



TURMOIL IN THE MIDDLE EAST HOPE ON THE HORIZON

The world has been stunned in recent months by events in the Middle East that are threatening to bring down monarchies and dictatorships entrenched for decades, some for hundreds of years. The United States has walked a tightrope with regard to a number of Middle East nations that have been somewhat friendly to us, providing bases for our troops and aid in combatting terrorist organizations—particularly Al-Qaeda. As a leading proponent of democracy, the U.S. has been looked upon as hypocritical for supporting the regimes of Hosni Mubarak in Egypt, Prince Saud in Saudi Arabia, and others. Barack Obama has called for restraint on the part of governments facing riots and calls for democratic change in several Middle East countries, knowing that the fall of those governments to a democratic constituency could threaten not only our security in that region, but the existence of the state of Israel.

It began in Tunisia on December 17, 2010, when one Mohamed Bouazizi committed suicide by setting himself on fire to protest the nation's high unemployment rate, inflation, poor living conditions and other political causes. Led primarily by labor unions, the populace rose up to oust the regime of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. The actions of police and security forces in response resulted in the deaths and injuries of scores of protestors. On January 14, 2011 Ben Ali officially resigned after fleeing to Saudi Arabia. What followed has been an amazing domino effect that threatens virtually every Muslim nation state in the Middle East.

Recent developments in several countries show a trend that could easily turn all the Middle Eastern Muslim countries into democracies within a very short time:

TUNISIA: The spark that lit the fire of revolution throughout the Middle East was the ouster of Tunisia's President Zine

El Abidine Ben Ali, resulting in a provisional government that has also come under attack by demonstrators calling for immediate change.

EGYPT: Next to fall was President Hosni Mubarak who had held power for over three decades. Many of the protestors in Egypt were young enough never to have known any other government than that of Mubarak's. Egypt's revolution began on January 25, 2011, the "Day of Revolt" that saw tens of thousands of protestors take over Cairo's Tahrir Square to call

an end to Mubarak's regime. Simultaneous protests broke out in Suez, Ismailiya and Alexandria. In spite of Mubarak's promise to gradually establish change, the protestors kept pressuring him to resign immediately. Prominent in the protests was the Muslim Brotherhood, a radical Islamic organization that calls for the destruction of Israel and America.

Mubarak remained defiant until February 11, when he handed power over to the military. It was widely reported that the military pulled off a bloodless coup by forcing Mubarak to step down.

As of this writing activists from among five youth organizations and political parties are expressing displeasure with the military-backed government for not making sufficient effort to involve them in consultations. The military council has dissolved Parliament, suspended the constitution, and is trying to recoup funds Mubarak has secreted away in foreign banks. Unless the military council acts soon, threat of another uprising could be imminent.

LYBIA: Emboldened by events in Tunisia and Egypt, protestors in Lybia on February 17 began to demand the resignation of Moammar Gadhafi, who has ruled for 42 years. The eastern port city of Benghazi was the center of the uprising

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Media Spotlight is a ministry to the Body of Christ, bringing understanding of the ways in which the world shapes our thinking and lifestyles through the influence of the mass communications media.

God's Word exhorts, "buy the truth and do not sell it" (Prov. 23:23). Therefore we do not sell *Media Spotlight*. Begun in 1977, *Media Spotlight* was the first ministry on a national scale to address the ungodly nature of the secular media—motion pictures, television, toys, games and myriad other things that contribute to Christians living no differently than the rest of the world.

The mass media have impacted the Body of Christ as much as they have society. Many Christians are so dependent upon the media that they aren't aware of how lukewarm they have become. We have many testimonials from readers who tell us that, because of *Media Spotlight*, they have become aware of the effect the media have on their thinking, and are now more selective in their choices.

But the problem of ungodliness is not exclusive to the secular media. Of major concern are the religious media that present messages contrary to God's Word. *Media Spotlight* addresses the impact that religious teachers have upon believers in Christ, whether for good or for evil.

It has escaped the understanding of many Christians that what they believe is more often shaped by the teachings and traditions of religious men and institutions than by Scripture. Most teachers in the institutional churches rely more upon their theological disciplines than on the pure Word of God. Yet the wisdom of the world is no substitute for God's Word, even if offered from the pulpit or in the Christian media.

Jesus tells us in Matthew 24:24 that in the last days false Christs and false prophets would arise and would show great signs and wonders, "so that, if possible, they will deceive the very elect." He also states in Matthew 24:12 that in the last days the love of many toward Him would grow cold because evil would increase in the world. If we believe Him, then we would be foolish not to guard ourselves against deception. There is little time to waste in the short span of life granted us by God. We must choose today whom we will serve. **MS**

Scripture quotations by *Media Spotlight* writers are from the King James Version of the Bible, rephrased in modern U.S. English unless otherwise stated.



A Personal Note

Dear Friends,

These days we are witnessing around the world tremendous upheavals that threaten the destruction of governments and the very fabric of our society. What will happen in America when repercussions from the current crises in the Middle East hit hard, especially at the fuel pump and the grocery store?

So-called fossil fuels are still the least expensive and most plentiful sources of energy, yet the federal government—sold out to the ideology of the left that hates this nation—refuses to allow drilling for oil where it can help us become self-sufficient. There is a reason we are being forced to rely on oil from OPEC. It's called treason on the part of those who wish to destroy America's strength for the sake of globalism.

Additionally, virtually every major governmental entity in the United States has fallen to billions of dollars in the red. Even some large cities and counties are counting their deficits in billions of dollars. Yet the current administration in Washington, D.C., is calling for more deficit spending and increased bailouts while authorizing the Fed to print even more fiat dollars.

There seems to be a refusal on the part of government personnel to recognize that they are a major part of the problem. The largest government expenditures at every level are for entitlements that include salaries and benefits for government employees, including generous pensions that the average citizen does not enjoy. And the ratio of government employees to private citizens continues to grow as governments become more domineering over those they are supposed to serve.

In our lifetime we've seen a gradual and steady decline in personal freedom and growth of government by bureaucracy that is beginning to rival that of the former Soviet Union. Every problem the current administration seeks to solve has come under control by appointed "czars." That word has no place in America. We are not a nation to be run by czars, but administered by public servants who are supposed to represent the citizens in a manner that is consistent with the laws of the land embodied in the Constitution of the United States.

This is not meant as a political statement, but to show how tenuous our free society is. Can it exist much longer, especially when we consider how far the government has gone in curbing many personal freedoms already?

We know where this is leading, and there will be no stopping it. Not only is it part of Satan's plan for world domination through his anti-Christ, but the Lord God Himself is allowing this as judgment upon the world.

This is a time when true faith in the living God is of paramount importance. But the faith of many Americans is as tenuous as the intent of governments to do what is right. Without faith, and without the strength of character that marked generations past, America is on the verge of surrendering to totalitarianism.

Most are already cynical of government, suspicious of politicians, and distrustful of others. Unfortunately that cynicism extends to trust in God even on the part of Christians. We must resist the inclination to fear, and we must renew our commitment to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who has said that if we seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, all that we need will be provided for us.

Our prayer is that you, dear reader, will trust Him for everything. Our thanks, as always, go out to those who continue to support this ministry.

In Jesus' love,

Al and Jean



TURMOIL IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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where protestors camped out for days. Gadhafi tried to rally loyalists amid the widening protests, but within a few days his regime began to falter as government officials in Libya and abroad began to resign, air force pilots defected, and a major government building was set on fire. As of this writing Gadhafi has lost the support of several military units and his own diplomats, including the United Nations delegation. Libya's U.N. ambassador Ibrahim Dabbashi has accused Gadhafi of committing genocide against his own people as a result of Gadhafi's strongarm tactics to quell the protests. Gadhafi has vowed to die as a martyr. Meanwhile, the U.S. is threatening some form of intervention on behalf of the protestors. By the time this gets into the mail Gadhafi may already be deposed.

IRAN: On Sunday, February 20, anti-government protestors gathered in Tehran, Iran, for a rally to protest the deaths of two men killed in clashes one week earlier. Police arrested protestors and used tear gas to prevent the unrest from escalating into the largest opposition protests since the disputed election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2005. The protests also took place in Mashad, Shiraz, Isfahan, Rasht and Tabriz, as well as in Marewan in the Kurdistan region.

BAHRAIN: Protests that began in August, 2010, with the arrest of a Shiite opposition leader in Bahrain have gradually mushroomed into riots that threaten the monarchy of King Hamad bin isa Al Khalifa. Bahrain, led by U.S.-allied Sunni rulers, was actually the first of the Middle East nations to experience a popular revolt. That revolt gained strength after news of Egypt's Hosni Mubarak's ouster. Teachers, lawyers and engineers marched into Pearl Square on Sunday, February 20, to join an emboldened opposition whose political leaders demanded the king dissolve the government and fire his uncle, who has held the post of prime minister for 40 years. Over that weekend, riot police opened fire at protestors, killing at least seven people.

On February 21, 2011, it was reported that an exiled prominent opposition leader, Hassan Meshaima, was planning a return to Bahrain. Meshaima is head of a Bahrain opposition group known as Haq. He has been in London since June, reportedly receiving treatment for cancer. His group is considered more radical than the main Shiite political bloc, Al Wefaq, which has so far taken a leading role in the uprising.

MOROCCO: More than 10,000 people turned out in cities across the country to call for limits to the power of King Mohammed VI, lower food prices, freedom for Islamist prisoners, rights for Berbers and other causes. In Rabat, the capital, and in Casablanca, the largest city, there were 3,000 to 5,000 protestors, and there were smaller demonstrations in Tangier

and other cities. There were reports of scattered violence in Marrakesh, where protestors clashed with police.

YEMEN: On January 27, 2011, protests in Yemen began in the wake of the revolution in Tunisia. Thousands of Yemenis thronged the streets in the capital city of Sanaa and other regions to demand a change in government. Yemen's president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, said that he would not run for reelection when his term ends in 2013. Saleh, who has been in power for 32 years, also promised that his eldest son, Ahmed, who heads the elite Republican Guard, would not seek the presidency either. Clashes between supporters of Saleh and opponents have escalated into violence. Saleh offered to oversee a dialogue between the ruling party and the opposition, in a bid to defuse protests calling for his ouster.

DJIBOUTI: Opposition groups in Djibouti, the Horn of Africa nation that hosts the only U.S. military base on the continent, plan to hold more anti-government protests after a demonstration in February ended in violence. Djibouti's president, Ismail Omar Guelleh has held office since 1999.

ALGERIA: Another protest inspired by the events in Egypt began on February 12 in Algiers, the capital city of Algeria, where anti-government demonstrators chanted "Bouteflika out!" President Abdelaziz Bouteflika has ruled Algeria with a strong arm since 1999. Opposition leaders accuse him of winning elections that were rigged. Baton-wielding police pushed back the demonstrators in the central Place de 1er Mai (May 1 Square).

IRAQ: As a result of U.S. intervention and the take-down of strongman Saddam Hussein, Iraq is in the process of establishing a democratic state. It remains to be seen if this nation will swing toward radical Islamic elements.

The revolution continues to spread with reports of unrest in Oman, Surinam, and other East African and Middle East states.

What if democracy were to come to the Middle East? Would that guarantee freedom, especially for non-Muslims, and particularly for Christians and Jews? Not necessarily. In fact, probably not. We may be sure that radical Islamist elements are also at work in these uprisings. It is certain the the Muslim Brotherhood is involved in Egypt. And although that organization may not gain total control, it will most likely attain to some leadership.

Especially in nations that are populated by a huge majority of people who adhere to one particular religion or philosophy, those who do not share in that religion or philosophy are targeted for persecution. Even in some Muslim countries where one branch of Islam such as the Sunnis control, the opposing branch such as the Shiites are persecuted. How much more may we expect persecution of Christians and Jews by any Muslim majority within a democracy?

Iraq is an example of how, due to the intervention of the U.S., a despot who was friendly to Christians and Jews was deposed, resulting in Christians and Jews having to flee for their safety in the face of persecution by the newly formed "democracy."

Muslim despots often treat Christians and Jews relatively well in order to keep the peace. That has been the case in a few of these other countries currently under attack by dissidents seeking democracy. When democracy is achieved, well, we'll see.

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Churches open for Muslim services

Two Protestant churches have opened their doors to Muslims needing places to worship because the Muslims' mosques are either too small or are still under construction. Heartsong Church in Cordova, Tenn., allowed Muslims from the Memphis Islamic Center (MIC) to hold Ramadan prayers there last September. Aldersgate United Methodist Church in Alexandria, Va., allows Muslims to hold regular Friday prayers in their building while the Islamic Circle of North America's new mosque is being built.

Diane Bechtol of Aldersgate has said, "I think it's a tenet of our Christian faith, and that is that we extend hospitality to the stranger. We are a congregation that wants to be helpful to people and if we are asked to help a neighbor in need, that's what we do."

Beginning with MIC's request to use Heartsong's facilities, Heartsong's relationship with MIC has developed into an annual Thanksgiving meal between the two groups.

Heartsong's senior pastor, Steve Stone, wrote in *Christianity Today*, "No thought at all was given to the political ramifications. The decision was firmly based only on our understanding of the mission and nature of the church."

Stone also stated that, as a "Jesus-following tribe, we could not be more evangelical and exclusivist when it comes to Jesus."

He insists that all they do is a witness to Jesus. "Our Muslim brothers and sisters know this about us because we always speak of Jesus and our love for him, and our love for them because of him, every time we are with them. There was no trading of theologies. They are Muslims; we are Jesus followers; both of us are clear about that. Jesus said people would know we are his disciples by our love for one another, and that is just what is happening with the dear and gracious people of the MIC. They recognize us as people who have been with Jesus."

Dr. Alex McFarland, a Christian theologian and radio talk show host, accused the two churches of having crossed the line from respect and tolerance to affirmation and endorsement. Said McFarland, "We as the church are called to show love; we're called to help. But to let a building simultaneously be used for

the activities of a mosque and also the activities of Jesus Christ, it's just incompatible. And I think it's one more example of political correctness and hyper-tolerance gone awry."

COMMENTARY

There are obviously pros and cons to this situation. That is, from a humanistic perspective. The flesh is quick to make judgments for either side. And it's easy to pull proof texts from Scripture to support either side.

It always seems presumptuous to say, "Jesus would do this...," unless Scripture is clear about a subject. Certainly He is against what would be overt sin as defined in Scripture. But here we have two churches that believe God's Word commands or at least encourages them to be hospitable to an anti-Christ religion. On the other hand, there are those who believe that to allow something such as a church building dedicated to Christ to be used by anti-Christ religionists would be the same as endorsing idolatry.

Steve Stone referenced the story of the Good Samaritan to show how Jesus intentionally chose as the hero of that story one whom His hearers would have feared and hated.

I'm afraid by doing so he is begging the question. Helping someone who is injured is not the same as helping them worship a false god, even if the motive is perceived as the same—demonstrating love.

It is one thing to be hospitable to people as individuals; it is another thing to be hospitable to their false religious beliefs and practices. If Muslims or people of other religions need a place to stay in the event of circumstances that place them in the position of being homeless, I believe Christians should provide them shelter as they are able. Christians who sheltered Jews during the Holocaust are to be commended. If the homeless wish to practice their prayers in private, they should not be cast out for doing so, but the opportunity should be taken to present the Gospel to them.

This is different from allowing a religious congregation to use one's facilities to practice their religion. Additionally, the idea of a Christian congregation joining in a Thanksgiving meal with a Muslim congregation is confusion. To which god are they giving thanks? Were the Christians allowed to eat ham, or must they bend to Sharia?

