



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

Lamplighter

LAMB & LION MINISTRIES
a Non-Denominational Christian Media Ministry

JULY/AUGUST 2022



THE GOSPEL UNWAVERING

GOSPEL-CENTEREDNESS | DARE TO SHARE | THE GOSPEL: A MAN OR A PLAN?

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From the Editor

TIM MOORE

Director & Sr. Evangelist
Lamb & Lion Ministries

What inspires you? Amidst all the noise and clamor, what core truth permeates everything you say and do?

For over 42 years, our mission at Lamb & Lion Ministries has been to proclaim the soon return of Jesus Christ—to as many people as possible as quickly as possible. But even that overarching purpose is grounded in an even more critical Truth: the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Why do I say that? Because it is possible to accept the reality that Jesus is coming soon and miss the impact that knowledge should have on your life. As many have recognized, there is a critical 18-inch gap between our head and our heart. Head knowledge does not necessarily translate into heart conviction. One extreme example would be Satan. He knows the validity of the Word of God and recognizes the power of God, but he refuses to revere God as God.

So, it should come as no surprise that even as we dive deep into Bible prophecy and point to Jesus' soon return, our driving motivation is to share the Gospel. For those wandering in the darkness of sin it offers light and hope. Paul described it as the power of God to salvation.

For those who have already embraced Jesus as the Messiah and are justified before God, the Gospel is a never-ending well-spring of encouragement and purpose. God leaves us here on this earth to be His ambassadors—sharing that Good News with people all around the world.

What is the Gospel? Simply stated, it is God's provision for salvation. It is the manifestation of God's infinite, marvelous, amaz-

ing grace—His unmerited favor offered to all who put their trust in His Son, Jesus. The Gospel tells us that Christ suffered the full measure of God's wrath we deserve on Calvary's cross. The Good News is that by believing in Jesus Christ our sins are covered by His shed blood so that we can be adopted as sons and daughters to enjoy the full measure of God's holiness and righteousness.

It is not enough to know about God—or to understand the mysteries He has revealed in the pages of Scripture. It is not enough to advocate for Jesus' soon return—convincing people that God the Father is about to send His Son to gather His Bride. If knowledge about God and insight on His mysteries and Jesus' return does not elicit saving faith, our labors are in vain.

We pray that this edition of the *Lamplighter* will embolden you to share the Good News about Jesus even more fervently. He is coming soon, which means that we must be *urgent* about our evangelism. Jesus forgave and then healed the paralytic man who was brought to Him by four men in Capernaum. Mark emphasizes that He was moved by their faith.

In a mysterious way known only to God, your faith in Him is often instrumental in bringing others to Him—for forgiveness, for healing, for eternal impact. Who are you bringing before the throne of God on a regular basis? Where are you going and telling what Jesus has done for you?

Time is running out!

UPCOMING EVENTS

JULY

3

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23

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AUGUST

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13

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15

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tim moore

The Gospel-Centeredness of God's Prophetic Word



Lamb & Lion Ministries'
Purpose Statement:
To proclaim the soon return of Jesus to as many people as possible, as quickly as possible.



he bylaws of Lamb & Lion Ministries sums up our mission in a succinct Purpose Statement:

To proclaim the soon return of Jesus to as many people as possible as quickly as possible. Even more specific purposes

include:

- Pointing unbelievers to repentance in Jesus
- Calling believers to a commitment to holiness and evangelism
- Teaching the fundamentals of Bible prophecy
- Challenging the Church to stand for righteousness

Obviously, our overarching mission is tied to additional evangelistic goals. As we tell pastors and churches who consider inviting a Lamb & Lion evangelist to speak, we seek to motivate urgent evangelism, holy living, and a focus on our soon-returning King—Jesus Christ. Even the word “evangelist” conveys our calling to lead others to faith in Christ.

THE PRIMARY JOB OF AN EVANGELIST IS TO SPREAD THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST TO THE WORLD

So, while we specialize in teaching the truths of Bible prophecy, our ultimate objective is twofold:

1. To warn unbelievers to flee from the wrath to come and into the loving arms of our Savior.

2. To encourage followers of Christ to live in a manner that honors our heavenly Bridegroom—even as we anticipate His soon return.

Those objectives center around the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

THE POWER OF PROPHECY IN THE LIVES OF UNBELIEVERS/ MESSAGE TO UNBELIEVERS

John asked the crowds who came to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?” (Luke 3:7). That question resonates down through the centuries and should motivate every follower of Jesus. Who will warn those who are hostile to God that His wrath abides on them (John 3:36)?

The Bible tells us that the path toward destruction is wide, but, certainly, some who hear the Gospel will enter the narrow gate that leads to life (Matthew 7:13-14). The message of the Cross is salvation to those who believe, but to those who reject God’s gift of deliverance from the wages of sin it is foolishness. Paul said, “the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God” (1 Corinthians 1:18).

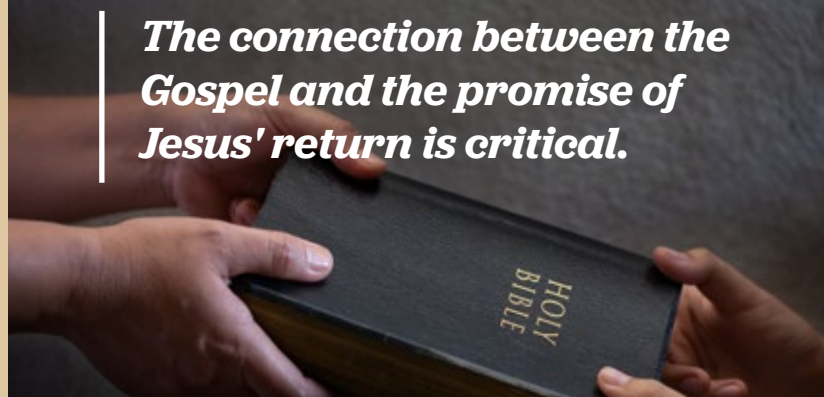
In his second letter to the church at Corinth, Paul was even more emphatic. He wrote:

Thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things?

—2 Corinthians 2:15-16

Paul is an exemplar among evangelists. After his own dramatic conversion, he dedicated his life to sharing the Gospel of Jesus throughout the Roman world. He was willing to suffer greatly for that cause and to become “all things to all men, so that [he might] by all means save some” (1 Corinthians 9:22).

The connection between the Gospel and the promise of Jesus’ return is critical.



The connection between the Gospel and the promise of Jesus’ return is critical. In his first sermon delivered in Jerusalem at Pentecost, Peter cited prophecies by Joel and David not only to prove that Jesus was the Christ—but to emphasize the expectation of His return. That is why his message culminated with the same prophetic promise Jesus cited to challenge the Pharisees (Matthew 22:42-46). David’s messianic Psalm describes the exalted stature of the Son of David: “The LORD says to my Lord: ‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet’ ” (Psalm 110:1).

One of my greatest frustrations is hearing Christians—including far too many in church leadership—dismiss God’s prophetic Word as too advanced for study and contemplation by regular Christians. They exhibit in practice if not in words a misconception that only theologians with advanced degrees can grapple with promises concerning Jesus’ return.

Paul clearly did not agree. We know that he spent only a few weeks planting a church in Thessalonica, but it is obvious that he had already been sharing his expectation that Jesus would come again. Both of his letters to that church offer his responses to their inquiries about Jesus’s second coming—an anticipation they would not have had without Him telling them while He was among them.

The evangelistic power of God’s prophetic Word is obvious in other passages as well. Inspired by an angel of the Lord, Philip was led into the countryside south of Jerusalem. When he arrived there he encountered a high court official from Ethiopia—a eunuch who had just come from worshiping in Jerusalem. Inquiring about what the man was reading, Philip learned that the Ethiopian was perplexed by Isaiah’s passage about the suffering Lamb of God (Isaiah 53:7-8). Philip explained that Jesus was the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophetic passage and the man excitedly embraced Jesus as the Christ—the Son of God (Acts 8:26-38).

Philip’s obedience to God and his willingness to “open his mouth” and preach Jesus from God’s prophetic Word

made an eternal impact on the Ethiopian eunuch's life. God's prophetic Word is still touching hearts today.

WARNING OF IMPENDING WRATH

We tend to think of positive role models as worthy exemplars. But the Bible offers us several examples of how not to act. Yet even in those episodes there are clear demonstrations of God's grace.

Jonah was called by God to go and warn the pagan city of Nineveh that the wrath of God was about to fall. Outraged that God would offer warning to Israel's hated foe, Jonah refused to obey. He insisted that those wicked people deserved the outpouring of God's judgment.

Why was Jonah so appalled at the idea of warning the enemy of Israel about their impending fate? Jonah understood that God never pours out wrath without warning because He does not wish for any to perish—and he knew that inherent in the warning was an opportunity for the Ninevites to repent of their wickedness and avoid God's righteous anger.

Instead of obeying God and crying against Nineveh (because, Jonah said in 4:2, "I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity"), he fled from the presence of the LORD and went down to Joppa.

Following his whale of a tale, Jonah grudgingly obeyed God's command and warned the people of Nineveh. As he feared, they repented, and God relented. Jonah was greatly displeased. God asked him rhetorically, "Should I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than 120,000 people who do not know the difference between their right and left hand, as well as many animals" (Jonah 4:11).

An infinitely better exemplar of God's lovingkindness than Jonah is Jesus. When He gazed out over Jerusalem, the Lord wept (Luke 19:41-44). Manifesting the heart of compassion God revealed to Jonah, Jesus recognized that many of His beloved creatures would perish in their sins—willfully ignorant or callously unrepentant in spite of His offer of salvation.

With God's wrath hanging over an unrepentant world, the urgency of warning those who are ignorant of their fate is growing every day. Some who come to understand that the wrath of God abides on them will eagerly flee into Je-

sus' loving arms.

Time is of the essence. How many billions will be consigned to eternal damnation if Jesus comes today?

