

TOMORROW'S WORLD

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**In Democracy
We Trust?**



To the Ends of the Earth

Last February, my wife and I traveled to Tierra del Fuego, the southern tip of Argentina, where the stunningly beautiful Ushuaia—a provincial capital—claims to be the world’s southernmost city, advertising itself as “the end of the earth.” Neighboring Chile claims the same distinction for its Puerto Williams, where we broadcast the *Tomorrow’s World* program for about a year, and we will leave it up to these two nations to fight it out (hopefully without going to war, which they have nearly done on occasion).

This was a “business trip”—Church business—but it was also an experience of a lifetime and very educational. While in Ushuaia, we visited a small park with plaques giving the Argentine point of view on the war with Britain over the Falklands/Malvinas, and we took a boat trip down the Beagle Channel past Puerto Williams.

Chile gave logistical support to Britain during that war, which did not help its often-strained relations with neighbor Argentina. Few outside South America are aware that the Beagle Channel, which separates the two countries, became a source of conflict in the late nineteenth century, when both nations claimed ownership of islands in the channel. Both sides were ready to go to war by the early 1980s, as international attempts to mediate the conflict all failed—until the newly elected Pope John Paul II intervened. “On [November 29, 1984], the heads of state of Chile and Argentina signed a Treaty of Peace and Friendship at the Vatican. The islands on the northern channel were awarded to Argentina and the islands on the southern half to Chile. Moreover, both countries could sail through the area although the marine territory belongs to Argentina” (“How John Paul II helped Chile and Argentina avoid going to war,” *Rome Reports*, November 30, 2009).

All of this aside, our main reason for visiting “the end of the earth” was to see our Living Church of God congregation three hours away in southern Argentina—yes, there are members and supporters of *Tomorrow’s World* all the way at the end of the earth. These members are mostly Spanish speakers,

but with the help of translators we had a wonderful visit with them, enjoying heartfelt fellowship over a fantastic barbeque. There are always hugs and kisses (on the cheek) whenever we visit our brethren in the Spanish-speaking world.

As you may be aware, Living Church of God members and coworkers support the proclamation of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ to all mankind. They make it possible to go on television and radio and to distribute this magazine—along with all our other resources—free of charge to more than 500,000 subscribers. Those



of us behind *Tomorrow’s World* are few in number, but the scope of our influence is farther and wider than numbers might indicate. We are scattered across the earth as salt is sprinkled on a plate of gourmet food, and in this short note I will share with you some details in this regard.

A Light for Salvation

The Apostle Paul quoted the prophet Isaiah, saying, “I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation *to the ends of the earth*” (Acts 13:47). As I saw during our trip to Tierra del Fuego, our influence does reach the ends of the earth—and countless places between the two polar regions. We have subscribers scattered across far northern Canadian villages, and these include communities that you have probably never heard of in the territory of Nunavut: Pangnirtung, Gjoa Haven, Pond Inlet,

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Cambridge Bay, Baker Lake, Sanikiluaq, Arviat, and Whale Cove.

Some years ago, one of my colleagues visited a man living in Kugluktuk, above the Arctic Circle. This dedicated man requested baptism, and our minister was able to fulfill his request. Yes, we are a little flock, but our reach is great. The *Tomorrow's World* magazine reaches 176 countries, we have active Living Church of God congregations in 67 countries, and we have baptized members in an additional 31 countries—where we hope to form congregations in the near future. We have subscribers in Russia, China, and the Middle East. We have subscribers in Scandinavia, South Africa, and countries in between. We have congregations in Vanuatu and recently started a congregation of about 35 people in Fiji. Our members in Myanmar have had to flee their homes and businesses due to the civil war there.

Jesus gave the Apostles a commission to take His true Gospel to the world, to make disciples of all peoples, and to baptize them. Baptism symbolizes our acceptance of Jesus Christ as our Savior, who died, was buried, and was resurrected three days and three nights later. By undergoing baptism, we show our acceptance of His sacrifice on our behalf and demonstrate our full intent to put to death our past life and come up to a new way of living (Romans 6:1-7).

Preaching Righteousness

Of course, we recognize that we will not convert the whole world at this time. We are living today in Satan's world, as Jesus made clear (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). The Apostle Paul also spoke directly about this fact. "But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them" (2 Corinthians 4:3-4). "And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:1-2).

Why do most mainstream churches fail to teach this important truth? We find the answer in these

very passages: Satan is now the god of this world, and he has deceived it (Revelation 12:9)—and this includes the overwhelming majority of those who call themselves Christian. That is why Jesus warned us against false Christianity (Matthew 24:3-5; see also Revelation 6:1-2).

We preach the true Jesus of the Bible and the message He preached while in the flesh, recognizing the time in which we are living. Just as Noah preached righteousness, warning the pre-Flood world, we are obligated to do the same as we approach the climax of Satan's 6,000 years of rule over mankind (2 Peter 2:5).

To preach that message, we must also recognize the house of Israel. The Jews are one of the twelve tribes of Israel, but they are not all that remains of the Israelites. This is clearly seen in Ezekiel 37:15-28, where it is prophesied that the house of Judah and the house of Israel (two nations that separated during the tenth century BC) will be brought back together after Christ's return. If you do not understand this amazing truth, order a free copy of *The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy*, or read it online at TomorrowsWorld.org. You cannot make sense of events now taking place in our world without this understanding.

Since we know who the house of Israel is, we are held accountable for warning its people (Ezekiel 33:1-7). But God also lays upon us the responsibility to warn *all* those in danger: "Deliver those who are drawn toward death, and hold back those stumbling to the slaughter. If you say, 'Surely we did not know this,' does not He who weighs the hearts consider it? He who keeps your soul, does He not know it? And will He not render to each man according to his deeds?" (Proverbs 24:11-12).

God has given His servants the responsibility of preaching the true Gospel, warning the world of what is coming, making disciples of all nations, and spiritually feeding those He calls. Yes, we are a small flock, but we continue to take these commissions seriously—all the way "to the ends of the earth."



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In Democracy We Trust?

As global instability grows and the world risks erupting into conflict, the citizens of many countries are sounding the alarm that democracy itself is in danger. But what is the verdict of Heaven on this most exalted form of human government?

By **Wallace G. Smith**

One might call 2024 the Year of Democracy. As *Time* magazine noted in December of last year, “2024 is not just an election year. It’s perhaps *the* election year. Globally, more voters than ever in history will head to the polls as at least 64 countries (plus the European Union)—representing a combined population of about 49% of the people in the world—are meant to hold national elections, the results of which, for many, will prove consequential for years to come.”

As more people than ever before go to the polls to determine the shape, tone, and direction of their own governments, 2024 should be the greatest year in democracy’s history. Instead, 2024 has been filled with cries from all quarters warning of the possibility of democracy’s impending demise. In Germany, news services warned that this year’s elections were really “an election about democracy.” Foreign policy experts declared that the European Parliament elections this year were vital in pushing back against dismantling and subverting democratic norms in member states.

Perhaps the direst warnings about how “democracy is at stake” have come from the campaigns of

Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump. Polls show that a majority of Americans do, indeed, believe that democracy is in grave danger—and, importantly, each side believes that the *other* side is the one generating that danger.

Yet for all the passionate pleading that we must “save democracy,” few seem to be asking an important question: *Is democracy worth saving?*

Decades ago, when political scientist Francis Fukuyama wrote *The End of History and the Last Man*, many found themselves agreeing with his analysis that man’s search for the ultimate form of government to maximize human flourishing was over. Fascism had been discredited. Communism had been proven a failure. Socialism was clearly inadequate. The winner in the contest of millennia—the pinnacle of human political organization—was *liberal democracy*, combined with market-based economics. Only liberal democracies had shown themselves worthy of human investment going forward, capable of bringing out the very best in mankind.

The decades since Fukuyama’s book have seen an expansion of the world’s democracies. Yet, they have also seen the world pressed closer and closer to the brink. In times like these—in which nations are ripping

themselves apart at even their sturdiest seams and international conflicts threaten to engulf us in a world war involving multiple nuclear powers—we *need* to know: Should we put our faith in democracy to solve our problems? Or is it possible that democracy is making them *worse*?

It's time to look more closely at democracy, what the Creator of humanity has to say about it, and what hope He holds out to a world in desperate need of truly good government.

Radical Steps Toward Self-Governance

Throughout history, most human beings have lived under the governance of dictators, generals, or monarchs. Democracy has never lasted. Athens, perhaps the best-known model of ancient democracy, lasted as such for fewer than 200 years. And even that “democracy” was exercised only by Athens’ free adult men—less than 30 percent of its population.

Rule by monarchy has been far more common over the centuries. Even the ancient Hebrews chose monarchy over their earlier rule by judges. Monarchs, no matter their religion, would generally claim the “divine right of kings” and consider themselves answerable only to their gods, leaving the governed citizens subject to their whims—it is one thing for the governed to challenge a ruler, but who would dare challenge God?

From this perspective, we can appreciate just how radical a step was taken by King John of England in 1215, when he consented to the Magna Carta (“Great Charter”)—a document acknowledging that even the king of England was subject to the rule of law. Though disputed and modified over the years, the Magna Carta set England apart as a nation ruled ultimately by law rather than by men.