When Jesus sent out the twelve to witness of Him and to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, and cast out devils, He told them that if anyone did not receive them or listen to their words, they should shake off the dust from their feet as a sign of rejection (Matthew 10:14). That seems contrary to good relations. Nowhere in Scripture are false gods tolerated by the one true God.

The way God has demonstrated His love for man is by sending His only-begotten Son to die for our sins:

God confirms His love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us (5:8).

It is not love to allow worshippers of false gods to use what has been dedicated to Jesus Christ. It is love to tell them why we cannot do so while still affirming our love and concern for them in other ways that do not compromise one's spiritual life.

We may be perceived as unloving for doing so, but sometimes we just have to be misunderstood in order to be true to our Lord. ❖

Strang suing Benny Hinn

Morality clause violated

Strang Communications, Co., publisher of *Charisma* magazine, is suing televangelist Benny Hinn, claiming he violated a morality clause in their contract when he began an “inappropriate relationship” with female televangelist Paula White. Hinn admitted to nothing more than friendship with White after the *National Enquirer* published photos of them holding hands while in Rome together. Hinn was separated from his wife, Suzanne, who had filed for divorce a few months earlier.

According to the suit, Hinn was paid a \$300,000 advance on the first of a three-book deal with Strang. Hinn acknowledged having an “inappropriate relationship” with White, and agreed that the publisher should be repaid.

As of yet, however, he has not followed through on the promise.

In addition to the claim of Hinn violating the morality clause, Strang accused him of failing to perform sufficiently to promote the book, *Blood in the Sand*, including failure to make television appearances.

COMMENTARY

Hinn’s divorce is a public scandal that brings reproach against the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet from all reports, Benny Hinn was against the divorce. Suzanne would not be persuaded to drop it.

Paula White was divorced from Randy White in 2007.

Both Benny Hinn and Paula White preach the prosperity gospel—a false gospel based on the belief that gain is godliness.

We can’t judge Benny Hinn’s relationship with Paula White because we don’t know the details. Perhaps they were merely holding hands as friends. However, this should be a lesson for Christians who think they can ignore Scripture’s admonition to avoid even the appearance of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22). People are quick to judge by appearances. They are anxious to justify their own sins by pointing their fingers at others—especially those they perceive as representatives of God. And they have been given ample fodder for their cannons by televangelists and pastors who have abused their positions of influence.

Aside from the question why Hinn would admit to an “inappropriate relationship” if he had done nothing wrong, there is really nothing to say other than to quote the apostle Paul:

Therefore there is now utterly a fault among you because you go to law with one another. Why do you not rather receive wrong? Why do you not rather allow yourselves to be defrauded?

No, you do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren. (1 Corinthians 6:7-8)

Yes, the love of money is truly the root of all kinds of evil. ❖

U.S. Government proposes federal I.D. for users of the Internet

Barack Obama’s Commerce Secretary, Gary Locke, has created a new office within his department to oversee the development of the “National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace.” The department proposes to issue Internet users a single account that would allow them to interact with government services and multiple Web sites using a single password.

“The reality is that the Internet still faces something of a ‘trust issue,’” Locke said at a January 7 speech in Stanford, Calif. “And it will not reach its full potential until users and consumers feel more secure than they do today when they go online.”

The government suggests that it needs to develop partnerships with companies and institutions that collect information for identification purposes. The Department of Homeland Security is a partner in the project.

COMMENTARY

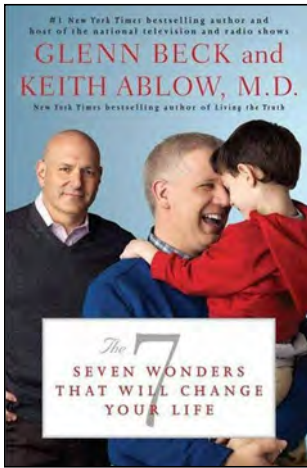
Whom do you trust more? The Internet or the government? I’ll opt for the former, especially when it comes to private information. A person may lose some big money if scammed by an Internet fraud, but he stands to lose his freedom if Big Brother gets his way.

Yes, it’s bothersome to come up with different passwords on different Internet sites for security reasons. But the government always provides good reasons for bad ideas, particularly when it comes to controlling people. The claim that the Internet can’t reach its full potential until users and consumers feel more secure than they do today is bogus. What this doublespeak means is that the Internet can’t reach its full potential for government interference and control. The Internet is doing a fine job when a search can bring up hundreds of thousands of Web sites within a few seconds. And there are security programs that can help avoid going to bad Web sites. Two that we use are Web of Trust (www.mywot.com) and McAfee Site Advisor (www.mcafeesiteadvisor.com). Both of these sites put colored icons next to the Web sites that you bring up. Green means the site can be trusted; yellow to red are degrees of danger.

These are far better security sources than a burgeoning federal government that wants to monitor every keystroke we make. Might we be reticent to log on to that Christian Web site that is critical of politically correct religion? Or during our research, log on to some Web site that promotes something threatening to government policy?

Might we one day have to think twice (or more times) before exposing our faith to an anti-Christ government worker monitoring us?

Locke says compliance would be voluntary. Yes, just like income tax is voluntary. If you volunteer not to file, you’ll go to federal prison. In this case, if you volunteer to opt out of the federal program you may find yourself “Locked” out of the Internet. ❖



GLENN BECK'S TRUE PHILOSOPHY REVEALED

NEW-AGE MORMONISM

A REVIEW OF HIS BOOK

THE 7: SEVEN WONDERS THAT WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE

By Albert James Dager

Radio host and conservative political commentator Glenn Beck reveals how he has overcome a life lived in the fast lane of fame and fortune that was unsatisfying at best, and destructive of himself and those around him. A toxic childhood, in which he experienced the pain of his mother's suicide and a father ill-equipped to handle the responsibilities of single parenthood, led Beck down a path of what he describes as self-loathing—a path in which he hurt many people who didn't deserve to be hurt.

In *The 7: Seven Wonders That Will Change Your Life*, co-authored with Keith Ablow, M.D., Beck reveals the journey that took him from a life of self-destruction to a new life based on seven principles that he promises will guarantee happiness and fulfillment if applied diligently, looking to God for strength.

Because Glenn Beck has been endorsed and even lauded by Christian leaders who agree with his conservative political philosophy, we felt it important to address his spiritual philosophy which is clearly revealed in *The 7*.

This is not a book detailing Beck's conservative political philosophy, although it does touch lightly upon some of the destructive aspects of liberalism. It is Beck's attempt to share his religious philosophy which he hopes will help others overcome lives of despair, addiction, and self-hatred, as well as hatred and mistreatment of others.

Contrary to the picture of a "mean, hateful, racist, crazy" person portrayed in the leftist media, we find a man filled with compassion for others, and an employer who looks out for the best interests of his employees at Mercury Radio Arts, paying them top wages and providing complete medical and dental coverage without charge or co-pay requirements.

But Beck wasn't always so altruistic. He reveals how he once fired a producer who gave him a ballpoint pen instead of the Sharpie he requested when autographing books. It was the producer's second offense, and Beck wasn't going to stand for it. Now, he sees how at one time his detractors may have been justified in portraying him as a lowlife.

To what does he attribute his remarkable reformation? Keith Ablow puts it this way in describing a taping session for Beck's television show:

We talked about the fact that Glenn's willingness, after a long struggle, to admit his shortcomings and face the sources of them had been essential to his triumphs and to his pursuit of genuine happiness. We agreed that

tapping into a higher power was the single most important ingredient in his rebirth and that it was the essential and ultimate key to personal transformation for every single human being on the planet.¹

If you recognize the importance of tapping into a "higher power" as an aspect of Alcoholics Anonymous, you are correct. A.A. played a major role in Beck's transformation, as did other spiritual disciplines which we will address in time.

The 7 takes the format of alternating Beck's life experiences in his own words with Ablow's explanation of how Beck's overcoming his deficiencies and traumatic experiences coincide with seven principles that Ablow says can unlock human potential and result in "immeasurable, life-altering power." These seven principles or "Wonders" are Courage; Faith; Truth; Compassion; Friendship; Family; and Common Sense. The book also offers advice on "Helping Others to Heal."

If *The 7* is true in what it says about Glenn Beck's life (and we have no reason to doubt) it is clear that Beck has gone through a transformation of character. The question arises, then, is that transformation the result of God's Holy Spirit working in Glenn Beck? Or are the forces that have shaped his new life of some other nature—benevolent and helpful within themselves?

Beck and Ablow consistently invoke God as the ultimate source of all the good experienced by Beck and others whom they cite as having overcome difficult, even ungodly lives. According to Beck and Ablow, the negative influences in people's lives are what cause them to act in ways that are destructive to themselves and others. They believe that people are intrinsically good; it is one's environment—particularly in one's childhood years—that shape their patterns of behavior for either good or evil. If we understand that, then we can help others search out their past and work at bettering themselves. Of course, professional psychiatric help is desirable, especially for harder cases.

The authors cite numerous sources for truths that can transform lives. They offer a caveat that they do not necessarily endorse or agree with all that those sources teach:

In the pages that follow, Glenn and I quote leaders and thinkers of virtually every faith and movement, from ancient times to modern times. Some of these people we'd likely vehemently disagree with on political or religious issues—but healing is not about politics, it's about understanding our place, our path, and our potential.

¹ Keith Ablow, M.D., *The 7 Wonders That Will Change Your Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., Mercury Radio Arts Division, Threshold Editions, 2011), p. 12.

Our goal has been to search out the timeless, ultimate wonders of truth that can change lives. In looking for them, we searched where lines of truth emanating from many different directions intersect. We tried to show no favoritism and no fear of its source, for it is at those intersections where the ultimate light may be found. (Ibid., p. 16)

As believers in Jesus Christ as the only way to God, and in the power of the Holy Spirit to transform our lives and to conform us to the image of Christ, we rely on Scripture alone to provide truth in matters dealing with spiritual issues in our lives. We do not look to the wisdom of men, but to the wisdom of the one true God. Although other sources may have some wisdom that coincides with that found in God's Word, it is only God's Word that is infallible in these matters; to search out truth from other sources incurs the danger that we may be influenced by the errors of those sources as well. Thus, any basis upon which a teaching is not exclusively tied to God's Word can mislead people into following false religion or philosophy.

If, for example, one cites someone who is solidly grounded in Scripture, or at least is not an adherent to a false religious or philosophical discipline, that citation may be valid, provided it is confirmed by Scripture. To cite sources that may contain truth, but that are from adherents to false religious or philosophical disciplines gives credibility to those disciplines.

Regardless of Beck's and Ablow's caveat, we can be sure that they do endorse and agree with the portions of those sources that they cite. This must be kept in mind as we review some of those sources.

As to Glenn Beck's religious philosophy it can be summed up as this: a blend of New Age philosophy and Mormonism, with an emphasis on spiritual renewal through mind control.

Glenn Beck's god

The god with whom Glenn Beck identifies is not the God of the Bible. It is a New Age god of self:

Denial of reality—past and present—is a special kind of hell. It separates you from your best self, which is the same as separating you from God. (Beck, p. 19)

Beck equates checking his gut with "checking in with God, which amounts to the same thing." (Ibid., p. 249)

Keith Ablow quotes *The Tibetan book of Living and Dying* to suggest that "God" is "the mind," or "self," as well as being equated with other religious concepts:

Saints and mystics throughout history have adorned their realizations with different names and given them different faces and interpretations, but what they are all fundamentally experiencing is the essential nature of the mind. Christians and Jews call it "God"; Hindus call it "the Self," "Shiva," "Brahman," and Vishnu"; Sufi mystics name it "the Hidden Essence"; and Buddhists call it "Buddha nature." At the heart of all religions is the certainty that there is a fundamental truth, and that this life is a sacred opportunity to evolve and realize it. (Ablow, p. 124)

This statement alludes to the New Age belief in evolution to higher consciousness and godhood. Yet Beck and Ablow speak of God in a more transcendent manner, saying that God indwells us:

You were born knowing that the truth always wins and that *You are the temple of God*. (Ibid., p. 280 [emphasis in original])

There is no explanation of how we are, or become, the temple of God. It is merely an opportunity to connect their philosophy to the Bible:

You are the temple of God, we read in the Bible. And so is your brother, and your sister, and your father, and your mother, and your friend, and your adversary, and your employee, and your employer, and that woman selling you a suit of clothes, and that man asking you for a handout on the street. Every single one of us has magic inside us that can transform our lives and the lives of others. (Ibid., p. 283 [emphasis in original])

This is not the Holy Spirit who indwells believers in Jesus Christ; Ablow's "god" indwells everyone without qualification. This god is the impersonal Force of New Age mysticism:

You have a polestar inside you. It is connected with all the energy in the universe. When you begin to follow that star you align yourself with immeasurable, inexplicable forces that will actually help you manifest your best intentions. (Ibid., p. 79)

...You can put yourself at one with immeasurable and extraordinary forces by removing the "viruses" corrupting the software of your soul. (Ibid., p. 105)

The current of energy that flows in your favor when you stop denying what you have lived through and how it has shaped you and how you must change is the immeasurable force that you can tap into to dramatically improve your existence. It is, ultimately, a force that was inside your soul from before your birth and is inside your soul at this very moment. It will never leave you. You can rely on it. It is nothing less than your connection to God. (Ibid., p. 113)

This "Force" is the same as that within the philosophy of the Star Wars saga—the Force which we traced to eastern mysticism and Nazism (see our special report, *The Force Behind the Force: Star Wars Theology Examined*).

This all-encompassing Force to which the majority of the world's religions look for guidance has both a dark side and a light side. It's worst expression was in Nazi philosophy which was predicated upon Nordic mysticism. Martin Bormann, head of the Nazi Party Organization was quoted in the February 21, 1942, edition of *The London Daily Telegraph*:

If we National Socialists speak about "faith in God" we do not mean the same God as the naïve Christians....The natural Force which maintains these innumerable planets in the universe we call the Almighty or God.

The true God as revealed in the Bible is Light; He has no dark side:

This then is the message that we have heard about Him, and declare to you, that God is light, and there is no darkness at all in Him.

If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:5-7)

Ablow further equates God with “Fate or Love or whatever force in the universe that speaks to you and gives your existence meaning.” (Ibid., p. 45)

Neither Ablow nor Beck knows how prayer works, but they believe it does work. But their prayers need not be to the God of the Bible:

Praying that God or Nature or the Cosmos or your own internal, immeasurable reservoir of spirit allows you the courage and faith to find and then face the truth about your life broadcasts your intention to your own mind, heart, and soul and—in ways that are miraculous and beyond complete human comprehension—to the minds, hearts, and souls of others. (Ibid., p. 132)

To Beck and Ablow any source of positive energy can work for us. It is a pragmatic application of therapy in one form or another that sets us free:

...If you're depressed and have avoided talking about your fears and feelings, contact a minister or therapist and schedule one visit. Just be sure you visit with a minister or therapist from a religion or healing discipline you actually have affinity for, or suspect you might. (Ibid., p. 74)

Where Does Jesus Fit In?

Because God's Word tells us that Jesus is the only Way to the Father, it is imperative that people be led to Christ in order to have any relationship with God. Yet in spite of Beck's and Ablow's references to “God” in his myriad forms, there is hardly any mention of Jesus in their book. When He is mentioned it is in the context of equality with other revered “holy men” such as Gandhi, Buddha, or Martin Luther King, Jr.

