everyone knows how to use a computer or smartphone. At a touch of a button, research can be done using sources from literally around the world.

This also applies to transportation. Before the internal combustion engine was invented, man relied on the power of beasts, whether camel, donkey, horse, or ox. Today, one can travel around the world in mere hours. Regarding food, the overwhelming majority of the population in olden days was involved in agriculture, growing crops to sustain life. That has been reduced by technology to a rather insignificant industry, now comprising about 2% of the workforce. Yet that 2% produces an abundance of food, even wasting nearly half.

But science (“knowledge”) is not done yet.

An article in the *Jerusalem Post* was headlined, “Israeli ‘no checkout’ technology.” Here are some excerpts:

Is a “just walk out” shopping revolution on the way in Europe? Three of Europe’s biggest grocery retailers opened cashier-less stores that allow customers to walk in, select their items, and walk out, without having to wait in checkout lines or scan any items.

“Some people are saying this is the biggest thing to happen this year in retail,” says Michael Gabay, CEO of Trigo, the Israeli company providing the system’s technology.

Shoppers at the Tesco Express store in central London and the REWE supermarket chain in Cologne, Germany got to experience the technology for the first time. After downloading the store’s app and creating a payment profile, shoppers must scan a QR code as they enter the store to get logged into the system. Then, after they walk around the store and choose their products, they can simply walk out of the store without doing anything else.

“We solve the three biggest complaints shoppers have,” Gabay says. “We eliminate waiting in line, we help make sure the store stocks enough of the products you want, and we help shoppers find

Regarding food, the overwhelming majority of the population in olden days was involved in agriculture, growing crops to sustain life. That has been reduced by technology to a rather insignificant industry, now comprising about 2% of the workforce.

products in the store with a floor map inside the application.”

Trigo plans to expand into the US market next year, and to work with other types of stores in the future, from department stores to electronics and toy stores. “Next year, we’ll be in dozens of stores, in two years, we’ll have hundreds of stores, and in five years, I expect we will be in thousands of stores. We have contracts for hundreds of stores already in place.”

-www.jpost.com, 1 November 2021

While “just walk in and walk out” has been practiced for a while in some European countries, the technology developed in Israel seems to aim for world leadership. Thus, we see computer-based science able to keep

record of individuals and the products they buy, as well as access their financial accounts. But in the end, the man-made system—in the Bible called the image of the beast—will also recognize those who have become true worshipers of the image and who not.

What is in store for us? Another mystery of forbidden revelation: “And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not” (Revelation 10:4). That is reserved for the believers; the ones purified and tried, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, “shall understand.” (MC)

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

VINEGAR BENEFITS... GRATITUDE... SPIRITLESS ANIMALS

Vinegar Benefits

I was reading the article by Stephan Beitze, where it mentioned hyssop and vinegar. I have been drinking vinegar for over 50 years, starting when I was 12. Very few people realize that vinegar is a hydrating acid! If you are really thirsty, and water or any other fluids don't do the trick, a swig of an ounce of vinegar will hydrate you immediately! I learned this years ago when I ran out of potable water. I only had apple cider left for emergency use—part of first aid. I took a swig and immediately, it quenched my thirst! So, I think the story of vinegar is being given a bad rap. Ignorance can be bliss! Vinegar was thought for evil, but in reality, it helped Christ!

-M. Faulkner, CA

Answer: Indeed, vinegar is good. I recall years ago, one of our family friends, an avid cyclist, emphasized that he always drinks a lot of pickle juice, which contains vinegar. Of course, I looked it up and noticed that it has little nutritional value, but does have some health benefits.

What I don't know is what type of vinegar Christ was offered on the cross. *Unger's Bible Dictionary* says, "It is uncertain whether the vinegar presented to our Savior on the cross was acid wine or true vinegar."

Gratitude

Dear Arno Froese,

I trust that this message finds you doing well in spite all that is going on in the world today, beginning with the Covid-19 pandemic.



Many years have passed since you challenged my views on God's Spiritual Laws (January 2008—February 2009), for which I am very grateful. I am writing, however, not only to express my gratitude for extending your time to challenge my views, but also to share with you an article I wrote on "The Circle of Life." Thank you for your kindness in continuing to send *Midnight Call* magazine when I was unable to continue my subscription. May the Lord bless you as you reach out to bless others in your ministry for Him.

