



PROPHECY IS LIKE A LAMP SHINING IN A DARK PLACE. 2 PETER 1:19

Lamplighter

LAMB & LION MINISTRIES
a Non-Denominational Christian Media Ministry

January/February
2022

Behold,
**I MAKE ALL
THINGS NEW**



REVELATION 21:5

4	ALL THINGS NEW	21	LION OF JUDAH	27	TRUTH, JUSTICE, AND THE AMERICAN WAY
9	MORTALITY RESET	22	UNCLEAN!	28	PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY
12	RESURRECTION IN HEBREW SCRIPTURE	23	THE MYSTERY OF THE NEW COVENANT	30	LOOMING THREATS
18	CHRIST AND OLD TESTAMENT BELIEVERS			31	MINISTRY MAILBOX



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FROM THE EDITOR

Throughout Scripture, God's people are instructed to mark the passage of time with regular memorials of His providence and provision. Seven times a year, the Jewish people observed ceremonial feasts ordained by God.

Christians also commemorate key events. We honor Jesus' first advent, His crucifixion and resurrection, and the "last supper," marking a new covenant in His body and blood. We gather each "Lord's Day," as the early disciples did—celebrating each week His validation of the good news of the Gospel.

Thankfully, God has given us seasons of life so we can appreciate the progression of our lives and the tender mercies He showers down upon us.

The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.

Psalm 145:9

The transition from one year to another presents yet another kindness of Almighty God. We are compelled to consider that we've lingered yet another year on the earth and realize that a brand new year—filled with unknown challenges and opportunities—lies ahead. And most of us are more than ready to turn the page.

Looking back on the past year or two, we might be tempted to give in to pessimism about the state of our nation. Indeed, the signs of decline and discouragement are all around us. Conversely, others are determined to see the world through rose-colored glasses, intent to remain oblivious to the moral and spiritual carnage growing year by

year. But neither extreme is appropriate for a child of God.

As I've quoted before, followers of Jesus Christ are neither pessimists nor optimists. We know that God will work all things together for our good and His glory, so we can't be pessimistic. Yet, we also understand that the world will grow darker and darker as the end draws near, so we can't be optimistic about the trajectory of the world around us.

Instead, we are people of hope. Our hope is not some ephemeral thing based on the whim of man or the compulsions of fate. As Edward Mote wrote in 1834, Our hope is built "on nothing less, than Jesus' blood and righteousness"—His, not ours. The world will indeed grow darker, but our eyes are fixed on our Blessed Hope—Jesus Christ.

In the fullness of time, He has promised to make all things new. Soon—very soon—He will burst from the heavens, and we will be caught up to join Him in new glorified bodies. When that happens, the old will be swept aside, and we will be new—forevermore.

I can hardly wait!

Tim Moore tmoore@lamblion.com

**Keep standing. Keep
praying. Keep believing.
Jesus is Coming!**

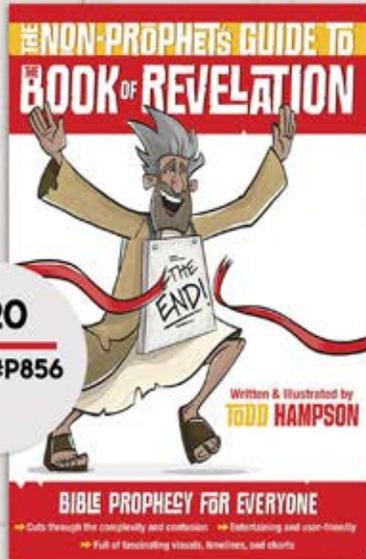


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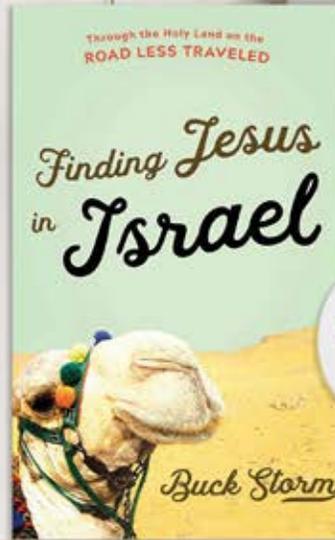
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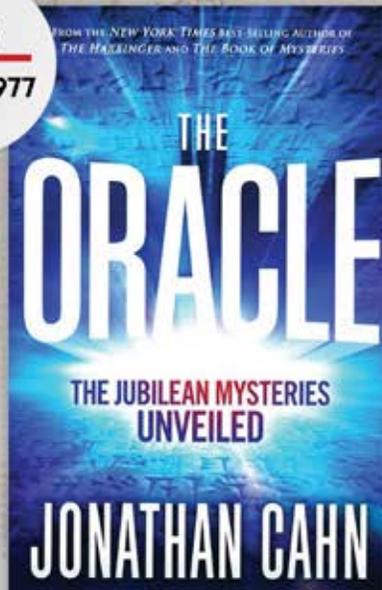
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Have you looked at yourself up close in a mirror recently? I mean really, really close—as in a magnifying mirror. Unless you are very young, you'll find that a magnified close-up is rarely flattering. Every wrinkle and blemish and errant hair (or lack thereof) is exaggerated to our great chagrin.

Whether we see ourselves up close or not, those same blemishes are there on full display every day. These days, more men are hiding behind prodigious beards and long hair. Ladies are able to conceal certain perceived flaws with makeup. But from a very young age, we are all winding down.

The author of Ecclesiastes recognized the apparent futility of this life: "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity" (Ecclesiastes 1:2). Those words of wisdom are attributed to the Preacher, David's son, king in Jerusalem. Most scholars believe that Solomon penned Ecclesiastes.

If the wisest man who ever lived, who was blessed with riches and a kingdom that expanded Israel's borders and wealth, lamented such pointlessness, what aspiration for meaning can we have in this life?

THE DANGER OF OVERTHINKING

Pessimism can stem from perceiving too vividly or feeling too deeply. Perhaps the Apostle Thomas doubted so frequently because he had been jilted and disappointed by life too often. Jesus did not harshly condemn his skepticism, but gently encouraged him to embrace evidence of a greater reality.



*all
things
new*



TIM MOORE

History offers numerous examples of great men and women who struggle with depression. Abraham Lincoln, William Tecumseh Sherman, Ernest Hemingway, and Winston Churchill all suffered from what used to be called deep bouts of melancholy.

Sometimes, extensive book knowledge can isolate us from the reality of the world around us. Festus' response to Paul's testimony about Jesus Christ was to call out in a loud voice, "Paul, you are out of your mind! Your great learning is driving you mad" (Acts 26:24). Paul did not deny the idea that great learning could undermine a firm grasp of reality. Instead he replied, "I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I utter words of sober truth." Paul testified to what he had personally experienced and what he knew King Agrippa would understand based on his own knowledge of current events and the prophets.

NOTHING MORE THAN FEELINGS

It is also possible for feelings to become so intense that they weigh in upon us continually. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a clinical term for the condition that a terrifying or shocking experience can cause. Memories of a traumatic experience and the feelings it caused can trigger flashbacks, nightmares, and severe anxiety. People who suffer from PTSD sometimes have a hard time connecting emotionally out of subconscious fear that they may be hurt again. Other sensitive souls look around at the unending stretches of human suffering and lose hope.

We live in an era where the manifestations of discouragement and despair are evident all around us. Prolonged homelessness, drug addiction, and suicide have reached epidemic levels. Even young people, typically brimming with hope and eager to find their place in the world, are falling victim to unchecked nihilism. Many are embracing anti-social behavior, espousing anarchist propaganda, and resorting to suicide.

Covid protocols did not help matters. Last year two cadets at the Air Force Academy committed suicide toward the end of the academic year, in part because of heavy-handed Covid lock-downs. But even before Covid, teen suicide rates had increased 60% in the preceding 10 years.

Regarding the caution of pitching over into the oblivion of our own minds and our own feelings, Benjamin Franklin offered us this wisdom in his Poor Richard's Almanac of 1750: "There are three Things extremely hard, Steel, a Diamond, and to know one's self." The Lord who made us, said it even better, "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?" (Jeremiah 17:9).

THE VALUE OF GOD'S WORD

I've seen many people become so enamored with their own learning that they cast themselves adrift from the Christian faith upon which they were raised. Like a ship that casts off from the safety of a harbor into a raging storm, they are soon tossed about by the tempest that is our modern culture.

God's Word speaks about the origin of Creation, the nature of man, the important difference between men and women, and the ordained relationship of marriage. Perhaps because God was so clear about those ontological distinctions, Satan has hurled his most pointed attacks on these fronts.

Ontological = the area of philosophy and science dealing with the nature of being.

Even within the Church, respect for the full counsel of God's Word is not universal. Some faithful Christians find themselves drawn toward two extremes relative to the Old Testament. Some discount the entire Old Testament, while others attempt to revert to its Law and ordinances.

Within the first group, we've all heard Christians who are quick to proclaim that they are "New Testament Christians"—as if the Bible should be cut in two and the outdated first half relegated to a museum of ancient artifacts. Someone recently complained to me that they didn't need to hear anything from the Old Testament, since it was irrelevant to their Christian faith.

Even renowned preachers of the Word are not immune from a callousness toward the Old Testament. In 2018, Andy Stanley infamously said, "Hey, it's time that we face the facts and unhitch our faith and our practice from some of these Old Testament values that we can

appreciate in their original context, but we really don't have any business dragging them into a modern context." He later complained that his statement was taken out of context.

The heresy he flirts with is called Marcionism, after Marcion of Sinope who embraced Christ but denounced the "malevolent" deity of the Old Testament. He claimed that the New Testament is inspired but dismissed the Old Testament as irrelevant to Christian faith. Thankfully, the early Church fathers condemned such a view as heretical.



While most professing Christians would not be so bold as to tear the Old Testament from their Bibles, many have described themselves as a "New Testament Christian"—as if that excuses them from having to grapple with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They tend to dismiss the promises made to the Jews and only want to focus on the love and grace offered by Jesus.