Coincidence & Circumstance = God at Work

The way Beck's and Ablow's god communicates with us is through coincidence and circumstances. We are told to follow through on these indicators of their god's will for us. This is how Beck describes meeting his present wife, Tania. It was through “chance” meetings on three occasions that he worked up the courage to ask her on a date. Circumstances and coincidence were also responsible for him becoming a Mormon. It was through meeting and working with Mormons that he came to believe that “god,” or his gut feeling, or whatever one wants to call it, was directing him to Mormonism which would become his “truth.”

On a personal note, I might interject here that I have also had similar “coincidences” that led me to date certain women, but those circumstances led nowhere. Still, it cannot be denied that God does sometimes bring us into situations where we sense His leading. But not all coincidences or circumstances in which we find ourselves are God's leading. To blindly accept Beck's philosophy in this area could lead people into disaster. Yet Beck's and Ablow's philosophy seems to be, “Let circumstances guide your life.” Particularly if you find yourself reading their book:

You are ready to vanquish the demons you have been fleeing. How do I know? Because you wouldn't be reading this book if you weren't. You wouldn't have picked it up, or you would have put it down quickly. It is in your hands this very moment *for a very good reason*. This is a bread crumb on your path. Do not ignore it! (Ibid., p. 112 [emphasis in original])

If this is true, then could it be that the book found its way into my hands so that I could warn people about its false teachings? If we followed this line of reasoning then whatever reason we find to apply to a given circumstance or coincidence would be from “god,” regardless of contradictions. This makes “god” double minded. In which case, can it be God?

But such is the New Age god—double minded and subjective when it comes to truth.

Truth is Relative

Throughout this book truth is spoken of as personal: “my truth”; “your truth.” Beck states that “you need truth to find your way into the light.”

This is true if one is speaking of truth in the light of God's Word. However, Beck follows immediately with these words: “I was on the run from my truth. I was in *denial* of my truth.” (Emphasis his)

Self-Love

Beck ties personal truth with self-love while advising that sometimes a person has to leave their marriage in order to be true to themselves—in order to hang on to their own dream:

Then, my friend, you may have to leave. If you were to do so, you would have to do it responsibly and with as much love for all concerned—including your wife—as humanly possible. But your love for self would have to be served.

Are you surprised to hear me say that? Does that sound like violating a covenant? It isn't. Covenants are, by their nature, sacred agreements between two or more parties. If you promised to stay married to someone who would love you forever, then realize you are not loved at all by that person, and that there is no reasonable hope that you ever will be, and that the example of your broken relationship is a burden to your children, then you must accept this reality: There is no covenant. There is only your truth. And in the end, the truth always wins. (Beck, Ibid., p. 219-220)

When one says, “as humanly possible,” one is dismissing the power of God (the true God; not the god of Mormonism or New Age philosophy). It is surrender of self to the will of God that causes true believers to overcome the trials and tribulations in this world, including marriages gone awry. To abandon one’s marriage in pursuit of one’s “dream” is selfishness at its peak. Yet in the convoluted philosophy of psychiatry and human “wisdom,” it is selfish not to pursue one’s dreams even at the expense of others. This is because self-love is the basis of all worldly philosophy.

Keith Ablow quotes one of his favorite writers, Harry Crews, whose acceptance of his own truth led to a self-love that, well, I’ll let him describe it:

Since that time I have found myself perpetually fascinating. It wasn’t many weeks before I loved myself endlessly and profoundly. I have found no other such love anywhere in the world, nor do I expect to. (Harry Crews, quoted by Keith Ablow, *Ibid.*, p. 116)

Excuse me while I gag.

Of course no one who loves himself with such fervor will find as great a love anywhere. Especially if everyone else is out there loving themselves with the same fervor. In view of how selfish people have become over the past five decades, we can see how the philosophy of self-love has contributed not to a better world, but to a world of people with attitudes of entitlement. “The world owes me everything because I’m worth it.”

You were born knowing that you deserve to be loved unconditionally, no matter what you have since learned to the contrary. (Ablow, *Ibid.*, p. 279)

What we have learned to the contrary is God’s Word. Self-love is diametrically counter to the love commanded by God for those who are truly His:

Love is patient, is kind; love does not envy; love does not boast about itself, is not proud, does not act improperly, does not seek its own, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

Love does not seek its own benefit, but the benefit of others:

Let nothing be done through strife or pride, but in humility of mind let each esteem others better than themselves.

Do not every man look after his own things, but every man also after the things of others. (Philippians 2:3-4)

Nowhere in Scripture are we commanded or even advised to love ourselves, simply because we already love ourselves. No one truly hates himself; even suicide is an attempt to escape the pain of life’s assault upon oneself. It is love of self that is at the root of most of man’s psychological, emotional, and spiritual problems. Yet psychology and psychiatry further impress upon miserable men the one thing that is guaranteed to make them more miserable. Or at least intolerable, like certain celebrities!

But is not Glenn Beck an example of how self-love can help a person achieve success and happiness?

As long as success remains, and enough others esteem him highly, yes, it may provide an illusion of success and happiness. But ultimately, if something serious challenges that self-love, then in order for the self-lover to sustain himself he must cut himself off from those he perceives as impediments to his happiness. This, in fact, is Beck’s advice. He states that he can’t stand being around people whom he perceives as being “fake.”

I now strive to include in my life only those ideas and people and plans that resonate deeply with me and seem consistent with what God wants for me and from me. (Beck, *Ibid.*, p. 209)

Well, excuse me! But what it comes down to is that everyone else must acquiesce to my desires; my goals; my dream. Otherwise I’ll have nothing to do with them.

It’s all about “Me”!

“Oh, but I’m generous with my employees. See how good I am?”

Yes, as long as the employees continue to support your dream, as admittedly, all good employees should do, provided your dream does not compromise their convictions.

But what if your dream does compromise another’s conscience? Then to be true to yourself you’ll have to make that other person suffer for your benefit.

You can see where this can lead.

It’s fine to have a dream, but our dream should be submitted to the will of our heavenly Father. Otherwise we will assume that our dream is de facto the will of God, as does Beck:

Dreams are important. They’re messages from God. When you ignore them or resist them or are kept from pursuing them, you are cut to the core of your being. Inevitably you then inflict injuries on others, too. (*Ibid.*, p. 93)

Well, Hitler had a dream. Was that a message from God? How about Stalin’s dream? Or Attilah the Hun? Or Beck’s nemesis Barack Obama’s?

Are we to assume that all these dreams were messages from God?

How easy it is to go astray when we assume that we are God, or that God is leading us through our own whims of what constitutes “good” in life.

Mormonism

Glenn Beck’s conversion to Mormonism is no secret. He has mentioned it numerous times on his broadcasts, and alluded to Mormon doctrine during his Restoring Honor Rally in Washington D.C. in 2010. Now he reveals how he was led to Mormonism through coincidences in his life. His best friend, Pat Gray, is a Mormon; Beck’s first job in radio was at a station in Seattle, owned by Mormons; his next job was at a station owned by the same company in Provo, Utah; his next job was at a station in Washington, D.C., where the news guy was a Mormon.



For quite some time we've been receiving e-mails from dear brothers and sisters in Christ, stating that the ACLU is waging a campaign to remove all cross-shaped headstones from military cemeteries. Along with photos of crosses arranged on the beach at Santa Barbara, Ca., placed there by a veteran's group, the e-mail contains the following message and picture:



Did you know that the ACLU has filed a suit to have all military cross-shaped headstones removed?

and another suit to end prayer from the military completely. They're making great progress. The Navy Chaplains can no longer mention Jesus' name in prayer thanks to the ACLU .

I'm not breaking this one.

If I get it a 1000 times,
I'll forward it a 1000 times!

Please send this on after a short prayer. Prayer for our soldiers Don't break it!

Prayer:

'Heavenly Father, hold our troops in Your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in this our time of need. These things I humbly ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, Amen.' →

After Beck and his new wife Tania decided they needed to have a common faith, they searched out several different religions including Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Unitarian, Unity, etc. Then one day his Mormon friend Pat Gray invited him to the Church of Jesus Christ, Latter-day Saints. He was surprised that in a class called "Gospel Principles" he could ask questions. Add to this that his daughters felt "so warm inside" by the friendliness they experienced at the Mormon stake and he was hooked. Now he teaches us his Mormon gospel, which includes baptism for the dead to give them another chance:

...Latter-day Saints do not believe that your chances ever cease, even with death. They end only with full understanding and denial of truth by your own exercise of real free will. And even then there is no "lake of fire." There is just the Hell that is realizing you could have been with your loved ones and your Heavenly Father and His son, but you're not. That is far worse than any "lake of fire." (Beck, *Ibid.*, p. 148)

Really? Then why did Jesus speak of the lake of fire and judgment so often? Why does God's Word tell us that after death comes judgment (Hebrews 9:27)?

Conclusion

Glenn Beck is a very likeable guy, as I'm sure is Keith Ablow. I don't think either is a conscientious deceiver. They have been deceived by the philosophies of the world that impressed them above God's Word. Unfortunately, their deception is contagious, particularly because of Beck's fame, and particularly among Christians who hold patriotism almost as high as they do their faith in Jesus. These are willing to overlook the deception and join Beck in a common cause of patriotism in the face of a leftist, internationalist agenda that has infected the governments of the United States at every level. By doing so, such Christians spread the deception deeper into the Body of Christ in America.

When we are cowed into ignoring or dismissing—even accepting—spiritual deception in the interest of worldly affairs we have denied the faith.

God's Word is the only criterion of truth to which we can adhere without fear. It is filled with examples of godly men and women who risked their own well-being for the sake of God's truth—men and women who should be examples of how we must live our lives.

It's my hope that this exposé of Glenn Beck's philosophy will help some of our more wise and discerning brethren resist the temptation to overlook his deceptions and stand for God's truth. ❖

COMMENTARY: There is no truth to this rumor. The ACLU has never filed suit to have military crosses removed. In separate lawsuits the Americans United for Separation of Church and State and the ACLU did win a suit in 2007 to convince the Department of Veterans Affairs to agree to allow family members to choose from 38 different religious symbols, including Wiccan, for headstones to represent the variety of religions practiced in the US.

We may disagree with much in the ACLU, but as we have stated before, our testimony must be true. Otherwise our witness for Jesus Christ will not only be hindered, but tarnished. ❖

A SPECIAL LETTER & REPLY

Dear Mr. Dager,

You once admitted in one of your *Media Spotlight* issues that you earlier worked in a bookstore which contained some volumes on the Illuminati, Bilderbergers, Rothschilds, New World Order, CFR, AIPAC, ADL, Freemasonry, etc. This was an astounding revelation, because none of your writings ever seemed to be influenced by the existence of such massive evil, controlled by Zionist Jews—phony Jews (Khazars—Eastern Europeans with no genetic link to Abraham, but simply religious converts to Judaism). This means that any Zionist Khazar who had renounced his faith in Judaism, could have no basis to call himself a Jew. In fact these Khazars are NOT Semites, but have bamboozled the whole world by their total control of the mass media into believing that anyone who criticizes them is anti-Semitic. The truth is that the Muslim Palestinians, as descendants of Abraham, are the genuine Semites, and any non-Sephardic Jew who opposes them is anti-Semitic.

No doubt, you understand all of this, coming from Lebanon. Yet, in newsletter after newsletter, you constantly rail against the Palestinian Muslims, and keep your big mouth shut about the Khazar phony Jews who stole their land, and now have moved on to control the whole world's economy by an unconstitutional Federal Reserve Banking Empire.

But not only the economy has been stolen, they have infiltrated the Christian churches, turned our morals upside-down with their Hollywood and TV filth, assaulted our Christian rights to expression in schools, government agencies, public places through unrelenting persecution by their ADL and ACLUs.

Tell me this, Dager, when have Muslims in America achieved 1/1000th of this power that these Khazars wield?

You are a very insightful person. But when it comes to Jewish Khazar evils, you have a serious blind spot. Then again, maybe not. You know quite well that if you confront these monsters, they will destroy you. The enclosed newsletter is a small example of people who dared.

And so in your Winter 2010 newsletter you pretend to call for “balance” in reporting the Palestinian situation. In so doing you criticize the video *With God on Our Side*, which presents the Muslim Palestinian views. Use your common sense, Dager. The Jewish-controlled media in North America always presents the Zionist view of events, and in fact censors Jewish criminality from being exposed. Where is the balance there?

So if once in a blue moon the Palestinians get to present their views, why should they be forced to be balanced?

Here's a little tidbit that should concern you. In July, 2006, Lebanese forces arrested two Israeli soldiers as prisoners of war. The Jews themselves had seized and imprisoned over 9,000 Palestinians without trial, which is legal according to Article III of Israeli law. The enraged Jews unleashed a blitzkrieg against Lebanon, killing over 1,000 men, women, and children.

Now keep in mind that about 42% of Lebanese are Christians. This means that about 450 innocent Christians were callously killed by the Israelis.

Al, did you see any “BALANCED” reporting of this fact in your Jewish-controlled media? Did you dare report it?

I have in front of me a book, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* by Jewish historian Ilan Pappé. Obviously, if this author lived in Israel, he'd be killed. He lives in England. You need this book Al, before you go shooting off your big mouth again.

But more than this book, you need to listen to Jesus Christ. The Jews of today are the same as the Pharisees of Jesus' time. They do not venerate the Old Testament, but the Babylon-inspired TALMUD. They are of their father, the Devil.

As you know, Al, the Devil is the god of this world. He is the god of the Masonic Temple, controlled by Jews and until Christ returns, true Christians will be persecuted by these evil monsters. It is time to stop taking cheap shots at Palestinian Muslims and to confront the Devils' Disciples—the Jews!

I am,

A Servant of Jesus – Anonymous*

*Because I can't trust you.

* * *

Dear Anonymous,

Why don't you tell me how you really feel?

Please allow me to respond to your concerns.

I've never “admitted” to working in a bookstore that contained volumes on the subjects you mentioned. I have stated that in the late 50s and early 60s I managed a bookstore, Poor Richards, that was the first bookstore specializing in conservative political literature—a store after which the American Opinion bookstores of the John Birch society were modeled. To use the term “admitted” makes it seem as if I was ashamed of that past, which I am not. Nor am I proud of it. It was merely one stopover on my journey to understanding.

You err when you say that none of my writings “ever seemed to be influenced by the existence of such massive evil, controlled by Zionist Jews, etc.”

I have often mentioned how anti-Christ the Zionist Jews are. It's just that I refuse to use the vitriolic language that he whose newsletter you included uses on a consistent basis. Nor have I used such vitriolic language in addressing the evils of Islam. It's best to stick to the historical and scriptural facts.

And that's where I must address your accusation of the so-called Khazars. When I was managing Poor Richards the subject of Khazars often came up. We carried books that accused the Khazars of plotting to destroy America and bring about a Jewish-controlled one-world government. Every source on the Khazars said essentially the same thing; it was as if each was referencing the other. But I did not find then, nor have I since found, any empirical evidence to prove the Khazar conspiracy.

It's true that some Khazars converted to Judaism around the sixth or seventh century, but there is no evidence that they replaced all the Jews, thus leading to the idea that today's Jews are de facto Khazarian descendants. *(Continued on page 19)*

WAS THERE A DIFFERENT GOSPEL FOR JEWS THAN FOR GENTILES?