John the Baptist's words in Luke 3:7 were shocking, but sometimes we need a shock to dislodge us from our complacency. Having gotten the attention of the crowds, John interacted with each person in a way that they could understand his message of repentance. His answer to the general crowd was different than his answer to the tax collectors and the soldiers, but his overarching message pointed to the coming Messiah.

About Him John said:

One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

– Luke 3:16-17

Far from a message of doom, John pointed to the Blessed Hope. As Luke records, "with many other exhortations He preached the gospel to the people" (Luke 3:18).

Our message that Jesus is coming soon represents a warning that will be foolishness to those who are perishing. But to those who are being saved, it offers the very power of God.

CALL FOR CHRISTIANS TO AWAKE!

Simultaneous with offering an urgent warning to the lost, the message that Jesus is coming soon is a call for Christians to "stay alert" or even to "wake up!" This is a theme that is repeat-



ed throughout the New Testament. In Romans 13:11, Paul urged, “Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed.”

Reminding the Thessalonians that the day of the Lord will not overtake us as a thief because we are not in darkness. Instead, he calls his fellow believers sons of light and sons of day, then encourages them this way: “We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober” (1 Thessalonians 5:5-6). Peter recognized the prophetic fulfillment the Gospel of Jesus represented. He wrote:

As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which the angels long to look. Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:10-13

With so much emphasis on staying sober and remaining alert, it is obvious that the Lord knew full well our human tendency. He knows that our spirits are willing but our flesh is weak. Like His own disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane, we are prone to grow weary as the hour grows late (Matthew 26:36-46). Still, He admonished the church at Sardis to “Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain” (Revelation 3:2).

Mark records that Jesus described in great detail the signs of His imminent return. He told a parable about a man who went away on a journey but left his servants in charge of his house, commanding them to stay on the alert. He

The
TRUTH
Shall
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FREE

summed up the point of the parable this way: “Therefore, be on the alert—for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning—in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep. What I say to you I say to all, ‘Be on the alert!’”

As the hour grows late, we urge followers of Jesus who are drowsy to remain alert—and those who are slumbering to wake up!

THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE

What should we be doing while we wait for our Bridegroom to come for us? Obeying His final order—“to preach the Gospel to all creation” (Mark 16:15). That is the truth that will set people free.

So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed in Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free” (John 8:31-32).

This poignant verse captures the relevance of our Gospel-centered message for the unbeliever and the believer alike. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, so knowing the true Truth is to know Him. And, regarding His own mission on earth, Jesus testified, “For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice” (John 18:37).

Ensnared in a world of politics and cynicism, Pilate’s disbelieving response was, “What is truth?” (John 18:38).

Americans in particular are eager to celebrate their freedoms—especially around Independence Day. Although

Dare to Share

liberty is under attack like never before, the United States still remains a beacon of hope to most of the world. But Jesus was referring to a freedom much more precious than even what is promised in the U.S. Constitution; He was speaking of freedom from sin. Only the Gospel communicates God's plan of salvation—offering the path from condemnation to righteousness, from rejection to adoption into the family of God.

To restate it once again: Christ was crucified for our sins. He died the death we deserve, so that by His death we can live. Isaiah foresaw God's eternal plan:

He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed.

Isaiah 53:5

THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

Are you an ardent student of Bible prophecy? Does your heart thrill to hear messages from God's prophetic Word? If so, the call on your life is clear.

Jesus told Peter to "feed my sheep." The disciple who was sifted by Satan when his faithfulness proved lacking spent the rest of his life proclaiming the eternal faithfulness of God. He preached the Gospel.

The angelic host who escorted John the Apostle when he was caught up to heaven called himself "a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus." Are you in that in that blessed throng? If so, he would also say to you, "Worship God" (Rev. 22:9) That wise angel revealed the culmination of the entirety of God's prophetic Word: "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Revelation 19:10).

What better way to worship God than to testify to Jesus Christ—our great God and Savior, our Alpha and Omega, the Lamb that was slain and the Lion of Judah, our soon-returning King of kings and Lord of lords. ♦

ASSOCIATE EDITOR'S COMMENTS: *After serving 34 years in the Air Force, working as an Instructor Pilot for UPS, serving as a State Representative in the Kentucky Legislature and much more, Tim Moore accepted Dr. David Reagan's invitation for the leadership role as Director and Sr. Evangelist of Lamb & Lion Ministries. He writes, speaks, and hosts Christ in Prophecy, the Ministry's weekly television broadcast. For a complete description on Tim's extensive bio, visit our website at LambLion.com.*

Editor's Note: *This article is based on a study of 1 Thessalonians 2:1-16. The reader is advised to follow along in that particular chapter.*

1 The second chapter of Thessalonians begins with Paul's reassurance that their visit to them was not a failure. Quite a statement when you consider all the excitement which erupted shortly after their arrival.

- Misunderstandings
- Rumors
- Mob violence and threats

With all that went on why did Paul not consider this visit to be a failure? Because Jews and Greeks turned their hearts and lives to Christ!

Paul and Silas came out of Philippi; they passed through the towns of Amphipolis and Apollonia (mentioned as road markers on their journey). In Thessalonica there was a synagogue so Paul and Silas, as was their habit, stopped and spent time in the synagogue reasoning with the Jews from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead (Acts 17:2-3).

2 Acts 16 tells us that Paul and Silas were arrested and beaten in Philippi, then spent the night in jail. Paul emphasized to the believers in Thessalonica that, despite everything, he did not alter the message. He writes, "we dared to tell you his gospel in spite of strong opposition". How easy it would have been to "adopt" or tweak the message to make it less offensive. How safe would it have been to make it less threatening? They could have presented Jesus as another possibility...except that would not have been the Gospel!

3 The Gospel Paul preached was not error but the absolute truth. This is not a simple spiritual statement; this is a declaration! The gospel invades every aspect of a person's life, their thoughts, their actions, and their intentions. Paul, Silas and Timothy could stand blameless knowing their appeals did not come from "impure motives". They had examined their motives; the people had witnessed them doing so by observing their actions. Truth CANNOT be right 98% of the time. These men possessed purity in their message and purity in their hearts (motives).

4 Paul testified that they were "approved by God" and "entrusted with the gospel". The word approve in the Greek (*dokimazo*) is often used to describe the testing of metals, purifying metals.

Paul, Silas, and Timothy's faith had been proved genuine. Their entire focus was on pleasing God not men. Often when the church today suffers ineffectiveness it usually comes from trying to please someone other than God. Paul, and all who follow Christ, have a goal, an objective. That is to ultimately honor one person, Jesus Christ. As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians "Whatever you do...do it for the glory of God".

5 Flattery never has the well-being of others in mind; it is designed to promote self-interest. It is designed to obtain some sort of personal gain such as admiration from others. Paul emphasizes again that they were not looking for praise from men. This is in sharp contrast to the Pharisees (Jew) and the pagan gods (Gentiles). The charge to all believers is to examine what we truly believe (the message) and expose our actions and thoughts (motives) for all to see.

Telling others about Christ is not a means for financial gain or personal popularity or status as a member of the church leadership. Paul's words here are clear – they had no hidden agenda. Their motives in presenting the gospel were pure! "God is our witness"; their actions were open to the scrutiny of God.

6-7 Christians who proclaim the Gospel should serve as examples of righteous living and dedication. They should also be gracious and considerate.

As an Apostle, Paul could have made demands on the Thessalonians, such as providing for him and his team. Instead, Paul and Silas chose to be gentle. In the Greek, gen-



leness is described as those who deal patiently and with a mild manner towards those who were difficult, like a loving mother would be with her newborn.

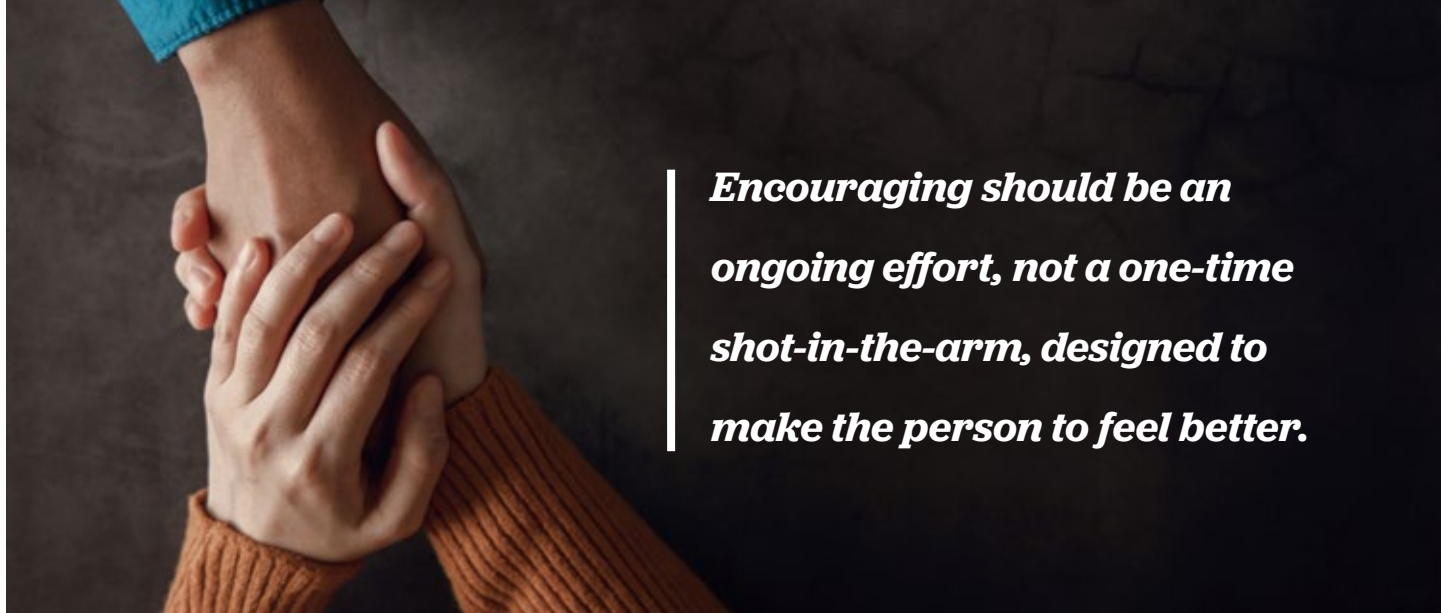
"We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well." - 1 Thessalonians 2:8

8 Here is a classic understanding of Biblical love. To Paul love is always a verb. It is an action and a commitment to act in the best interest of another. In this case Paul says, "We loved you so much that we were delighted to share ... our lives". It is much easier to teach theology than it is to live theology! Paul not only delivered the Gospel, he lived it out as well.