Other Christians go to the opposite extreme. They have rediscovered the Jewish roots of the Christian faith and insist that true faith is demonstrated by a fervent adherence to the Old Testament Law. Movements such as the Hebrew Roots Movement try to impose the yoke of Law on themselves and others. Yet Paul rejoiced to be set free from the Law. He and the other apostles were consistent in recognizing that freedom in Christ relieved Jew and Gentile alike from the burden of the Old Testament.

THE BIBLE JESUS USED

Anyone who has been watching our "Jesus in the Old Testament" TV series on *Christ in Prophecy* knows that we hold the Old Testament in very high regard. All its prophets and promises pointed to Jesus Christ—both toward His First Advent and to His glorious Second Coming. In Peter's first sermon to the gathered throngs in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, he pointed to fulfilled prophecy (Old Testament prophecy) to validate Jesus as the Messiah of Israel (Acts 2). The truth of his words pierced many of them to the heart, and about 3,000 of

them believed and were baptized.

Jesus too, pointed to the prophetic Word. When He was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted (let the weight of that truth press in upon you!), He responded to the devil's temptations by quoting the Old Testament. The circumstances and His responses were:

- **Hunger** – "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God" (Deuteronomy 8:3).
- **Recognition of His role as Messiah** – "You shall not put the LORD your God to the test" (Deuteronomy 6:16).
- **Worship of the world** – "You shall worship the LORD your God, and serve Him only" (Deuteronomy 6:13).

Jesus' prowess with the Word of God makes me realize that I have not studied Deuteronomy enough!

Likewise, when He launched His public ministry in Galilee, Jesus stood in the synagogue at Nazareth and read from Isaiah:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord (Luke 14:18-19).

Over and over again, the Gospel writers document that Jesus referenced and cited Old Testament Scripture. Said another way, the Old Testament as we know it was the Bible Jesus used. Similarly, it is impossible to understand many of the prophecies referenced in the New Testament without a solid foundation of Old Testament understanding.

The point of all this is to encourage study of all God's Word. Hopefully, our "Jesus in the Old Testament" series has demonstrated that even books like Leviticus come alive with relevance and meaning when you read them looking for Jesus Christ. As He testified, "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished" (Matthew 5:17-18).



***“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets;
I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.”
– Matthew 5:17***

NEW AND IMPROVED

The point is not to merely convince you that the Old Testament is rightly joined to the New. The very word “testament” demonstrates that they are testimonies of someone. The same Creator God who tells us in His Word how and why He created the heavens and the earth (to the depth He deemed appropriate) has also told us how He intends to bring human history to its final culmination.

Testament = a tangible proof or expression of a fact, event, or quality; a statement of disposition of property. (i.e. - will) Covenant between God and man.

That progression of revelation and action is eternally relevant. In the beginning God created. He made the heavens and the earth and every living creature *ex nihilo* (out of nothing). He formed man from the dust of the earth (worthless, cast aside matter) and endued him with worth far above every other creature because he was made “in the image of God” (Genesis 1:27).

What we consider the appearance of age is really a consequence of the fall: we grow old and eventually die. The wages of sin are the decay and death we suffer (Romans 6:23). Even when we recognize our helpless estate and aspire to choose wisely, we are trapped in bodies

that are breaking down and saddled with a sinful nature (Romans 7:24). But Christ...

In His first recorded miracle, Jesus demonstrated His power over matter, space, and time. He changed water into wine during a wedding feast in Cana (John 2). This same Jesus—who was nailed to a cross and died, buried in a borrowed grave, rose again to life, and ascended into heaven as His disciples gazed on intently—has promised to make us new again!

David sought solace when overwhelmed by the horror of his own sin. He fasted and prayed for seven days following Nathan’s rebuke. Psalm 51 captures his contrition. Just consider the broken heart that cried out, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me” (Psalm 51:10-11).

The shepherd king had witnessed Saul descend into mental anguish and confusion when the Spirit of the Lord departed from him. He was desperate to stay close to the Almighty—and understood that his own sin had threatened that relationship. His worthy sacrifice was a broken spirit and a contrite heart.

Thankfully, while we too are called to confess our sins and repent, we have an even better sacrifice. Jesus Christ laid Himself on the altar and His blood covers all

our sins. That is why the writer of Hebrews describes the Gospel as a new covenant. When we put our trust in Christ, we receive the new heart and new spirit that God promised Israel in Ezekiel 36:25-27. And that is only a down payment on what is to come.

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

In Revelation 21, John saw a new heaven and a new earth. Speaking of the coming future in the past tense, he observed that the first heaven and the first earth had passed away and there was no longer any sea. He watched as New Jerusalem came down out of heaven. The voice of God validated the name of the city foretold by Ezekiel ("Yahweh Shammah"—The LORD is there, Ezekiel 48:35). He said, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them" (Revelation 21:3).

The Lord promised there will no longer be "any mourning, or crying, or pain, the first things have passed away" (v. 4). Then He declared, "Behold, I am making all things new. Write, for these things are faithful and true" (v. 5).

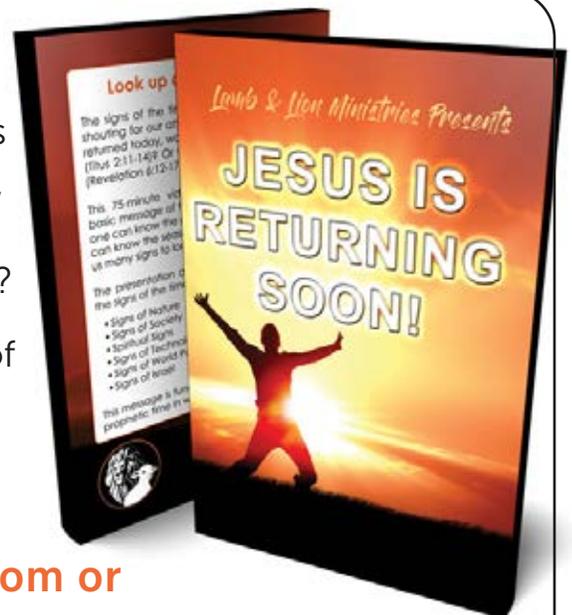
We know that we are promised glorified bodies, which will be like Jesus' body following His resurrection. They will not wear out or grow old. They will be unfettered by time or space and yet will be able to enjoy food and touch.

Human factors engineers speak of a phenomenon called sensory overload. That occurs when your five senses take in more information than your brain can process, causing your mind or body to either shut down or to flee from the overwhelming stimulation. Our natural senses can be so heightened that we are unaware of what is happening in the spiritual realm. That is exactly what happened with Elisha's servant (2 Kings 6). Elijah too, came to realize that God often speaks in a whisper instead of a cacophany of noise (1 Kings 19:11-13).

While you await your glorified body, make a point to shut out the clamor in order to hear the voice of the Lord. He has already given you a heart that is attuned to His. As His sheep, you will hear the Great Shepherd speaking to your heart. Praise Him for making you a new creature in Christ—and for the glorified body that awaits you when you meet Him face to face. ♦

The signs of the times are upon us and they are shouting for our attention! Are you ready? If Jesus returned today, would He be your "Blessed Hope" (Titus 2:11-14), or your "Holy Terror" (Rev. 6:12-17)? This 75-minute DVD contains the basic message of the Ministry, and features a categorized overview of all the signs of the times.

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NATHAN JONES



We live in an age when so many people are talking about resets: the Great Reset, the Church reset, an environmental reset, a population control reset, resetting one's crashed computer, resetting one's clock due to Daylight Savings, and so on and on. But, did you know that every person who has ever lived, is alive now, or has yet to be born faces a mortality reset? In the vernacular, we call it – Death. For, after all, to be human is to be mortal, defined as “the state or condition of being subject to death.”

JOY UNSPEAKABLE...

Every one of us holds inside us an innate knowledge that there still remains a life beyond our death, confirmed in Ecclesiastes 3:11, “He [God] has also set eternity in the hearts of men, yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.” God has placed inside of us knowledge that there is something about us and about life that goes way beyond our earthly existence. As mere mortals, we are just too small to grasp exactly what that is. First Corinthians 2:9 reveals, “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those that love Him.”

The reason why we cannot properly conceive of life beyond death is because our view outside of the womb can be just as limiting as our life when we were living inside of the womb. We think of this life only as it is now, and not how it could be. When you think about it, humans go through very distinct stages across our lifespan. We start out as a blastocyst, and then we grow into an embryo, and then a fetus, then are born as a baby, develop into a toddler, elementary, teen, and so on until finally we become fully



MORTALITY RESET

grown adults. But, there is another stage to our existence that extends even beyond the adult stage (and I'm not talking about retirement).

Sadly, when it comes to pondering over this next life stage, most people live as Hebrews 2:15 reveals as "those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death." Life is so short and death always looms on the periphery of our vision. We know that death is out there, but we spend most of our time trying to avoid it so as to not think about that potentially scary next stage.

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT DEATH

People are often scared of death because of misconceptions ranging from annihilationism, to reincarnation, to suffering in Purgatory, to soul sleep, and to living forever as a disembodied spirit. The last, in particular, seems especially frightening because the concept brings with it an everlasting sentence of boredom.

Misconceptions about the afterlife arise from our "womb" perspective because we just do not have enough data and so are left guessing on some of the details. But, we don't have to totally guess, for God has revealed a good number of details about what our mortality reset is going to look like. He wrote those details down in the Bible. Don't forget that 1 Corinthians 2:9 confirms for us that, "God has prepared." God has prepared our life for living now and for living after we die, and He shares a taste of that in the Bible.

So, let's say that today you go outside and a tornado sucks you up and tosses your carcass a mile away. You are now dead. The following is what will happen to you if you are a believer in Jesus Christ as your Savior and so are saved.