T.Deltwas-Leet, FL

Answer: I have read the booklet "The Circle of Life," and it reminded me of Acts 14:22: "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."

When reading Hebrews 11, we note those who received victory because of their faith. Yet, beginning with verse 36, we find believers who were martyred.

Love is the key, bridging over the law: "for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law" (Romans 13:8b). Verse 10 adds: "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Indeed, inviting those

who are outside the saving knowledge of Christ is supremely important.

Spiritless Animals

I was just wondering about the article under "World Focus" on monkeys. The comment was made that animals have no spirit but do have a soul. Ecclesiastes 3:21 says: "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?" Looking for more info on this.

-J. Pineo, MA

Answer: Man consists of spirit, soul, and body. Man can reason, and he knows what is good and evil. The animal did not eat the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Certain animals can be trained to a degree. In most cases, the trainer is trained, which is quite obvious when one goes to a circus. I for one would not go into the lion's cage and give commands to a hungry lion.

However, animals have a God-given instinct; it's the soul, which corresponds to the body.

The spirit communicates the things of this world in non-believers. The born-again person communicates with his spirit, things that are out of this world. (MC)



Facing Corona in the Ebenezer Home



By David Phillips *COO (Chief Operating Officer)*

“When Jesus heard that, He said, ‘This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it’” (John 11:4).

The above verse has kept me thinking so often about Yeshua and the special love He had for Lazarus. Reading the story for the first time, we may receive the impression that Yeshua is comforting the two sisters in vain, because Lazarus has already died. Going over the verses of this story multiple times, we come to realize that these words include the message: “to the glory of God.” Yeshua was delayed and, humanly speaking, it was too late to heal Lazarus of his illness. It even went beyond four days, so in Jewish belief, a resurrection was impossible. Yet, it all had to happen and Lazarus had to be resurrected (and pay attention to the reason)—for the glory of God.

As Lazarus was ill, his two sisters were in distress, which we can certainly understand. They knew Yeshua could heal, but in their minds, they didn’t realize that He could also resurrect from the dead. Remember the song, “Oh, the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus”? It’s been very encouraging to me, as I sang it to myself

during the activities of the 5th wave of corona.

Since the beginning of January (writing this article mid-January), there have been corona-infected and positive test results among our residents and team, resulting in many having to quarantine. We have been working now around the clock, with roughly 40% less on the team. One of our floors has been turned into an isolation ward, with all positive-testing residents moving there. It has been quite an impressive logistic adventure, as you can see from the pictures.

As a team, we gathered together and prayed that our dear residents could stay in our home and not be sent to a corona hospital, which is usually mandatory. Our doctor and head nurse have been on the phone with the Ministry of Health, asking them, “If we fulfill all the requirements (to the extent we can), will you allow us to keep the residents at the home?” Miraculously, they agreed, and even encouraged us to do so! We are so thankful to the Lord that they highly



Delivering meals



respect us and that we are in good standing among senior citizens' homes. Just as the Lord said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." This too, we understand, is for the glory of God.

While the team members and residents have been in quarantine and isolation, we especially pray that the residents will not suffer complications from the virus. Lazarus in the Bible passed away, but that was not the end. We all understand that if one of our elderly residents passes away, it is not the end for them, praise the Lord. It will be for the glory of God. These are not my words, but come from those who I have been communicating with among the elderly who have had to quaran-

Nurses' station



Isolation ward



Testing for Corona



tine. They assured me they have a much better place awaiting them in eternity, and they all eagerly await this. "Yes," they explained, "we still pray. We have fellowship, and we pray that this entire situation will strengthen us all and glorify our Lord."

It has been amazing to watch how committed our team has been and how they have worked around the clock and helped each other under such pressure. If one is sick, the other steps up. If something needs to be done, even if it isn't their usual task, someone quickly jumps in and fills the gap.

Yes, this is a challenging and complicated time. There are those who don't feel well among the residents and team. We are working 12-14 hours a day. The team is tired. We must wear protective disposable gear, which is uncomfortable. Some feel stressed and scared, but these feelings come with an understanding that we are safe in His



Cleaning



Dealing with isolation laundry



hands. We are all human and have our own needs and families, and pray for extra grace and strength for this time.