Paul's message and living testimony were in perfect balance. We need to visit and encourage those who are in the hospital and in prison, however we also need to help them hear the truth of the cross and what it means to follow and trust Christ. Most Christians are comfortable with one but not the other. Paul demonstrated that we need to love people as we share the Gospel.

Every church must maintain that same balance. Separating the call to meet the physical needs of people or to preach the gospel is like asking which wing on an airplane is more important. Both are essential!

9 Like some churches today, the church in Thessalonica had a problem with laziness (1 Thess. 3:7-13). Paul and Silas willingly embraced "toil and hardship". They worked day and night. They modeled sacrificial love and giving for the sake of the church.



Encouraging should be an ongoing effort, not a one-time shot-in-the-arm, designed to make the person to feel better.

10 Paul knew that people would watch him. Those who profess Christ will be examined to see if their lives match their words. So, Paul called upon the Thessalonians to bear witness to his faithfulness, even as he challenged them to also be righteous and blameless—answerable to God as they cultivated godly habits.

11–12 Paul made a point to guide people through the maze of emotions and conflicts which can easily confuse young believers.

Encouraging should be an ongoing effort not a one-time shot-in-the-arm designed to make the person feel better. Comforting is coming alongside someone as they experience failures and distress in life. Urging is asking someone to do or be something for the highest good.

Living a life “worthy” of God requires an accurate understanding of God and ourselves. The Gospel shows God’s great love, justice, and mercy—and His desire to reveal Himself to the world. He pursues us and promises that those who follow Christ will be welcomed by Him into heaven.

Until that day we are to be like Christ—bearing His character and nature. His Holy Spirit enables us to pursue holiness, but the choice is always ours. Are you living a life “worthy” of God? When you trust the Good News of God’s Word you accept it into the depths of your heart and mind, giving you the desire to “live it”.

13 Paul was concerned that his abrupt and forced departure from Thessalonica might have left those new believers confused and floundering, which in turn would have made the church unstable. But

after Timothy’s report, he gave thanks that these young believers were proving to be genuine followers of Christ. The proof was in their changed lives.

Thanks be to God, believers today can still allow God’s Word to lead them into spiritual development through obedience.

14 No one sets out to suffer, but when suffering comes it reveals those who are genuine. The Thessalonians stood firm in their faith. Persecution is rising as the End Days approach. Will we stand firm in our faith?

15 All persecution is part of the spiritual war between good and evil.

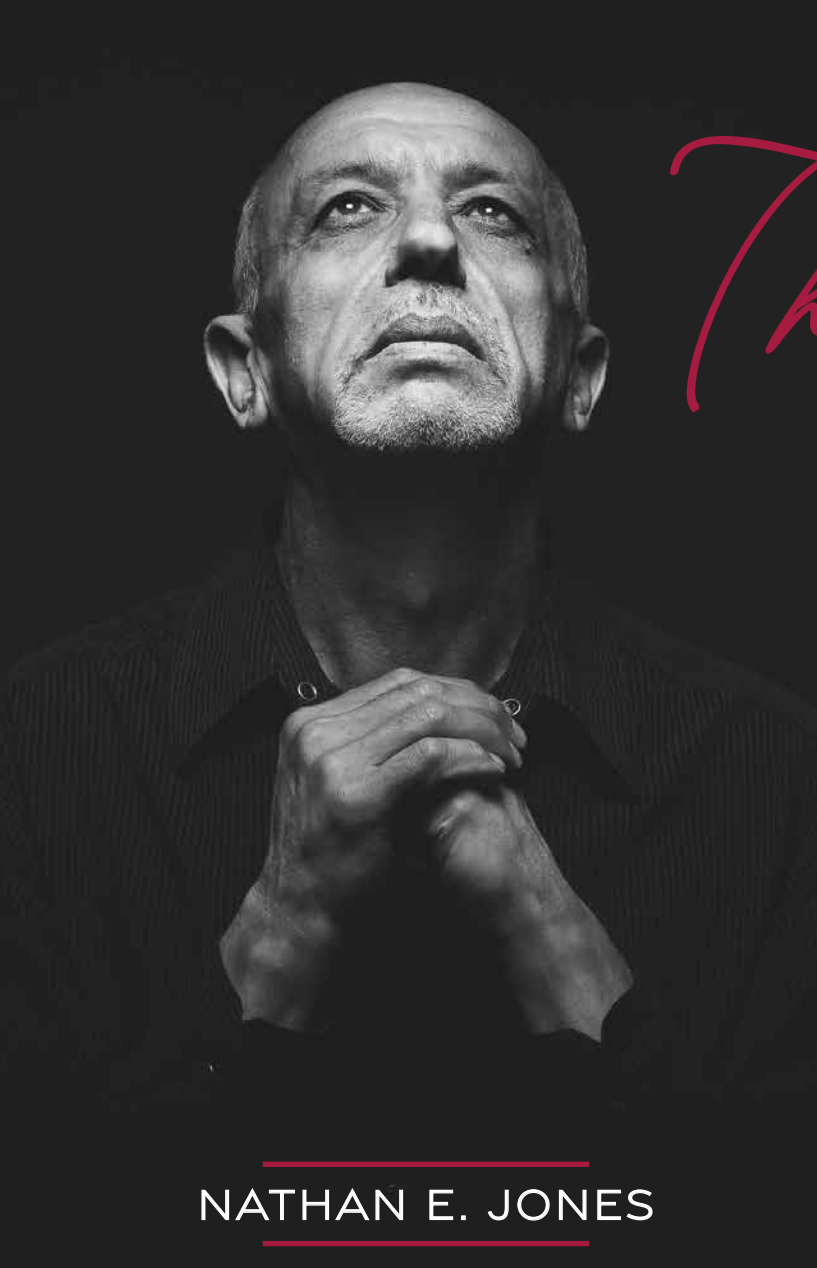
“The wrath of God has come upon them”. Anyone who tries to prevent the spreading of the Gospel and deny God’s grace is an enemy of God. They “heap up their sins to the limit” and fill their cup to the brim with the wrath of God.

The Gospel declares that those who turn and rely upon Christ’s death and resurrection to remove their sin are transformed from enemies of God to children of God. The accusations against them are nailed to the Cross and canceled (Col. 2:14). The wrath of God that abided on them was endured by Christ and their debt is forgiven.

And that is Good News! ♦



David Bowen serves as Senior Pastor of Standing Stones Community Church and also founded a web and podcast ministry focusing on the End Times. For more information, visit: InterpretingTheTimes.com.



NATHAN E. JONES

LONGING FOR

The King

poignant. Therefore, when Christians today pray, we can follow John's example and do so with the mindset of, "It could be today!"

If we too long for the King's glorious return, and that becomes our heart-cry, then we can live every day in eagerness and preparation to, "Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:36). Indeed, that certain knowledge of Christ's soon to be fulfilled promise can dramatically change our daily prayer lives.

THE BIRTH PANGS

We live in a world where the alarming news and absurdity of what's happening increases each day—especially at a rapid pace in our nation. Absurdities that we didn't give much thought to before are suddenly becoming a nightmarish reality. It is obvious that society is speeding down the fast track to the end of the world as we know it. What astounds us today is the speed of its approach. But, that also means we are speeding ever closer to the Second Coming of Christ.

But, how soon is soon? After all, it's been nearly 2,000 years since Christ made that promise. From a human perspective, that's a very long time. Though, from God's eternal perspective, not so much. For Him, those two millennia have been only like two days (2 Peter 3:8).

The Apostles asked this very question of Jesus when He dropped the bombshell revelation on them about the eventual destruction of the Temple (Luke 21:6). This prophecy, found in Matthew 24 and paralleled in Mark 13 and Luke 21, resulted in the Apostles asking three questions specifically:

1. When will the Temple fall? (related to New Testament times)
2. What will be the signs of the end of the age? (meaning the end of the Church Age concluded by the Rapture, which is our time)

That Jesus Christ is returning is a given.

Three times in Revelation 22, Jesus promised that He will return (Revelation 22:7,12,20). Jesus said over and over, "Surely I am coming quickly."

He even added that we could trust this promise stating, "These words are faithful and true" (Revelation 22:6).

Jesus' return is a promise made by God, a promise found so prolifically in the Bible that you can read about His Second Coming in nearly 500 prophecies of the Old Testament and one out of 25 verses in the New Testament. That Jesus fulfilled all 300 First Coming prophecies 100% means that you and I can rest assured that all of the Second Coming promises will be fulfilled as well.

In the exaltation of that exciting promise, the Apostle John closed out the book of Revelation (and the entire Bible) with a prayer: "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20). Final messages often are the most

3. What will be the sign of Jesus' coming? (concerning Christ's Second Coming, a time yet future)

Using the concept of prophetic perspective, which looks across time and covers multiple events, Jesus answered all three questions with the same answer. He provided ten signs that people could look out for that would mark the advent of these three events. He added the illustration of birth pangs, in that these signs would increase in frequency and intensity the closer humanity got to these events, much like a woman's contractions leading up to a baby's birth (Matthew 24:7-8).