1) USHERED RIGHT TO JESUS

Upon death, your spirit will be delivered into the presence of Jesus Christ by His angels in Heaven (Luke 16:22).

2) RECEIVE AN INTERMEDIATE BODY

God has intended all along that we will live on after death and throughout eternity as a physical being. We were never meant to exist as disembodied spirits floating around on clouds playing harps all day (thankfully!).

Throughout this life on earth, our spirits exist inside of a mortal physical body, but after we die, we receive what

theologians refer to as an intermediate spirit body. We know that intermediate spirit bodies exist because we can read in the Bible about Elijah and Moses appearing at the Transfiguration, as well as Samuel appearing to Saul when he visited the Witch of Endor. These long dead people had physical, intermediate bodies. And, Revelation 7 displays the Tribulation Martyrs as standing before the throne of God worshiping while wearing white robes. If all of these examples were spirits, then they would have no need of clothing. The Church Age saints instead have to be "clothed" in some sort of physical body as they await the Resurrection of the Just at the Rapture of the Church. And, later, the Old Testament and Tribulation Saints will be resurrected at the end of the Tribulation (Daniel 12:1-2; Revelation 20:4).

While humans never remain bodiless, neither are we ever left unconscious. We remain totally conscious after death. A perfect example of this comes from the story Jesus told in Luke 16 about the Rich Man and Lazarus. After both men had died, Lazarus was taken to Paradise while the Rich Man was cast into Torments. Both are described as dwelling in bodies that could feel, see, and talk. They existed fully conscious and never dormant due to any kind of soul sleep. Only the earthly, mortal body remains "asleep" in the grave awaiting the Resurrection.

3) RESURRECTED INTO YOUR GLORIFIED BODY

As 1 Corinthians 15:35-56 explains, when the Rapture occurs, the earthly bodies of the dead in Christ will be resurrected and merged with their intermediate body, both being transformed into their glorified body. And, for those in Christ who are alive when the Rapture occurs, their earthly body will be automatically transformed into their glorified body. This will be the only generation in history to avoid death. How this transformation into our glorified forms is accomplished technically, well, only God knows. If you have accepted Jesus as your Savior, you will soon find out firsthand!

What will our glorified body be like? First Corinthians 15:42-50 describes it as, "the body that is sown is perishable," in other words, can be destroyed, "is raised imperishable," meaning it cannot be destroyed. "It is sown in dishonor," in that our sin weighs us down like we are slogged in filthy mud, "but it is raised in glory," meaning in purity. "It is sown in weakness," in that we get sick and

tired, "but it is raised in power." We are first "sown a natural body," but "it is raised a spiritual body." We will dwell forever in a Holy Spirit-powered body.

And, we will "bear the likeness of the Man from heaven," whom we know is none other than the resurrected Jesus Christ. His resurrection provides the template for our own resurrection. For when Jesus returns, He "will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself" (Philippians 3:20-21).

...AND FULL OF GLORY

To summarize, our glorified bodies cannot be destroyed. We will become immortal. We will live forever. We will be mighty and powerful. We will be Spirit-controlled rather than sin-controlled, for the sin nature will have died along with our earthly bodies. We will exist as tangible beings, in that we can touch and feel other glorified bodies just as the disciples could touch and feel Jesus after He was resurrected (Luke 24: 41-43; John 20:27-28).

We will be recognizable, in that we will appear much as we do now, though most likely a lot younger. And, we will have no weaknesses. None!

Interesting to note, Jesus performed some pretty remarkable actions after He was resurrected. He would appear out of nowhere – just pop in and out without having to use a door. At His ascension, Jesus flew up to Heaven. Does that mean our glorified bodies will allow us to fly? If our future home – the New Jerusalem – exists as a 1500-mile high cube or pyramid, you can bet we will need the ability to fly.

Just think about how our earthly bodies exist right now. They are bogged down in a state of degradation so that our ability to taste, touch, smell, and see are all much weaker. But, in our new body, these senses will be perfected. Think about all of the colors we will be able to see. Maybe we will even see outside of the light spectrum and into the ultraviolet. And, what about tastes? We will get to savor certain foods, because as Jesus showed, we will still get to eat (Luke 24:30-31, 41-42; John 21:10-13; Revelation 19:7-9). We may even be able to smell all sorts of sweet odors beyond our limited range.

And, don't forget – the pièce de résistance – we will finally have a body capable of standing in the presence of the Shekinah glory of Almighty God. We can look upon the loving face of our Creator and at last enjoy perfect fellowship with Him. Our mortality reset also resets God's children into the ultimate fulfillment of a right relationship with Him. I cannot wait! ♦

Speakers: Brandon Holthaus • Nathan Jones
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RESURRECTION IN HEBREW SCRIPTURE

DR. DAVID R. REAGAN

When the Apostle Paul returned to Jerusalem after his third missionary journey, he was arrested when he entered the Temple. He was falsely charged with bringing a Gentile into the Temple (Acts 21:26-36). The next day he was brought before the Sanhedrin (the highest judicial court of the Jews) and he was put on trial for desecrating the Temple (Acts 23:1-10).¹

Paul knew that the Council (composed of 70 members) was ruled by the Sadducees, but he was also aware of the fact that many of its members were Pharisees. He used this knowledge to immediately throw the Council into disarray. He cried out, "I am a Pharisee. . . and I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead!" (Acts 23:6).

The result was "a great uproar," as the Pharisees began debating the Sadducees. The conflict became so intense that the Roman soldier who had brought Paul to the Council decided that Paul's life was in danger. He intervened, took Paul by force, and returned him to the Roman barracks (Acts 23:10).

THE BASIC ISSUE

Why did Paul's comment produce such an explosion of emotion? It was due to the fact that the Sadducees and Pharisees differed strongly on certain points of theology—one of the most important being life after death and resurrection.

The Sadducees, who controlled the Temple and the Sanhedrin, strongly rejected the idea of an afterlife and therefore dismissed the concept of resurrection as heresy. They based their theology solely on the writings of Moses (Genesis through Deuteronomy). Based on these five books, they argued that there was no evidence in them of life after death or resurrection.²

The Pharisees, on the other hand, relied on all the Scriptures and also believed that the Oral Law (interpretations of the Written Law which were consolidated centuries later in the Talmud) was equal to the written Scriptures. The Pharisees rejected the idea of the Sadducees that the soul ceases to exist at death. They believed instead in the immortality of the soul and in a future resurrection of the dead.³

When the Sadducees discerned that Jesus believed in life after death and resurrection, they decided to challenge Him (Mark 12:18-25). Jesus gave them a very clever response. Knowing that they relied only on the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible), He referred them to the passage in Exodus 3:6 where God spoke to Moses out of the burning bush, saying, "I am



the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Jesus then made His point by asserting that "He [God] is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Mark 12:27).

Jesus could have referred the Sadducees to a very clear example of future life after this earthly existence that is portrayed in the writings of Moses. I am referring, of course, to the rapture of Enoch to Heaven that is recorded in Genesis 5:22-24. Jesus probably refrained from this example because Enoch did not experience death.

SCRIPTURES OUTSIDE THE PENTATEUCH

How about the rest of the Hebrew Scriptures? Is there any reference to life after death and resurrection, or are these concepts strictly New Testament revelations?

There is no doubt that most of what we know about death, consciousness after death, and resurrection come from the New Testament Scriptures. The Bible is definitely progressive in its revelation about what happens after death.

But the Old Testament is not silent about these subjects. There are verses in the Hebrew Scriptures that clearly teach life after death, and there are others that imply resurrection. These verses are to be found primarily in the wisdom literature (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes). The topics are also addressed in the writings of the prophets both the Major and Minor.

Before we take a look at some of those verses, let's consider a story in First Samuel 28 that clearly teaches life after death. This passage relates to a time when King Saul was facing war with the Philistines. He was very fearful, and he prayed earnestly to God for reassurance, but God would not answer his prayers because of his rebellious spirit. So, in desperation and in violation of God's Word, Saul went to a medium and asked her to call up the spirit of the prophet Samuel who was dead. She did so, and Samuel appeared in a transitional spirit body and announced that the Philistines would be triumphant and that Saul and his sons would be killed and "therefore tomorrow you and your sons will be with me" (1 Samuel 28:19).



"Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever." Psalm 23:6

Another story that affirms spiritual existence beyond earthly life is found in 2 Kings 2:1-11, where we are told that the prophet Elijah was raptured to Heaven, just like Enoch.

THE AFTERLIFE IN THE WISDOM BOOKS

Concerning life after death, King David certainly believed in it. When his son born of Bathsheba died, David proclaimed that one day he would go to be with his son (2 Samuel 12:23).

Additionally, David speaks of life after death several times in his psalms. For example, in Psalm 16:10, he says, "You will not abandon my soul to Sheol." This was a reference to the belief that after death, the soul goes to a temporary holding place of the spirits of the dead, called Sheol in the Old Testament and Hades in the New Testament.

David's best-known reference to life after death is found in Psalm 23:6, where he wrote, "Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever." A similar affirmation is found in Psalm 133:3 where, speaking of the unity of believers, David wrote: "It is like the dew of [Mount] Hermon, coming down upon the mountains of Zion; for the LORD commanded the blessing — life forever."

On one occasion, David said that the thought of life after death was what kept him hopeful: "I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living" (Psalm 27:13).

Other psalmists also affirmed their belief in life after death. In Psalm 49:15, the Sons of Korah proclaimed: "God will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol." Asaph, David's worship leader, wrote: "With Your counsel You will guide me, and afterward receive me to glory" (Psalm 73:24).

King David's son, Solomon, like his father, affirmed his belief in life after death when he concluded the book of Ecclesiastes with the observation that "God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). There would be no need for such a judgment if people's souls were annihilated at death. Solomon also spoke of life after death in his Proverbs. He wrote: "The path of the godly leads to life. So why fear death?" Proverbs 12:28 (TLB).