This month we are dedicating the donations to this situation, since this time has been very challenging financially. During this period, because of the virus being extremely contagious, we've had to go to using all disposable dishes and protective gear, much more sterilizing, using extra cleaning supplies, having separately packed items and food, bottled water, doing a lot more laundry, and also having to purchase an extra washer and dryer just for the isolation ward. We're using much more water and energy (which is very costly here in Israel), and have even partly resorted to bringing in our own supplies, as businesses here in Israel are running short on some needed items ... and so on.

I share this with you as a prayer request. Please keep us in continued prayer, and may the Holy Spirit guide you in those prayers.

If any of you have worked in a senior home or hospital, you know exactly what we are describing. But for those of you who would like an inside view of what this all looks like, we have added some pictures for you.

I really don't know how to say thank you enough, but please know that your prayers and help are greatly appreciated! We love you all!

May the Holy One of Israel reward you in all you do and keep you in His service.



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SHIPWRECK



The Romanian-language editions of *Midnight Call* and *News from Israel* are printed about 250 km (155 mi.) from our branch office in Romania. Our Romanian employees retrieve them after each print run.

By Peter Malgo

Bad roads, inconsiderate drivers, and unfavorable conditions make this literature transport a dangerous undertaking every time. During the last trip, it finally happened: Franz Rudolf hit a pothole with his fully loaded car and popped a tire. Franz replaced it and kept going. What he hadn't noticed was that the impact had damaged his suspension, so he could no longer steer the car. He described the effect as like driving on black ice. Franz didn't stand a chance as the car lurched closer and closer to the roadside; it slid into a ditch and overturned. It was a total loss. But Franz walked away from the accident completely unharmed, as if by a miracle.

This event illustrates the great dangers our employees are exposed to on their numerous trips, and this isn't just the case in Romania. Dur-

ing one of his last speaking circuits, Norbert Lieth discovered that the country roads had become dangerously narrow due to heavy snowfall. But whether we are traveling by air, sea, or automobile, we are exposed to risks at any time. Some of us actually feel sorry for ourselves when we assume these dangers in the Lord's service. But there are Kingdom workers—missionaries—who are even more exposed and have to endure many delicate situations. Some even lose their lives in the process.

Events like this may tempt us to give the impression that we're bearing great hardships, if not outright suffering, for the sake of Christ. Some relief organizations direct our focus to these kinds of events to arouse pity. But is that really what our Lord Jesus expects from us?



Our thinking becomes darkened when reflection on everything that is happening to us devolves into self-pity. Yes, it leads to dejection and depression. Eventually, you're only talking about yourself; everything revolves around you.

Paul, who experienced numerous hardships himself, speaks plainly to this. In his second letter to the Corinthians, he gives us a bit of insight into his many extremely painful experiences. "Three times I was shipwrecked" (2 Cor 11:25). Hopefully, Franz's car wreck was just a one-time occurrence! "I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger..." (vv. 25-26). Read on yourself to find out what Paul experienced. In the next chapter, he speaks of his very serious illness, although we don't know exactly what condition he was suffering from. The drama of his shipwrecks can be read in the Acts of the Apostles. They'd make riveting movie scenes! But Paul's assessment of it all is different from what we'd expect. In 2 Corinthians 12:10 he writes: "For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities..." It's apparent from several different places

in Scripture that Paul could have easily boasted of all he'd suffered for the cause of Christ. He could have emphasized himself and said, "Just look what happened to me!" And yet he draws the reader's attention from himself to Jesus over and over: "Not a result of works, so that no one may boast" (Eph 2:9). "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord" (1 Cor 1:31).

Our thinking becomes darkened when reflection on everything that is happening to us devolves into self-pity. Yes, it leads to dejection and depression. Eventually, you're only talking about yourself; everything revolves around you. Paul, on the other hand, puts the emphasis where it belongs: "For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor 4:5). Let's put Jesus Christ at the center and proclaim Him every day! (MC)

The Gulf Between Position and Condition

Wim Malgo (1922-1992)

An interpretation of the last book of the Bible.
Part 28. Revelation 2:19-20.