THE TEN SIGNS

The following list contains the ten signs that Jesus gave that are meant to show us that we are getting closer to His return.

1. False Messiahs

Jesus warned, "Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not follow them" (Luke 21:8).

We live in a time like no other as false messiahs and prophets such as Joseph Smith, Charles Taze Russell, Jim Jones, Sun Myung Moon and hundreds of others claim to speak for God, and even commit the blasphemy that they are Jesus Himself! These fakes will lead up to the greatest of all false messiahs—the Antichrist—and his False Prophet (Revelation 13).

2. Wars

"When you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom" (Luke 21:9–10).

British novelist Margaret Drabble labeled the twentieth century a "Beastly Century" because an estimated 160–187 million people were killed by war. And, the twenty-first century isn't shaping up to look any different. Nation can also be translated as *ethnos*, meaning the great divisions along ethnic lines will widen.

3. Earthquakes

"There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven" (Luke 21:11).

According to the British charity, Oxfam, earthquakes

and other natural disasters have gone up 400% over the last two decades. High Richter-scale level earthquakes have been increasing in frequency and intensity affecting nearly 254 million people per year.

4. Famines

Jesus also foretold how famines would increase the closer the world approached His return. Seventeen famines have occurred just in the first two decades of the twenty-first century, decimating nations such as Myanmar, Malawi, North Korea, East Africa, Kenya, and Somalia. Some 925 million people go to bed hungry, and every day almost 16,000 children die from hunger-related causes. That's one child every five seconds.

5. Plagues

Likewise, pestilence and plagues will increasingly continue to kill people by the masses. While over six million people have died from the latest COVID-19 pandemic; Malaria, Cholera, AIDS, and countless other diseases continue to ravage the world's population.

6. Fearful Events

Fearful events, especially socio-economic disasters, loom over every horizon. Trillions in debt have been mounting as every country in the world tackled the pandemic by printing unbacked currency—leading to rampant inflation. The Bible prophesies an inevitable worldwide economic collapse (Revelation 6:6) and a new passport system that grants permission to people to buy and sell (Revelation 13:16–17).

7. Signs in the Sky

Great signs from the heavens include cataclysmic weather, such as tornadoes and hurricanes, and objects up in outer space hurtling past the earth at unimaginable speeds. The NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) reports that every year unusually active and deadly tornadoes are on the rise. And, in 2020, so many hurricanes tore through the Atlantic that naming them ran past the 26-letter alphabet.

8. The Persecution of Christians

"But before all this, they will lay hands on you and persecute you... All men will hate you because of me" (Luke 21:12–19).

Voice of the Martyrs reports that tragically more Christians died for their faith in the twentieth century than in the nineteen centuries leading up to it. But, as bad as the

***Tragically, more Christians
have died for their faith in
the 20th Century than in the
19 Centuries leading up to it.
~Voice of the Martyrs***

twentieth century was, the twenty-first century is starting to make that look like a Sunday picnic. Tonight more than 200,000 Christians will try to stay warm in horrific North Korean labor camps. And, the mass murder of Christians in China, Nigeria, and many Islamic countries bloodily continues unabated.

9. Jerusalem Under Siege

“When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near... Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” (Luke 21:20–24).

One of the greatest prophetic signs foretold by Old Testament prophets was the regathering of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel. That happened in the 19th and 20th centuries and continues today. And, when Israel was resurrected as a nation in 1948, all the other signs began to multiply in frequency and intensity—just like birth pangs.

Since the Six Day War in 1967, Jerusalem is once again controlled by the Jewish people. The United Nations Human Rights Council has passed more resolutions condemning Israel than it has all of the other states combined. And yet, God promised: “I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling. Judah will be besieged as well as Jerusalem. On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves” (Zechariah 12:2–3).

10. The Return of Christ

Jesus Christ’s final sign specifically answers the third question concerning His Second Coming. “There will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world.” (Luke 21:25–28).

Just before Jesus breaks from the heavens, the sky will be alight with even more celestial signs, the nations will cringe in terror, the seas will toss violently, and all of His enemies will run in terror over the return of the King. Jesus then defeats Satan and his followers and ushers in His earthly kingdom defined as a thousand-year reign of peace, righteousness, and justice.

PRAYING FOR THE KINGDOM

These signs of the times indicate that Jesus is coming back, and we don’t have much longer to wait.

Can we know the exact day and hour of His return? No, for Jesus stated point-blank, “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only” (Matthew 24:36). But, from these ten signs and the many others Jesus provided throughout the Gospels, and knowing that these signs are happening more frequently and with increasing intensity, we can know for certain that we are now living in the season of Christ’s return.

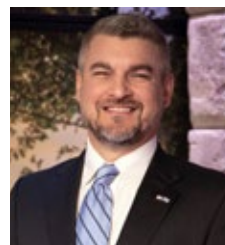
So that begs the question, “Are you ready for the Lord’s return?” The only way to be ready is to embrace the Gospel. Repent and surrender your life wholly to Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord. Accept the Good News that He has died for your sins.

If you have already accepted Him as your Savior, then make John’s prayer your prayer: “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” (Revelation 22:20).

Our prayers do not bring Jesus back. That date has been stamped in Heaven by the Father. But, prayer for the return of the King reflects the power of the Gospel working in and through us—radically changing us, releasing God’s power, and bringing about revival and spiritual awakening in those we encounter.


So, ask the Lord today to grant you His heart-cry of anticipation and pray according to His Kingdom purposes. One day soon, you will see the fulfillment of your prayers and experience that blessed hope of the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13). ♦

EDITOR’S COMMENTS:



Nathan Jones serves as the Internet Evangelist for Lamb & Lion Ministries and co-hosts our Christ in Prophecy television program. He is a best-selling author, an expert on Bible Prophecy, and speaks at events nationally and internationally.

Nathan is one of several speakers presenting at our upcoming Annual Conference, “Storm Warning: The Urgency of the Rapture,” on Saturday, July 23rd. Get the details and register at LambLion.com or by calling 877.658.1439.

A background image showing two men on a beach at sunset. One man in a white shirt has his arms raised in a gesture of prayer or praise, while the other man in a blue shirt stands beside him, looking on. The ocean and a distant shoreline are visible in the background.

DR. DAVID R. REAGAN

The Gospel:

A PLAN OR A MAN?

I was born into and grew up in a very legalistic church—so legalistic, in fact, that it claimed to be the one and only true church. All other professing Christians were viewed as deceived pagans who were destined to Hell – and rightfully so, because they did not agree with us on our “plan of salvation.”

That plan was also often referred to as “the five finger exercise” because it consisted of five points which our preachers would always count out on five fingers of one hand. The five points were: 1) Hear, 2) Believe, 3) Repent, 4) Confess and 5) Be Baptized.

Some particularly zealous preachers would sometimes add a sixth point – namely, obedience to all New Testament commands. Over and over, I heard it declared that “God had done His part, and now we must do our part.”

This, of course, amounted to salvation by good works, in direct contradiction to Ephesians 2:8-10 where the Apostle Paul specifically stated that we are saved by grace through faith and “not as a result of works.”

BAPTISMAL OBSESSION

The really BIG point in our plan of salvation was baptism. Yes, we believed in what theologians call “baptismal regeneration.” We thought that baptism magically washed our sins away. Our preachers even had a saying that “you meet the blood of Jesus in the water.”

Accordingly, while I was growing up I heard sermon after sermon on baptism. I learned that my salvation de-

pended upon being baptized in the right way by the right person for the right reason.

Specifically, I had to be totally immersed by a preacher of my church for the purpose of being saved. The Baptists were constantly attacked from our pulpits because they believed baptism was simply a public manifestation or proclamation of one’s salvation. Our leaders openly scoffed at such an idea, calling it “unbiblical.” The purpose of baptism could only be in order to obtain salvation.

SERMONS IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

My turnaround occurred while I was in college. The Holy Spirit led me one day to start reading all the sermons recorded in the book of Acts, and I noticed that they focused not on a mechanical Plan but a divine Man and His glorious resurrection from the dead.

For example, in the first gospel sermon ever preached by the Apostle Peter on the Day of Pentecost, he focused from the beginning to the end on proving that Jesus was indeed the long-promised Messiah of God. The entire sermon reveals how Jesus fulfilled Bible prophecies about the Messiah, leading up to the climax of the Resurrection.

As I read sermon after sermon recorded in the book of Acts, I noticed that the Resurrection rather than baptism was the central point that was stressed over and over again:

- On the Day of Pentecost, Peter declared that Jesus was raised from the dead and therefore the Jewish people could know for certain “that God has made Him both

Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:32, 36).

- When Peter was hauled before the Sanhedrin Council for healing a man in the name of Jesus, he called Jesus “the Holy and Righteous One” whom they had put to death but whom “God raised from the dead” (Acts 3:14-15).
- When Peter was arrested a second time for proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus on the Temple grounds, he declared to the chief priest and the rulers and elders that “there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:10,12).
- In Acts 4:33 we are told that all the apostles “with great power were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.”
- In the first sermon to a Gentile group, Peter speaking to the household of the Roman soldier, Cornelius, concluded his remarks by asserting that “God raised Him [Jesus] up on the third day” (Acts 10:40).
- We are told in Acts 17:18 that the Apostle Paul spent his time in Athens “preaching Jesus and the resurrection.” In fact, Paul concluded his sermon with these words: “He [God] has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man [Jesus] whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”

Paul summed up the central message in these sermons and others in the book of Acts when he wrote these words in his letter to the Romans: “if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9).

THE BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF SALVATION

God's true plan of salvation focuses on a person. It was revealed in the Old Testament in the book of Joel, where the prophet wrote: “And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved” (Joel 2:32 NKJV). In Old Testament times that name was Yahweh; in New Testament times it became Jesus (Yeshua)—both being divine beings who are part of the Triune God.