The book of Job is considered by many scholars to be the oldest book of the Bible, written before the Pentateuch. In it, the central character, Job, proclaims his belief in life after death when he is recorded as saying, "Though He [God] slay me, I will hope in Him" (Job 13:15). This is an amazing statement since Job lived before any written revelation of God to Mankind. His faith was grounded solely in His personal relationship with his Creator.

THE AFTERLIFE IN THE PROPHETIC BOOKS

The prophet Isaiah spoke of his belief in life after death when he declared that a day would come when God would "swallow up death for all time," and He would then "wipe away tears" from the faces of

those who were redeemed (Isaiah 25:8). He spoke of it again in his taunt of the King of Babylon when he wrote: "In the place of the dead [Sheol] there is excitement over your arrival. The spirits of world leaders and mighty kings long dead stand up to see you" (Isaiah 14:9, NLT).

A similar passage about souls in Sheol welcoming the dead is found in the writings of Ezekiel: "The Egyptians will fall with the many who have died by the sword, for the sword is drawn against them. Egypt and its hordes will be dragged away to their judgment. Down in the grave [Sheol] mighty leaders will mockingly welcome Egypt and its allies, saying, 'They have come down; they lie among the outcasts, hordes slaughtered by the sword.'" (Ezekiel 32:20, NLT). Here Ezekiel depicts some mighty leaders among the dead in Sheol mocking the dead Egyptians who have arrived there.

In his first letter to the Corinthian church, Paul quoted one of the Minor Prophets to justify his claim that there was life after death. He pointed his readers back to the prophet Hosea who defiantly sneered at death with his chant: "O Death, where is your victory? O Death where is your sting?" (Hosea 13:14).

RESURRECTION IN THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES

There are a number of examples in the Old Testament of persons being raised from the dead. They include the son of the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17:17-24), the son of the Shunammite woman (2 Kings 4:18-37), and a man who was thrown into Elisha's grave (2 Kings 13:20-21). However, none of these were true resurrections. Instead, they were resuscitations, for each of these people died again. A true biblical resurrection results in eternal life.

Belief in a day when a true resurrection of believers will take place can definitely be found in the Hebrew Scriptures. The patriarch Job expressly stated his belief that one day his body would be resurrected. He asked, "If a man dies, will he live again?" (Job 14:14). He seemed to answer the question himself by stating, "You [God] will call and I will answer You; You will long for the work of Your hands" (Job 14:15). He got even more specific later when he affirmed his absolute belief in the resurrection of his body (Job 19):

25) "As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives,
And at the last He will take His stand on the
earth.

26) "Even after my skin is destroyed, Yet from
my flesh I shall see God;

27) "Whom I myself shall behold, And whom
my eyes will see and not another. My heart
faints within me!"

King David affirmed belief in his resurrection in Psalm 17:15 when he wrote, "But as for me, my contentment is not in wealth but in seeing You and knowing all is well between us. And when I awake in heaven, I will be fully satisfied, for I will see You face to face" (TLB). In Psalm 22:29, David extended this belief to all who had ever lived and died: ". . . All those who go down to the dust will bow before Him [Jesus], even he who cannot keep his soul alive."

An unknown psalmist professed belief in resurrection in Psalm 71:20 when he declared that God would one day revive him and "bring me up again from the depths of the earth." Isaiah spoke specifically of that resurrection day when he wrote, "Your dead will live; their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, for your dew is as the dew of the dawn, and the earth will give birth to the departed spirits" (Isaiah 26:19).

Another specific reference to resurrection in the Hebrew Scriptures is to be found in Daniel 12:1-3, where the prophet is told by God that Old Testament Saints will be resurrected at the end of the Great Tribulation:

- 1) "At that time Michael, the archangel who stands guard over your nation, will arise. Then there will be a time of anguish greater than any since nations first came into existence. But at that time every one of your people whose name is written in the book will be rescued.
- 2) "Many of those whose bodies lie dead and buried will rise up, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting disgrace.
- 3) "Those who are wise will shine as bright as the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness will shine like the stars forever."

This passage makes it clear that Old Testament saints will not be included in the Rapture. That is due to the fact that the Rapture is a promise to the Bride of Christ, the Church. All Church Age saints will be taken in the Rapture, both the living and the dead (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Old Testament saints and Tribulation martyrs

will be resurrected when Jesus returns to earth at the end of the Tribulation.

THE ONE TRUE RESURRECTION

The only true resurrection that has taken place thus far in history is the resurrection of Jesus. His resurrection to life in an eternal glorified body proved His claim to be God in the flesh. It also serves as the guarantee that those who put their trust in Him will also be resurrected to live forever with Him in glorified bodies on a new earth.

Jesus' triumph over death is the Gospel — it is the good news. It is our hope. It was the focus of Apostolic preaching (Acts 2:29-36). It should be the theme of preaching today.

Have you received Jesus as your Lord and Savior? He is the only way to the atonement of your sins and reconciliation with your Creator (John 14:6).

Do not be deceived by Satan's lie that you can work your way into Heaven by performing good deeds. Faith in Jesus is your only hope. Heaven is not for good people. Rather, it is for saved people:

Ephesians 2:8-9

- 8) For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;
- 9) not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

References:

- 1) All Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible (1995), unless otherwise noted.
- 2) GotQuestions.org, "What are the differences between the Sadducees and Pharisees?" <https://www.gotquestions.org/Sadducees-Pharisees.html>
- 3) AskAnyDifference.com, "Difference Between Pharisees and Sadducees," <https://askanydifference.com/difference-between-pharisees-and-sadducees/>



Editor's Note: Lamb & Lion Ministries was founded by Dr. David Reagan in 1980. Dr. Reagan continues to serve as Evangelist Emeritus, writing books and occasionally appearing as a guest on Christ in Prophecy.

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4. Name some unlikely exemplars in the lineage of Jesus Christ.
5. What does the world consider to be the "Great Reset"? What is the greatest reset?
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7. Are there any prophets today?
8. True or False? David is called "a man after God's own heart" because he was sin-free and righteous.
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10. In Revelation 21, He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." When will that happen?

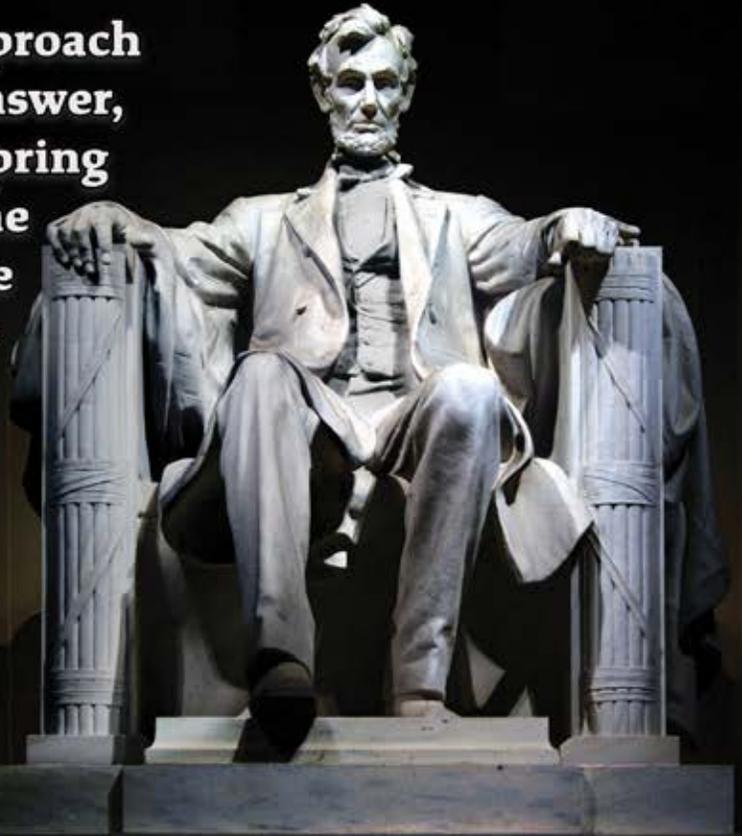
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Abraham Lincoln from his Lyceum Address delivered to the Young Men's Lyceum in Springfield, Illinois on January 27, 1838.

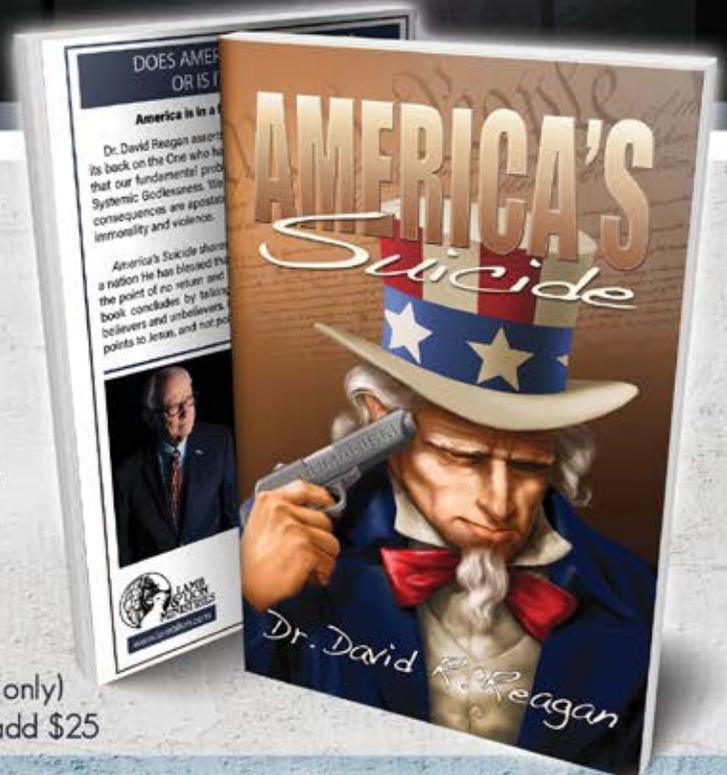


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Christ and Old Testament Believers

DR. RON RHODES

Editor's Note: Ron Rhodes wrote a wonderful article that appeared in our Sept-Oct 2021 edition, focusing on Jesus in the Old Testament. This article builds on that one, highlighting the recognition of Christ that is evident in the Old Testament (and testified to in the New).