The church's offense isn't in a specific action against the Lord, but in a passive tolerance of the enemy.

Jezebel means “chaste,” but she was only chaste in appearance. That is just what Jezebel’s teachings did: create a gulf between a believer’s position in Christ and his actual state.

What does our “position in Christ” mean? In Christ we are perfect, righteous, and sanctified (Rom 8:1; 1 Cor 6:11, etc.). Whoever has accepted Jesus as his Savior; whoever has been born again, has a holy and immaculate position before God. “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Cor 5:17). But our condition—our personal life—must then be correspondingly sanctified (1 Thess 4:3).

If we create a gulf between position and condition by following the spirit of this world (whether morally or financially), while saying that we believe in Jesus Christ, then the spirit of Jezebel is ruinously effec-

tive. Jezebel’s teaching is practiced in just this way: you blur the lines. You may even go so far as to say by way of apology, “It’s the old man in me that’s sinning, not the new man.”

“Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols” (Rev 2:20). She seduces obedient servants to eat food sacrificed to idols (in other words, to have fellowship with those of dubious character). The Lord is deeply saddened by the church’s doings; it insults His holiness. The church’s offense isn’t in a specific action against the Lord, but in a passive tolerance of the enemy. And tolerance ultimately means affirmation.

(MR0721/1175)