In addition to studying the sermons in the book of Acts, I discovered a definition of the Gospel written by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4:

Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures . . .

A SUMMARY

In summary, the Gospel is the good news that Jesus came to the earth, died for our sins and was resurrected from the dead, proving that He was God in the flesh and that those who put their faith in Him will be saved. It is not a matter of God doing his part and us doing ours. No! Baptism is not even mentioned. Jesus did everything necessary when He died for our sins on the Cross.

My complete deliverance from baptismal salvation came when I discovered a verse about baptism that I had never heard read aloud in the church of my youth. That verse is 1 Corinthians 1:17. It is a verse that literally jolted my spirit. In it, Paul boldly asserts that “Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel . . .” The gospel is not baptism; it is the joyful news that Jesus loved us enough to come to earth to pay the penalty for our sins, making it possible for us to be reconciled to God.

The focus of all Christian preaching should be a divine Man, Jesus, and not a humanly-devised plan. We should be proclaiming to all humanity that salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus, and not by works of any kind (Ephesians 2:8-10).

Hallelujah! ♦



EDITOR'S COMMENTS:

Dr. David Reagan is the Founder of Lamb & Lion Ministries. Since his retirement, he continues to write, occasionally makes a guest appearance on Christ in Prophecy, and teaches at his home church.

TIM MOORE

The Lord's Supper

A REFLECTION & PREVIEW
OF GOOD NEWS

There may be no clearer example of the Gospel focus of Christianity's reflective "remembrances" and prophetic "anticipations" than the Lord's supper.

Communion as it is commonly referred to in most denominations offers a unifying moment of Christian clarity. Whether weekly or periodically, followers of Jesus pause to remember His sacrifice on the cross at Calvary. The very words of Paul that instruct our observance of this holy sacrament convey the reverent meaning. Paul's own description of The Lord's Supper to the church at Corinth says it all:

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." - 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

The significance of those emblems never wanes. There is a range of practices regarding the frequency and manner in which communion is shared. I will observe that while some are dismissive of the necessity of sharing in communion on a weekly basis as an aspect of Christian worship, I've found most churches that offer weekly communion do so in a much more reverent and meaningful manner than those who engage only sporadically. Regardless of the frequency, Paul's admonition is one that he received from God: that we share communion with other brothers and sisters in Christ as often as we do in remembrance of Him.

***...do this in
remembrance of Me.
1 Corinthians 11:24***



A PICTURE OF THE GOSPEL

The Gospel-centeredness of the Lord's Supper is obvious. The elements point back dramatically to Jesus' great sacrifice. His death on the Cross was the propitiation—the payment in full—for our sins. In the words of the great Keith and Kristyn Getty song, “on the Cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied.” Jesus act of atonement allows us to be reconciled with God—to quite literally be “at one” with Him.

The Apostles could not have conceived of a Gospel that did not center on the death of Jesus. They would recognize the so-called “prosperity gospel” that proclaims health, wealth, and material blessings in this life but minimizes the shameful death of the Savior as what it is: a false gospel.

That is why Paul would purpose to preach nothing but Christ crucified. The great paradox of the Christian faith is that His death—the most ignoble and dastardly episode in human history—provides the path to salvation. By His stripes we are healed...

COMMUNION ANTICIPATION

Sadly, many people stop reading at 1 Corinthians 11:25—or at least fail to cast their gaze forward in anticipation. That is because Paul also stresses the purpose and foreshadows the extent of the sacrament known as communion. He wrote:

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. – 1 Corinthians 11:26

The first part of that statement is clear enough. By partaking of the Lord's Supper we proclaim His death. At the Passover meal we remember as the “Last Supper,” Jesus blessed the unleavened bread and broke it, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” Then, after they had eaten, He took the cup and said, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood” (Luke 22:19-20). Mark records that the cup would be “poured out for many” (Mark 14:24), while Matthew elaborates that it was “poured out for many for forgiveness of sins” (Matthew 26:28).

These passages make clear that communion is a Christ-centered celebration of a meal first ordained by God for the Jewish people to remember His angel of death pass-

ing over their homes and their firstborn children. In that sense communion drives our thoughts even further back than Calvary to another instance of God's grace toward His people. But Paul emphasizes that this commemoration is not only backward-looking; it should also propel our thoughts forward in anticipation of the Lord's coming.

Jesus also meant for His disciples to cast their gaze forward. When He shared that last Passover meal with them, His death on the cross still lay in the future. Even as He tied the significance of the bread and the wine to His body and blood, He said, “I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God” (Luke 22:16) and “I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom” (Matthew 26:29).

Following His resurrection, Jesus ate fish with His apostles (Luke 24:41-43). It is reasonable to assume that He drank water when He shared a meal with them at the Sea of Galilee (John 21:9-14). But the special meal He re-purposed to commemorate His own crucifixion points to a prophetic closure that awaits final fulfillment.

Luke says that after Jesus ate with His disciples before His ascension, “He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures” (specifically “all things which are written about [Him] in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms”) (Luke 24:44-45).

So there is much to look forward to in the Kingdom of God. I can't wait to dine with Him at the great marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:9). Until then, when I revel in His presence and worship Him face to face, I will proclaim Jesus' death—the Good News that offers salvation. ♦



ALISA CHILDERS

3 WAYS THE GOSPEL IS EMBARRASSING & WHY IT'S A GOOD THING!

The gospel accounts found in the New Testament are embarrassing. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John included some pretty uncomfortable details in their writings. But if you're a Christian, that's actually a really good thing.

We humans have a tendency to paint ourselves in a good light—to leave out the bad stuff and exaggerate or embellish the good. If you need proof of this, click over to Facebook and check your newsfeed. You will be bombarded by photos of your friends vacationing at the beach, having ice cream with their children, drinking artisan coffee, and eating mouth-watering delicacies at the new local Bistro. You will read a wife's birthday tribute to her husband that would convince the most skeptical rationalist that she is married to Superman himself. In short, Facebook is a highlight reel.

That's not necessarily a bad thing—no one wants to scroll through Facebook and see everyone's dirty laundry.

But Facebook isn't exactly an accurate portrayal of history.

When assessing historical documents, there are certain attributes of authenticity that historians are looking for. One of those attributes is called the "Criterion of Embarrassment." If an author includes details that might be embarrassing to himself or his cause, there is a much greater chance that he is telling the truth. This gives scholars more confidence in the historical reliability of the document. What about the New Testament gospel accounts? Here are 3 ways the gospels are embarrassing, and why those "embarrassing details" actually demonstrate that the authors were telling the truth:

1 EMBARRASSING DETAILS ABOUT THEMSELVES

Let's say I wanted to make up a brand new religion that wasn't true, but I was hoping to gain money, power, fame—or all three. If that were the case, I would NOT portray myself as a dim-witted coward who was always getting scolded by my spiritual leader!

But that's exactly what the writers of the New Testament did.

If they were making the whole thing up, they would have most likely portrayed themselves in a much better light. Here are some of the ways they describe themselves:

- They never seem to "get" what Jesus is talking about. (Mark 9:32; Luke 18:34; John 12:16)
- They fall asleep twice when Jesus urges them to pray. (Mark 14:32-41)
- They get scolded by Jesus. (Mark 8:33)
- They fiercely disagree with each other. (Galatians 2:11)
- They run away and hide like cowards when Jesus is arrested. (Mark 14:50-52)
- They disown Jesus when asked if they know him. (Matthew 26:33-35)
- They constantly doubt Jesus. (John 2:18-22; 3:14-18; Matthew 12: 39-41; 17:9; 22-23; Mark 16:14; Matthew 28:16-17)
- They record that women were the first witnesses of Jesus' resurrection. (This is embarrassing because back then, the testimony of women wasn't even admissible in court!) (Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20)

2 EMBARRASSING DETAILS ABOUT JESUS

Now back to that "made up" religion. If I was basing my newly invented religion on a spiritual leader such as Jesus, I would make sure that he came off in the best possible light. I would portray him as being respected and admired by all....especially by the most powerful and influential social and political elite.

But that's not what the writers of the New Testament did.

In fact, they recorded details about Jesus in which he was thought to be morally questionable and even a little crazy:

- He is called "out of his mind" by his own family, who are so embarrassed by him that they try to "seize" him when a crowd gathers at his home. (Mark 3:20-21)
- His own brothers don't believe in him. (John 7:5)
- He is thought to be "leading people astray." (John 7:12)
- He is called names like "drunkard" and "madman." (Matthew 11:19; John 10:20)
- He is called "demon-possessed." (Mark 3:22; John 7:20, 8:48)
- He is abandoned by many of his followers. (John 6:66)
- In trying to convert the Jews, he ends up almost being stoned by them. (John 8:59; 10:31)

- He is killed by Roman crucifixion, which was the method of execution used only for slaves, low-life criminals, and enemies of the state.
- He is crucified despite the fact that his own Holy Book states that this brings a curse upon a person.
- He is seen with prostitutes, and even allows a prostitute to wipe his feet with her hair, which could have been interpreted as a sexual advance. (Luke 7:36-39)
- He dines with tax-collectors, who were considered by Jews to be the same as traitors. Tax-collectors were Jews who worked for the despised Romans and often cheated people and kept some profits for themselves. (Mark 2:15-16; Luke 15:1)

3 DIFFICULT AND DEMANDING SAYINGS OF JESUS

If I were inventing a guru-type spiritual leader, I would definitely NOT make Him difficult to follow. I would make His sayings emotionally pleasing, welcoming, and all-inclusive. After all, if I was making the whole thing up, I would want as many people as possible to join my movement. I would make sure that no one felt excluded!

But that's not what the writers of the New Testament did.





The criterion of embarrassment is just one of the principles that scholars use to authenticate historical documents, and the gospels pass with flying colors.