On five different occasions, Jesus claimed to be the theme of the entire Old Testament: (1) Matthew 5:17; (2) Luke 24:27; (3) Luke 24:44; (4) John 5:39; and (5) Hebrews 10:7. Because Christ is the theme of the Old Testament, it should not surprise us that key Old Testament personalities were aware of Christ, and, in some cases, even encountered the pre-incarnate Christ, long before He was born as a human being in Bethlehem.

CHRIST THE ROCK ACCOMPANIED THE ISRAELITES IN THE WILDERNESS SOJOURN

Paul's first letter to the Corinthians reveals that Christ sustained the Israelites during their wilderness sojourn after leaving Egypt: The Israelites in the wilderness "all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:4).

Notice that the Israelites "drank from the spiritual Rock." The imperfect tense used in the original Greek of this phrase indicates continuous action—as if this "Rock" sustained God's people throughout the entire journey.

DID CHRIST RESCUE DANIEL'S FRIENDS IN THE FIERY FURNACE?

When Daniel's companions refused to worship the image of gold set up by King Nebuchadnezzar, they were threatened with being thrown into a blazing fire (Daniel 3:15). The three brave lads responded: "If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from

the burning fiery furnace" (verse 17). This made the king so mad that he heated the furnace seven times hotter than usual and had them thrown into the flames (verses 19-20).

As the king was observing what should have been an instant incineration, he was suddenly startled by what he saw and exclaimed: "I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods" (Daniel 3:25).

Though we are not explicitly told that it was Christ who sustained Daniel's friends through the fiery trial, many scholars believe it was. This is inferred from two facts: (1) Daniel's friends affirmed that God Himself is "able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace." (2) A person like a son of the gods delivered Daniel's friends. If this is correct, we can affirm that just as the pre-incarnate Christ kept the Israelites in the wilderness from perishing, so also Christ rescued Daniel's friends from perishing of fire.

WHAT MOSES KNEW OF CHRIST CHANGED HIS LIFE

Hebrews 11:24-27 tells us:

By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible.

Moses lived 1500 years before Christ. And yet Moses spoke of his commitment to honoring Christ in his



actions. Scholar E. Schuyler English explains that “God spoke to him, showing him things invisible to the natural eye, revealing another King, another kingdom, and a better reward.”¹

Our text tells us that Moses “considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt.” The Greek word for considered indicates careful thought. Moses thought through his decision, weighing the pros and cons. If we were to try to reconstruct Moses’s reasoning, we might come up with something like this:

God has revealed future things to me, invisible things, but glorious, heavenly things. I believe what He says. He has also made known to me that I am His chosen instrument to deliver His people—my brethren according to the flesh—from bondage. But I am the adopted son of Pharaoh’s daughter. To me the throne of Egypt has been promised, as heir through her. If I follow God’s program for me, I must suffer reproach. On the other hand, if I remain in the royal court, all the wealth of Egypt is mine—and *how great is that wealth!* Each of these things—the affliction of God’s people, and Egypt’s wealth—is temporal. I am looking to life after death. Then, he who has suffered within the will of God will be rewarded; but he who has followed the way of the flesh will be judged. I make my choice. I refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, preferring by choice to suffer affliction with God’s people—and *I do so in honor of Christ.*²

Moses would have agreed with the apostle Paul, who wrote many centuries later: “For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things

that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:17-18).

ABRAHAM REJOICED ABOUT CHRIST

Jesus engaged in a dialogue with some Jews about Abraham (John 8:54-59). The Jews felt that because they were the natural descendants of Abraham, they were in a privileged position before God. Jesus countered by pointing out that true spiritual descendants of Abraham do what Abraham did—that is, they believe and obey God. These Jews should have responded by faith in the one sent by God (Jesus) rather than merely trusting in their Abrahamic lineage.

Jesus then made an astonishing statement to this group of Jews: “Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad” (John 8:56). Jesus was the One Abraham anticipated. And when Abraham thought of seeing His day, he was filled with gladness.

ISAIAH SAW JESUS’ GLORY

Isaiah had a vision in the temple in which he found himself in the presence of God’s glory: “In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple” (Isaiah 6:1). The angels proclaimed His holiness, and the “smoke” of God’s glory permeated the temple (verses 2-5).

While in the temple, God granted Isaiah a glorious vision that would strengthen him for the duration of his ministry. Isaiah saw the Lord seated on a throne in glory, “high and lifted up” (Isaiah 6:1). The angels covered their eyes with their wings. Despite their own brightness and purity, they apparently could not look at the greater brightness and purity of God, who Himself dwells in “un-

approachable light" (1 Timothy 6:16).

John's Gospel later informs us that Isaiah actually beheld the glory of Jesus Christ: "Isaiah... saw His glory and spoke of Him" (John 12:41). Isaiah 6:3 refers to the glory of "the Lord of hosts," but John says these words were actually in reference to Jesus Christ.

How awesome this must have been for Isaiah. Some 700 years before the Messiah was physically born in Bethlehem, Isaiah witnessed the incredible glory of the preincarnate Christ in a vision. And the one whom Isaiah had personally encountered in this vision is the same One whose birth as a human he often prophesied (Isaiah 4:2; 7:14; 9:6-7; 11:1-5, 10; 32:1; 42:1-4; 49:1-7; 52:13—53:12; 61:1-3).

The Bible truly is a "Jesus book"—both the Old and New Testaments! ♦

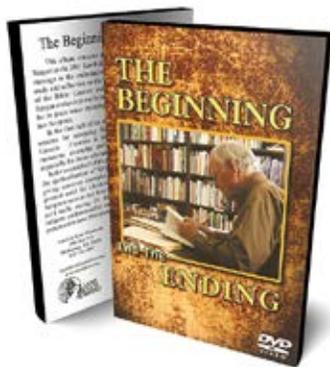
¹E. Schuyler English, *Studies in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1976), p. 405.

²Adapted from English, p. 405.

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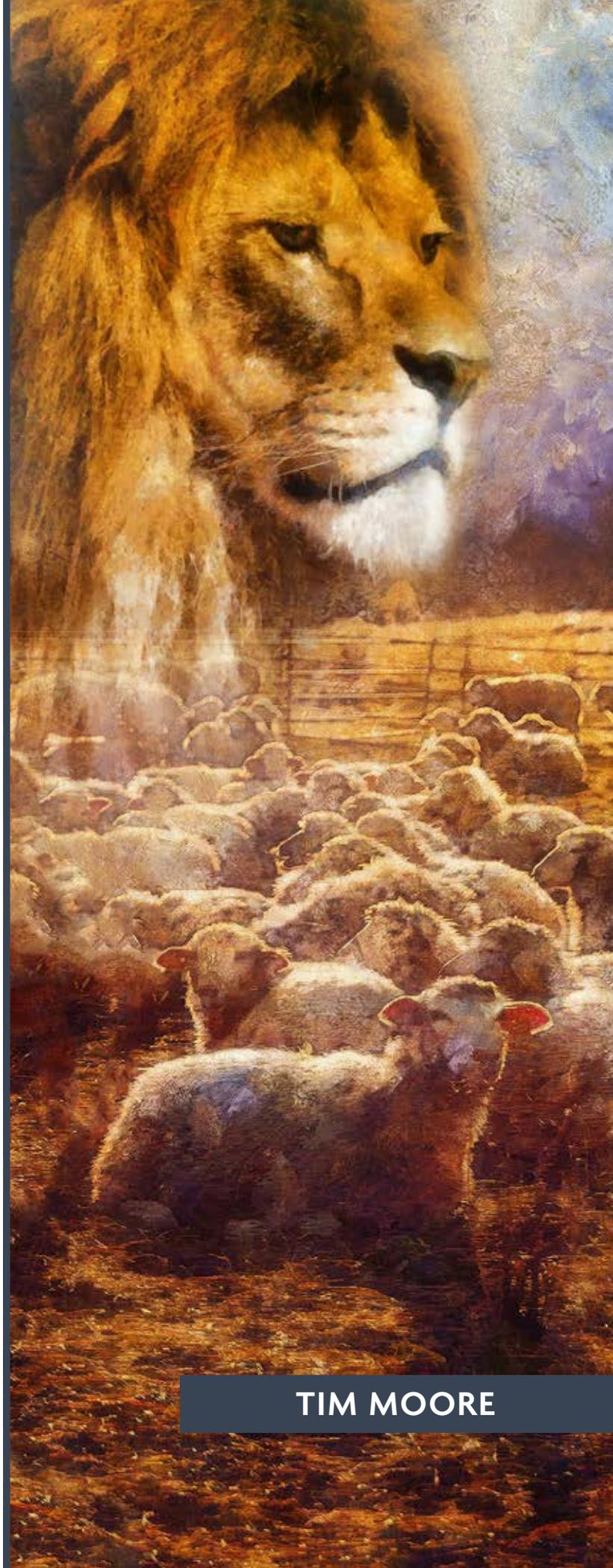
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TIM MOORE

Alexander the Great supposedly said, "I am not afraid of an army of lions led by a sheep; I am afraid of an army of sheep led by a lion."

Christians realize that God's Word refers to Jesus in a variety of poetic ways. He is called the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the valley (Song of Solomon 2:1), the bright and morning Star, (Revelation 22:16), the righteous Branch of David (Jeremiah 23:5 and 33:15), and the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Revelation 5:5).