There is a teaching common among some Dispensationalists, which is not new, but is experiencing resurgence. It is that Peter's Gospel to the Jews was different than Paul's Gospel to the Gentiles in their day. Some believe that there is still a different Gospel for the Jews than for the Gentiles. They claim that both must come to Jesus Christ, but in a different manner. Others go so far as to say that the Jews have a different means of salvation than do the Gentiles; the Jews do not need Jesus, but may be saved through the Law of Moses.

Two of the more prominent leaders within Christianity who posit this latter view are Pat Robertson and John Hagee. Robertson's and Hagee's false teachings reject out-of-hand that the Jews need the Gospel at all. Robertson's position was revealed on NBC's *Donahue* in 1988, when Phil Donahue asked him, "Do Jews go to Heaven?" Robertson's reply:

The Jews go to Heaven in relation to their own religion, and what does their religion say? It's very clear. They go to Heaven if they keep all the commandments of the Jewish Law. And if you go back into the Old Testament you see that it was necessary in case they didn't, to have animal sacrifices. That's what was set up in the Old Testament. And in accordance with keeping all of the Law, they are God's chosen people; there's no question about that.

At the time, Robertson was running for the Republican Party's nomination for president of the United States, and his waffling may have been motivated by his desire not to seem biased against the Jews.

John Hagee, on the other hand, preaches this deception from his pulpit as a matter of course:

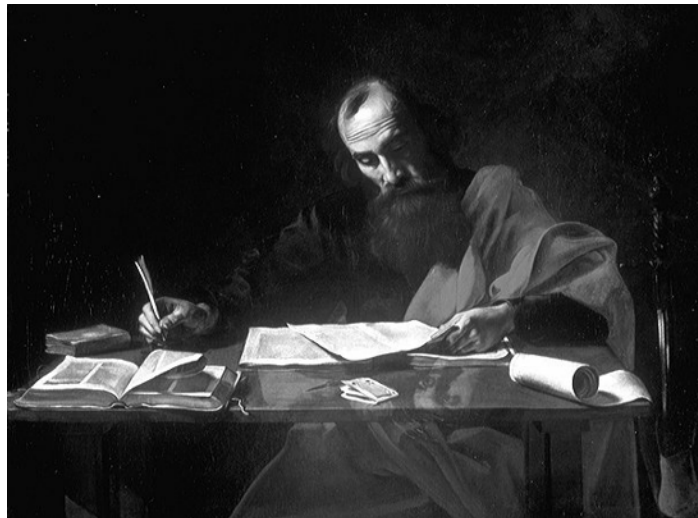
The Jewish people have a relationship to God through the Law of God as given through Moses. I believe that every Gentile person can only come to God through the cross of Christ. I believe that every Jewish person who lives in the light of the Torah, which is the Word of God, has a relationship with God and will come to redemption.

The Law of Moses is sufficient enough to bring a person into the knowledge of God until God gives him a greater revelation. And God has not. Paul abandoned the idea [of Jews knowing Christ]. In the Book of Romans he said, "I am now going to go to the Gentiles from this time forward."

Judaism doesn't need Christianity to explain its existence. But Christianity has to have Judaism to explain its existence.

Hagee's claim that God did not give the Jews a greater revelation is not true. God sent the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Jews first, then to the Gentiles. The Jews for the most part rejected their Messiah. The Gospel has been known to them for two thousand years. So for Hagee to say that the Jews can be saved by living by the Torah while rejecting Christ is a disservice to the Jews and a slap in the face of our Savior.

And Paul did not decide to go to the Gentiles on the basis that the Jews didn't need the Gospel, but because the Jews he encountered rejected the Gospel:



And when Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia Paul was compelled in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. And when they resisted and blasphemed, he shook his clothing and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles." (Acts 18:5-6)

(More complete reviews of these statements, along with citations, may be found in our special report, *Joel Osteen: Another Victim of Larry King*.) These men's false teachings on this issue are far more serious than the error we are addressing in this writing, but they share the same erroneous basis: God deals differently with Jews than with Gentiles, and therefore there is (or at one time was) a difference in the manner in which both are saved to eternal life.

The basis for this idea that there are different gospels for Jews and Gentiles rests upon what Peter proclaimed to the Jews at Pentecost and what Paul wrote in his letters to the Gentile assemblies. Briefly, the claim is that Peter told the Jews that they must repent and be baptized, but Paul never mentions to the Gentiles the need to repent and be baptized, but only that they must "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ." Therefore, it is reasoned, the Jews had one means of salvation (repentance and baptism) and the Gentiles had another (belief alone), although both rested upon faith in Jesus Christ. It is further stated that the Jews were given "the Kingdom Gospel," and the Gentiles were given the "Grace Gospel."

At first blush one might be persuaded to believe this teaching, particularly when those who teach it claim that they are only sharing God's Word and are not adding anything to it. But

whenever someone teaches God's Word in a way that ignores other portions of God's Word that better clarify the truth, they are either adding to it or subtracting from it.

There are a number of teachers who posit these views, and we will look at the reasoning of two of them. First, we will consider the teachings of Matthew McGee found in his "Israel's Kingdom Gospel and Our Grace Gospel."

The Gospel of the Kingdom vs. the Gospel of Grace

The teaching about disparate gospels is based on the idea that the Jews were given the Gospel of the Kingdom by John the Baptist, then by Jesus, then by His apostles, but Paul proclaimed a different Gospel, "the Gospel of Grace," to the Gentiles. Here are some excerpts from McGee's teachings:

Before our Lord Jesus Christ revealed it to Paul, the other apostles did not know that Jesus Christ's crucifixion was the sacrifice for our sins. In the book of Acts, Peter never mentions sacrifice, or propitiation, or the blood of Jesus Christ. He never associates Christ's death with remission of sins. Our gospel by which we are saved was a mystery revealed by our Lord Jesus Christ to Paul. It was not known by any man, not even the twelve apostles or Satan himself (1 Corinthians 2:7-8).

Paul was the apostle of the Gentiles. Jesus Christ and the apostles prior to Paul preached only to the people of Israel, with just a few exceptions.

After Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, Peter preached that the people of Israel should believe that Jesus Christ was who He said He was, the Messiah. They should repent, and be baptized with water (Acts 2:38). If they did all this, then Jesus Christ would return and bring in the kingdom just as the Old Testament prophets had foretold (Acts 3:19-21).

The twelve apostles were under the law of Moses and continued to zealously follow the law all of their lives. But Paul taught the Gentiles "...ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Romans 6:14)

No, John the Baptist and Jesus did not overtly equate Jesus' death as the sacrifice for sins. But John did proclaim that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

The Jews understood that the lambs slain during Passover were atonement for the sins of the people. The proclamation was there; just because the people did not understand it fully does not negate the proclamation. That proclamation was given in conjunction with John the Baptist's call for repentance because the Kingdom of Heaven was near (Matthew 3:2).

The Jews also had the witness of Isaiah:

Who has believed our report, and to whom is the arm of YHWH revealed?

For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground. He has no form or splendor, and when we shall see Him, there is no handsomeness to be desired.

He is despised and rejected by men—a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief—and we hid our faces from Him. He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

Truly He has borne our grief and carried our sorrows, yet we considered Him punished, stricken by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was beaten for our iniquities; the chastisement for our welfare was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and YHWH has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth. He is brought like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is mute, so He did not open His mouth.

He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who can ponder His age? For He was cut off from the land of the living. He was killed for the sins of my people.

He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death, because he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.

Yet it pleased YHWH to bruise him; He has put Him to grief. When you make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of YHWH shall prosper in His hand. He shall see the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied. By His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many, for He shall bear their sins.

Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong because He has poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. (Isaiah 53:1-12)

The Jews knew this to be a messianic prophecy; they just didn't understand it, or relate it to Jesus.

When Peter convicted the hearts of those who heard him and the other apostles proclaiming the Gospel in several languages at Pentecost, they were stricken because Peter's accusation that they had killed their Messiah harkened back to Isaiah:

You men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man among you approved by God through miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as you yourselves also know, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain Him whom God has raised up, having loosed the pains of death because it was not possible that He should be held by it. (Acts 2:22-24)

Although Peter did not quote Isaiah in this particular instance, it is very possible (even probable) that, as the apostles were speaking in the many languages of the people there, Isaiah was referenced. Yet even if Isaiah was not referenced directly, his prophecy of the Messiah dying for the sins of the people was well known, and surely would have been recalled by the listeners.

Furthermore, when all the apostles were performing miracles in Solomon's porch at the temple in Jerusalem (Acts 5:12), resulting in their being thrown into prison, we find that, after being miraculously released from prison, they did indeed equate Jesus' death as a sacrifice for the sins of the Jews:

Then the captain went with the officers and brought them without violence, for they feared the people lest they should have been stoned. And when they had brought them, they set them before the council, and the high priest asked them, saying, "Did we not strictly command you that you should not teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, "We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you slew and hanged on a tree. God has exalted Him with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, in order to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are His witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him." (Acts 5:26-32)

The insistence that the Jews were given a different gospel that was specifically related to the kingdom of Israel has a number of holes, which we will see as we further consider McGee's words:

God promised the people of Israel a Land, a King, and a Kingdom. Their nation was to eventually become a nation of priests to bring salvation to the Gentile nations. In the Old Testament, it was no mystery that Israel would someday spread the Word of God to all nations. But it was prophesied to be after the Messiah had come and set up His kingdom centered in Jerusalem. The people of Israel would then be sent to all nations to lead the Gentiles to their God in Jerusalem. But all Israel did not receive and has not received Him yet. So the fulfillment of the old program has been postponed. The mystery was that God planned to go to the Gentiles (through the apostle Paul) when Israel rejected the kingdom. After this dispensation of grace (sometimes called the "church age") ends at the rapture, God will resume the old program....

As we move forward from the Old Testament to the time of Christ's earthly ministry, we see that Jesus Christ, John the Baptist, and the twelve apostles preached the gospel of the kingdom to Israel. This was not the gospel of grace that would later be preached by the Apostle Paul to the churches composed mostly of Gentiles (non-Israelites). Paul preached that Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose from the dead, but during Christ's earthly ministry, no one was preaching that message. It had not even happened yet....

It had not yet been revealed that Jesus Christ would die and rise again, much less that He would give Himself as a sacrifice for our sins. So that was not part of the gospel which the twelve, John the Baptist, and Jesus

Christ were preaching. Yet, they were still preaching the gospel of the kingdom.

Peter's Gospel was: Jesus is the Messiah and the kingdom can still come if Israel will repent and be baptized....

The twelve apostles never mention Jesus Christ's blood or sacrifice or propitiation in the entire book of Acts, nor do they recognize Jesus Christ's death as the payment for sin. But that was not part of the kingdom gospel they were preaching....

The blood of Christ is not mentioned by Peter and the other 11 apostles in Acts, yet it is a vital part of the gospel of grace. One must conclude that either the twelve were negligent, or that it had not yet been revealed to them that Christ died a sacrificial death. Certainly the apostles, filled with the Holy Spirit, did not dispense an incomplete gospel, or those that heard it would have been without hope. So the sacrificial nature of Christ's death had not been revealed to them by God, just as we saw earlier.

Did Jesus NOT die for the Jews' sins? That is what must be deduced from this reasoning. If the Jews did not need to know Jesus died for their sins, then how could His death be effective toward their salvation? That dichotomy is merely one of several problems with the above quotes.

To begin, the restoration of the Israelite kingdom was not "postponed." God's eternal plan was laid out in the writings of the prophets, and everything was fulfilled exactly as He had planned. To say that His plans were "postponed" strongly suggests that God was defeated in His purposes. This is similar to the hyper-dispensationalist teaching that Jesus' death on the cross interrupted God's plan to bring about the Kingdom on earth because the Jews were supposed to receive Him and didn't.

Also, Peter did mention the blood of Christ. He accused the Jews of crucifying their Messiah, and Isaiah's prophecy of His death at their hands clearly describes His sacrifice as atonement for their sins.

As to the Israelites being promised a land, a king, and a kingdom, and that they would be priests of YHWH to the nations, this is true. However, when the author says that Israel spreading the Word of God to all nations would be after the Messiah had come and set up His kingdom centered in Jerusalem, he is only partly correct. Jesus told His disciples that they would be witnesses of Him first in Jerusalem, then throughout Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the world. Although the apostles stayed in Jerusalem, persecution drove many of the disciples out from there into the nations where they took the Gospel, first to their brethren, then to the Gentiles. Jesus' command was fulfilled shortly after He was taken into Heaven, as attested by the unbelieving Jews themselves:

But the Jews who did not believe, moved with envy, took to themselves certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.

(Continued on page 22)

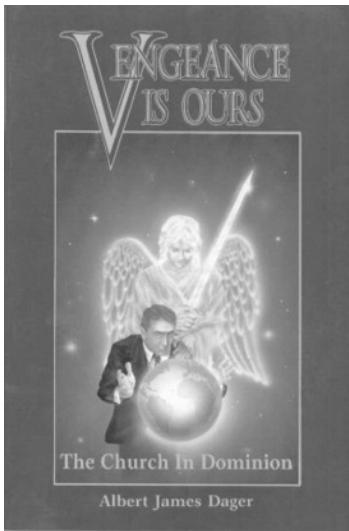


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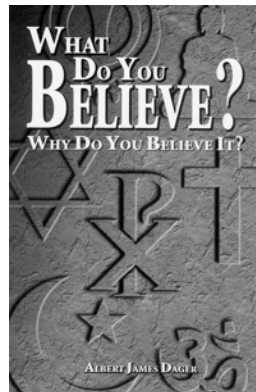
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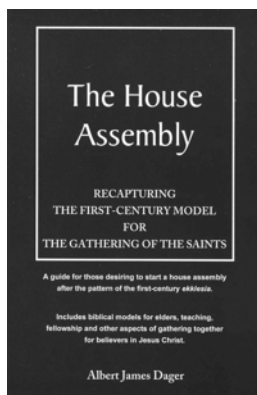
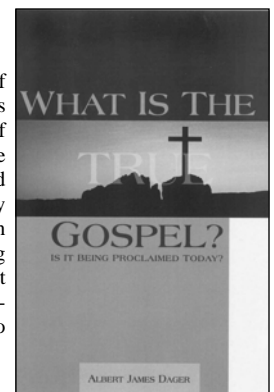


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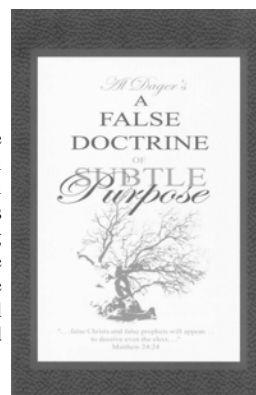
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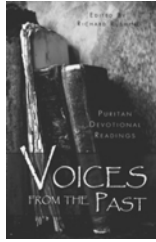
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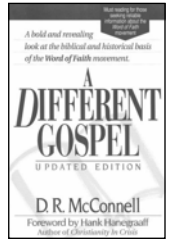


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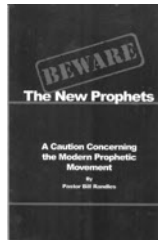


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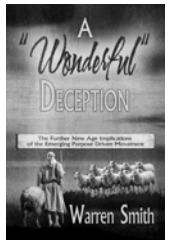


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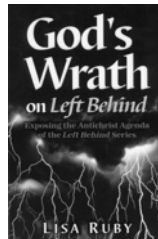


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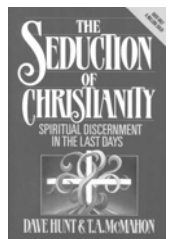