Here are some of the difficult things Jesus said:

Though the Scriptures defined adultery as a sexual act, Jesus said that even lusting in your heart is adultery. (Matthew 5:28)

- He set strict standards for marriage and divorce. (Matthew 5:32)
- He said, "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect," which is seemingly impossible. (Matthew 5:48) He said, "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." (Matthew 16:24)
- He labeled people as "**Enemies**," (Matthew 5:44) "**Pagans**," (Matthew 5:47) "**Hypocrites**," (Matthew 6:2) "**Thieves**," (Matthew 6:20) "**Dogs**" and "**Pigs**," (Matthew 7:6) "**False prophets**," (Matthew 7:15) "**Blind guides**," (Matthew 15:14) "**Wicked generation**," (Matthew 12:39) "**Unclean**," (Matthew 15:20) "**Fools**," (Matthew 23:17) "**Whitewashed tombs**," and "**Serpents**," (Matthew 23:27) "**Brood of vipers**," (Matthew 23:33) and "**Cursed**," (Matthew 25:41)....and that's just a few from Matthew's gospel alone.

If the gospel writers were just fabricating the events of Jesus' life in an effort to gain followers for their new religious movement, they were not off to a very good start! The truth is that no-one would make this stuff up. Their tendency would be to simplify, unify, clarify, and beautify Jesus' sayings and character—to make Christianity much more simple, broad, easy, and pleasant.

That is...if their motive was anything but telling the truth.

But they were telling the truth. They recorded what they saw....the good, the bad, and the ugly. The Criterion of Embarrassment is just one of the principles scholars use to authenticate historical documents, and the gospels pass with flying colors. Are the gospels embarrassing? Yes....and that's a good thing! ♦



Editor's Comments:

Alisa Childers is a former Christian music recording artist, lifelong Christian and writer of apologetics, theology and culture. She tackles the tough questions about the truth of Christianity and the Bible. Alisa also was a featured guest on Christ in

Prophecy, Lamb & Lion Ministries' weekly television program.

For more information, visit alisachilders.com.

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For the word of
the cross

is foolishness to those
who are perishing, but

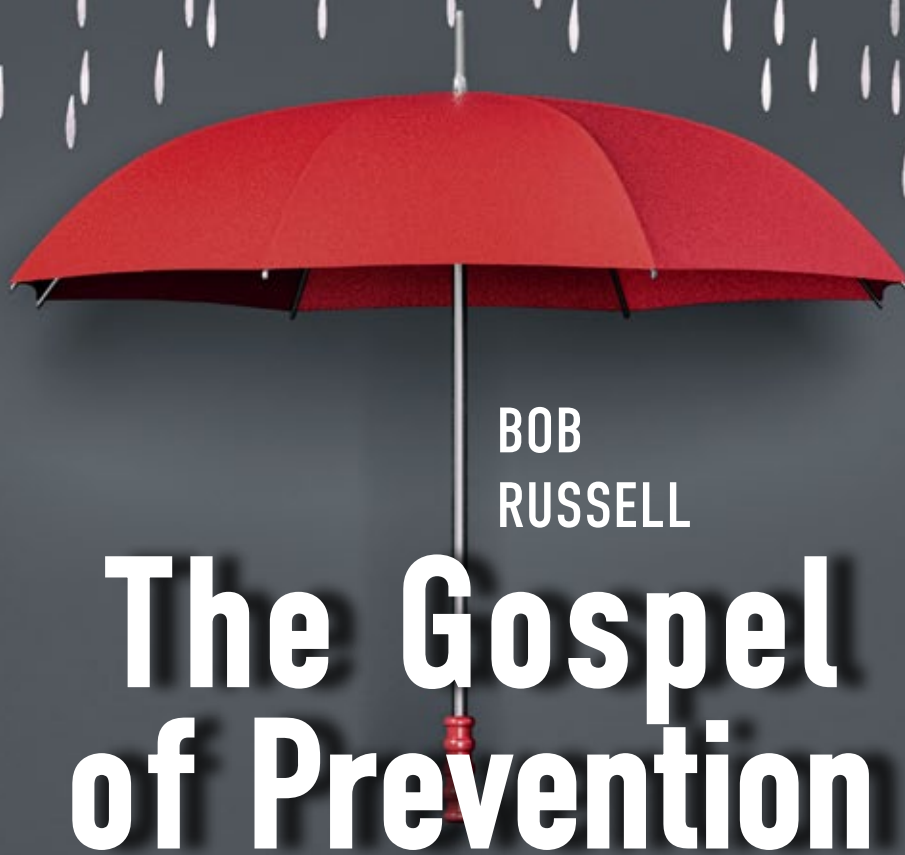
to us who are

being saved it is the

power of
God.

1 Corinthians 1:18





BOB
RUSSELL

The Gospel of Prevention

Since, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,” we vaccinate our children against disease. The primary emphasis of medicine today is on maintaining wellness, not just curing illness. We all know the wisdom of fire prevention, crime prevention and flood prevention.

But when it comes to our spiritual lives, we haven’t been as wise. The message of Jesus Christ is regarded primarily as a curative gospel- medicine to help us when we are spiritually sick or an emergency treatment when we are in deep trouble.

When I was a boy in church we sang, “I was sinking deep in sin.... When nothing else could help, love lifted me.” Today we ask people to give testimonies if they have a dramatic story about being rescued from the depths of sin. “I had an abortion”.... “I was an alcoholic”.... “I was addicted to pornography”.... “I had multiple affairs.”

These are the people we hold as success stories – and they provide thrilling proof that the gospel still saves to the uttermost.

It’s good that we emphasize the power of Jesus Christ to save us from being wretched sinners. There is a sense in which we all were once sinking deep in sin. But the gospel is effective not only as a curative. Jude 24 speaks of prevention as well, “Unto Him who is able to keep you from falling.”

We need a new emphasis on spiritual wellness. We could use some testimonies in church about how Jesus Christ can prevent the family from falling apart. He can prevent us from drunken accidents. He can prevent us from falling into foolish get-rich-quick scams. He can prevent us from ruining our lungs with tobacco, our liver with alcohol, our heart with worry, and our spirit with bitterness.

Admittedly, those testimonies might not be as captivating. But they are more desirable. When we take Christianity seriously from youth and establish Christian habits and attitudes, that doesn’t mean we ever reach the point where we’re above temptation. But we can reach the point where fewer and fewer temptations have a strong appeal. We can benefit from a kind of spiritual immunity. Like Joseph in Egypt, we become immune to the temptation to commit adultery or to steal or commit murder.

A man once went to Dwight Moody with a sordid tale of moral disaster. After having narrated the complex, harrowing facts, he asked, “Now, Mr. Moody, what would you do if you got yourself into my situation?”

Now to Him who is able to protect you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory, blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Jude 24-25

“Man”, Moody replied, “I never would have gotten into it!”

That’s not an entirely unsympathetic answer. Dwight Moody was acknowledging that Christianity is not simply an ambulance at the foot of the precipice to pick up those who have fallen over. It is a fence at the top to prevent people from falling in the first place.

There’s nothing very exciting about throwing away oily rags, having the furnace checked once a year and not smoking in bed. Those precautions won’t make headlines. But if a fire is raging and a brave soul risks his life in a thrilling rescue the papers carry the story on the front page. But fire prevention is so much better.

If a young man grows up in a Christian home and is sustained by faith in Christ and lives an honorable life, few take notice. He isn’t asked to give his testimony in church. But while his story is not as thrilling as the dramatic conversion of someone rescued from a near-suicide, it is much preferred.

Harry Emerson Fosdick once suggested that there’s something better than the prodigal returning from the far country. It’s when he stays home and is humbly obedient to the Father. ♦



EDITOR'S COMMENTS:

Bob Russell, retired Senior Pastor of Southeast Christian Church in Louisville, Ky, is an author, prolific speaker and has mentored thousands throughout his many years of ministry..

Prophetic Preaching

PASTOR
ROBERT J.
MORGAN

I have never understood why some preachers shy away from the preaching of the signs of the times and the end of the age. Some Bible teachers don't like to deal with prophetic themes or predictive passages about the future. Perhaps they don't think these passages are very relevant to current life. Perhaps they aren't sure of how to interpret them or they find them confusing. But...

The apostle John didn't feel that way. He gave us the book of Revelation.

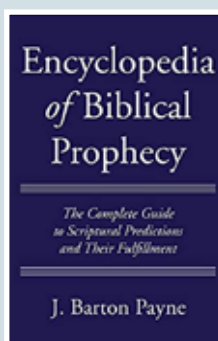
The apostle Paul didn't feel that way. His epistles and letters are filled with information about the end times.

The apostle Peter didn't feel that way. He described the day of the Lord as coming like a thief in the night, in which the heavens would disappear with a roar and the elements would be destroyed by fire.

The Lord Jesus Christ didn't feel that way. He's the one who talked about the period of great distress, unequalled in human history, which would precede His Second Coming.

And the Lord of the Bible didn't feel that way, because He gave us a book that is packed with prophetic information.

Recently I came across some calculations done by Dr. J. Barton Payne, which appeared in a book called *Encyclopedia of Bible Prophecy*. Dr. Payne was a Presbyterian Bible scholar and professor of Old Testament at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis. He also taught at Bob Jones University, Wheaton College, and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.



He served on the translation committees for both the New American Standard Bible and the New International Version.

According to Dr. Payne, there are over 31,000 verses in the entire Bible—31,124 to be precise. Out of those 31,000 verses, over 8,000 contain predictive material or predictive prophecy when they were written—8,352 to be exact. In round numbers, 8,000 of the 31,000 verses in the Bible are prophetic. That means 27 percent of the Bible is predictive prophecy. In other words,

over one-fourth of the Bible was prophetic when it was written! [i] Some of those prophecies were historical predictions that have already been fulfilled; but others still point toward the future.