Midnight Call's **March Resource Guide**



An In-Depth Look at Our Eternal Home

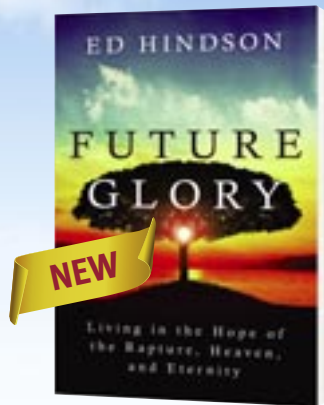
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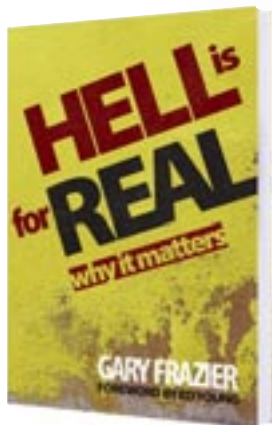
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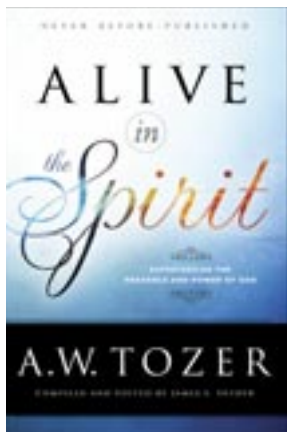
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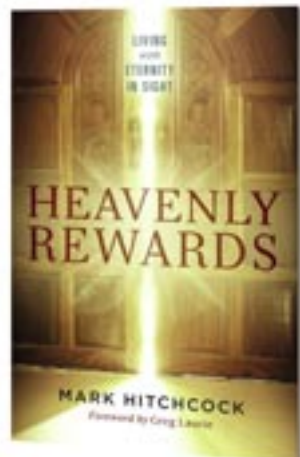
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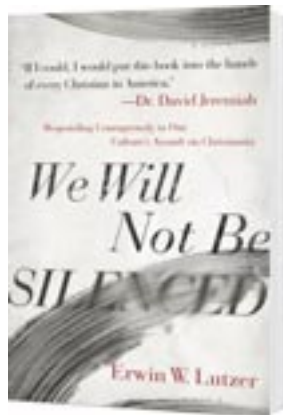
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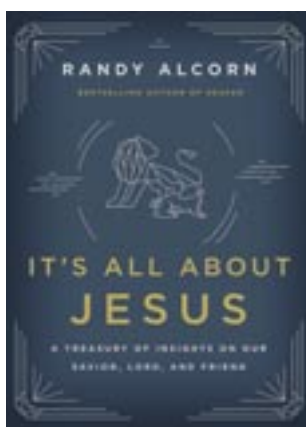
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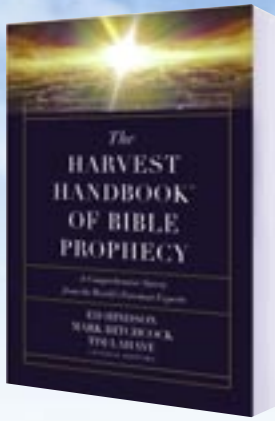
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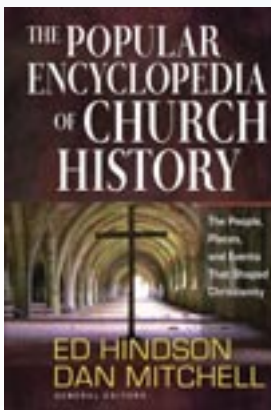