Yet that rule became oppressive at times. Five hundred years after the Magna Carta, British colonists in North America found themselves chafing under what they considered unjust application of law. Not content to be ruled by a king and a Parliament across the ocean, the colonists rebelled and established their own constitutional republic—first with the Articles of Confederation in 1781 and then with the Constitution of the United States in 1789. Nearly 250 years later, supplemented by a Bill of Rights and 17 subsequent amendments, the Constitution is still

the guiding document of U.S. law and has been widely imitated by other nations around the world.

The nation’s founders sought to vest the vast power of national sovereignty fully with the people. They were not content with a power-sharing approach between a king and a parliament, as they had experienced under British rule. In America, the *citizen* was to be “king.”

Nor were the architects of the American republic content to hand the reins of the American conscience to any faith. Influenced by the work of philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the founders sought to anchor government in the concept of a *social contract*: a mutual agreement among the peoples of a society concerning the laws they would all accept, the culture they would embrace, and the freedoms they would recognize—or, for that matter, give up for the sake of social order.

The U.S. was to be a radical experiment in freedom and liberty, grounded in a radical embrace of the sovereignty of its people. Yet the architects of the new nation’s government were not ignorant of the lessons of history. They knew, for instance, the history of Athens, widely considered to be the birthplace of democracy around 2,500 years ago. And they knew the dangers of a *direct* or *pure* democracy—one in which the people decide, directly, even the smallest matter of policy and practice.

In 1787, James Madison wrote that “such democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contention; have ever been found incompatible with personal security, or the rights of property; and have in general been as short in their lives, as they have been violent in their deaths.” One year later, speaking to the Constitutional Convention of the young nation, Alexander Hamilton noted that the ancient pure democracies of history “never possessed one feature of good government. Their very character was tyranny; their figure deformity.”

Among the faults of such direct or pure democracies was the tendency to drift into “mob rule,” where the majority exercised tyrannical power over the minority. Any cruelty, any injustice, any despotism could become law in a pure democracy if a majority of people willed it to be so at the ballot box.

Democracies also lent themselves to the creation of tyrants—one of the very dangers the nation’s

founders sought to make impossible in their new country. To this end, they planned to divide the powers of government into separate and *adversarial* branches, governed by checks and balances among and between them.

The result of their effort was to embed American democracy within a *constitutional republic*. Making the government a *republic*, in which the citizens would democratically elect leaders to represent them in the matters of governance, was intended to be a barrier against the chaos that accompanies pure democracies. The people would remain sovereign, since the leaders served at the will of the people—and those leaders who did not satisfy the people’s desire would be replaced by new leaders at the end of their terms.

And making the government *constitutional*—organizing it under a written constitution that would serve as the law of the land—meant that American democracy could be greatly constrained. Rights and protections could be codified in the U.S. Constitution to preserve them from alteration even by a majority. The people’s sovereignty would be preserved, as even the Constitution itself could be altered by the people through their elected representatives—but through “super majorities,” helping to guarantee the broadest possible agreement and preventing hasty, radical changes.

The Constitution would also define the cooperative—yet adversarial—nature of governmental authority, preventing too much power from residing in the hands of a few. Executive power would rest with a single individual—a democratically elected president. Legislative power rested with a congress of democratically elected representatives in two chambers. And supreme judicial power rested with appointed, independent judges. Each branch was designed to be dependent on the others for functions it could not accomplish and checked in its power by the others so that it could not turn its functions into an opportunity to take larger control.

While many claim that being a constitutional republic means that the U.S. is *not* a democracy, they need to read the founders’ words more carefully. As Alexander Hamilton noted during the U.S. Constitution’s ratification, “the true principle of a republic is, that *the people should choose whom they please to govern them.*” And concerning the constitutions of the nation or its component states, no lesser a light

than George Washington himself stated, “The basis of our political systems is the right of the people *to make and to alter their constitutions of government.*” The Constitution was to be considered “sacredly obligatory on all,” yet only “until changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people.”

The nation forged by the founders of the U.S. placed sovereignty democratically on the shoulders of citizens while ingeniously safeguarding against the abuses of a *direct* democracy by placing the exercise of that sovereignty within the structure of a constitutional republic. The nation truly was, to borrow Abraham Lincoln’s turn of phrase, a government “of the people, by the people, for the people.” This grand experiment in self-governance has generally been considered a dramatic success, and the wisdom and foresight of the founders of the U.S. is almost universally acknowledged.

A Fatal—and Unavoidable—Flaw

The poet T. S. Eliot wrote that men “constantly try to escape from the darkness outside and within by dreaming of systems so perfect that no one will need to be good.” This is exactly what the founders of the U.S. sought to do—what the architects of *every* liberal democracy seek to do. So that the people are not dependent on a potentially corrupt monarch or a potentially corrupt aristocracy, democracies make the people their *own* rulers.

But the fundamental flaw remains: People are *not* good (Matthew 19:17). And no system of self-governance can separate people from the corruption they, themselves, bring into it.

To their credit, the founders of the U.S. recognized this. In 1788, James Madison concisely stated, “Is there no virtue among us? If there be not, we are in a wretched situation. No theoretical checks—no form of government can render us secure.” Ten years later, John Adams noted that if the morality of citizens became only superficial—a veneer that looked good on the outside while hiding covetousness and vulgarities within—then “this Country will be the most miserable Habitation in the World,” with nothing in the American form of government able to restrain the people’s immorality.

And many would say that some democracies are, indeed, becoming some of the most miserable habita-

tions in the world. With no culture or ethical system beyond what everyone agrees to in the “social contract,” societies are disintegrating into competing collections of ideologically driven camps, each accusing the other of destroying what’s best about our nations. With no recognized source of right or wrong that transcends the ballot box—no internal check against the degradations of human nature—the most perverted of acts and lifestyles increasingly take place under the protection of misguided laws. And with no acknowledgement of the authority of the divine Designer of humanity—having replaced Him with the sovereign will of the people—even the most fundamental institutions of man, such as the family, are redefined and recast according to the political whim of the moment.

In fact, even the plagues of direct democracies that the founders sought to avoid—tyrannies, easily manipulated voters, degradation in the quality of leadership—have begun to manifest in spades. Whatever systems the architects put in place have only been able to delay, not halt, the inevitable.

The philosopher Plato—surrounded as he was by the “mother” of all democracies in ancient Athens—often railed against the idea that a people could rule itself democratically. In his classic work *The Republic*, he warned millennia ago that democracies don’t produce leaders of high virtue, rulers possessing profound wisdom and ability, or representatives who truly care about the people who elected them.

Rather, democracies produce leaders who excel in one specific skill: *getting elected*.

In his classic work, *Democracy in America*, the nineteenth-century French political philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville saw the same forces at work in the young nation. He saw that those most able to lead were rarely elected to office and that voting decisions were generally—almost unavoidably—made on relatively superficial bases. Consequently, de Tocqueville noted that the public “often assents to the clamor of a mountebank [fraud or huckster] who knows the secret of stimulating its tastes,” while those who might actually serve the people well are ignored by the electorate (Book 1, Chapter 13, trans. Henry Reeve).

Can we see these truths on display in our own nations? We must ask ourselves honestly: Are our democratic processes—in whatever form they take—producing the wisest leaders? The most capable?

We would have to be delusional to think so. Our nations are increasingly run by individuals with neither the wisdom nor the abilities demanded by their office. Rather, they excel in one, single skill our system of government requires of them: the ability to convince voters to give them the job.

There simply is no system of human government that can protect us from human nature.

Democracy vs. God

Some have sought to see the principles of democracy, especially in America, reflected in the inspired words of the Bible—hoping to gain God’s endorsement for the form of government they have chosen.

For example, some have claimed that the tripartite separation of powers is supported in the praise given to God in Isaiah 33:22: “For the LORD is our Judge, the LORD is our Lawgiver, the LORD is our King; He will save us.” It is true that all three categories of power—the executive, the legislative, and the judicial—are mentioned. But who in their right mind would call three powers united in the one Almighty God an example of *separation* of powers? It is, in fact, quite the opposite!

However, a scriptural principle *does* apply—a principle delivered by the Lord Himself when He said, “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation” (Matthew 12:25). While there is much human wisdom in how the founders of the U.S. arranged the separation of powers—setting human ambition against human ambition, as James Madison framed it—the revealed *godly* wisdom states that such a state of affairs is bound to end in desolation.

So, who do we expect to be proven right—the architects of our modern democracies, or Jesus Christ? In fact, the Bible is filled with revealed truths that make utterly and unavoidably plain that democracy—in all its forms—is *not* godly government, no matter its lofty aims.

For instance, democracy’s fundamental concept—that sovereignty rests with the people and that rulers derive their authority only from “the consent of the governed,” in Thomas Jefferson’s famous words—is utterly foreign to Scripture in all but the most radical readings, twisted takes, and imaginative interpretations. Indeed, the universal testimony of God’s word is entirely against democracy.