With regard to Jesus as the Lion of Judah, that refers to a prophetic blessing bestowed on Judah by his father Jacob, or Israel. In Genesis 49:8-10, He said,

"As for you, Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies;

LION OF JUDAH

your father's sons shall bow down to you. Judah is a lion's cub; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He crouches, he lies down as a lion, and as a lion, who dares to stir him up? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples."

The word Shiloh has a dual meaning. It can be translated "he whose it is" or "whose is the kingdom." It is also understood to be a formal name pointing to the Messiah and the peace or tranquility He will provide.

Jacob went on to describe the royal color—deep red or purple. These references explain why many royal houses consider the lion their representative animal and purple their royal color.

SATAN AS THE COUNTERFEIT

Casual readers of Scripture might be confused by the similar language used to describe Satan, who is also called the star of the morning (Isaiah 14:12) and a roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8). But the context in each case conveys the nature of the attribute being highlighted.

Satan would love to usurp Jesus and lay claim to His royal titles. That is why he appears as an angel of light and why he will someday indwell the Antichrist.

The Bible warns that he is cunning and deceitful, advising us to be wary because he does disguise himself so well. But, whereas Jesus' appearance is glorious and permanent, Satan's lesser glory is superficial and fading. And, while Jesus is called a lion to highlight his strength and regal nature, Peter makes it clear that Satan only prowls about seeking someone to devour (2 Peter 5:8).

Since the Bible refers to those of us who follow Jesus—our Good Shepherd—as sheep, Peter's warning is especially important. Isolated from the flock and wandered away from the Shepherd, we make for easy prey.

GREATER IS HE

Jesus told us to "beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are raven-

ous wolves" (Matthew 7:15). He said that we will know them by their fruits (Matthew 7:16). John also advised us to be wary of the false prophets and spirit of the antichrist. Then he encouraged us by assuring, "you are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

Paul said that at his first defense only the Lord stood with him and strengthened him. He testified, "I was rescued out of the lion's mouth" (2 Tim. 4:17). Likewise, he reminded Timothy, "God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline" (2 Tim. 1:7).

As the Pevensie children learned in C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, Aslan (the majestic lion who represented Christ) was powerful enough to defeat death itself. In the real world, no witch or devil or ravenous wolf or prowling beast can stand against the LORD's Anointed. Greater is He!

STRIDING BOLDLY INTO 2022

So, since we are sheep led by the Lion of Judah, we will overcome the demonic hordes. Regardless of what lies ahead in 2022, let's echo Paul's aspiration: "...reaching forward to what lies ahead, [let's] press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13-14). ♦

UNCLEAN!

TIM MOORE

I imagine being consumed by a disease that forced you to isolate yourself from other people. Your own family banished you and every person you encountered recoiled in horror. Your very appearance became disfigured and unrecognizable. On top of those shocks, it meant no job, no income, no love, no hope.

What might have required a leap of imagination for most people just a couple of years ago is now all too familiar to us all. Covid has separated and isolated people since early 2020—dividing families and friends and causing many people to lose hope.

Even the controversy surrounding the Covid vaccine has some declaring those who decline vaccination as “Unclean!” The division and distrust roiling our society is only growing deeper. But our collective experience offers a unique moment of clarity in understanding a biblical truth.

In Luke 17:11-19, Jesus encountered 10 lepers. They had undoubtedly been shunned by family and friends and were banished from society. When they encountered Jesus, they cried out, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” Luke records that Jesus matter-of-factly told them to “go and show yourselves to the priests,” conveying without elaboration His great compassion and power.

Luke, who Paul called “the beloved physician,” says that as they were going—obeying the Lord’s command—

they were cleansed. This episode echoes the cleansing of a single leper (in Matthew 8:1-4, Mark 1:40-45, and Luke 5:12-16) and Naaman (2 Kings 5). Interestingly, both Naaman and the one leper out of the ten who returned to praise the Lord in Luke 17 were foreigners.

In a very real sense, all of us are unclean before we cry out to Jesus Christ. Sin disfigures us and isolates us—especially from God. Left to ourselves, the love of God eludes us and we have no hope.

But when we put our trust in God, He cleanses us. We might not feel any different immediately, but we are new creatures in Christ. The old has passed away and new things have come (2 Corinthians 5:17). Once Naaman obeyed the word of Elisha and dipped seven times in the Jordan River, the Scripture says his “his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child and he was clean” (2 Kings 5:14).

As followers of Jesus, we look forward to the day when we will exchange our bodies of death (Romans 7:24) for glorified bodies that will never wear out. But if you have put your faith in Jesus Christ, He has already given you a down payment on His promise of a glorified body, because He has created within you a new heart.

Begin this year praising the Lord for making you clean—and for His promise of an even more glorious body to come. ♦

THE MYSTERY OF THE NEW COVENANT



DR. IGAL GERMAN

For centuries, the church has grappled to understand the substance of the body and blood of Jesus Christ in the eucharist (1 Corinthians 11:24-25). Even theologians overlook—much less ponder upon—the very notion

of the “New Covenant,” enacted in the Lord’s Supper.

When Jesus said at the Last Supper, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood” (Luke 22:20), He alluded to the prophet Jeremiah who predicted the launching of a new covenant with the houses of Israel and Judah (Jeremiah 31:31-34, cited in Hebrews 8:8-12, 9:15-22, 10:16-17). While some biblical scholars dismiss the book of Jeremiah as too complex and even “unreadable,” I submit that the opposite is true. Jeremiah, the weeping prophet from Anathoth, is a visionary theologian par excellence, and his book demands our full attention.

Regarding the new covenant of God Jeremiah foretold, several questions remain: What kind of a covenant is this? Do other Hebrew prophets speak of God’s new covenant with Israel and does it extend to the Gentiles? Should we await the consummation of Jeremiah’s prophecy in the future or has it already been fulfilled?

THE NEW COVENANT OF JEREMIAH 31

Similar to earlier prophets such as Moses and David who spoke of Israel’s spiritual restoration, the Judean prophet-priest Jeremiah (7th century BC) declared the following oracle of comfort to his fellow countrymen:

“The days are surely coming,” says the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more” (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

First and foremost, this is the most direct prophecy of hope in the Hebrew Scriptures promising a new covenant between God and His chosen people – Israelites and Judeans alike. The reader of this divine revelation can sense God’s urgent appeal to restore the entire nation of Israel to proper covenantal relationship with Him. The Hebrew text of Jeremiah 31 uses the unique expression “new covenant” in the most explicit way. It is not merely a renewed type of an agreement between Yahweh and Israel similar to the covenant renewal in the days of the Judean King Josiah (2 Kings 22-23). On the contrary, it’s a brand new covenant with His people initiated by the God of Israel. As such it renders a new phase in God’s redemptive plan. The prophetic expression “the days are surely coming” points to the definite future when the Lord will put His law within the Israel-

ites, write it on their hearts, and be their God forever in the restored city of Jerusalem (see Jeremiah 31:35-40). The internal transformation of the heart will derive from an intimate knowledge of the LORD as the forgiving and compassionate God of the patriarchs “who will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more” (Jeremiah 31:34).



Will the new covenant supersede the Sinai covenant? Many Christians would be inclined to give a positive answer without hesitation. For example, an early second century Christian composition catches the supersessionist wave: “These things [Old Testament laws] then he abolished in order that the new law of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is without the yoke of necessity, might have its oblation not made by man” (Epistle of Barnabas 2:6). Similarly, William A. Dyrness, states that “the Hebrew construction here implies that though the new covenant will succeed where the other did not, it will carry forward (as well as supersede) the reality of the Mosaic covenant” (Themes in Old Testament Theology, 122).

While the new covenant promised in Jeremiah 31 definitely carries forward the reality of the Mosaic covenant, it hardly conveys supersessionist overtones. In fact, the new covenant oracle promises that God’s law would be written on the hearts of the covenant recipients. Jeremiah 31:33 clearly states that the God of Israel “will put” His law within the Israelites. Another eschato-

logical prophecy of hope and restoration is found in the next chapter of Jeremiah, referring to the same new covenant as “everlasting”: “I will make an everlasting covenant with them, never to draw back from doing good to them; and I will put the fear of Me in their hearts, so that they may not turn from Me. I will rejoice in doing good to them, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all My heart and all My soul” (Jeremiah 32:40-41).

According to Scripture, a covenant is an official agreement between God and humankind usually sealed by blood. There have been multiple covenants or agreements throughout biblical history (Noahic, Abrahamic, Sinaitic, Davidic, among others). We are often puzzled or scared by the word “law” since we associate it with a collection of some senseless motions or rituals which must be observed for an unknown reason. Torah, translated as “law” in Hebrew, literally means “instruction” or “teaching.” The word Torah is derived from the root “yara” which means “to throw, cast or shoot an arrow at the target” (e.g., 1 Chronicles 10:3). Thus, Torah should be properly understood as “the teaching or instruction which lets you shoot your arrow right in the target.”



Unfortunately, Torah, has been often equated by many Christian theologians to the covenant established at Mt. Sinai. Thus, the replacement of the Mosaic covenant by the new one found in Jeremiah 31 has been wrongly interpreted as the abolishment of God’s Torah in the Pentateuch and its replacement by the New Testament



writings. Such erroneous theology has led to antinomianism, Marcionism, and other false doctrines within the church throughout the centuries. On the contrary, the Lord was progressively revealing His Torah to mankind from Genesis to the book of Revelation which renders the whole Bible as God's Torah—His instruction. It is the infallible, as well as harmoniously unified Word of God, alive and relevant in all ages and cultures. God's Torah recorded in the Pentateuch in particular has been the building block of all covenants found throughout biblical history and it is consummated in the New Testament.