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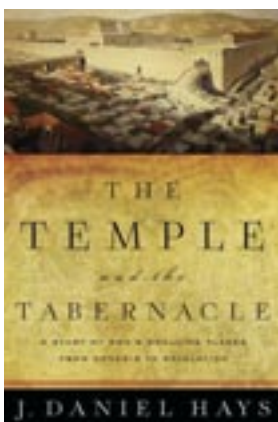
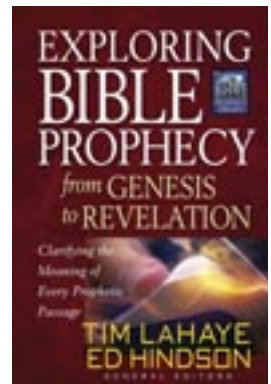
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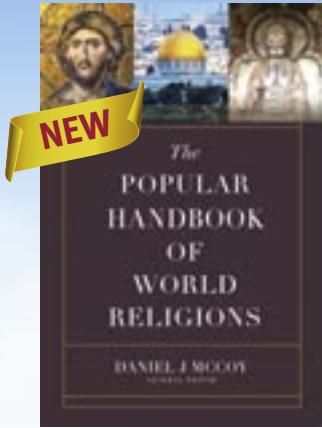
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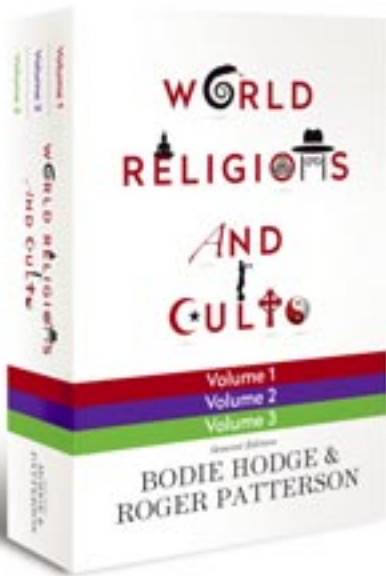
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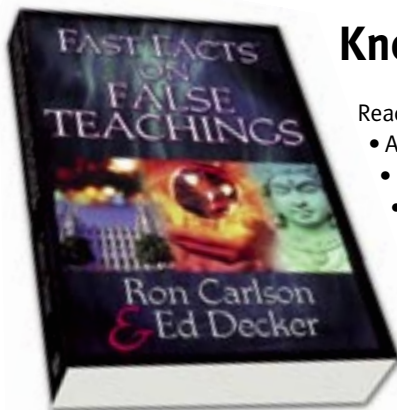
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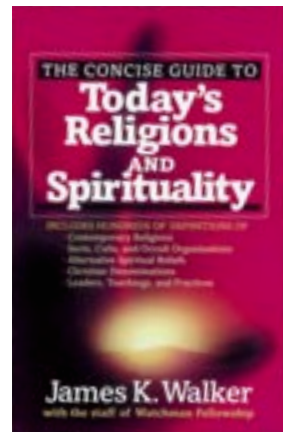
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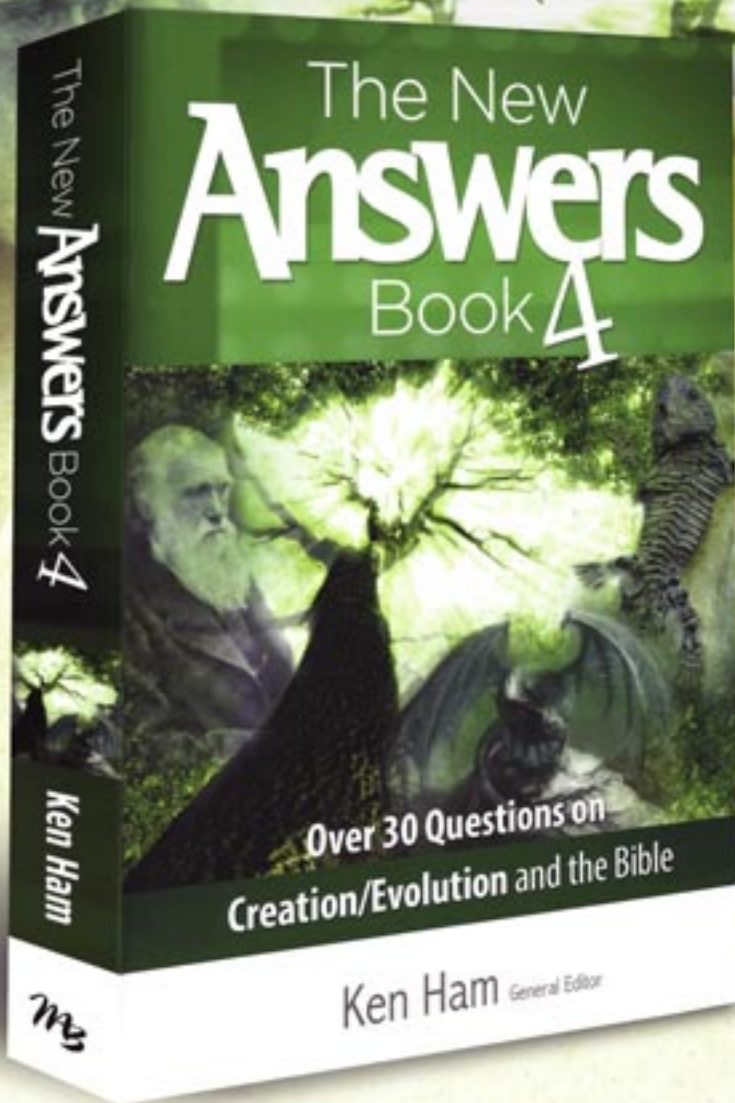
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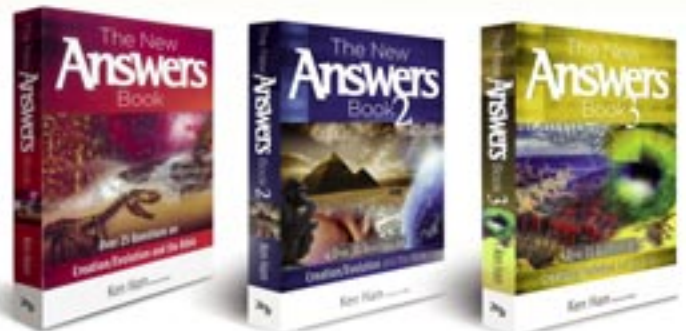
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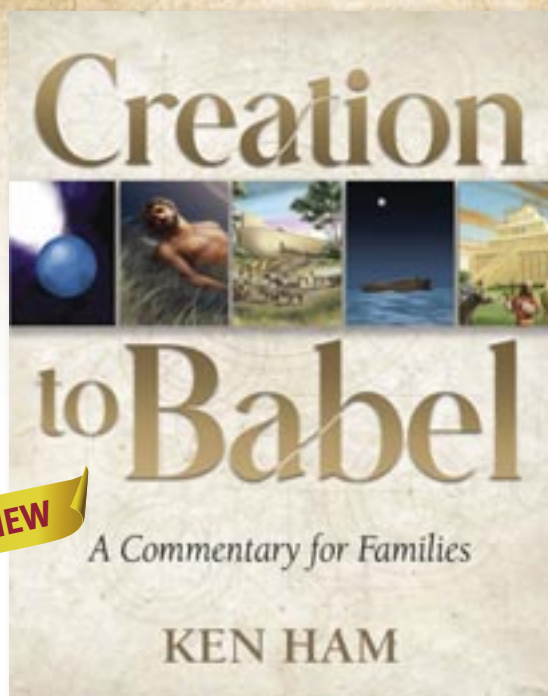
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