Consider the correction given to Nebuchadnezzar. When the great king of Babylon lost sight of how dependent he was on the God of heaven for his place and position, the Eternal temporarily gave him the mind of an animal, stripped of all rationality, “in order that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, gives it to whomever He will, and sets over it the lowest of men” (Daniel 4:17).

This truth—that God reserves to *Himself* the appointment of authorities and powers—is seen in many passages throughout the Bible. As God inspired Daniel to state elsewhere, “He removes kings and raises up kings” (Daniel 2:21). And in every form of government God creates—including the ancient nation of Israel, the first-century Church, and even the family, itself—that government is *always* structured from the *top down*, with positions given by *appointment* based on discernible fruits (e.g., Titus 1:5).

In fact, when you do find places in Scripture in which the *people* decide the form of government, you don’t see God’s approval. Again, quite the opposite—in the case of the people’s rejection of Samuel’s sons as judges over them, even when those sons were doing a lousy job, the Eternal declared that He saw this rejection as a refusal of His *own* rulership over the people (1 Samuel 8:7). And the only clear mention of a vote in the pages of the Bible is that of Paul’s in the days before his conversion—and he cast that vote to put Christians to death (Acts 26:10). Fundamentally, for all the worldly wisdom of democratic government and its placing sovereignty in the hands of the ruled instead of the rulers, it does not reflect the wisdom of God.

It does, however, reflect the spirit and nature of Satan the Devil, the first ruled being who sought to rise above the One who ruled him and take authority for himself (Isaiah 14:12–14). It is *his* spirit that now works in this world (Ephesians 2:2). Should it surprise us, then, that the spirit that dominates our politics is one of taking control for ourselves—seizing power as if the wisest and safest place for it to be is in our own hands?

A Glorious Promise


Part of the dream that continues to drive the democracies of the world—even as they increasingly generate

the chaos inherent to them—is that life free from abusive tyranny, free from oppression, and free from corruption, can be achieved through human effort alone. Yet humanity’s every effort is doomed from the start, due to its one, essential ingredient: us. We fundamentally cannot be trusted with our own government.

We do not know the way to the peaceful lives we long to live (Jeremiah 10:23; Isaiah 59:8). And even if we stumble across it, we find it is a narrow path and a difficult way (Matthew 7:13–14). It does not involve creating systems that allow us to avoid choosing the good, but rather requires us to yield ourselves, as individuals and as a civilization, to the laws of God—something utterly antithetical to our nature (Romans 8:7).

But the Creator of humanity has not left us without a solution. The Bible reveals that God is sending His Son, Jesus Christ, back to this earth to rule this world and reign in the Kingdom of God. That government won’t be ruled by competing crowds or polarized parties. It will be ruled by Christ Himself, “He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords” (1 Timothy 6:15).

Over the course of a thousand years, that Kingdom will finally achieve what no government of man has ever been able to do. It will transform flawed human nature until it conforms to God’s own, “for this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people” (Hebrews 8:10). Wars will cease, inequity will be abolished, and every individual will have the opportunity to live a fulfilled and abundant life under the liberating laws of his Creator (James 1:25).

God the Father is looking for those who understand that they are not called to trust in the governments of this world and fight with this world’s broken and carnal tools, as if they could enthrone His Son before His time (John 18:36). He is looking for those who, instead, are ready to put their trust in *Him*—allowing Him to transform their own hearts and minds today, that they might help Him transform the hearts and minds of mankind tomorrow. 

MAY WE
SUGGEST?

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Oh Canada!

Calgary's Water Crisis: A Wake-Up Call



Nearly three-quarters of the Earth is covered with water. There is so much water on our planet that it looks like a blue ball from far out in space. Water is one of the most vital requirements for life. While some organisms can flourish in salt water, most—including humans—need fresh water to thrive. Although crucial for human life, fresh water is not so readily available, making up just about 3 percent of all water on Earth. And roughly 69 percent of that fresh water is stored as polar ice caps and glaciers, while another 30 percent is hard-to-access sub-surface groundwater. That leaves about 1 percent of all fresh water on our planet readily available for human consumption and renewable through the water cycle—a mere 0.03 percent of the water on Earth.

Water supply is taken for granted in cities across Canada, as in developed areas worldwide. Most Canadians have come to expect access to clean drinking water at the turn of a tap. But what happens when that expectation for something vital to our existence fails?

Broken Pipeline, Shattered Lifeline

Recently, the Canadian city of Calgary experienced a severe disruption that reduced its available water supply by 60 percent. Calgary, in the province of Alberta, is the largest city in the three prairie provinces, which include Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The city's population is 1.3 million, with an additional 300,000 in the wider metropolitan area. Calgaryans are used to dry summers; the city has a semi-arid climate with an average annual rainfall of about half a metre.

However, the abundant water flowing from the Rocky Mountains to the west of the city usually adds

greatly to the water supply. Municipal water restrictions have been enacted in the past, but none so extensive or of such a prolonged duration as those put in place during the summer of 2024. At that time, a large water main break on the Bears paw South Feeder Main, in the Bowness and Montgomery area, disrupted water flowing from the Bears paw Water Treatment Plant to Calgary's water distribution network.

Soon after the June 5 break was discovered, city officials issued emergency alerts, warning citizens not to water lawns or gardens, not to shower or bathe, not to wash dishes or run appliances that use water, and to conserve water in any way they reasonably could. At the onset, while the problem was being assessed, Calgaryans said they were confused by officials' communication of the severity of the situation, creating further chaos for citizens of Calgary and the surrounding areas. Still, it was clear that the city's water infrastructure had been compromised and that usage needed to be curtailed.

Scrambled Repairs and Aging Infrastructure

The broken Bears paw South Feeder mainline repairs were completed just in time for the July 5 start of the annual Calgary Stampede, along with repairs made to other areas of concern identified by a pipeline scanning device. But further scanning in late July and early August revealed more areas requiring urgent repairs.

The additional work was scheduled to be completed by the end of September, and Calgary officials set indoor and outdoor water use restrictions to mitigate the situation. Commercial and residential restrictions on indoor usage were voluntary. Outdoor

restrictions were mandatory, and violation of them was subject to fines from \$400 to \$3,000. The municipality set outdoor water restrictions at four stages—Stage 1 allowed for minimal watering of trees, shrubs, and gardens by using a spray hose and two hours a week for lawn sprinklers. At Stage 4, no outdoor potable water usage was acceptable.

The level of water restrictions changed several times throughout the summer as city officials tried to balance supply and usage. Some residents chose to abide by those restrictions, although the level of the restrictions

The water infrastructure of major Canadian cities includes pipes that are more than 50 years old. Although those pipes were designed for greater longevity, some seem to be nearing the end of their usefulness much earlier than expected.

was often unclear. Others did not curtail their water usage at all—whether out of frustration or simply a lack of understanding of the situation's severity. Adding to the confusion, the communicated cause of the break—and the laying of blame—shifted as the summer progressed.

Calgarians will remember the summer of 2024 for years to come—yet the implications of the crisis go far beyond the city of Calgary.

The water infrastructure of major Canadian cities includes pipes that are more than 50 years old. Although those pipes were designed for greater longevity, some seem to be nearing the end of their usefulness much earlier than expected. Also, the increasing urban population has put heavier demands on the aging infrastructure, as water

lines of more recently built communities are being tied into the existing older network. Assessing water supply lines, identifying problem areas, and making necessary repairs will involve extensive work and considerable expense. Still, it is crucial to ensure safe drinking water for Canadians. Civic engineers, planners, and politicians in many large urban areas throughout North America saw Calgary's water crisis as a wake-up call.

And it wasn't long before that wake-up call sounded again. On August 16, in the province of Quebec, the city of Montreal experienced a water main rupture, creating

a spectacular geyser and severely flooding homes and businesses near the downtown core.

Who Can Give Us Living Water?

The deterioration of Canada's water infrastructure is only one symptom of a much more fundamental issue. Our society's foundations are crumbling around us—family, education, government, and the economy are only the most obvious casualties of widespread moral decay. Mankind has turned its back on God, following a path of its own making and reaping the results.

God did not create us to exist apart from Him; as the prophet Jeremiah reminds us, "O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). God has revealed the way that leads to true prosperity and happiness. Without following His direction, everything in our lives will eventually fail, for "where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but happy is he who keeps the law" (Proverbs 29:18).

Fresh, potable water is essential for human life. When its supply is restricted, it becomes all the more clear that our physical lives are fragile. The prophet Isaiah was inspired to write, "All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, because the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass" (Isaiah 40:6-7). Our human lives have been *designed* to be temporary. Like all things physical, including our bodies and city infrastructure, they are subject to decay—they will wear out over time.

Though physical things may not have permanence, the prophet Isaiah describes what does: "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever" (Isaiah 40:8). Just as our physical lives need the water God has created for us, our spiritual lives need the living water that only He can provide. Jesus Christ said, "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38), and to truly believe in and love Him is to obey His commands (John 14:15). To have a true, sustaining "water source," we must look outside our physical needs and requirements and seek answers in God's word.