THE HARMONIOUS TESTIMONY OF HEBREW PROPHETS

Several Hebrew prophets predicted the arrival of the new covenant with Israel prior to and after the Judean prophet Jeremiah. In this section, we will deal with two major biblical prophets, Moses and Isaiah. Let's begin with the prophecy of Moses before his departure on Mt. Nebo (Deuteronomy 30). Although Moses doesn't use the term covenant, the whole context and its message are certainly covenantal. This concluding section of Moses' long sermon on the plains of Moab speaks of Israel's future dispersal and regathering in the Promised Land. The most remarkable direct reference anticipating a national turning to the LORD is found in Deuteronomy 30:6: "Moreover, the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live." This prophecy speaks of a spiritual circumcision envisioned by God for His fickle yet beloved nation of Israel. Hundreds of years later, the Lord spoke through Jeremiah and urged them to circumcise their hearts: "Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and remove the foreskins of your hearts, O men of Judah and people of Jerusalem. Otherwise, My wrath will break out like fire and burn with no one to extinguish it, because of your evil deeds" (Jeremiah 4:4).

Now let's turn to another major prophet of Yahweh, Isaiah, Jeremiah's predecessor, who prophesied about a new covenant God will make with Israel: "Incline your

ear, and come to Me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, My steadfast, sure love for David. See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, for He has glorified you" (Isaiah 55:3-5 cf. 61:8-9). Two components stand out in this Isaianic prophecy: (1) God promises an everlasting covenant in conjunction with reflective of God's faithfulness and lovingkindness towards David, the second king of Israel; and (2) Other nations will partake in the everlasting covenant by joining the commonwealth of Israel (Jeremiah 3:17; Zechariah 8:20-23; John 4:22; Ephesians 2:11-22).

In another prophecy, Isaiah predicts the coming of a redeemer to Zion who will turn Jacob's descendants back to the Lord: "And he will come to Zion as Redeemer, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression, says the Lord. And as for Me, this is My covenant with them, says the Lord: My spirit that is upon you, and My words that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouths of your children, or out of the mouths of your children's children, says the Lord, from now on and forever" (Isaiah 59:20-21).

In these passages, both Moses and Isaiah prophetically point to another, new covenant God is going to make with His people which will lead to their spiritual transformation and knowledge of His Torah, His eternal teaching.

ALREADY/NOT YET FULFILMENT OF JEREMIAH'S NEW COVENANT



A thorough study of Jeremiah 31 and its allusions in the New Testament reveal that the new covenant was launched by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper with the apostles in the upper room in Jerusalem (Luke 22:20). According to Hebrews, Jesus Christ is the mediator of the new covenant (Hebrews 7:22, 8:6). The Jewish disciples of Christ were representatives of the tribes from the

two houses of Israel and Judah. In his commentary on the Book of Jeremiah, Michael L. Brown rightly states that “Jesus/Yeshua came with no other mission than to fulfill what was written of Him in the Hebrew Scriptures (e.g., Lk 24:27, 44–45), choosing with clear intentionality twelve disciples (all Jewish, of course; see also Mt 19:28; Rev 21:12) and declaring Himself to be the true vine (Jn 15:1) in definite contrast to the nation as a whole, which had become a corrupt vine (see Isa 5:1–7). And as Israel’s Messiah, He inaugurated the new covenant at the Passover meal with His disciples before his death, and it is these men who announce the good news to their own Jewish people – exclusively, at first – after His resurrection” (Michael L. Brown, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 403).

“O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable His ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been His counselor? Or who has given a gift to Him, to receive a gift in return? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.”

Romans 11: 33-36



Yet, the final consummation of the new covenant for ethnic Israel is to be eagerly expected by all those who await the return of our Lord Jesus from heaven (Zech-ariah 12:10). The Apostle Paul who suffered for the sake of the “hope of Israel” (Acts 28:20), explained the truth about the eschatological consummation of the new covenant for his Jewish countrymen in his letter to the believers in Rome: “So that you may not claim to be wiser than you are, brothers and sisters, I want you to understand this mystery: a hardening has come upon part of Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And so, all Israel will be saved; as it is written, ‘Out of Zion will come the Deliverer; He will banish ungodliness from Jacob. And this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins’ ” (Romans 11:25-27).

As we ponder upon God’s Word, we bow our heads and hearts in awe before the mystery and greatness of the Holy One of Israel: “O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable His ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been His counselor? Or who has given a gift to Him, to receive a gift in return? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.” (Romans 11:33-36). May the blood of the new covenant in Jesus the Messiah and His transformational Torah draw us nearer to Him and strengthen our faith as we enter into the new year and await His glorious return (Titus 2:13). ♦

Dr. Igal German teaches at Moody Theological Seminary and is the founder of the International Biblical Apologetics Association and Yesod Bible Center (YesodBibleCenter.com)

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TRUTH, JUSTICE, AND THE AMERICAN WAY

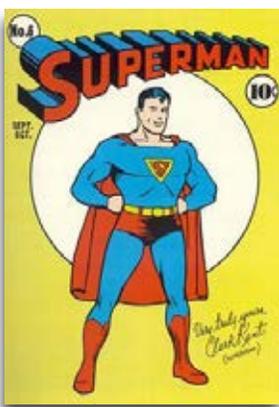
TIM MOORE

In 1938, Superman landed in America. Just as the nation was emerging from the Great Depression—and just before the crisis of World War II—the comic book character embodied characteristics that made America great.



Unassuming in the persona of Clark Kent, Superman possessed strength and power far beyond other men. He was “faster than a speeding bullet, more powerful than a locomotive, and could jump tall buildings in a single

bound!” The writers who crafted this fictional character summed up his heroic attributes: Superman stood for “truth, justice, and the American way.” Superman resonated with the American public because those ideals were universally understood in the middle of the 20th Century.



But in just the past 20 years, those ideals have been treated with skepticism or outright hostility. An increasing number of Americans pointedly believe that America is incapable of truth or justice. And it would be hard to find a consensus on what the “American way” even means today. Certainly, across the political spectrum

our elected leaders cannot even announce what that should mean.

But in recent months, the character of Superman has taken a dramatic turn. Eager to embrace the “woke” sensibilities of our modern age, the writers who mold

and shape the Superman character have decided to reveal that he is bisexual. They timed the surprise to correspond with “National Coming Out Day” in October.



To be clear, the 21st Century Superman is the son of Clark Kent and Lois Lane. Originally introduced as Superboy, this now-grown super hero is being presented as non-heterosexual. He now has a male boyfriend, and their romantic encounters will be highlighted as part of the narrative going forward.

With his ability to fly, protect the innocent from evildoers, and hear the announced concerns of the entire world, Superman represented a secularized messiah. In 2013, Warner Brothers even commissioned a nine-page briefing entitled “Jesus: The Original Superhero,” to convince Christians to attend “Man of Steel”—the latest movie in the series. Sent by his father to dwell among us, Superman’s life exemplified a fictional shadow of Christ—until now.

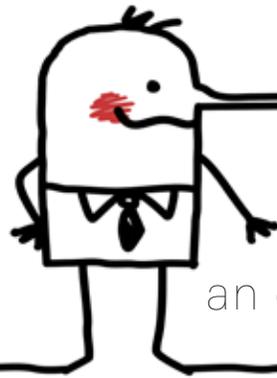
In a clearly messianic passage, Psalm 2:12 advises, “Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, for His wrath may soon be kindled.” The son of Superman may still leap tall buildings and outrun speeding locomotives, but he now represents a false messiah. And the American Way has become a broad road celebrating deviancy and immorality—hurtling toward the wrath of God.

But soon the real Superman—the God-Man Jesus Christ—will come for His Bride. After that, He will return to reign—dwelling with us and flooding the earth with Truth and Justice. And that is not merely a comic book sentiment, that is a promise of God. ♦





ALISA CHILDERS



PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY

an old lie in new packaging

Several years ago, my husband and I began attending a local Evangelical, non-denominational church, and we loved it. We cherished the sense of community we found among the loving and authentic people we met there, and the intelligent, "outside the box" pastor who led our flock with thought-provoking and insightful sermons. Sadly, the church started going off the rails theologically, and after about a year and a half, we made the difficult decision to leave. Today that church is a self-titled "Progressive Christian Community."

Back then I had never heard of "Progressive Christianity," and even now it is difficult to pin down what actually qualifies someone as a Progressive Christian, due to the diversity of beliefs that fall under that designation. However, there are signs—certain phrases and ideas—that seem to be consistent in Progressive circles. Here are five danger signs to watch for in your church:

1 There is a lowered view of the Bible

One of the main differences between Progressive Christianity and Historic Christianity is its view of the Bible. Historically, Christians have viewed the Bible as the Word of God and authoritative for our lives. Progressive Christianity generally abandons these terms, emphasizing personal belief over biblical mandate.

Comments you might hear:

- "The Bible is a human book...."
- "I disagree with the Apostle Paul on that issue...."
- "The Bible condones immorality, so we are obligated to reject what it says in certain places...."
- "The Bible *contains* the word of God...."

2 Feelings are emphasized over facts

In Progressive churches, personal experiences, feelings, and opinions tend to be valued above objective truth. As the Bible ceases to be viewed as God's definitive word, what a person feels to be true becomes the ultimate authority for faith and practice.

Comments you might hear:

- "That Bible verse doesn't resonate with me..."
- "I thought homosexuality was a sin until I met and befriended some gay people..."
- "I just can't believe Jesus would send good people to hell..."

3 Essential Christian doctrines are reinterpreted

Progressive author John Pavlovitz wrote, "There are no sacred cows [in Progressive Christianity]...Tradition, dogma, and doctrine are all fair game, because all pass through the hands of flawed humanity." Progressive Christians are often open to redefining and reinterpreting the Bible on hot-button moral issues like homosexuality and abortion, and also cardinal doctrines such as the virgin conception and the bodily resurrection of Jesus. The only sacred cow is "no sacred cows."

Comments you might hear:

- "The resurrection of Jesus doesn't have to be factual to speak truth...."
- "The church's historic position on sexuality is archaic and needs to be updated within a modern framework...."
- "The idea of a literal hell is offensive to non-Christians and needs to be reinterpreted...."