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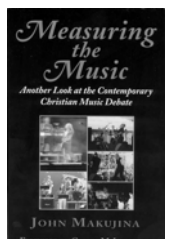


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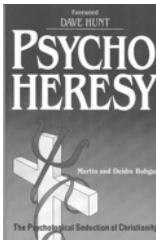


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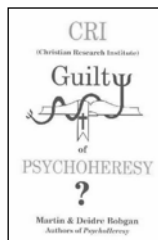


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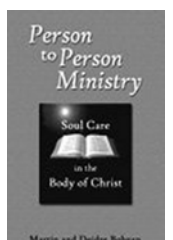


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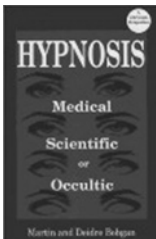


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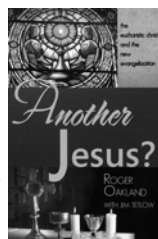


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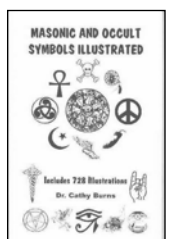


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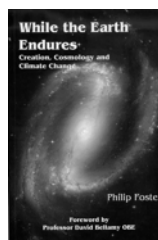


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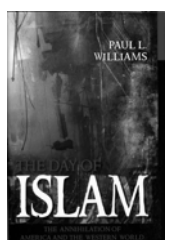


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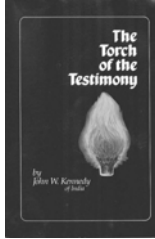


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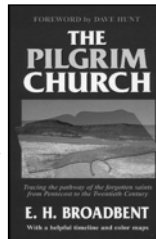
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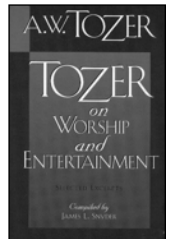
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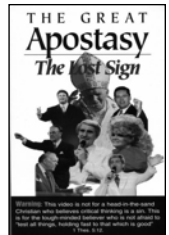
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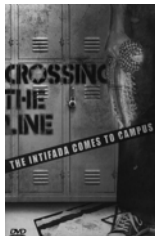
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A SPECIAL LETTER & REPLY

(Continued from page 11)

The theory that the majority of Ashkenazic Jews (German Jews) are the descendants of the non-Semitic converted Khazars has been promoted by some racial theorists and particularly by anti-Semitic (really anti-Jewish) proponents. Even Arthur Koestler, who wrote *The Thirteenth Tribe*, which is considered by anti-Jewish proponents as one of the basic textbooks for their biases, admitted that the sources for the theory are scant at best. But it, and earlier works, have been used by the Christian Identity Movement, Black Hebrews, and British Israelists (aka, Anglo-Israelists) to “prove” that white Europeans are the true descendants of Jacob. Recent genetic evidence is contrary to these theories (“The Matrilineal Ancestry of Ashkenazi Jewry: Portrait of a Recent Founder Event,” *The American Journal of Human Genetics*, Volume 78, March, 2006).

There is no empirical evidence to support the theory that today’s Jews are, for the most part, anything other than descendants of Jacob, although admittedly many Jews have intermarried with non-Jews throughout the centuries. In truth, there are very few “thoroughbred” people among any ancestry today. Yet in spite of intermarriage and proselytization, the Jews have maintained their distinct religious and cultural identity.

Yes, they are largely given over to the apostate rabbinical Judaism inherited from the anti-Christ elements that have plagued them since their sojourn in Egypt, but that doesn’t mean they are consciously anti-Christ; they are blinded in part until the fullness of the Gentiles has come into the faith (Romans 11:25).

The Arab Muslims also claim to be the true descendants of the Israelites, not just of Abraham. However, people will believe what they want to believe regardless of the source of information. Those who insist on the Khazars being this great evil go to great lengths to “prove” their thesis. Because they can’t find any legitimate mainstream source for their proof, they reason that lack of proof is in itself proof that the Khazars control all sources of information; those Khazars won’t allow the proof to surface.

Even if that were true—which is itself unproven—the fact remains there is no empirical evidence to support this particular conspiracy theory. Unless I have that empirical evidence from reliable sources—not sources that parrot what previous unproven sources say—I will not try to convince others that it is true. That doesn’t necessarily mean I don’t believe that it’s true or possibly true; it means that rumor, no matter how convincing it may seem, is not what I wish to spread. Conspiracy theories abound and have millions of adherents. Numbers don’t make truth. Scripture and provable facts make truth.

Another error you make is that Muslim Palestinians are the genuine Semites rather than the Jews. Palestinians are not descendants of Ishmael or Esau as are the Arabs. Their ancestry traces to the early Canaanites who inhabited the land before the Israelites conquered it. For the most part they were the Philistines.

Ishmael was the son of Abraham, a Syrian (Deuteronomy 26:5) through Hagar (an Egyptian). The Syrians were descendants of Shem, as were virtually all the Middle Eastern peoples, but they were not directly descended from Abraham.

Esau was the son of Isaac, and his descendants were the Edomites who settled in Hebron, south of Philistia (modern Palestine).

The origins of the Philistines is lost to antiquity, but modern archaeology has determined early cultural links to the Mycenaean world in ancient Greece. There is no evidence of Semitic origins (certainly not through Abraham) for the Philistines, or modern Palestinians.

Now, to set the record straight, I did not come from Lebanon. I was born in East L.A. (cue Cheech Marin). Nor do I, “in newsletter after newsletter...constantly rail against the Palestinian Muslims.”

I challenge you to find any railing against Palestinian Muslims in any of my writings. Not even in my review of *With God on Our Side* did I rail against the Palestinian Muslims. I called for balanced reporting on the subject of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, and even laid some blame on the Israelis. Nor did I “pretend” to call for balance; you have judged me in an ungodly manner; I suggest you go before the Lord on that.

As far as what you call, “the Khazar phony Jews” controlling the whole world’s economy by an unconstitutional Federal Reserve Banking Empire, again you are mistaken. The Federal Reserve is a private banking institution that controls the printing and circulation of only United States currency. It is, truly, unconstitutional, and it is highly suspect as to who the top stock holders are (a mystery). There is no evidence that the Class A stockholders of the Fed are all Jews, let alone Khazarian Jews, or even mostly Jews of any sort. I will grant that the Rothschilds have a history of subterfuge and empire building, but so, too, have many non-Jewish bankers and industrialists.

Yes, there are evil Jews, and many (but not all) mass media outlets are headed by Jews. They are prominent in education, government, industry, the arts, and entertainment. As a result the Jews have also been responsible for many good things such as advances in medicine, industry, and invention. But just as they cannot take credit for all the good, it is remiss to debit them for all the bad. All mankind is fallen; from among all mankind can be found greedy, evil, traitorous souls. To single out the Jews based on misinformation and ancient history that is sketchy at best and promoted by avowed racists does not honor the Lord who bought all mankind with His blood.

You accuse me of being afraid to confront “these monsters.” No, I’m not afraid; I’m just not going to put my reputation or the reputation of this ministry at risk to please people who don’t know of what they speak, but are so adamant that anyone who doesn’t take their word for things is somehow a coward or a lackey of the great conspiracy.

Yes, there is a conspiracy; I admit it. It is a conspiracy by Satan to cause brothers in Christ to fight one another based on nothing more than conjecture strongly held. It is a conspiracy

(Continued on page 29)



TURMOIL IN THE MIDDLE EAST

(Continued from page 3)

Where Is This Leading?

At first glance, were we to take the lead from the mass media, it would appear as if what began in Tunisia and spread to Egypt and all these other countries are grassroots attempts by a disgruntled and downtrodden people to topple oppressive regimes. But revolutions are never truly grassroots inspired. Rather, there must be some organization to them. Anti-government groups are virtually powerless without financing and control from some source outside themselves. I have become cognizant of how many protestors in some demonstrations carry signs and placards that are obviously made professionally, or at least emanate from a central source, being well-made and spouting the same slogans.

Yet if a truly grassroots movement succeeded in a small country like Tunisia, the chances of it spreading so fast to, let alone succeeding in, a nation as large and established as Egypt, then to several other countries in such a short span of time are pretty much nil.

Even considering the power of the Internet to disseminate information instantaneously, tens of thousands of people in diverse places do not easily come together without some external motivation and prompting.

One of the biggest myths is that democracy is government by the people. It may be to a certain extent, but democracy has throughout history devolved into dictatorship by elected officials. Even in the United States we are seeing a gradual dictatorship by a burgeoning bureaucracy. And with few exceptions those placed in positions of power within democracies trace their roots to political parties and societies that maintain control by guiding the masses through disinformation in concert with the media. When the financial powers behind government want to change things, the media, also sold out to Mammon, do their bidding.

The last place we can look for truth in the deeper political spectrum is the mainstream media. It takes diligent searching on the part of individuals to come to any semblance of the truth, and even then some of the sources to which we look may be suspect.

The bottom line is that what is taking place in the Middle East and Africa is not serendipity. It isn't happening by chance, nor is it necessarily good that democracy may result.

It has been my belief for years that in order for the last-days anti-Christ to establish his empire all those countries that will come under his rule must first be democratized. Monarchs and dictators do not give up their power easily. It must be taken from them. That goes for surrender to any international political structure. This is why the United Nations is largely a paper tiger. Even democracies are reticent to allow foreign authorities too

much internal power. But democracies are more easily blended into a multi-national superpower. Thus, the anti-Christ forces that rule this world from the spirit realm have been rebuilding the Tower of Babel in the broad sense by gathering together through mass communications, travel, and other forms of technology, people from all nations that had originally been scattered by YHWH God some 5,000 years ago. The fruition of these efforts will be the kingdom of the anti-Christ which will encompass the territories once held by the Roman Empire, depicted in the statue in Babylon's King Nebuchadnezzar's dream as interpreted by the prophet Daniel as the final empire before the return of the Lord (Daniel 2:1-3:45).

Upon the death of Pope John Paul II in 2005, I wrote a letter to the editor of the *Seattle Times* regarding news items that called him "the 264th pope, or that made statements such as, "Peter was the first pope." In my closing remarks I stated:

And while we're on the subject of the papacy, the time seems right for the next pope, or one soon following, to come from a predominantly Muslim country. Imagine the implications for the world should a pope arise who has the potential to unite Western Europe and a newly democratized Middle East into a strong religio-political world power. Why, it would be the rise of the Roman Empire all over again!

Obviously I was wrong in thinking that John Paul II's successor might be from a Muslim country, but I was very sure that democracy must come to the Middle East if the prophesied final empire, which would be a revived or revised Roman Empire were to become reality.

Contrary to what many Christians assume, the anti-Christ's kingdom will not encompass the entire earth—at least not initially. When we read the prophecies of Daniel regarding the "time of the end" we see a king who will exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and will prosper until the indignation is accomplished (Daniel 11:45). In Daniel's prophecy the princes and kings of various nations and locales are not necessarily the human agents that ruled at any particular time in history; they are also and primarily the spiritual principalities that rule the nations of the earth over which Satan has dominion.

We read in Daniel 11:44 that this king will plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain, yet he shall come to his end, and no one shall help him. Immediately following, we read in Daniel 12:1 that the archangel Michael, the prince of Israel, will come to the defense of the Israelites during a time of great trouble to deliver them. Verse 2 speaks of the resurrection to follow.

The king who will rule over the nations for Satan in the last days has planted his tabernacle between the seas (the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea). It is called the Dome of the Rock, and it stands on the holy mountain either in place of, or in close proximity to, the site of the last Jewish temple. It was built between A.D. 689 and 691 by the Umayyad Caliph Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan.

If my understanding is correct, Scripture and the history of Islam reveal that the king who would place his tabernacle on the holy mountain, then in the last days will come to his end—at the time Michael delivers Israel—is none other than the anti-Christ spirit that will bring together the remnants of the old Roman Empire. That empire encompassed Western Europe, the western portion of the Middle East, and North Africa.

These things must come to pass before the Lord will return.

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together to Him, that you not be suddenly disturbed in mind, nor be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by letter as from us, that the Day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come until there first comes a falling away, and that man of sin is revealed—the son of perdition who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he, as God, sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. (2 Thessalonians 2:1-4)

The poor people in the Middle East and North Africa—some engaged in what they hope will be a chance for personal freedom, some hoping to establish Islamic states—are digging their own graves by toppling those responsible for their discontent. Believers in Jesus, knowing that our lives are in the hands of the One who cares for us, must not be like them regardless of how the governments under which we live cause discontent. When asked by Pontius Pilate if He were the King of the Jews, Jesus answered, “My Kingdom is not of this world; if My Kingdom were of this world My servants would fight so that I would not be delivered to the Jews. But now My kingdom is not from here” (John 18:36).

Nowhere in Scripture are Jesus’ disciples instructed or even allowed to rebel against any government. God may allow Satan to create conditions for the heathen to rebel in order to accomplish His purposes in the earth; He may even allow nominal Christians to rebel. But He will never lead us to rebel.

Yes, Christians have gotten involved in revolutions—particularly the American Revolution. But that doesn’t mean they were led by the Lord to do so.

We cannot judge them for this; that is the Lord’s responsibility. In many ways we may even be thankful that they did what they did. But everything works together for good for those who love God and are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). This may even be said of the evil that God allows. For example, if it hadn’t been for the evil of slavery in America the blacks who have been born as a result of that slavery (virtually every black born in America) would not have been born. Had the persecution of the Huguenots by the Roman Catholic Church in France not taken place, many Christians living today in America, Germany, South Africa and elsewhere would not have been born.

I’ve often said in my writings that we are all products of our parents coming together at a particular time to conceive us. Had history been different, we would not have been born. Our ancestors would not have been in the right place at the right time for us to be conceived.

All of history, though guided to a large degree by Satan, is ultimately in the hands of our heavenly Father. We may lament the evils that have transpired throughout history; we may certainly learn not to repeat them. But we must not fall into the trap of discontentment because of some perceived slight done to our ancestors. We should thank God for allowing those evils to take place.

This is why God’s Word tells us to be content in whatever situation we find ourselves. Warning against false teachers who would lead us astray with evil ideas that suggest material gain is evidence of godliness, the apostle Paul said, “Godliness with contentment is great gain, because we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, let us be content with that” (1 Timothy 6:1-8).

Paul set himself an example by saying, “I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content therewith” (Philippians 4:11).

The writer of Hebrews offers this:

Let your communication be without covetousness, and be content with the things you have, because He has said, “I will never leave you, nor forsake you.” Thus we may boldly say, “The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man does to me.” (Hebrews 13:5-6)

Yes, we may complain about what goes on in the world. There are examples of that in Scripture. And we may learn from the world’s attempts to destroy us in order to better our lot in this fallen world—provided we seek the Lord’s will and direction. But our concern for the evils around us should be more a lamentation for the lost than a complaint of our circumstances.

Let us not get caught up in the protests of the rabble simply because our union encourages us to rail against our employers, or because our employer encourages us to fight the workers, or because a political party encourages us to speak evil against authorities. God has called us to be at peace with all men as much as it is in our power to be so (Romans 12:18). But we may not use the excuse that another refuses to be at peace with us to fight against him. When it comes to our faith and our testimony we are called to turn the other cheek.

Self-defense in the face of an unprovoked attack apart from persecution for our faith, I believe, is a matter of one’s conscience. In any case, even for those who wish to defend themselves or their families, they should hope to inflict as little harm as possible. One brother whom I admire says he keeps a baseball bat handy at home, but he refuses to own a gun. There are other brothers who feel the same way. Still other brothers feel a gun is okay to own. Let each be persuaded before the Lord, and let each be willing to reconsider if led by the Lord.