Our infrastructure is crumbling, and so too is our society—because of our rejection of God's revelation. Only God's word, including His law, brings happiness and permanence.

—Gary Molnar

PRAY FOR OUR LEADERS

Yes, even that one.

In the past few decades, we have seen a dramatic increase in disrespect toward those in leadership positions. An attitude of hatred and vitriol toward political rivals permeates society. In a time of increased difficulty and heightened emotion, how should Christians react to leaders they perceive as “bad”?

Yes, we all should be sickened by decisions that violate God’s laws, such as the normalization of homosexuality, transgenderism, and pedophilia; the push for critical race theory and class warfare; the feminization of men and masculinization of women; the push for uncontrolled, unwise government spending with no concern for the future—and the list goes on. It is troubling to see secular leaders pushing immoral debauchery down the throats of citizens, and it is difficult to not be frustrated with them.

How can we respond when we or our families suffer? Should we fan the flames of rage or join in a protest to express our opinion and frustration?

Godliness and Reverence

God teaches a revolutionary approach toward leaders—even questionable ones. “Let every soul *be subject to the governing authorities*. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore, whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves” (Romans 13:1–2).

This passage does not compel us to submit to ordinances *contrary to the laws of God*. Rather, it teaches respect toward authorities and subjection to them in matters *not conflicting with God’s way*—because God has placed them over us. When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego refused to submit to Nebuchadnezzar’s ordinance requiring disobedience to God’s commandments, they did so with respect toward the king’s office: “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. But even if he doesn’t, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve

your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up” (Daniel 3:16–18, *New Living Translation*).

On social media, do we share or “like” anti-establishment posts or comments that make fun of leaders? Do we applaud others’ disrespect toward offices of leadership? Do we casually criticize those who are in office? If we do, we are resisting God—and bringing judgment on ourselves. Even though we may not approve of our leaders’ policies, we shouldn’t be disrespectful in our words or actions.

Instead of responding to negativity *with* negativity, Christians are to take the narrower path, the one less traveled: to *pray for our leaders*. Pray that they may come to their senses and make decisions in harmony with God’s truth and calling. “Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:1–4).

The Apostle Paul wrote those words while the notorious Roman emperor Nero was in power—the same Nero who “married” a slave boy, who was credited with burning Rome for his own selfish desires, and who severely persecuted the early Christians. Yet, instead of criticizing the Roman authorities, Paul was inspired to encourage us to pray for our leaders—and to desire that they come to the knowledge of the truth, which leads to repentance and salvation. That is something we should desire for *all* human beings.

As Christians, we look forward to the day when Jesus Christ will return and reign as the one perfect leader. His rule will bring justice, peace, and righteousness—which no earthly government or leader can fully achieve. Until that time, let us pray that our leaders make better decisions and let us seek to find good in what they are doing. Let us pray for them to come to the knowledge of the truth. Let us see the big picture and pray that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. Let us pray for our leaders!

—Justin D. Ridgeway



The Holy Days: God's Master Plan

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THE HOLY DAYS

God's Master Plan



The Destructive Consequences of Government Cover-ups

Trust can be considered the glue that binds relationships together—and trust is what people long to place in their leaders and their nations. When we trust others, we feel at peace. But what happens when a nation loses trust in its leaders? And what happens when leaders *break faith* with their citizens?

A shocking 2017 poll showed that only 17 percent of Britons trusted their politicians (“Why British people don’t trust the government any more—and what can be done about it,” *The Conversation*, 31 January 2018). This research was conducted after Brexit, but before the COVID-19 pandemic spurred even greater distrust in a government widely scorned for engaging in health-related cover-ups. Among participants in intensive two-day group “democratic forums” across Europe—in Copenhagen, Berlin, Oslo, and Ljubljana, as well as in Birmingham, England—English participants stood out as unique when interviewed. “The UK participants stood out for their general mistrust—elsewhere people had confidence in the capacity of government to deal with the challenges.” According to 2023 UK government statistics, fewer UK citizens trust their political parties (12 percent) than their news media (19 percent), Parliament (24 percent), or the UK government itself (27 percent).

An Erosion of Morality

More than 20 years ago, British historian Niall Ferguson made a sobering observation: “The British Empire is long dead; only flotsam and jetsam now remain. What had been based on Britain’s commercial and financial supremacy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

and her industrial supremacy in the nineteenth was bound to crumble once the British economy buckled under the accumulated burdens of two world wars” (*Empire*, 2002, p. 303).

Ferguson also cited economic historian David Landes, who compiled a list of measures that “ideal growth-and-development governments” have historically possessed. These include the provision of stable and honest governments that are fair, impartial, and governed by “publicly known rules” (p. 307).

In his book *When Nations Die*, Jim Nelson Black called attention to three aspects of national decay: social decay, moral decay, and cultural decay. Moral decay is not limited to the decay in the morality of citizens; it is often led by governments. And when a government’s morality cannot be trusted, this leads directly to the moral decay of the nation. Experience and common sense show that people need to be able to trust their government to protect them and provide for their general welfare. When there is no more trust, citizens doubt their governments, lose respect for those governments, and feel greater instability and uncertainty in their lives.

Put simply, when trust fails, people become fearful. Could it be that one reason for the decline of Great Britain is the failing morality of its leaders?

Compensation Does Not Excuse Corruption

Two recent scandals have received significant press, resulting in a further loss of trust in the UK government. The first is the *infected blood scandal*. The Infected Blood Inquiry launched by the British government examined blood-borne infections that were transmitted

as a result of neglect by the National Health Service (NHS) and successive UK governments between 1970 and 1991 (“Infected blood inquiry: Five things we have learned,” *BBC*, 3 February 2023). This action—or inaction—led to the infection of more than 30,000 people and has been implicated in 3,000 deaths so far. “The five-year inquiry found safety had not been paramount in decision-making, pointing out the risk of transmitting viral infections [including HIV] in blood and blood products had been known since the NHS’s foundation, in 1948” (“PM apologises after infected blood scandal cover-up,” 20 May 2024).

In short, the NHS knowingly, for decades, passed on high-risk and contaminated blood to patients within the British health care system. As then-Prime Minister Rishi Sunak lamented, “Today’s report shows a decades-long moral failure at the heart of our national life.” And as was noted by Sir Brian Langstaff, who chaired the Infected Blood Inquiry, “the ‘disaster was no accident’ and should never have happened as he exposed a ‘chilling’ cover-up by the NHS and successive governments” (“Day that shames the British state: Tainted blood scandal report blasts ‘horrifying’ failures that led to over 3,000 deaths - but families fear no one will ever face justice,” *The Daily Mail*, 20 May 2024). According to the British government, the first compensation to victims and victims’ families will be made by the end of the year (“What is the infected blood scandal and what compensation is there?,” *BBC*, 16 August 2024). Although monetary compensation may be a step in the right direction for a government that failed its citizens, the ruined trust cannot be purchased back.

Consider also the recent *Post Office scandal* that caused nationwide disruption. Computer software is only as good as its programming, and accounting software for the British postal system was found to be grievously error-prone, causing the false appearance of misconduct by postal workers. Not only did money incorrectly appear to go missing thanks to software glitches—hundreds of employees paid for the faulty software with their jobs! “More than 900 sub-postmasters were prosecuted for stealing because of incorrect information from the Horizon computer system” (“Post Office Horizon scandal: Why hundreds were wrongly prosecuted,” *BBC*, 30 July 2024). Many were even imprisoned because of their perceived “false accounting and theft,” and others were financially ruined.

Yet, for years, Post Office leadership—backed by politicians and cabinet members—refused to acknowledge the errors. Finally, in 2017, 555 former employees sued the Post Office and won. However, much of the £58 million in restitution was consumed by legal fees. By March of 2024, only 102 of the more than 900 cases had been overturned. Legislation was finally enacted in May 2024 to clear victims’ names and provide restitution, and the government has budgeted £1 billion for compensation. But this is widely seen as “too little, too late”—and experience tells us that the compensation will not restore trust in the government.

Trustworthy Government Will Soon Come

Sadly, years of cover-up and denial by government agencies and Cabinet members—people whose words and deeds should be exemplary enough to earn the nation’s trust—have resulted in an erosion of the nation’s faith in its leaders. And the Bible prophesies of this reality.

God warned that many of the leaders—“shepherds”—of the end-time Israelite-descended nations would take care of only themselves, instead of taking care of those they claim to serve (Ezekiel 34:1-4). He also warned against perversion of justice (Deuteronomy 24:17) and lamented that in these nations “truth is fallen in the street” (Isaiah 59:14). Yet God also warned that those who sin will not keep their sins secret forever (Numbers 32:23). National leaders set the example for morality in their nations (Isaiah 3:12), so it should not be surprising to see the sorry state of so many citizens’ morality.

The Bible makes clear that people who are led by unjust, lying, and self-serving leaders groan under such unrighteous leadership (Proverbs 29:2). Yet when righteous, just, and truthful leaders rule, “the people rejoice.” As our Western democracies speed down the path of immorality and self-centered rule, we can find solace in the reality that a better future is coming. The Bible foretells that Jesus Christ will return to the earth and rule over the nations in righteousness (Psalm 9:8). And all His work will be done in truth (Psalm 33:4).