4 Historic terms are redefined

There are some Progressive Christians who say they affirm doctrines like biblical inspiration, inerrancy, and authority, but they have to do linguistic gymnastics to make those words mean what they want them to mean. I remember asking a Pastor, "Do you believe the Bible is divinely inspired?" He answered confidently, "Yes, of course!" However, I mistakenly assumed that when using the word "inspired," we both meant the same thing. He clarified months later what he meant—that the Bible is inspired in the same way and on the same level as many other Christian books, songs, and sermons. This, of course, is not how Christians have historically understood the doctrine of divine inspiration.

Another word that tends to get a Progressive makeover is the word "love." When plucked out of its biblical context, it becomes a catch-all term for everything non-confrontative, pleasant, and affirming.

Comments you might hear:

- "God wouldn't punish sinners—He is love...."
- "Sure, the Bible is authoritative—but we've misunderstood it for the first 2,000 years of church history...."
- "It's not our job to talk to anyone about sin—it's our job to just love them...."

5 The heart of the gospel message shifts from sin and redemption to social justice

There is no doubt that the Bible commands us to take care of the unfortunate and defend those who are oppressed. This is a very real and profoundly important part of what it means to live out our Christian faith. However, the core message of Christianity—the gospel—is that Jesus died for our sins, was buried and resurrected, and thereby reconciled us to God. This is the message that will truly bring freedom to the oppressed.

Many Progressive Christians today find the concept of God willing His Son to die on the cross to be embarrassing or even appalling. Sometimes referred to as "cosmic child abuse," the idea of blood atonement is de-emphasized or denied altogether, with social justice and good works enthroned in its place.

Comments you might hear:

- "Sin doesn't separate us from God—we are made in His image and He called us good...."
- "God didn't actually require a sacrifice for our sins—the first Christians picked up on the pagan practice of animal sacrifice and told the Jesus story in similar terms...."
- "We don't really need to preach the gospel—we just need to show love by bringing justice to the oppressed and provision to the needy...."

Conclusion: Identifying the signs is not always obvious—sometimes they are subtle and mixed with a lot of truth. Progressive Christianity can be persuasive and enticing, but carried out to its logical end, it is an assault on the foundational framework of Christianity, leaving it disarmed of its saving power.

We shouldn't be surprised to find some of these ideas infiltrating our churches. Jesus warned us, "Watch out for false prophets" who "come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves" (Matthew 7:15).

So, if you spot any of these five danger signs in your place of worship, it might be time to pray about finding fellowship in a more biblically-faithful church community. ♦

Editor's Note: Alisa will be a featured guest on Christ in Prophecy in January. Her insightful writing can be found at: alisachilders.com/blog.

For the time will come when they will not tolerate sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance with their own desires, and they will turn their ears away from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

2 Timothy 4:3-4



While America is consumed with high gas prices, rising inflation, unrest, and cultural insanity, threats are rising abroad.

China is growing in power and belligerence. Russia and Turkey are flexing their clout in their respective regions—and looking southward for future expansion. And Israel is warily eyeing a looming threat from Iran.

Under the Obama Administration, the US entered into a multilateral agreement with Iran called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. In exchange for access to billions of dollars of frozen assets and oil revenues, Iran pledged to curtail its pursuit of enriched uranium for 15 years—the necessary precursor to nuclear weapons. Realistically, Iran gained access to the cash for promises that were not upheld and cannot be verified.

President Trump withdrew from the JCPA and re-established sanctions on Iran. The mullahs responded

with their usual venom, denouncing the United States and pledging to eradicate Israel altogether.

Israel does not take such threats lightly. And, although the rest of the world is satisfied by Iran's empty promises, Israel has demonstrated over and over again the truth of Iran's disingenuousness and deception. And, as demonstrated on the inset below, Israel has been in the crosshairs of Iranian support for terrorism and regional conflict. With the exception of Yemen, all of Iran's mischief is ultimately directed against Israel.

Israel has already announced publicly that the Israeli Air Force has been ordered to train for possible strikes in Iran. Such training was inevitably underway long before the public pronouncement. That means that the warning is meant to send a signal to Iran and the world that Israel will act—sooner rather than later—if Iran continues its pursuit of a weapon of mass destruction.

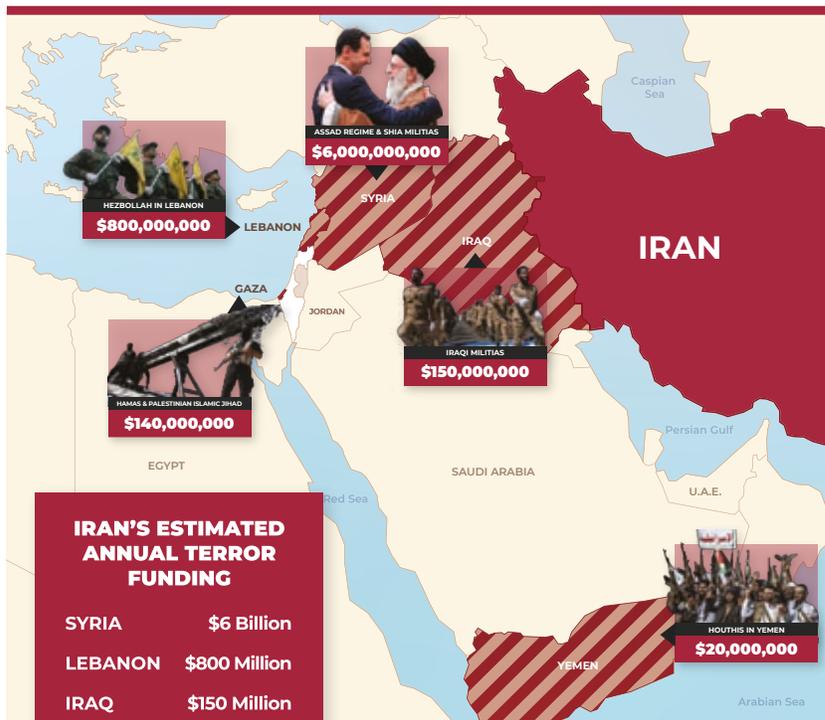
The ideology of the Ayatollah in Iran was on full display during the presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad from 2005-13. On multiple occasions he voiced his aspiration to destroy Israel—even at the cost of his own nation's destruction—because he believed the ensuing chaos would usher in Islam's mystical messianic figure, the twelfth Imam. The world foolishly dismissed his rantings, including on the occasion in 2005 when he told the United Nations that the aura of light surrounding him as he spoke had all the delegates transfixed.

Satan is desperate to prove God a liar, which is why he has been trying to destroy Israel since God chose the Jewish people for Himself. Those who are in league with the devil are willing accomplices in his evil agenda—including Hamas and Hezbollah and the twisted rulers in Iran who fund them all.

But God has promised that Israel will not be uprooted. Indeed, "He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep" (Psalm 121:4). So, pray for the peace of Jerusalem as we are commanded to do. Advocate for Israel's defense and call upon our leaders to support Israel. And know that the same God who has kept—and will keep—all His good promises to Israel will honor every promise made to you and me. ♦

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IRANIAN TERROR PROXIES: ANNUAL INVESTMENTS IN TERRORISM*



*Figures represent estimated 2018 funding levels.

The Iranian people are being held hostage by a regime that **prioritizes regional aggression over the well-being of its own people.** Increased sanctions help reduce Iran's ability to fund terrorism in the region and around the world.

MINISTRY MAILBOX



During one of our recent Streaming Conferences, Jill McA. wrote to say that she had “so many questions!” She offered one that we often hear when we speak in local churches:

“When we are raptured [will] we know about the earth's continued events... and will we have a memory of those that are lost like with the rich man and the beggar?”

Jill, your question resonates with so many Christians because it touches on two aspects of what we anticipate as believers: 1) the nature of our awareness of temporal things when we receive our glorified bodies, and 2) the reality of our concern for those who will be “left behind” following the Rapture.

First, Scripture teaches that those who die in Christ are immediately ushered into His presence in Heaven (2 Corinthians 5:8 and Philippians 1:21-23). They have a transitory body—not yet the glorified body that they will receive at the Rapture. On that note, Paul wrote to the Thessalonian church that at the Rapture, the dead in Christ will rise first. Then the followers of Jesus Christ who remain on the earth will be “caught up” together with them to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17).

We do not believe those in the presence of Jesus Christ are aware of what is ongoingly happening on the earth. Unlike the rich man and Lazarus, who were languishing in the separate compartments of Sheol known to the Jews as “Torments” and “Paradise,” those who die in Christ do not have to await His finished work at Calvary. In 1 Peter 3, Scripture states that after His death,

Jesus descended into Hades and made a proclamation. Ephesians 4 tells us that when He ascended into Heaven, he led forth a train of captives. In other words, Paradise was moved to Heaven, which is why believers go to be with Him when they die.

There were two prophets ushered into the presence of God in Heaven who offer us telling examples today. Isaiah and the Apostle John were so overwhelmed by the glory of the Lord and the holiness of what was occurring in Heaven that the concerns of this world fled from their minds. Only as God’s plan intersected with temporal events did they even record the goings-on here on earth. For that reason, when we take off what Paul calls “this body of death,” the sadnesses and regrets of this life will be forgotten. As Revelation 21:4 promises, God “will wipe away every tear from their eyes...there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain...”

On that note, were we still aware of the tragic end of so many who chose to reject Christ, we might be overwhelmed with sorrow. Certainly, those with loved ones who do not trust in Christ as Savior and Lord understand the reality of a burdened heart. But, in our glorified bodies—with glorified minds—we will fully realize that God’s judgments are righteous and true.

Having said all that, concern for unbelievers expressed in the second part of your question is understandable and valid. That concern should motivate us to share Jesus Christ here and now because once we have crossed the great divide between Heaven and Earth, we will not be able to warn those we leave behind. Urge those you know to rush into the arms of our loving Savior now, lest they be lost for all Eternity. ♦

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