Which books in the Bible contain the most predictive prophecy? Well, according to Dr. Payne:

- Matthew was 26 percent predictive when it was written.
- Revelation is 63 percent predictive. [ii]
- 2 Peter is 41 percent predictive.
- Ezekiel is 65 percent.
- 59 percent of Isaiah's verses are predictive.
- Nahum is 74 percent predictive.
- Of all the books of the Bible, the one that is the most predictive in terms of proportions and percentages is – the little book of Zephaniah. This little book has 53 verses; and 47 of them are predictive. That is 89 percent. In terms of percentages, the little book of Zephaniah contains more prophetic material than any other book of the Bible. ♦

EDITOR'S COMMENTS: Pastor Morgan captures the truth that God's prophetic Word is scattered throughout the Bible—with much of it predictive. That is one of the wonder-

ful attributes that sets the living God apart from every false god (Isaiah 46:9-10).

Why then do some preachers shy away from the prophetic Word? Why do they deprive their congregations of the things revealed (Deuteronomy 29:29)? With Satan raging, the Church needs to hear the encouraging message that Jesus is coming soon and unbelievers need to be warned to flee from the wrath to come (Matthew 3:7).

[i] J. Barton Payne, Encyclopedia of Bible Prophecy (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), 13. According to Payne, there are 8,352 verses (out of a total of 31,124 for the whole Bible) that are predictive. That is 27 percent. The breakdown: In the Old Testament, there are 6,641 verses out of 23,210 (28.5 percent) and in the New Testament, there are 1,711 verses out of 7,914 (21.5 percent).

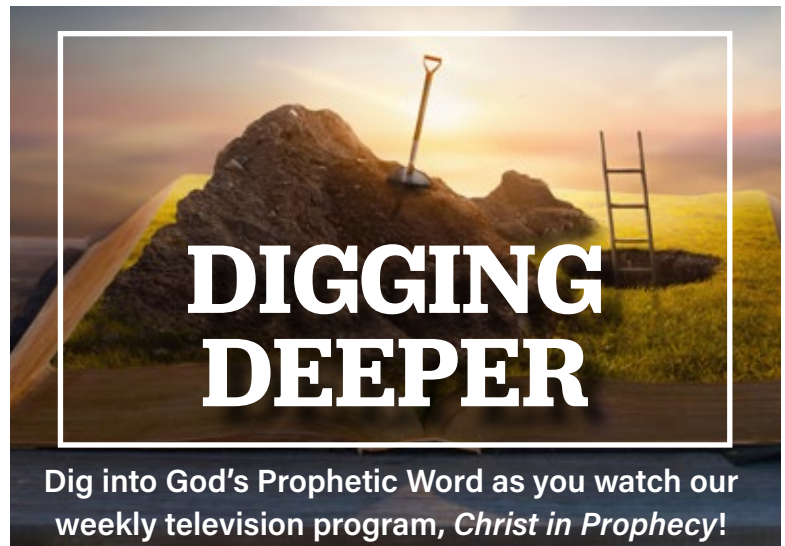
[ii] This is according to Dr. Payne's research. Other Bible scholars put the percentage much higher.



Robert J. Morgan is the teaching pastor of The Donelson Fellowship in Nashville, Tennessee. He is also a best-selling writer and has more than 35 books in print and more than 4 million copies in circulation in multiple languages.

Our hope has to be interwoven with warnings. The prophets were big about warnings; the Lord Jesus Christ was constantly warning people; the Apostle Paul would warn people; the book of Revelation is filled with warnings. We have got to warn people of the wrath to come—of the judgment of God. Then we must quickly say that God loves us and Jesus came and died on the cross and rose from the dead for us. We must believe on Him and if we do we have eternal life.

—Pastor Robert J. Morgan



- 1 Dave Reagan's new book is *What's the Difference in a Millennium and a Millipede*. How many times does the Word of God say Jesus will reign for a Millennium?
- 2 According to the book of Job, who still has access to Heaven?
- 3 Who drew attention to Job and touted his obedient faith?
- 4 What does the Psalmist say the Lord does as the nations and the kings rebel against Him?
- 5 True or False? God is not present in the book of Esther.
- 6 What are some of your favorite Messianic Psalms?
- 7 What did the Psalmist Asaph realize might be the result from "running his mouth"?
- 8 What is "the beginning of wisdom"? By extension, what is the culmination of wisdom?
- 9 There are six things that the Bible says that God hates. What are they?
- 10 Jeremiah—the "prophet of doom" who witnessed great horrors—never wavered in his faith. How did he advise the Jewish exiles to live in the midst of a pagan society?

Lamb & Lion's responses to these questions can be found at ChristInProphecy.org.

Time to Call Upon the Name of the LORD

TERRY COOPER



Pastor and Mrs. Terry Cooper
Ninevah Christian Church

On Friday, February 18, 2022, Terry Cooper, the pastor of Ninevah Christian Church in Lawrenceburg, KY, and a dear friend to Lamb & Lion Ministries, was asked to offer the opening prayer for the Kentucky House of Representatives. His reflections on that day and an excerpt of his prayer are below:

Jesus warned us that the last days would bring perilous times...times like have never been experienced in the world before.

“And when you hear of wars and insurrections, don’t panic. Yes, these things must take place first, but the end won’t follow immediately.” Then he added, “Nation will go to war against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.

“There will be great earthquakes, and there will be famines and plagues in many lands, and there will be terrifying things and great miraculous signs from heaven.”

Luke 21:9-11 (NLT)

This is not the time to panic! No, this is the time to pray, to call out to God for help. These world changing events are bigger than any individual or human government. We need help from God. We should put our hope and trust in God and call upon the name of the LORD.

The Psalmist Asaph said, “Help us, O God of our salvation! Help us for the glory of your name. Save us and forgive our sins for the honor of your name” (Psalm 79:9 - NLT).

Guided by that passage, here is a portion of the prayer I delivered to the Kentucky House of Representatives:

Blessed are you O Lord, King of the Universe. Blessed are You, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Blessed Father of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Your Only Begotten Son. Blessed be Your Name.

In prayer, and through the atoning Blood of Jesus we dare to enter Your Presence and call upon Your Name today for help.

Jesus told us that...in His Name...we could ask You, Father for anything...and we could come boldly and confidently with our requests before Your Holy Throne...if we would come by faith in Jesus’ Name.

So today, Father, by faith in Jesus’ Holy Name we ask You for help.

Lord, You told us that if we would confess our sins and repent of those sins, You would forgive us, cleanse us, and bless us...You would help us.

Today, we confess our many sins individually, as a state, and as a nation.

“In God We Trust” is written on our currency and our state-house walls, but we have not put our trust in You or your Holy Word.

We confess this terrible sin today...we have trusted in many things, many people, but not in You.

Our nation, our people, we are divided...more than at any time in my lifetime there is a great division in our land.

Anger, malice, hatred, fear, loneliness, anxiety, and despair are everywhere.

A hopelessness, a spiritual darkness covers our land.

We are looking for answers, looking for help in many places and through many people.

Some are seeking help through political power or political ideologies.

Some are seeking help through violence and intimidation.

Today, in this Kentucky House...we lift our eyes to You for help...in the Name of Jesus our Messiah, we lift our eyes to You for help.

I lift up my eyes to the hills-- where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.

Psalm 121:1-2 (NIV)

We acknowledge today that You alone are the Creator of all things and from You alone comes life and breath.

We acknowledge today that only You can change the human heart.

Only You can give us the ability and the desire to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

Only You can unite us...United under You we will stand...divided apart from You...we will surely fall.

Only You can restore civility to our political discourse that would enable our state and Federal this government to carry out Your divine purposes and plan for the Commonwealth of Kentucky...In God We Trust.

We need your help; we need your Truth, we need your Word to light our way.

We need your help; we need Your Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ to light our way into the future.

We need You...we are all blind without Your Light, we will surely fall without You.

Today, in Jesus' name I pray that Your Holy Spirit would come upon and into every Representative in this House...come in power and authority.

Today, in Jesus' name I pray that every bill, every law that comes from this House will be under Your Divine Authority, Power and Providence.

I pray that this House will truly be the people's house...the representative form of government that it was intended to be.

Legislators working for the people, representing the people, but never forgetting that our ultimate responsibility and accountability is to the God of Heaven.

For it is before HIM that we will all one day stand.

May He, by His Grace and the Blood of Christ, find us all faithful to Him on that last day.

In God We Trust...in Jesus' name...Amen.

Today, I encourage the Church to pray and specifically ask God for help. Help us to not be fearful, but to use these perilous times to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ to the lost and dying world that is living in fear and hopelessness.

In the midst of a time of distress, David wrote:

Help, O LORD, for the godly are fast disappearing! The faithful have vanished from the earth! (Psalm 12:1 - NLT)

I pray that we will be among the faithful on the last day. Maranatha, Hosanna, Hallelujah and Amen! ♦

Terry and almost 50 members of his church traveled to Israel with Lamb & Lion Ministries in May of 2019. The positive impact on their congregation is still reverberating years later.

If you would like to learn more about joining our Holy Land pilgrimage in 2023, contact us at (972) 736-3567 or at LambLion.com.



TIM MOORE

The Gospel and Tisha B'Av



A

v is the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar, and usually falls in the months of July and August on the Gregorian calendar. Tisha B'Av—also known as the 9th of Av—is what the Jews would consider “a date that lives in infamy.”

According to Jewish scholars, on the 9th of Av the following historic catastrophes occurred:

1. Ten Jewish spies returned from the Promised Land with a bad report (leading the people to lose heart and be consigned to wander in the wilderness for 40 years).
2. The First and the Second temples were destroyed.
3. The Battle of Betar was lost (the Jewish rebellion under Simon bar Kochba was crushed and the remaining rebels were annihilated).
4. The Romans plowed the Temple Mount—in fulfillment of the prophecy of Micah 3:11-12.
5. Jews were expelled from England (in 1290 AD).
6. Jews were expelled from Spain (in 1492—the same year Columbus “sailed the ocean blue”).
7. Both World Wars in the 20th Century began—unleashing horrific tragedy upon the Jewish people.