That exciting future is coming! To learn more, read our inspiring booklet *The World Ahead: What Will It Be Like?* You can order your free printed copy from the Regional Office nearest you, listed on page 4 of this magazine, or read it online at TomorrowsWorld.org.

—Scott D. Winnail



Ancient Prophecies Are Coming Alive

By **Gerald E. Weston**

We find this bold statement in the biblical book of Isaiah: “Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure’” (Isaiah 46:9–10). What are we to make of this?

Fulfilled prophecy is one of the great proofs that the Bible is more than the work of men, and that it is truly what it claims to be—the word of God. Few today understand that what was written thousands of years ago explains geopolitical events in the twenty-first century. Yet that is exactly what we can see if we simply open our eyes.

It is estimated that as much as a third of the Bible is prophetic in nature. Some are vaguely familiar with the book of Revelation, though few understand it. Others recognize that Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel were prophets—but assume that all their writings were for the Jews of old. Nothing could be further from the truth, as many of their prophecies are for the days yet ahead—and they are hardly for the Jews alone, as this article will show.

Prophecy is found in nearly every book of the Old and New Testaments. Jesus foretold the future in His detailed Olivet Prophecy, recorded in three of the gospel accounts. The Apostles Paul and Peter spoke prophetically of end-time events. Jude, half-brother of Christ, wrote a short prophetic letter. Even the book of Psalms contains prophecy—check out Psalm 2 as one of many examples.

How many realize that the very first book of the Bible, Genesis, is full of prophecy—and that most of it is coming alive today? Written about 3,500 years ago,

it contains some of the most important and relevant prophecies for our day, helping us to make sense of our world.

Promises to Abraham’s Descendants

The book of Genesis introduces a particular man, Abram, in the context of promises—prophecies—given thousands of years before their fulfillment. God gave Abram this promise: “I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Genesis 12:2–3). Many professing Christians realize that the last part of that promise, the blessing for all the world’s families, foretold the coming Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. But there is obviously more to this passage. Notice that God told Abram that he would become a great nation, his name would be great, and that God would bless those who blessed him and curse those who cursed him. Those promises were not fulfilled in Christ or His Church. Rather, they have a far broader fulfillment.

The promises made to Abram, whose name was later changed to Abraham, were passed from one generation to another and expanded in detail. As for Abraham’s grandson Jacob, we read, “Also God said to him: ‘I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body’” (Genesis 35:11). While the promises made to Abraham clearly included the coming of Christ, it is equally clear to anyone with an open mind that those promises involved nations—specifically “a nation and a company of nations.” Were those merely nice-sounding words? Or was the God of Creation behind them? And, if He was, what do they mean? You need to know the answer. The truth is that it is *impossible* to make sense of what is happening in

our time today if you do not understand these promises that affect our modern world.

Near the end of Genesis, we learn the origins of the single nation and the company of nations that were to arise. As Bible students know, Jacob—whose name was changed to Israel—had twelve sons. His favorite son was Joseph, but jealousy incited Joseph’s brothers to sell him into slavery and deceive their father into thinking their brother had been killed by a wild beast.

Joseph ended up in Egypt, where he came to great prominence through a series of remarkable events. Years later, Israel learned the truth, meeting his son in Egypt in a truly tearful reunion. This is when we read of a highly profound prophecy. In a strange turn of events, Jacob—that is, Israel—adopted Joseph’s two sons as his own.

And now your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.... The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; let my name be named upon them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth (Genesis 48:5, 16).

Interesting—“a multitude in the midst of the earth.” Where is that multitude today? Did everyone in it die out? Or were they absorbed by the Jews, as many assume? In fact, these cannot be Jews, as the Jews are descendants of Joseph’s brother Judah. Remember, it was Judah who convinced his brothers that there was no profit in killing their brother Joseph.

After this, Jacob blessed Ephraim and Manasseh in an unusual ceremony, wherein he placed his hands on the head of each adopted son and foretold what would become of them. In doing so, he crossed his arms and placed on Ephraim his right hand, symbolizing the greater blessing—and placed his left hand on Manasseh. Joseph protested when he realized what was happening, thinking his father was making a mistake. “But his father refused and said, ‘I know, my son, I know. He [Manasseh] also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother [Ephraim] shall be greater than he, and his

descendants shall become a multitude of nations” (v. 19).

Here we have it: The promise given to Jacob years earlier—of a single great nation and a company of nations—now becomes clear. This promise would not be to the Jews, nor to Jacob’s firstborn Reuben, nor to any of his other sons. The promise of a great nation and a company of nations belonged to Joseph’s two sons. Some believe that the nation and company of nations came about when ten tribes split off from Judah and Benjamin, forming the house of Israel and the house of Judah, but this is incorrect. The promise of a great nation and a company of nations was never to the Jews, nor to any of the other tribes of Israel. It was only to the tribe of Joseph—specifically to his two sons. Why is it that so few understand this simple truth of Scripture?

“In the Last Days”

Before he died, Israel called all twelve of his sons together and foretold what would become of them in the last days—more than 3,700 years in the future. “And Jacob called his sons and said, ‘Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you *in the last days*: Gather together and hear, you sons of Jacob, and listen to Israel your father” (Genesis 49:1–2).

Israel went on to foretell what would become of the descendants of his twelve sons “in the last days.” These prophecies are not fulfilled by the Jews, except for the one given by Jacob to his son Judah. So, let us begin with that son. What did Jacob prophesy for the Jews at the end of the age?

Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; *your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies*; your father’s children shall bow down before you. *Judah is a lion’s whelp; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; and as a lion, who shall rouse him?* The scepter [rulership] shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh [Messiah] comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people (Genesis 49:8–10).

Did the Messiah not come from the Jews, just as foretold more than 1,700 years in advance? Let the

author of the book of Hebrews answer that: “For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood” (Hebrews 7:14). And will He not return in the near future?

Notice also that, in the last days, the Jews would wield great military power. Was this a lucky guess by Jacob? Or was it inspired by the same God who declares “the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done”? Let those who have eyes to see look at the Middle East today. Do not the Jews have their hands on the neck of their enemies? Are they best not provoked? Dear friends, this has not always been so—but it is today, at the *end of the age*.

Other prophecies have confirmed that there *would be* a Jewish state *in the latter days* with the Jews in control of Jerusalem. This was not the case for the better part of 1,900 years. Yet, today, we find Jerusalem as a thorny problem to all peoples, in the midst of a Jewish state with practically the whole world lined up against the Jews. “Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it” (Zechariah 12:2–3).

Note also that Zechariah confirms Jacob’s prophecy regarding the Jews’ military prowess in the latter days. “In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile, and like a fiery torch in the sheaves; they shall devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left, but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place—Jerusalem” (Zechariah 12:6). Zechariah 14 tells of how the whole world will line up against the Jews before the second coming of the Messiah. Open your Bible and read Zechariah 14 for yourself!



What About Reuben?

If Jacob’s promises for the Jews are accurate, what about some of the other end-time sons of Israel? There is not enough space in this article to cover them all, but of special note is Israel’s firstborn, Reuben. The birthright blessings of great national wealth and power, of a great nation and a company of nations, should have gone to Reuben—but they did not. Why not? Jacob explained: “Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power. Unstable as water, you shall not excel, because you went up to your father’s bed; then you defiled it—he went up to my couch” (Genesis 49:3–4). Several chapters earlier, we read of Reuben’s disqualifying sin: “And it happened, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father’s concubine; and Israel heard about it” (Genesis 35:22).

Yes, Reuben would have great dignity and power—but he was unstable and committed a great sin. These traits have carried through his descendants, with immense consequences explained in a passage of scripture that is almost universally neglected: “Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel—he was indeed the firstborn, but because he defiled his father’s bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph [Ephraim and Manasseh], the son of Israel, so that the genealogy is not listed according to the birthright; yet Judah prevailed over his brothers, and from him came a ruler [a line of kings culminating in the Messiah], although the birthright was Joseph’s” (1 Chronicles 5:1–2).

Are these no more than nice-sounding words with no significance for us today? Or can they help us fully understand “the latter days”? As already shown, these detailed prophecies for the Jews are being fulfilled at this very moment—some 3,700 years later! It is difficult for any informed person to deny this. So, what about Reuben? Where is he to be found at the end of the age?

Few today realize that the Jews are only a small part of Israel. And even fewer realize that the prophecies Israel (Jacob) made for his sons at the time of the end are to be taken seriously. Indeed, to disregard these facts is to disregard the validity of the Bible! Either these promises are true, or the Bible cannot be relied upon as the word of God. So, again, where is Reuben to be found in the world today?