I realize I’ve digressed from the original topic, but I’ve found that we may often learn personal lessons from the turmoil that occurs in the world, and particularly from the turmoil that occurs within the Body of Christ, which turmoil, of course, we lament.

A final thought would be this: regardless of the present turmoil in the Middle East, believers in Christ should take heart. These are signs of the times leading up to the return of the Lord. Therefore let us look up, because our redemption draws near. ❖

ARE THERE TWO GOSPELS?

(Continued from page 14)

And when they did not find them they drew Jason and certain brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These that have turned the world upside down have come here also!" (Acts 17:5-6)

This transpired in Thessalonica. These unbelieving Jews had heard of the Gospel being taken to the whole world by their fellow Jews, disciples of Jesus. Granted, this was the known world at that time; much of the world had not been discovered by any civilization that would have recorded it. But as time has passed there is no question that the Gospel has gone to the uttermost parts of the world, and it all began with the Jews in Jerusalem.

During the Millennium all nations will be required to bring gifts to the King at Jerusalem, and the people from the nations will be looking to Israel as priests who will be ministering in the millennial temple. The people from those nations living at the time of the Lord's return will know He is the Messiah, but their children and descendants throughout the thousand years will have to learn of Him. The restored kingdom of Israel will be their tutors (priests).

The problem with the idea that Peter proclaimed the Gospel of the Kingdom and Paul the Gospel of Grace is the question of which kingdom is being spoken of.

The Kingdom that John the Baptist and Jesus proclaimed was the Kingdom of Heaven, not the kingdom of Israel. The Jews were looking forward to the restoration of their kingdom, but that kingdom is to be merely part of (albeit a major part of) the Kingdom of Heaven during the Millennium.

(Of course, preterists will deny that either kingdom will ever exist on earth in the physical sense. They do not believe in the millennial reign of Christ. So I am not speaking to them except insofar as some of them may have eyes to see.)

But this writing is for those who take God's Word literally in regard to the 1,000-year reign of Christ according to Revelation 20:2-7.

One cannot legitimately equate the kingdom of Israel with the Kingdom of Heaven. It is true that Paul did not tell the Gentiles to look forward to the kingdom of Israel as their possession, but He did mention the Kingdom of Heaven and its coming manifestation on the earth with the return of Jesus.

When Paul and Barnabas went to Lycaonia they proclaimed the Gospel and exhorted the disciples there that they must enter into the Kingdom of God through much tribulation (Acts 14:22).

Later, while in Miletus, Paul called for the elders of the assembly in Ephesus to come to him. He then reminded them of his ministry to them, and told them with sorrow, "And now, look, I know that you all, among whom I have gone proclaiming the Kingdom of God, shall see my face no longer."

While imprisoned in Rome Paul continued "proclaiming the Kingdom of God, and teaching those things that concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him" (Acts 28:31).

In his letter to the Romans, Paul said, "the Kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Acts 14:17).

Writing to the Gentile believers in Corinth, Paul said, "Do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God?" (1 Corinthians 6:9)

He gives the same warning to the Galatians (Galatians 5:21).

In his dissertation concerning how those who are alive when Jesus returns will not die, but will be changed in a moment, in the blinking of an eye, Paul precedes with, "Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Corinthians 15:50).

Paul also tells the Thessalonians that he, Silvanus, and Timothy boast of the assemblies of God there because of their patience and faith throughout persecution and trials, "which is the manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which you also suffer" (2 Thessalonians 1:5).

So we see that, contrary to this erroneous teaching, Paul did proclaim the Kingdom to the Gentiles. But He did not proclaim the kingdom of Israel; he told them to look forward to the kingdom of God.

Now, for some contrived reasons there are those who say the Kingdom of God is not the same as the Kingdom of Heaven. But the only "difference" is that where the other Gospels say "Kingdom of Heaven," Luke says, "Kingdom of God."

Also, Jesus used the terms "Kingdom of Heaven" and "Kingdom of God" interchangeably on numerous occasions, one example being recorded in Matthew 19:23-24:

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Truly, I say to you that a rich man shall hardly enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God. (Matthew 19:23-24)

Although the terms "Kingdom and Heaven" and "Kingdom of God" may be used interchangeably, the same cannot be said for "Kingdom of Heaven" and "kingdom of Israel."

Yet that is the mistake made by those who insist that Jesus, John the Baptist, and the twelve apostles proclaimed the "Gospel of the Kingdom," which they allege is different from the Gospel of Grace.

Yes, the Jews were looking for the restoration of the kingdom of Israel, and that will come in the Millennium, but the kingdom of Israel will be merely one kingdom among many within the Kingdom of Heaven manifested on earth through the reign of the Messiah. There will be one over-arching Kingdom that will rule over the nations:

And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in Heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever." (Rev 11:15)

Within the erroneous "two gospels" teaching, the Law of Moses is said to have remained obligatory for the Jews—at least for those in Jerusalem:

Some may say that after the cross, no one was under the law any more (*sic*). That is true for the church, but the Jews who were not under Paul's teaching were still under the law.

Earlier, we saw a similar contrast in Galatians 2:7, where Paul shows that Peter was an apostle to the nation of Israel. "But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision (the Gentiles) was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision (the Jews) was unto Peter..." Clearly we see Paul pointing out the difference between his ministry to the Gentiles and the ministry of twelve apostles of the circumcision.

Was required circumcision and keeping the law [of Moses consistent with the gospel of the kingdom that Peter and the rest of the eleven apostles were teaching the Jews? Of course it was. Otherwise, the question of whether the Gentiles had to keep the law of Moses would have never even come up. If the Jews were not required to keep the law of Moses, the Gentiles certainly would not have to keep it. But in the argument they had about whether the Gentiles had to keep the law of Moses, there was "much disputing" (Acts 15:7). Now if Paul's gospel had been the same as the gospel preached by the eleven, there would have been no argument. But Paul's gospel of grace is different. The finished work of the cross cannot be mixed with any requirement for keeping of the law of Moses.

But wait a minute. If the finished work of the cross cannot be mixed with any requirement for keeping the Law of Moses, then the finished work of the cross must apply to all believers, whether Jew or Gentile. It is true that the apostles for a time maintained the keeping of the Law, but that's because until Paul's revelation came to them they saw no other way. But later they recognized the error and no longer placed that requirement on themselves or other Jews who believed in Jesus. The fact that Peter was content to be among the Gentile believers without adhering to the Law, but erred in allowing himself to be intimidated by the Judaizers into separating himself from the Gentile believers, thus giving Paul occasion to chastise him, is evidence that Peter was not following a different gospel than that of Paul's.

But when I saw that they did not walk uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel, I said to Peter in front of them all, "If you, being a Jew, live after the manner of Gentiles, and not as the Jews do, why do you compel the Gentiles to live as the Jews do?"

We Jews by nature, and not Gentile sinners, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ—even we have believed in Jesus Christ so that we might be justified by the faith of Christ and not by the works of the Law. For no flesh shall be justified by the works of the Law. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves are also found sinners, is Christ therefore the minister of sin? It cannot be.

For if I build again the things that I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For through the Law I am dead to the Law so that I might live to God.

I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live—yet not I, but Christ lives in me—and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.

I do not violate the grace of God, for if righteousness comes by the Law then Christ died in vain.

Paul's words prove that Peter was living like the Gentiles, and not according to the Law of Moses. But Peter's fear of the Jews caused him to separate himself from the Gentile believers to give the false impression that he was still under the Law.

McGee continues:

In verse seven [Galatians 2] we see the two gospels. They all agreed that Apostle Peter should continue with the gospel of the circumcision (gospel of the kingdom) to the Jews, and Apostle Paul should continue with the gospel of the uncircumcision (gospel of grace) to the Gentiles.

What the author is missing is that this was not the acknowledgement of two different gospels, but of two different ministries. Paul would travel throughout the world establishing assemblies among the Gentiles (while also at times entering synagogues and proclaiming the Gospel of Grace to the Israelites), and Peter would remain in Jerusalem proclaiming the Gospel to the Jews. That Peter was not insisting on the keeping of the Law for Jewish believers is evidenced in Acts 15 when the "much disputing" took place. Peter said to the believing Pharisees who wanted the Gentiles to keep the Law of Moses:

"Men and brethren, you know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe. And God, who knows the hearts, bore them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit even as He did to us, and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

Now therefore why do you test God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." (Acts 15:7-11)

Peter acknowledged that the Jews couldn't bear the burden of keeping the Law, and moreover that the Jews are saved by grace just as the Gentiles are.

While not departing from the idea that the Jewish Christians had to keep the Law of Moses, McGee makes a distinction between the Jews at Jerusalem and the Jews in other areas to whom Paul proclaimed the Gospel:

They [the Jews in Jerusalem] were taught under the twelve apostles, and had been saved under that kingdom dispensation. So the law was perfectly fine for them. But if these had been the Jews in Ephesus or Corinth who had been saved under Paul's grace gospel teaching, Paul

would have told them that the law had been nailed to the cross and that they were saved by faith alone, totally apart from works.

Ahh! So the Gospel of the Kingdom was for only the Jews in Jerusalem? It didn't apply to the Jews in other parts of the world who were under Paul's "different" Gospel? Does that mean that the Jews outside of Jerusalem were not looking forward to the kingdom of Israel being restored? According to their history they were. So why wasn't the "Kingdom Gospel" proclaimed to them?

But, again, the kingdom of Israel is not the Kingdom of Heaven which John the Baptist, Jesus, and the apostles (including Paul) proclaimed. They never proclaimed the restoration of the kingdom to Israel outside of minor references to it, and never as equating to the Kingdom of Heaven.

The distinction in Peter's and Paul's preaching was not the message, but the people to whom each ministered primarily. Both ministered to Jews and Gentiles, but Paul the more to the Gentiles, and Peter the more to the Jews.

Amazingly, McGee warns us against proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom today:

Are we preaching the gospel of the kingdom? We had better not be. Paul tells us in Galatians 1:9, "If any man preach any other gospel unto you that ye have not received, let him be accursed." Does that mean that Peter was accursed because he preached the gospel of the kingdom? Of course not. Peter preached to a different audience in a different dispensation of God's Word. But now, we are to preach the gospel that Paul preached, not the gospel of the kingdom or any other gospel.

Contrary to this teaching, we had better be proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom. The Gospel of the Kingdom is not a different Gospel than Paul proclaimed. It is the Gospel that Jesus said would be proclaimed throughout the whole world before the end of this age came (before the millennial Kingdom):

And as He sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of this age?"

And Jesus answered and said to them, "Be careful that no man deceives you, for many will come in My name, saying that I am Christ, and shall deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for all these things must come to pass.

"But the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in diverse places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.

"Then they will deliver you up to be persecuted, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.

"And then many will be enticed to fall away, and will betray one another, and will hate one another.

"And many false prophets will rise, and will deceive many. And because iniquity will abound, the love of many

In Memoriam



ROY
PAVLIK

A dear brother in our assembly has gone to be with the Lord. Roy

was a source of many blessings in diverse ways. Besides the obvious love he held for us all, two words—humility and humor—characterized Roy's demeanor among us. His difficulty hearing exactly what was said, at times elicited laughter. Like the time one of the brothers cited Acts 14:12 where the Lycaonians called Paul "Mercurius," because he was the chief speaker. Roy's quizzical response floored us: "What was that? He was the cheese maker!?"

We miss Roy very much, not only for his person, but we always looked forward to the unique breads he used to bring to our communal meal.

We thank our heavenly Father for the generosity of sharing Roy with us these past few years. ❖

will grow cold. But he who will endure to the end, the same shall be saved.

"And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world as a witness to all nations, and then the end shall come." (Matthew 5:3-14)

The context of Jesus' prophecy is clearly "this age." The problem is not that Christian teachers are proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom; the problem is that they are not doing so. For the most part they focus on individual salvation, which is a part (albeit an important part) of the Gospel of the Kingdom, but it is not the whole Gospel. (See our book, *What is the True Gospel: Is It Being Proclaimed Today?* [Sword Publishers]).

With this teaching of different gospels for different people, come serious challenges to God's Word and a dangerous lack of adherence to the Lord's commands. For example, there is the teaching that only Jews needed to repent and be baptized—that repentance and baptism was not a command for Gentiles then or today.

We'll look at that aspect of the "two gospels" teaching in our next issue. ❖



After Pentecost anti-Christ's efforts would become focused on the apostles as they ministered the Gospel to the Gentiles. Paul, especially, would be the major target. As he and his companions began to take the Gospel to the Gentiles they were strongly opposed by the Jews who were zealous of the Law of Moses and their man-made traditions. Although many Jews also believed the Gospel, most did not. Those who resisted the truth also sought to prevent the apostles from converting Gentiles to the Gospel.

Upon proclaiming that they would henceforth be taking the Gospel to the Gentiles, Paul and Barnabas were expelled from Antioch. Anti-Christ used the Jews to stir up the devout women and chief men of the city to persecute them. Leaving Antioch, Paul and Barnabas went to the synagogue at Iconium and gained a large crowd of Jews and Greeks who believed. But again, anti-Christ in the persons of unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and turned them against the believers. So Paul and Barnabas stayed there for a long time, speaking boldly and demonstrating God's power through signs and wonders.

Just as it happened at Antioch, so at Iconium the city was divided, some holding with the unbelieving Jews, and some with the apostles. The anti-Christ elements among the Jews and Gentiles sought to stone Paul and Barnabas, but they became aware of the plot and escaped to Lystra and Derbe in Lycaonia. There, and in the regions around, they proclaimed the Gospel.

At Lystra Paul and Barnabas met a different kind of attack by anti-Christ. When Paul spoke healing to a life-long cripple, there was no opposition as before. This time the Gentiles assumed that the gods of Rome had come down to them. They called Barnabas "Jupiter," and Paul they called "Mercury" because he was the chief speaker. Rather than give the God of Heaven the glory they were persuaded to give the gods of Rome the glory, and were ready to make sacrifices to them.

Alarmed, Paul and Barnabas tore their clothes and ran in among the people, explaining that they were mere men, and that

the people should give the glory to the living God who made the heavens and the earth. Even so, they barely restrained the people from offering sacrifices to them.

Anti-Christ blinded the Gentiles, causing them to lean toward their own gods rather than the God of Heaven. He also brought Jews from Antioch and Iconium who convinced the people to turn against the apostles. Whereas they were ready to offer sacrifices to Paul and Barnabas, they were convinced to stone Paul instead:

And there came there certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and having stoned Paul, carried him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. However, as the disciples stood around him he rose up and came into the city. And the next day he left for Derbe with Barnabas. (Acts 14:19-20)

Anti-Christ knows how to turn the fickle nature of men to his purposes.

It appears as if Paul and Barnabas were able to continue on their journey without opposition for a time. We're told only that they left Lystra for Derbe, then returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, confirming the faith of the believers there, and exhorting them to continue in the faith. They also appointed elders in each assembly.

They then went throughout Pisidia, Pamphylia, Perga, and Attalia before returning again to Antioch.