Given all the sadness tied to this day, it is long been recognized as a Jewish day of mourning. But even as they commemorate tremendous suffering, the Jewish people also demonstrate a resilience that has inspired believers and objective skeptics alike. Asked by King Louis XIV of France to provide proof of God's existence, Blaise Pascal responded, “Why the Jews, Your Majesty, the Jews!” (The

same statement is ascribed to insightful individuals in England and Russia.) The point is that *in spite of* their suffering, the Jews are still here. Their very presence proves that God's promises are “Yes and Amen” (2 Corinthians 1:20).

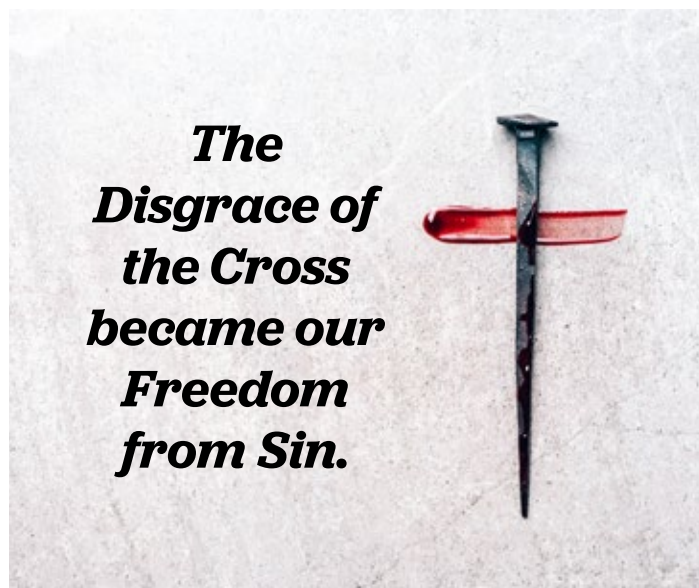


And, although Satan was the instigator of all those historic tragedies, God repeatedly turned ashes into beauty for the Jewish people. He did that through Joseph's life. He did it again through Ruth. He will do it again when yet another threatened catastrophe will lead the Jewish people to cry out, “Baruch haba b'shem Adonai”—Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the LORD. That prophecy points forward to a time that will lead up to Jesus' glorious Second Coming, His establishment of the Millennial Kingdom, and His reign from David's throne on Mount Zion in Jerusalem.

The Cross represents another historic catastrophe. Following Jesus' death, His disciples despaired. When the Shepherd was arrested and then struck down, they scattered—just as He had foretold. Peter had denied Him three times, in spite of his own vehement profession of allegiance. The death of God's own Son seemed to represent

an unprecedented victory for Satan and unmitigated disaster for the people of God. And yet...

And yet, God turned that tragedy into the greatest victory in human history. The disgrace of the Cross became our freedom from sin. The humiliation of Christ's shameful



death became the Good News that we call the Gospel—because it provides the salvation of God to all who believe.

The 9th of Av will fall on August 5th this year. Jewish people will spend the day reflecting and mourning. The Christian sacrament of Communion offers us a regular opportunity to reflect and mourn—but our mourning is surmounted by the joy we have in knowing that Jesus lives.

Death could not hold Him. The tomb could not keep Him. Satan could not lock Him away.

When Jesus stood in the synagogue in Nazareth, He read verse 1 and the first half of verse 2 from Isaiah 61:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent ME to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners; to proclaim the favorable year of the LORD...

Jesus stopped reading at that point, sat down, and said to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing” (Luke 4:16-21). At that moment, the rest of verse 2 and all of verse 3 still awaited fulfillment:

...and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn in Zion, giving them a garland instead of ashes; the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.

If you are close to a Jew on the 9th of Av, mourn with them on that day of sadness as a good friend should. And then take the opportunity to tell them about the Good News that turns ashes into beauty, mourning into joy, and despair into praise. That is the power of the Gospel. ♦

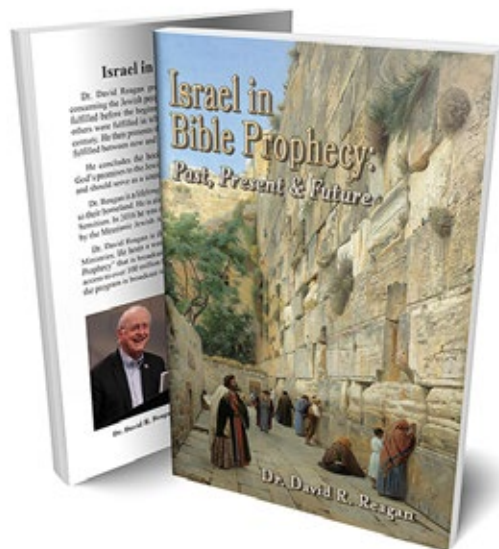
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tim moore

Signs of the Times

Doug Cobb, founder of The Finishing Fund, has written a book called “And Then the End Will Come.” We will feature him on an upcoming Christ in Prophecy episode. His thesis is that Jesus said, “the gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come” (Matthew 24:14). Peter insisted that we should manifest “holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God...” (2 Peter 3:11-12).

Together, these and other passages demonstrate that God has given us a strategic mission to share the Gospel with the entire world. As we discern the Signs of the Times, our motivation to be about the Lord’s business should be more heightened than ever. With that in mind, here is more evidence that we are living in the season of Jesus’ return!

NATURE

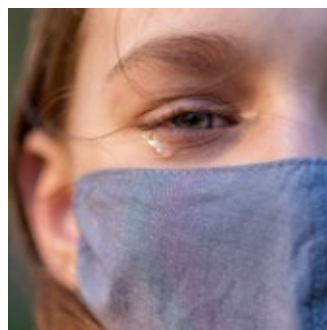
• Almost 40 million chickens were destroyed in the US recently—in an effort to stop the spread of bird virus; in the midst of growing supply chain challenges, this natural calamity will put even more strain on the American food supply.



• In May, an asteroid the size of a house streaked past the earth at over 34,000 mph; collision with an object that size or larger would be devastating over many miles. There may not be more asteroids today, but we are able to detect and track them—

ironically increasing public anxiety over the risk they pose.

SOCIETY



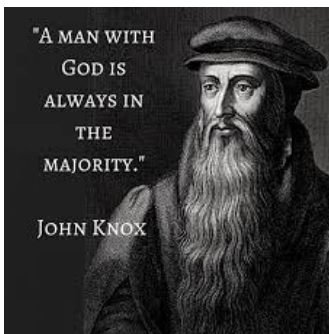
• Following the disruptions forced upon the public during the Covid pandemic, suicide rates have gone up dramatically—especially among teens and particularly among girls; 44% of teens report feeling “persistently sad and hopeless” and 26% of girls

have contemplated suicide recently.

- In response to the unprecedented leak of a Supreme Court draft decision (regarding an abortion case under consideration), the Left in America is experiencing a melt-down. Inflamed by careless rhetoric, they are picketing and threatening Justices in their homes (in violation of Federal law); more incitement and violence will likely follow.



SPIRITUAL



- Once a European bastion of Reformed thought and adherence to Scripture, the Church of Scotland has officially embraced homosexual marriage—in violation of its own scripturally-based creeds; Conservatives determined to stand on the Word of God

have fled the Church in droves.

- Next door in Northern Ireland, the spiritual (and political) battle between Catholics and Protestants that led to the “troubles” from 1960-1998 is now a moot point. Secularization has overtaken any spiritual distinction—leading to Sinn Fein (the rabidly Catholic political wing of the terroristic IRA) being elected on a platform embracing abortion and same-sex marriage; across the Atlantic, America is also rushing headlong to secularize.



WORLD POLITICS



- With its war in Ukraine becoming a destructive quagmire, Russian leaders are rattling their nuclear sabers in order to threaten the west and try to bully their way toward a grudging victory.

- Also on the nuclear front, the Biden Administration’s desperate attempt to re-engage Iran in a nuclear agreement (with Russia acting as the mediator on our behalf) is raising concerns in both political parties and throughout the Middle East. Other Arab countries—especially those who embrace Sunni Islam as opposed to the Shiite version in Iran—will inevitably follow suit, leading to unchecked proliferation and a likely catastrophe.



TECHNOLOGY



- In another demonstration of miraculous medical technology, researchers at the University of Oxford have developed a human family tree that is approaching “a single lineage that traces the ancestry of all people on Earth.” We already know that all people trace their lineage back to one couple as described in Genesis 1-5.

- Even before he sent the Left into orbit following his takeover of Twitter, Elon Musk’s SpaceX company was launching a new constellation of “Starlink” satellites. Promising to deliver high-speed internet access in remote locations around the world, this technology promises to tie even more people together through immediately accessible information.



Stay Connected

Current events are unfolding with an eye on the soon return of Jesus Christ!

ChristInProphecy.org/News/



BIBLE PROPHECY ENCOMPASSES OVER **ONE-FOURTH OF THE BIBLE.** DON'T MAKE IT WEIRD.

Bible prophecy offer insight to those with eyes to see. It should never be avoided or dismissed as too strange. It is not impossible to understand, nor something that only theologians can grasp.

In fact, Revelation 1:3 says those who read, hear and heed the words of prophecy are blessed, for "the time is near." With every passing day, it only grows nearer.

Satan wants Christians to ignore Bible prophecy, because when they fully understand that Jesus is *really* coming back soon and His return is imminent, they are then motivated to holiness and evangelism.

Unbelievers and Christians alike are struggling to understand what is happening in our society and world events.

NOW IS THE TIME, like never before, to dive into God's prophetic Word and begin to grow your faith in Christ as you look forward to His return and share the Good News.

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Lamb & Lion Ministries is a non-profit, 501(c)3 evangelical Christian ministry. Our mission is proclaim the soon return of Jesus Christ to as many as possible, as soon as possible. We do not claim to know the day or hour of the Lord's return, but do believe we can recognize the season of the Lord's return. It is our conviction we are living in that season.