France is known for “excellency of dignity... and power.” Look no further than Versailles and the Louvre. The country excels in culture, and many chefs go to school in France because French cuisine

cultural wealth described in Genesis 49:22–26 and Deuteronomy 33:13–17 would instead go to the sons of Joseph: Ephraim (the British-descended nations) and Manasseh (the Americans). “His [Reu-

OTHER PROPHECIES HAVE CONFIRMED THAT THERE WOULD BE A JEWISH STATE IN THE LATTER DAYS WITH THE JEWS IN CONTROL OF JERUSALEM. THIS WAS NOT THE CASE FOR THE BETTER PART OF 1,900 YEARS. YET, TODAY, WE FIND JERUSALEM AS A THORNY PROBLEM TO ALL PEOPLES, IN THE MIDST OF A JEWISH STATE WITH PRACTICALLY THE WHOLE WORLD LINED UP AGAINST THE JEWS.

ben’s] birthright was given to the sons of Joseph [Ephraim and Manasseh].” And what was it that was given to Joseph’s sons? A great nation and a great company of nations!

The opening ceremonies for the 2024 Paris Olympics illustrated what Jacob foretold about Reuben—instability and loose sexual values. Many were appalled by the seeming parody of Leonardo de Vinci’s

is renowned throughout the world. The 2024 Paris Olympics reminded us that they know how to put on a show (more about that in a minute). But what about “power”? France was a major colonizing power, along with the British, Spanish, and Dutch. Napoleon ruled over much of Europe for a short time. And today, the French military is believed to be the fourth-largest in the world, only behind Russia, the United States, and China. Yet France has never attained the greatness of the British-descended and American peoples—never came close to English or American supremacy. When it came to direct confrontations, France often ended up in second place, whether at Waterloo (ending Napoleon’s attempt to control Europe) or the Plains of Abraham (a decisive battle that eventually led the French to cede eastern Canada to the British).

At the same time, France has had an affinity with Britain and especially with America. The French helped America during its revolution against the English. It was France who gave America the Statue of Liberty. And Britain and America came to the aid of France in two world wars. Conflicts *between* these countries have involved who is to be on top, and Britain and America usually end up as “king of the hill.” The promise of great power and agri-

Last Supper, depicted in Paris with blasphemous and sexual license—as was seen in other aspects of the opening ceremonies. Of all the northwestern nations of Europe, France uniquely fulfills Israel’s prophecy of the tribe of Reuben in the latter days.

What About Joseph?

Jacob’s latter-day prophecies regarding his twelve sons are generally quite short—only a sentence or two—but he gives much space to Joseph, the recipient of the birthright promises. We have focused on Judah and Reuben, but the promises to Judah are *highly* significant because they foretell that the Messiah would come from his tribe and that at Christ’s Second Coming He will save the end-time Jewish state—and, in fact, all of mankind— from total destruction. Reuben is significant because he *should* have received the birthright promises of national wealth through a great nation and a company of nations, but he was disqualified. So now we come to the tribe that was given those birthright promises: Joseph. Here is how Scripture describes the tribe of Joseph “in the latter days”:

Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well; his branches run over the wall [he

will spread out over the earth]. The archers have bitterly grieved him, shot at him and hated him [he will have many enemies]. But his bow remained in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob (from there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), by the God of your father who will help you, and by the Almighty who will bless you with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. The blessings of your father have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers (Genesis 49:22–26).

Just as Jacob prophesied regarding his twelve sons, so did Moses—and Moses, too, went on to spend more time describing the birthright blessings that were to go not to Reuben, nor to the Jews, but to their brother Joseph, of whom he said this:

Blessed of the LORD is his land, with the precious things of heaven, with the dew, and the deep lying beneath, with the precious fruits of the sun, with the precious produce of the months, with the best things of the ancient mountains, with the precious things of the everlasting hills, with the precious things of the earth and its fullness, and the favor of Him who dwelt in the bush. Let the blessing come ‘on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers.’ His glory is like a firstborn bull, and his horns like the horns of the wild ox; together with them he shall push the peoples to the ends of the earth (Deuteronomy 33:13–17).

It is difficult not to recognize the British-descended and American peoples in this description

of unmatched natural wealth. And if we are to look for two brothers whose descendants would make up a single great nation and a company of nations—anywhere in history, much less at the time of the end—who else could possibly fit this description? We often refer to the British and Americans as “cousins,” but “brothers” is a more suitable designation. Who was it that pushed their enemies to the ends of the earth at the close of World War II? Who else has experienced such abundant agricultural and mineral wealth as, not only Americans, but also the British-descended peoples of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa?

Sadly, all of Jacob’s sons have squandered God’s blessings, rejected Him as their Creator, turned their backs on His laws, and despised His statutes. The result is disaster for His birthright people, as well as for the other sons of Jacob (Leviticus 26:14–39). “The alien who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower” (Deuteronomy 28:43). Are we so blind that we cannot see this happening before our very eyes? It is no accident that the Israelite nations see millions of illegal immigrants inhabiting their lands.

For more on this subject, order a free copy of *The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy*. It covers far more detail than this article can in the space allowed. These prophecies are there for anyone who has enough curiosity to look into them and eyes to see the obvious. As our world plummets into disaster, the prophecies contained in Scripture show us more than just the anxieties of the past—they show us nothing less than history written in advance.

The same God who once powerfully asserted that He declares the end from the beginning is, even now, guiding world events according to His unchangeable plan. If we are to understand where our world is heading—if we are to have any certainty at all of what our nations will be faced with in the coming days—we have no choice but to embrace the importance of these prophecies. Ours is a time of global upheaval, and in such times, recognizing the relevance of God’s inspired word is more vital than ever, as is truly seeking to know God’s purpose for mankind. TM

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What Should We Do About Christmas?

By **Rod McNair**

Many people know the pagan origins of the ubiquitous Christmas holiday—origins that are not at all hidden. In fact, when Christmas comes around each year, we usually see articles or blog posts explaining where these traditions came from. If you have been a *Tomorrow's World* subscriber for a while, you probably remember Mr. Wallace Smith's "Is Christmas a Pagan Holiday?" from our December 2021 issue—and, if you're a new subscriber, you can still read it online at *TomorrowsWorld.org*.

It may not come as a shock to you that there are Christians who choose not to keep Christmas. You may be one of them. You might have come to that decision through your own study—maybe the pagan origins of Christmas caused you to think twice about keeping it. If so, you're not alone.

But, of course, the vast majority of people in Western nations still keep Christmas. According to Gallup, 93 percent of Americans celebrate Christmas in one way or another, whether religious or secular—a figure that has been more or less consistent for decades ("What Percentage of Americans Celebrate Christmas?," *News.Gallup.com*, December 23, 2019). In Great Britain as well, 93 percent of people celebrate the Christmas season, and in Canada, 92 percent do so ("Christmas and New Year's Survey amongst 1,000 British people reveals habits," *Statista.com*, December 18, 2019; "In Canada, Christmas traditions change as

fewer people see religion as the reason for the season," *AngusReid.org*, December 19, 2019).

And many of these celebrants know that the origins of Christmas are not Christian at all. You probably do, as well. If you're not sure, just look it up in virtually any encyclopedia or relevant online article. For example, here's a quote from the online *Encyclopædia Britannica*: "In ancient Rome, December 25 was a celebration of the Unconquered Sun, marking the return of longer days. It followed Saturnalia, a festival where people feasted and exchanged gifts. The church in Rome began celebrating Christmas on December 25 in the 4th century during the reign of Constantine" ("Does Christmas have pagan roots?," *Britannica.com*, December 6, 2020).

As *Britannica* reveals, feasting and exchanging gifts on December 25 were among the many pagan customs observed under the Roman Empire. And this date was only adopted in the fourth century by what had become the mainstream "Christian" church—hundreds of years after Christ's ministry.

Though December 25 is the day Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the date itself and several of the customs we've come to associate with Christmas actually evolved from pagan traditions celebrating the winter solstice. "Christmas is really about *bringing out your inner pagan*," historian Kenneth C. Davis told "CBS This Morning." According to Davis, Christmas was celebrated as early

as the fourth century, suggesting that it had *almost nothing to do with Jesus Christ* (“The unexpected origins of popular Christmas traditions,” *CBSNews.com*, December 25, 2018, emphasis added).

These are remarkable quotes—but, again, they probably don’t surprise you, especially if you are a regular reader of this magazine. Even if you’re not, you’ve probably already seen articles and videos elsewhere explaining the pagan origins of the Christmas traditions. These facts are not kept secret.

Most people don’t find the origins of Christmas surprising. For most, the bigger question is, *Why does it matter?* Should anyone even care where Christmas traditions came from? After all, isn’t the big issue about honoring Christ—and aren’t the other details trivial?

Easy Rationalizations

Most people who know the origins of Christmas have rationalized to themselves why they should still keep it. “Well, it’s not really a religious observance,” you may hear. “It’s just a fun, relaxed social event to enjoy with friends and family.” That’s what a lot of people think. A 2017 survey found that while 82 percent of Americans planned to gather with family or friends on Christmas Day, just 46 percent considered the day more of a religious holiday than a cultural observance (“Americans Say Religious Aspects of Christmas Are Declining,” *PewResearch.org*, December 12, 2017). That was a drop of 5 percent from just four years earlier, when a slight majority said they saw Christmas as more of a religious holiday. The trend is that more and more people are seeing Christmas as primarily—or entirely—a social and secular observance.