At Antioch certain believers in Jesus came down from Judea and taught the brethren that they must be circumcised or they could not be saved. This was the first attempt by anti-Christ to employ the technique of Judaizing to compromise the purity of the faith. But Paul and Barnabas disputed strongly with them, so that it was determined that the question should be taken to the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. There it was determined that the Gentile believers should not be pressed into keeping the Law:

Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole assembly, to send chosen men from their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas—namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

And they wrote letters by them after this manner: “The apostles and elders and brethren send greetings to the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia. Forasmuch as we have heard that certain who went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls by saying you must be circumcised and keep the Law, to whom we gave no such commandment, it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul—men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, we have sent Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication, from which, if you keep yourselves, you shall do well. Fare you well.”

So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch. And when they had gathered the multitude together they delivered the letter which, when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation.

And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them. And after they had stayed there awhile, they were let go in peace from the brethren to the apostles. Notwithstanding, it still pleased Silas to stay there.

Paul and Barnabas also continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the Word of the Lord, with many others also. (Acts 15:22-35)

Paul and Barnabas determined to return to the cities where they had established the Body of Christ to see how they were doing. Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus, while Paul took Silas through Syria and Cilicia. When Paul and Silas came to Derbe and Lystra they met Timothy, whose mother was a Jewess and whose father was a Greek.

There are no recordings of opposition as they continued on their journey until, on their way to Macedonia because of a vision given to Paul of a man beckoning him to come to Macedonia to help them, they came to Philippi. There they met a different kind of opposition from anti-Christ.

At a certain time, as they went to prayer, a girl possessed with a spirit of divination followed them, crying out, “These men are the servants of the most high God, who show the way of salvation to us.”

After several days of this, Paul was grieved and commanded the spirit to come out of her.

Here is an example of how anti-Christ may speak truth, but with an ulterior motive. The people knew this girl had a spirit of divination; her testimony was tainted. People would associate the truth with devils, thus hindering the apostles’ testimony.

After the devil was cast out of the girl her masters who used her for monetary gain turned the city against the apostles, beating them and throwing them into prison. Thus anti-Christ again sought to silence the truth through persecution.

The Book of Acts chronicles the work of Paul and his companions in taking the Gospel to the known world. There we find many different attempts by anti-Christ to thwart the fledgling Gospel through persecution and death of the faithful disciples. History (and tradition) also records how all the apostles with the exception of John were most likely put to death for their testimonies.

James, son of Zebedee: Beheaded in A.D. 44, James was the first of the twelve to be martyred. Acts 12:1-2 records that Herod Agrippa had James executed by the sword. There are no details beyond this, although some traditions state that his remains are in Santiago de Compostela in Spain, considered the third most holy town within Roman Catholicism.

We will see, as we progress through the fates of the apostles, how Roman Catholicism largely usurped claims to the apostles through its fabricated traditions—a ploy by anti-Christ to corrupt the purity of the faith and lay the groundwork for an apostate Christianity.

John, son of Zebedee: This is the John who was exiled to the island of Patmos where he wrote the Book of Revelation. There are no traditions or history about this John being martyred. It is believed that he died of old age in Ephesus around A.D. 100.

Peter: Roman Catholic tradition stemming from the teachings of Origen of Alexandria states that Peter was crucified in Rome in A.D. 64 during the *dies imperii* (anniversary of ascension to the throne) of Emperor Nero. This was some three months after the fire that destroyed Rome, and which Nero blamed on the Christians. It is believed that Peter requested he be crucified upside down because he felt he wasn’t worthy to die in exactly the same manner as the Lord.

There is no empirical historical evidence that Peter was ever in Rome. Scripture’s last references to Peter have him in Jerusalem. So while this is a dramatic story, it rests entirely on Roman Catholic tradition, tied to the belief that Peter was the first pope, and thus, had to have been in Rome.

In either case, we see how anti-Christ may have had Peter martyred, or, lacking that, used Peter as a foil to establish the tradition of the papacy. Certainly the latter is true, whether or not Peter was ever actually martyred.

Andrew: Another apostle whose history is largely shaped by tradition, Andrew’s death has two versions. One of the so-called “New Testament Apocrypha,” *The Acts of Andrew*, (ca. third century A.D.) forms the basis for much of the tradition surrounding Andrew’s ministry and death. It has Andrew dying bound, not nailed, to a Latin cross of the type Jesus is said to have died on. But a tradition developed that Andrew was martyred by crucifixion on an X-shaped cross because, like Peter, he did not consider himself worthy to die in exactly the same manner as the Lord. This is believed to have taken place in the city of Patras in Ahaea, on the northern coast of the Peloponnese.

Philip: There are conflicting traditions concerning Philip's death. One has him being crucified upside down in the city of Hierapolis in southern Turkey. It is said that his preaching brought about the conversion of the proconsul's wife which, in turn, brought the wrath of the proconsul upon Philip and Bartholomew, as well as Philip's sister Mariamne. All three were tortured, but Philip and Bartholomew were crucified. It is said that, while crucified, Philip continued to preach, affecting the crowd so much that the people wanted to release both men. Bartholomew was released, but Philip refused to be released, thus consenting to his own martyrdom. Another legend has Philip being martyred by beheading in Hierapolis.

Again, there is no definitive historical evidence for Philip's martyrdom, but there is no reason to doubt that the early Apocryphal writings wouldn't have some basis in truth. Both traditions put his death in Hierapolis; both have him being martyred. **Bartholomew (Nathanael):** As with other apostles, the account of Bartholomew's death is largely based on tradition, some conflicting. He is said to have been beheaded in Albanopolis in Armenia. But a more popular tradition has him being flayed alive and crucified upside down. His death is said to be the result of having converted Polymius, the king of Armenia, to Christianity, prompting Polymius' brother, Astyages, to order Bartholomew's death.

Jude: Armenian tradition places Jude's death by martyrdom about A.D. 65 in Beirut, in the Roman province of Syria. He is said to have been martyred along with Simon Zelotes (the Zealot). But, again, there is no empirical historical evidence for Jude's martyrdom.

Simon Zelotes: One tradition associates Simon Zelotes with Jude who together evangelized Persia, and Armenia after Simon had evangelized Egypt. In Simon's tradition they were martyred in Armenia. Another tradition in Ethiopia is that he was crucified in Samaria. Still another is that he was sawn in half at Suanir, Persia. Other traditions have him being martyred in Iberia or Britain, while yet another has him dying peacefully at Edessa.

Matthew: There is no empirical historical evidence concerning Matthew's death. Some hold to the belief that he died a natural death; others say that he was martyred by being stabbed to death. But neither can be conclusively established.

Thomas: The New Testament apocryphal book, Acts of Thomas (ca. third-century), is the source generally accepted regarding Thomas' ministry and the circumstances of his death. The apocryphal books are regarded as historical, but they have never been accepted as canonical by any mainstream Christian religion. Apart from this source there is no historical account of Matthew's life after the writing of the New Testament books.

It is said that Thomas' ministry was to India. According to the Syriac version of the Acts of Thomas, Masdai, the king at Mylapore, condemned Thomas to death around the year A.D. 72 to appease the Brahmins who opposed the introduction of Christianity into India. His death was by stoning and stabbing with a lance by an angry Brahmin.

James, son of Alphaeus: Often referred to as James the Less, this James was less prominent than James the son of Zebedee. There are many uncertainties surrounding this James' ministry and history, but tradition holds that he was executed by the Jews for violating the Law of Moses. Some historians consider this unlikely since the Jews did not practice execution, and the Roman authorities would not have acquiesced to it. However, contrary to this argument, the Lord Himself was executed by the Romans to appease the Jews.

Matthias: The apostle chosen to replace Judas (Acts 1:26) is also the victim of diverse traditions surrounding his death. Some accounts say that he died peacefully of old age in Jerusalem. One tradition has him being stoned by the Jews at Jerusalem, and then beheaded.

Skeptics dismiss these traditions of martyrdom because there are no secular historical accounts of them. Nor are there any biblical accounts for any other than for James the son of Zebedee. The confusion that surrounds early history can be attributed to faulty intentions on the part of religious traditionalists who fabricate traditions. Unfortunately, even with their supposed good intentions, such fabrications play into the hands of the anti-Christ simply because they call into question the truth of history as it relates to true biblical faith.

Yet there is no reason to doubt that some of the traditions surrounding their deaths are true. Certainly they were met with much opposition by anti-Christ in every land where they took the Gospel. Scripture relates how often the anti-Christ attempted to kill Jesus (eventually succeeding according to the Father's plan), Paul, and others, and how they did manage to kill Stephen and John the Baptist. Those who wrote of the martyrdoms of the other apostles were privy to oral traditions that dated back a couple of generations, and there is no reason to suspect those writers of deliberately falsifying the accounts they received.

Thus ends the account of the apostles and how anti-Christ sought to destroy the faith at its outset. Having failed, anti-Christ was faced with the daunting task of combating the faith for the next 2,000 years in every arena into which the Body of Christ shed the light of the Gospel. That conflict is evidenced in the letters to the assemblies written by Paul, as well as those written by others who exhorted the brethren during the first-century buildup of the Body of Christ.

Although indwelt by the Holy Spirit, many believers in those first-century assemblies had to be taught why and how to submit their wills to the will of God. The flesh is strong and unwilling to die so easily, and the spirit of anti-Christ is always lurking within the flesh of believers to act contrary to righteousness.

This is why Paul had to consistently exhort the brethren to live by the law of love and to submit themselves to godliness at the expense of their own pleasure.

A most notable example is that of the brother in the Corinthian assembly who had taken his father's wife for his own spouse or mistress. The details aren't provided, nor are they

necessarily important. What is important is that Paul had to chastise the Corinthian believers for tolerating that sin. To their credit they dealt with the brother in a way that brought him to repentance.

Another problem that reared its head was the attempt to Judaize the assemblies by some insisting that the Law of Moses must be kept, and that circumcision was required. Still other ways anti-Christ sought to destroy the assemblies was by false brethren bringing in what Peter called damnable heresies (2 Peter 2:1).

Paul had to deal with those who opposed his authority, and others who sought to rule over the assemblies in ungodly ways. The assemblies were often on the verge of schisms that threatened scandal and the unity of the Body. In the world, anti-Christ was devising other ways to keep the heathen in their unsaved condition and to thwart the spreading of the Gospel. His ultimate goal, however, has remained constant—to gather all humanity into a globalist Babel through which he hopes to lift himself above the heights of the clouds. All the major world events that have seen one kingdom after another rise and fall has been to that end. Now, after the Lord had effected the means by which the world would be redeemed—the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world—anti-Christ’s efforts toward globalization would increase exponentially.

Rome, the last of the great kingdoms prophesied through Daniel’s interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, would have to be subordinated for a season in order for those efforts to come to final fruition. But Rome would not go quietly; anti-Christ would continue to use it in his attempts to stamp out the new faith in Jesus Christ. Yet at the same time, the Roman Empire provided the means by which the Gospel could be taken throughout the world. Historian J.M. Roberts attests how Rome was perceived by the early Christians as God’s creation for the benefit of the faith:

...It can be argued that Paul was the real maker of Christianity. Certainly most of the theology of the Christian Church has its roots in his interpretation of Jesus’ teaching. Here there is room only to note that he seized the opportunity presented by a world at peace, protected by a framework of government and law in which men could travel easily and securely, a world in which the widespread Greek language made communication of ideas easy, to launch Christianity on its huge career of expansion. It is not surprising that Christians soon began to think that the Roman empire itself was somehow created by God to make the spreading of the Truth possible. It was divinely intended, some of them thought, to further Christianity. A more sinister reflexion also occurred to some of them as time passed: it was not the Romans, after all, but the Jews who had actually killed Jesus.¹

It wasn’t long before Christian assemblies sprang up in all Roman provinces. And it was tasked to Paul, Peter, Jude, John,

¹ J.M. Roberts, *A Concise History of the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 147-148.

Luke, and the writers of the Gospels to bring testimony of Jesus’ finished work on the cross and clarification of the faith, as well as exhortation to live godly and defend the purity of the faith. But two things happened that threatened that purity: 1) as the Gentiles began to outnumber the Jews within the assemblies, the approach to Scripture took a turn away from Hebraic understanding toward Hellenization; 2) a strong desire for organization led to a hierarchical and eventually centralized authority over the originally autonomous assemblies. Both of these developments, we will see, were attempts by anti-Christ to turn faith in Jesus Christ into a religious system largely controlled by men of ambition who would use it for personal gain and/or propagation of their peculiar philosophies. There was also a desire to have preeminence over the people (3 John 9).

Because Christianity was perceived as a sect of Judaism rather than the continuation of the faith once delivered to the saints of old, men following their fleshly instincts soon began to follow the pattern of the synagogue. Thus, assemblies became less and less autonomous communities of believers guided lovingly by a plurality of elders meeting in homes and other non-descript environs, instead evolving into hierarchical institutional gatherings in buildings designed for the institution’s benefit.

As well, heretical sects began to break off from the mainstream of biblical faith, establishing beliefs that challenged the nature of Jesus as the Word of God incarnate. Soon false gospels were being written and attributed to the apostles. These purported to offer insights into the mysteries of God while redefining Jesus as a mystic—a mere man who had attained higher consciousness through adherence to tenets and practices within eastern mysticism.

Gnosticism, which predates Christianity, found among some of its sects an affinity to Jesus, as well as some of His apostles, whom they considered Gnostics. In some Gnostic texts Mary Magdalene was seen as a Gnostic leader superior even to the twelve apostles. Simon Magus (Simon the Sorcerer in Acts 8:9-24) is said to have been a Samaritan proto-Gnostic. This Simon is mentioned in several Gnostic texts as one of the leaders of early Gnosticism.

Gnosticism is a form of mysticism that purports to impart esoteric knowledge leading to realization of one’s alleged divine origins. Gnosis is knowledge—spiritual knowledge attained by mystically enlightened human beings. The influence of Gnosticism came into Christianity early on, and has remained in various forms over the centuries. It is the basis for belief in divine principles which, if learned and applied, will elevate the believer to a state of spiritual maturity that will give him power over the physical and spiritual worlds.

It would be some 100 years before the Gnostic “gospels” would be written, but we will see as we progress how Gnosticism is at the heart of many of today’s false teachings.

At the same time anti-Christ was employing Gnosticism, Hellenization, and Judaizing to wreak havoc upon the assemblies internally, externally the assemblies were suffering persecution from the world.

(Continued on next page)

A SPECIAL LETTER & REPLY

(Continued from page 19)

to bring the world into constant turmoil so his anti-Christ (non-Jewish, I believe) may be the agent of a great deception that will unite the world against the Lord when He returns. It is a conspiracy to use men of every nation (not just the Jews) to deceive the masses into following his evil plan for world conquest.

Are some men involved in conspiracies complicit with this satanic conspiracy? Yes. Are some of them conscious of their involvement? Yes. Are most of them conscious of it? No. The vast majority of mankind, including the Jews and the Palestinians, are pawns in the game—fodder for the enemy's cannons.

Regarding the killing of Lebanese in a Jewish blitzkrieg, yes, I lament the deaths of all people on all sides of the conflict, particularly Christians. But Israel is not engaged in a conscientious pogrom against Christians. Their attacks have been in response to attacks generated from southern Lebanon by Hezbollah, and from Gaza by Hamas, not to mention other sources. The Muslim terrorists who have vowed to destroy Israel hide among the civilian populations in order to assure condemnation from the world against Israel for "targeting" innocent women and children.

The Muslims are decidedly persecuting and killing Christians and Jews as a matter of policy in many areas. Some Jews may be behind much of the deception leading men into a one-world government, but they are not purposely killing Christians as are the Muslim terrorists, many of whom, by the way, are Palestinians.