On the other hand, many of those who *are* religious are well aware that the origins of Christmas are pagan, but convince themselves that this isn’t a problem, arguing, *As long as I do it for Christ, it’s okay*.

But *is it okay?* Does this line of reasoning even make sense? As one British website reminds us, “Christmas makes no sense... the basic facts of the annual ritual just seem to defy logic and meaning. What do brightly lit trees and mistletoe have to do with the birth of a prophet in Bethlehem thousands of years ago? What does a jolly, portly man in red and white

garb have to do with Christianity? What’s the meaning behind the Yule log?... Many people have a general inkling about the way old pagan traditions and celebrations fed into Christmas as we know it today” (“The Pagan Roots of Christmas,” *History.co.uk*).

Indeed, many people really *do* know that the roots of Christmas are pagan—but they keep it anyway. What about you? What should *you* do about Christmas?

To answer that question, let’s break it down to two other fundamental questions—the first being, *Does God condone lying to children?*

The Lies of Christmas

Everyone knows that Santa Claus does not really come down chimneys on Christmas Eve—everyone, that is, except millions of children. Thalia Goldstein, assistant professor of applied developmental psychology at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia, notes that about 85 percent of American 5-year-olds believe that Santa is real. “Children’s belief in Santa starts when they’re between 3 and 4 years old,” she writes. “It’s very strong when they’re between about 4 and 8. Then, at 8 years old is when we start to see the drop-off in belief, when children start to understand the reality of Santa Claus” (“How many kids still believe in Santa?,” *CNN.com*, December 19, 2017).

What about children outside the United States? According to an international survey led by Professor Chris Boyle of the University of Exeter in the UK, “the average age when children stopped believing in Father Christmas was eight. A third of those surveyed also reporting feeling upset when they discovered Santa wasn’t real, while 15% had felt betrayed by their parents and 10% felt angry. Around a third (30%) also said that their trust in adults had been affected by their belief in Father Christmas” (“Here’s what age most kids stop believing in Santa,” *The Sunday Times*, December 6, 2020).

But Santa isn’t the only myth. There is no real evidence that December 25 is the date of Christ’s birth. In fact, Luke 2:8 records that the shepherds were out in the fields at the time of His birth—which would never have happened in the rainy and cold winter months.

And what about the Christmas story of three kings from the east visiting the baby Jesus in the

manger? That’s nowhere in the Bible—at least not the way the popular story tells it. Scripture calls them wise men, not kings, and doesn’t reveal how many there were. It even says that “when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother” (Matthew 2:11). In context, we see that Jesus was at least a year old when the wise men met Him—and He was definitely not in a manger at the time.

Yes, the many Christmas traditions are riddled with errors and outright lies. Yet Scripture tells us that God cannot lie (Titus 1:2). So, with an open mind, ask yourself, *Would God really be behind such a fictionalized tradition? Would He condone millions of parents telling their children outright lies and convoluted myths about His Son?*

Consider that the Apostle John tells us, “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral,

Santa is fictional (University of Texas at Dallas News Center, December 6, 2023).

Mills is one of many scholars who believe that when children learn that the people around them have been lying about Santa, “their reactions are generally quite positive” and that “they understand that even parents get joy out of the Santa myth.” From this perspective, the Santa myth is just one of many, as belief in various other myths and falsehoods “doesn’t necessarily disappear when we grow up” (“Don’t Stop Believing,” *Psychology Today*, December 6, 2021).

But stop and think for a moment. Has someone ever lied to you? How did you feel? When you found out, did it affect your ability to trust? Even if it was for a so-called “good reason,” did it make you cautious the next time the liar told you something? If being lied to affects us in such a way as adults, can we really believe that it does not affect our children?

I hope you are seeing that what’s good for your children is teaching them *truth* and being *truthful*.

And what is the foundation of truth? *God’s word* is truth (John 17:17). By contrast, Jesus revealed a powerful lying spirit behind the Pharisees:

THE SECOND FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION: DOES GOD EVER SAY THAT WE CAN KEEP ANY DAY AS LONG AS WE HONOR CHRIST? SOME MAKE THIS CLAIM TO EXPLAIN THEIR HOLDING ONTO CHRISTMAS DESPITE ITS OBVIOUS ERROR. ARE THEY RIGHT? IS CHRISTMAS ACCEPTABLE AS LONG AS WE USE IT “TO HONOR CHRIST”?

sorcerers, idolaters, and *all liars* shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death” (Revelation 21:7–8).

So, who is standing up and warning parents to stop the lies of Christmas? Almost no one. Instead, we have “experts” like psychology professor Candice Mills, who explains, “Parents should keep in mind that most people, when reflecting on their childhood, decide that they want to celebrate Santa with their own kids—about 87 percent to 95 percent, in fact. They found something valuable about the experience and want to pass it on.” Mills believes that children benefit from discovering for themselves the truth that

“You are of your father the devil,” He said, “and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it” (John 8:44).

Satan the Devil is the father of lying, and we shouldn’t want any part of him—and that means not taking part in traditions that, no matter how we sugarcoat them, are based on lies. The Apostle Paul drew a sharp contrast between those who follow truth and those who do not, saying that “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and

unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness... who exchanged the truth of God for the lie” (Romans 1:18, 25).

We can be either for the truth or for the lie. We are either seeking to live God’s way of truth—following His Spirit and becoming conformed to His righteousness—or we are living the way of the lie, following errors and falsehoods that often masquerade as happy traditions and holidays. We must decide whether we will pass on truth or error to our children.

Let Scripture speak for itself—nowhere in the Bible will you find God telling you to do something deceitful, dishonest, or in support of error. That should tell us what to do about Christmas.

God Decides How We Worship Him

Let’s move on to our second fundamental question: *Does God ever say that we can keep a pagan holiday if we use it to honor Christ?* Some make this claim to explain their holding onto Christmas despite its obvious error. Are they right? Is Christmas acceptable as long as we use it “to honor Christ”?

We find some powerful principles in the Bible that give us the guidance we need. One is in the history of ancient Israel, whom God led out of Egyptian slavery thousands of years ago. Before the Israelites entered what was called the Promised Land, God gave them a serious warning not to pollute His worship with the worship practices of the nations around them. “Take heed,” God said, “that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.’ You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way” (Deuteronomy 12:30–31).

Notice that the principle is not only *Don’t worship idols*—it’s *Don’t worship the true God with idolatrous practices*. That is an important detail! Sadly, in the history of mainstream “Christianity,” this is exactly what happened: Worship of Christ was mixed with pagan traditions. Author Stephen Nissenbaum notes, “It was only in the fourth century that the Church officially decided to observe Christmas on December 25. And this date was chosen not for religious reasons but simply because it happened to mark the approximate arrival of the winter solstice, an event that was celebrated long before the advent of Christianity” (*The Battle for Christmas*, 1996, p. 4). The early Christians lived among people who were observing

days such as the winter solstice. Over time, there was tremendous peer pressure for Christians to conform to the pagans—which most did, instead of expecting pagans to conform to the standard of the Bible.

Nissenbaum continues, “The Puritans were correct when they pointed out—and they pointed it out often—that Christmas was nothing but a pagan festival covered with a Christian veneer.” He then refers to Puritan minister Increase Mather, who lived in the early days of colonial America and “accurately observed in 1687 that the early Christians who first observed the Nativity on December 25 did not do so ‘thinking that Christ was born in that Month, but because the Heathens Saturnalia was at that time kept in Rome, and they were willing to have those Pagan Holidays metamorphosed into Christian’” (p. 4).

No, Christmas was not put on December 25 to reflect the birth of Christ. Rather, it was put there to co-opt keepers of Saturnalia and easily bring them into the church—precisely the opposite of God’s own instructions in Deuteronomy. The expanding mainstream church had to find some way to deal with the traditions of the pagans around them, and it chose to accommodate them. Indeed, “most of the Christian missionaries who moved into Central and Western Europe as the Roman Empire crumbled, followed the advice of [Pope] Gregory the Great. He wrote, in 597, that they should not try to put down pagan customs ‘upon the sudden,’ but adapt them ‘to the praise of God’” (*The Pageantry of Christmas*, 1963, p. 10).

That’s why we see the strange mix of pagan rituals and lip service to Christ in Christmas today. But is that what God wanted? Notice His clear instruction:

Hear the word which the LORD speaks to you, O house of Israel. Thus says the LORD; “Do not learn the way of the Gentiles.... For the customs of the peoples are futile; for one cuts a tree from the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the ax. They decorate it with silver and gold; they fasten it with nails and hammers so that it will not topple. They are upright, like a palm tree” (Jeremiah 10:1–5).

These remarkable parallels with Christmas customs jump right off the page. Through Jeremiah,

God specifically told ancient Israel *not* to learn how to worship Him by watching how the nations around them worshipped. But in the “Christian era,” that’s exactly what so many did—they transformed the worship of Christ by mixing it with the worship of Saturn, Mithra, and others.

Some will quote Scripture to claim that it’s acceptable to keep any day you like, including Christmas, as long as you honor Christ: “One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it” (Romans 14:5–6).