Islamic propaganda aside, Israel and the world's Jews are not engaged in terrorist plots to kill us all. Rabbinical Judaism, as anti-Christ as it is, does not foment terror, certainly not on a worldwide scale. Yes, there are hateful Jews who would like to see the world brought under Jewish domination, just as there are hateful white supremacists who would like to see Hitler resurrected or reincarnated. There are black supremacist groups that preach hatred of whites, Jews, Hispanics, you name it.

But there is presently only one worldwide threat to all mankind, and that is Islam. Everywhere in the world, including the United States, Islam is developing terrorist training camps, equipping men, women and children with the tools to kill innocent civilians going about their everyday tasks. Although many Muslims are benign, and willing to live and let live, the radical element of Islam is huge, numbering in the millions, and they are entrenched within every nation, ready to do their thing.

Rabbinical Judaism is anti-Christ; Hinduism is anti-Christ; Buddhism is anti-Christ; much of Christianity is anti-Christ. The difference between these and Islam is that Islam is the religion of the anti-Christ, and is being used to establish his dominion. In the meantime, some Christian teachers are stirring up hatred against the Jews on the basis of nothing more than unproven theories regarding the Khazars.

The Jews whom Jesus said were of their father the Devil were not, and are not, those who were or are in ignorance or

hold prejudices due to their upbringing. They were conscientious enemies of the truths He presented to them; they purposely sought to kill Him and reject His truth in spite of the evidence of the Scriptures and the works He did among them. The same could be said of any person who willfully rejects truth, Jew or Gentile. It is the willfulness of sin that characterizes Satan in his fall from grace.

I'm sorry you can't trust me, but trust me. You are in error if you continue to resist God's Word that purposes a plan for the Jews in the last days, particularly in relation to the Promised Land, and to the Millennial Kingdom.

God has established Israel as a nation, as He has established all nations. Our responsibility is to be a witness of His love to all men, Jew and Gentile, and to avoid the conflicts of the world. My writing on *With God on Our Side* did not take sides; it called for truth on all sides.

If you can't trust that, then you've got a problem that only the Lord can deal with as you go to Him in humility, willing to let Him put within you a love for the Jews as well as the Arabs.

In Jesus' love,
Al

A HISTORY OF ANTI-CHRIST

Although the Roman world afforded the Gospel easy inroads into the nations, the empire began to perceive Christianity as a threat to its stability which rested largely on the belief in the divinity of the emperor. The pantheon of Roman gods was under attack by the proclaiming of the Gospel which insisted that there is only one God, and that the way to Him is only through His Son, Jesus Christ.

It wasn't long before persecution of the most horrific kind was instituted by the Romans against Christians. The first imperially supervised persecution of Christians within the Roman Empire began with Nero (37-68). When in A.D. 64 a great fire broke out in Rome, destroying much of the city, Nero came under suspicion by Roman historian Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus. Suetonius accused Nero of playing the lyre and singing the "Sack of Illium" during the fires. Tacitus stated that "to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace."

Nero's persecution of Christians was merely one of anti-Christ's attempts to stamp out the faith. Nor was it the worst under the Roman Empire. As time passed succeeding emperors would devise ever more cruel ways to dispose of the hated Christians.

As Christianity is spreading throughout the Roman Empire, Buddhism also expands, reaching China from central Asia and India around A.D. 60. The spiritual darkness that enveloped the world was just beginning to be pushed aside by the light of God's Word. Anti-Christ still held sway over the minds of the vast majority of men and women. ❖

NEXT
THE SECOND CENTURY



Hi Al.

Christian Zionism is bitter water. John Hagee is way off base. I think he gets some of this when Scripture says, "all Israel will be saved." However, he does not go back to Romans 9:27: "Though the children of Israel be as the sands of the sea, a remnant shall be saved."

It's that remnant that shall see Christ as their Savior and repent.

Christians are God's Chosen People. The apostle Peter told those who believe in Jesus, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God" (1 Peter 2:9-10).

Was the whole Jewish race chosen by Jesus? No, absolutely not. He declared that the pharisaic Jews were of their father the devil (John 8:44).

The Scriptures firmly declare, "Whoso denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father" (1 John 2:23).

Jews who embrace Judaism have neither Jesus nor His Father.

"If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29).

Christians of any and all races are Abraham's seed and heirs of the promise. You become Abraham's seed and heir by God's grace, not because of your race.

Based strictly on the testimony of Jesus our Lord, we know for sure that the Jews who reject Jesus (and almost all the Jews who live in the U.S.A. and who populate today's nation of Israel fall into this category) are not God's chosen. They are, in fact, of the synagogue of Satan (Revelation 2:9; 3:9).

Regards,

C.S., Delton, MI

Dear Al and Jean,

Last evening I read your recent *Media Spotlight*, specifically the article entitled "Christian Zionism Challenged."

First let me say I have never been able to accept the teaching that is in the churches today regarding Israel. I must say in the denomination that we left in the late 70s they did not talk about this. However, one day (in the 80s when I was pondering this teaching) the Lord spoke to me and said, "You must find out how Israel became a state."

I began my search for information at the public library. I would like to recommend three of the books that were available to me at that time, many years ago.

1. *Zionist Connection II: What Price Peace* by Alfred M. Lilienthal (Himself a Jew)

This is no longer listed in our library.

There is also a first volume by that title but I have not read it. It was not available at that time for me.

2. *They Dare to Speak Out* by Paul Findley (This author shows how you basically were not allowed to say anything favorable about the Palestinians in Washington D.C.)

3. *The Transfer Agreement: The untold story of the secret agreement between the Third Reich & Jewish Palestine*, Author: Edwin Black.

This Jewish student searched the records in the synagogue. After he finished his manuscript he asked his Jewish parents if he should publish it. They read it and said yes, that it answered many questions for them. I checked and found that this book is still listed as being available in the library at Clintonville, Wisconsin. It is a very large book.

I checked with two used book sellers on line and found that Half.com has a copy of both *The Zionist Connection* and *The Zionist Connection II*. There may be others available, I do not know.

I find it interesting how angry people get with you if you do not go along with this teaching regarding Israel. I just tell them, "You need to study."

Of course, very few people will. Someone recently made a comment to me regarding this being the land belonging to the Jews and I then asked him how he would feel if he had to give his land back to the American Indians. That was just a little too close to home. He said he would really have to think about that.

We do appreciate your writings. I know you have helped many people.

I do sincerely believe we are in for a very difficult year ahead. We are bracing for something tragic happening and we will take one day at a time and listen for any instructions the Lord may have for us. I know that many people are moving from the south to the north because the Lord has told them to move. We don't know if we are in a safe place but we are seeking to know His instructions.

Stay close under His wing,

E.S., Appleton, WI

* * *

Dear E.S.,

Yes, there is a lot of intrigue in the history of modern Israel, just as there is in every nation's history, including ours. Injustice and the work of the devil is behind every worldly government, including modern Israel. But these are the things the Lord uses to accomplish His will and to bring about fulfillment of His prophecies. It doesn't justify the evil; it merely recognizes the hand of God in all of human history.

Our sympathies must be with all who suffer on both sides of every worldly conflict. The Christian Zionists have little sympathy for the Palestinians, and the pro-Palestinians have little sympathy for the Jews. They often make no distinction between Zionist Jews and regular Jews.

We will all answer to our Father for how we treat all men regardless of their natural lineage.

Thanks for your input.

In Jesus' name,

Al

Al:

I am always confused when I hear men speak of *Palestine* or *Palestinian*. When were these ever a “people”? I understand you have to relate to folks in terms they understand but the word is nothing more than propaganda. There are 22 Arabic-speaking nations who never assimilated the “refugees” because they have wanted them kept there as a show-piece so the wicked Jews could be vilified. The Arabs told them to leave at the onset of the '48 war. They said, “Get out; we will kill the filthy Jews, then you can go back and take all they own.” This was done on radio and by bullhorn. Everything Israel does is flogged to death by the media *ad nauseam*. I am no Zionist. I am commanded to love all men. But I get so sick of the attacks on this little nation. Rachel Corrie is everywhere. Useful idiots as Lenin said. I was in Israel on a bus and everyone was outside but the driver and me. As we began to talk I said, “The only thing the Arabs want to do is cut your throats.”

He pulled down his turtleneck and showed me a horrible purple scar across his throat. An Arab had snuck up behind him in the old quarter of Jerusalem and sliced him. It was a miracle he lived, and I will never forget the exchange, either here or hereafter. I'm forwarding another page. I hope you will read it. I appreciate the article. Say hello to Jean. We both send our love.

B.H., Olympia, WA

Dear B.H.,

As I state elsewhere in this issue, the origins of the Palestinians trace to the Philistines mentioned in the Bible as one of Israel's greatest enemies. That rivalry has never abated.

Al



Dear Brother Dager,

I greet you in Jesus Christ, our beloved Lord and Redeemer.

God bless you for blessing me with the precious *Strong's*. I love it, and it is a great help in my studies.

Your letter about *The Urantia Book* was a great blessing, and it really opened my friend George's eyes to just what he had been reading. He says he is now done with reading it and will get rid of it.

There is now a big move by the Word-Faith movement here. A lot more of their books and materials are popping up, and sadly, those reading these materials don't compare what they read with the Word of God.

I've found that most Christians in prison interpret their Bibles by the books they read, instead of interpreting the books by the Bible they should know, but don't.

I love you all. Thank you for everything. You are always in my prayers.

Because of Jesus,

B.V., Ione, CA



Dear Al and Jean,

I pray the grace of our Lord Jesus is abundant in your lives this year. Thank you for the many years of dedicated work for and in the Kingdom of God. Your gifts of service have touched my life in a profound way, and I know untold thousands are blessed by your ministry.

It is a joy to know you in a distant way through your writings. I look forward to the day of a glorious meeting in God's Kingdom.

If possible, I would like a couple of your special reports along with my book purchase. Also the report, *Facts and Fallacies of the Resurrection*, would be a great help for me.

Thank you once again. I am receiving *Media Spotlight* on a regular basis, and a love gift will follow soon.

Respectfully yours in Christ,

M.G., Richmond, TX



Media Spotlight,

Your reviews and biblical analyses are always a great blessing to me and all others (church friends and all others) that I get to share with.

Your research digs very deep, and seems to always get to the bottom of secular, etc., media.

Truly, the discernment of both good and evil is a great gift that you can use to pass on the knowledge to the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is a great need for all of us that will hear and share the awesome truth of the Word. May the Lord richly bless you.

C.S., Humble, TX

Dear Al,

On your views of Harold Camping's belief that the end of the world will begin on May 21, 2011: sadly, we can't ignore him, as he is placing his ads all over the place, and has begun to air his programming on independent PBS stations. His arguments, based on the belief that the church has been done away with, is the basis for his errors. Does he not realize that the church is the believers—not some structure?

Here at S.C.I., Graterford, his books are being passed around. His use of numerology adds to his errors. As with this, one can get Scripture to say what they want it to say.

Now to your interesting review of the video, *With God on Our Side*. First, John Hagee is dead wrong when he says it is not necessary to proclaim the Gospel to the Jews. The Great Commission (Matt. 28:16-20) is to be taken to all nations. It is through Christ that one gets to the Father (John 14:6).

Mr. Hagee missed (I guess?) where the apostles were instructed to take the Gospel to the Jews first. Or where in Scripture that one day they will confess Christ to the glory of God. How Moses prophesied that He [God] would provoke them (Israel) to jealousy with the Gentiles (Deut. 32:21; Rom. 10:19).

Sadly, with the history of this conflict, those who border on the steps of anti-Semitism tend to twist the history. It is only through telling the whole truth that we can hope and pray this will lead to peace.

We need to push aside the political correctness; when talking about this we need to speak the truth. We need to pray for our brethren, the Arab Christians, whom the Muslims have been forcing out of this area.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

J.C.L., Graterford, PA

We wish we could include all the letters we receive. Please know that we read each one personally. We regret that we are often late in replying to those that require answers.

We'll do our best to get to them. If you haven't heard from us after three months, please write again. Some questions require lengthy research. Not having a staff keeps us from always being able to give a timely response. Thanks for your understanding.



Jean's Turn

THE LORD'S THINGS

By Jean Dager

"But first seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore, do not think about tomorrow, for tomorrow will think about its own things. Each day's trouble is sufficient." (Matthew 6:33-34.)

In one of our assembly meetings, a brother shared how the Lord has impressed upon him to be mindful FIRST of the Lord's things in his daily life. So while at work, he's open to be a witness for the Lord when opportunities arise. He goes about his business, working as unto the Lord, and not as unto men, always ready to share God's Word, but careful not to impose upon his employer's time which is owed to him.

Personally, it's an encouragement to me to see how this humble brother is being used by the Lord just as he goes about an ordinary workday. There is so much upheaval in the world today; sometimes I can get so caught up in the world's events that I'm forgetful of the things of the Lord. Just recently while verbally lamenting over some local news, Al quietly reminded me not to keep fretting over those things.

Even so, it's always so refreshing when we gather with the saints of God. There we can focus on the Lord's things and devote ourselves entirely to Him. As brethren share their faith, we not only learn from each other, but our individual walks are strengthened.

Earlier this year a faithful member of our assembly, Roy Pavlik, went home to be with our Lord. He was loved by all who knew him. We enjoyed his natural cheerful nature. Sometimes his hearing loss might give cause for a few chuckles when his responses were a bit off. But he laughed right along with the rest of us. Roy's enthusiasm with Scripture was remarkable. Often during a reading, he might suddenly exclaim "Now that's profound! We really need to contemplate that! We need to really focus on it!"

Old hymns were his specialty and he was familiar with most of them—capable and willing to robustly lead the rest of us in some of the more difficult melodies. Everyone truly loved this dear brother and his fellowship is sorely missed. However, we're rejoicing with him, confident that he is now in the very presence of the Lord. As C. H. Spurgeon once said, "Happy are the spirits who have ended their fight of faith and now live in the raptures of a sight of Him...and do forever behold the face of our Father which is in heaven."

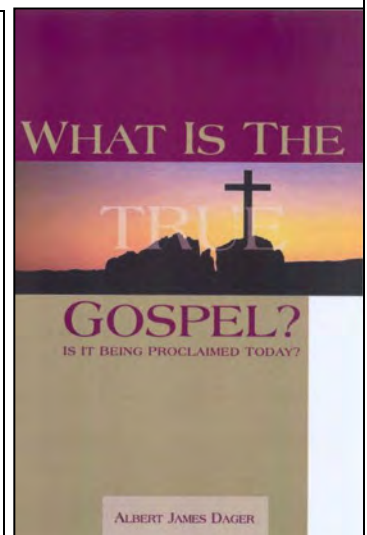
We learn from each other when we gather in His Name. Our faith is strengthened. We are encouraged as we pray together, addressing each other's needs and concerns, reading and expounding upon the Scriptures, lifting up the Lord in song and praise in a spirit of unity. Our love for one another increases as we share our faith, putting aside the things of the world and focusing upon the things of the Lord.

"Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be of like mind toward one another according to Christ Jesus, so that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Therefore, receive one another as Christ also received us to the glory of God." (Romans 15:5-7.)

Jesus proclaimed the Gospel of the Kingdom, and commissioned His disciples to do the same.

Many false gospels have arisen since then. A great apostasy based on the traditions of religious institutions substitutes a weak easy-believism in place of the true Gospel of the Kingdom. This book points the reader back to Scripture for understanding the significance of the true Gospel Jesus proclaimed.



Order at www.swordpublishers.com