But does this really mean we can keep any day if we call it by Christ’s name? We’ve just read what God thinks about mixing pagan practices with His teachings—and He does *not* like it. Does it then make sense that we could, from this one passage of Scripture in Romans, conclude that we can just take any day we want and make it holy time for honoring God?

Not at all. What Paul was addressing in Romans 14 was how people sometimes keep traditions by which they treat certain days differently from others. Specifically, he was talking about two different issues that had become controversial: avoiding meat that may have come from pagan temples and keeping specific fast days that were not commanded in the Scriptures. The Jews had many traditional fast days and still do. Romans 14 has nothing to do with whether we should adopt pagan practices and call them Christian.

God determines what is holy time. He determines what days we keep to honor Him. Jesus said He is the “Lord of the Sabbath” (Luke 6:5), so we cannot overrule our Lord by changing His weekly—or annual—days of worship.

Jesus also said that “the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him” (John 4:23). As defined by the Bible, truth is *God’s standard*—not human traditions or customs. When we show honor to God, we must do so His way—and that includes keeping the days on which He wants us to honor Him.


The Better Way

So, what should we do about Christmas? We should accept God’s offer of something *better*. We don’t need to settle for a festival steeped in pagan traditions. We can be different. In Leviticus 23, God outlines His annual Festivals, which teach us about Him and His plan of salvation: Passover, the Days of Unleavened Bread, the Day of Pentecost, the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Last Great Day.

Paul took the Gospel message primarily to a Gentile world, and the brethren he worked with and wrote to were coming out of pagan practices. Many people in the Roman world of the first century were keeping the Saturnalia, worshipping Mithra and other false gods. They had to come out of these practices to become part of the body of Christ, the Church of God—and Paul had to encourage them not to fall back into their old customs.

Notice what he wrote to the congregation in Colossae: “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ” (Colossians 2:16–17, *King James Version*). Notice the word “is” in verse 17. Though most English translations include it, it isn’t present in the original Greek. Translators added it because of their doctrinal biases. What the verse actually says is that the body of Christ—His Church, not the world around us—should judge our observances. And those observances should not include pagan holidays. (For further clarification, request a free copy of *Law or Grace: Which Is It?* from the Regional Office nearest you, listed on page 4 of this magazine, or read it online at TomorrowsWorld.org.)

So, don’t let the world judge you for walking away from Christmas—for replacing the traditions of man with the ways of God. Don’t be discouraged. Your friends and relatives may not like it, but God is looking for those who are willing to follow Him *no matter what*.

Christmas does not lead us to truth. Instead, it obscures the truth. It’s not enough to know the origins of Christmas—we must *act* on what we know. That means following the truth—and that’s what we should do about Christmas. 

MAY WE
SUGGEST?

Is Christmas Christian? Find out more about how Christmas is truly Christ-less! Request this **free** printed booklet from the Regional Office nearest you, or order at TomorrowsWorld.org. PDF, ePub, and Kindle are also available.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Who is the prophet of Deuteronomy 18?

Question: Deuteronomy 18:18 tells of an unnamed prophet whom God would use to proclaim His message. Some Muslims say this refers to Muhammad, while others say it points to Joseph Smith or even various contemporary Christian leaders. Many Jews think it is a reference to Elijah or Jeremiah. How should we understand this verse?

Answer: Not only is this plainly a prophecy of Jesus Christ—it is also a warning against preachers who claim falsely to be prophets:

“I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him. But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.” And if you say in your heart, “How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?”—when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him (Deuteronomy 18:18–22).

This passage describes a prophet who would be like Moses, sharing similar characteristics and a divine mission. The New Testament clearly demonstrates that Jesus Christ is the prophet spoken of in Deuteronomy 18; no one else can fulfill the requirements of that prophecy.

Moses and Jesus were born during times of oppression—Moses when the Israelites were slaves in Egypt, and Jesus during Roman occupation of Israel. Pharaoh ordered the murder of Hebrew infants during Moses’ infancy, while King Herod ordered the murder of infants in Bethlehem after Jesus’ birth. Moses led the Israelites out of physical slavery in Egypt, while Jesus leads His true disciples out of the spiritual cap-

tivity of sin. Large numbers of people were fed during the ministries of both Moses and Jesus.

Both Moses and Jesus received and delivered foundational revelations under divine authority; Moses received the law of God, which laid the foundation for the Old Testament, while Jesus brought the teachings that form the foundation of the New Testament. Jesus stated, “I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak” (John 12:49–50). This confirms that Jesus spoke the words given to Him by God, fulfilling the prophecy of Deuteronomy 18.

New Testament Testimonies

The New Testament gives us further evidence that Jesus is the fulfillment of this prophecy. In Acts 3:20–23, the Apostle Peter speaks to the crowd after healing a lame man and quotes Moses’ prophecy, clearly identifying Jesus as the prophet Moses spoke about. Similarly, Stephen, in his final sermon before being martyred, also testifies that Jesus is the prophet mentioned by Moses (Acts 7).

The strongest evidence comes from Jesus Himself, who said the following:

Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you—Moses, in whom you trust. For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words? (John 5:45–47).

Jesus directly affirms that Moses wrote about Him, further indicating that He is the fulfillment of the prophecy Deuteronomy 18 records.

Scripture unequivocally shows that Jesus Christ is the prophet spoken of in Deuteronomy 18. Neither Muhammad nor Joseph Smith—nor any present-day claimants—fulfill this prophecy. Only Jesus Christ meets all the requirements described, and He alone is the prophet like Moses who brought a foundational revelation from God. TM

Anarchy: Gaza Follows Haiti

For more than a year, Haiti’s law enforcement system has been in shambles. Despite police assistance from Kenya and monetary and military hardware aid from the United States and the United Nations, the situation in Haiti is far from being under control (*Reuters*, September 3, 2024). Aid has been slow to arrive, leaving security forces struggling against gangs and losing hope. Five or more children die every week due to gang warfare (*The Guardian*, August 23, 2024).

On the other side of the Atlantic, as Israel dismantles Hamas, Palestinian crime families that Hamas once kept at bay are resurfacing (*The Times*, August 19, 2024). Residents hear frequent gunfire in their neighborhoods—not fighting between Hamas and Israeli troops, but between Palestinian gangs. When Hamas took over, it moved powerful Palestinian clans to the side but allowed them to keep their weapons. According to a source in Gaza, Hamas made an agreement with these large clans—each with a minimum of 3,000 men—that they would not use their weapons against each other. But with Hamas mostly gone, these clans are fighting again. As one humanitarian aid worker noted, “The fabric of society has been ripped apart,” and Palestinian clans are now helping to destroy the remaining shreds of their society.

Without the guidance of God’s Spirit and the moral compass of His law, people may take care of their friends and families but are often willing to subjugate everyone else. The Apostle James observed, “Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?” (James 4:1). There is a solution to the situations in Haiti, Gaza, Myanmar, and many other nations around the globe that are currently self-destructing. That solution is the return of Jesus Christ!

Australia Dusting Off Old Air Bases

Rising tensions in the Pacific are stirring nations to act. “Across Australia, decades-old facilities—many built by the United States during World War II—are being dusted off or upgraded amid growing fears of another global conflict” (*The Washington Post*, August 24, 2024). Government officials say these efforts are not for offense but for “deterrence.” The U.S. Secretary of Defense says these efforts will assist in promoting “greater peace, stability, and deterrence across the region.” He also touted the “unbreakable alliance” between Australia and the United States. Critics have begun to accuse Australia of becoming America’s “51st state.”

At only 2,000 miles away, the Australian air bases are strategically close to many flashpoints in the South China

Sea and can project additional power throughout the region. Australia also plans to upgrade three other bases in the north and a base in the Indian Ocean to monitor Chinese naval activity. America is working with Australia on these projects, as well as providing money and eventually aircraft that will be located at several of the bases. The U.S. is also working to refurbish some of its own bases in the South Pacific—bases that were critical steppingstones during the Second World War (*Forbes*, April 10, 2024).

The winds of war are growing in Europe and the Pacific—the two major theaters of World War II. Nations that have been militarily quiet for the last 80 years now feel threatened by Russian and Chinese aggression and are preparing for a rapid response.

The World’s Economic Engine Is Slowing

As Europe’s manufacturing sector struggles, new German data is sobering. *The Telegraph* reports that German employment rates are falling at their fastest rate in four years, and manufacturing orders are being further cut (August 22, 2024)—and now the service sector is starting to slow.

Meanwhile, America’s drastically revised non-farm payroll numbers, the worst numbers seen since the Lehman Brothers collapse in 2008, paint a far different picture from what has been assumed. Economists now expect a series of interest rate cuts in the months ahead, as the

U.S. Federal Reserve works to stave off recession. And while European and U.S. economies slow, news from China is worse as the nation sinks deeper into depression. New home starts, the engine of China’s economy for decades, have dropped by 63 percent from their high—a greater property bust than Japan experienced in the 1990s. This home-building collapse is the major reason iron ore prices have crashed. China is using global trade to generate more revenue, but as it undercuts global competitors, it is forcing factories out of business (*Wall Street Journal*, August 22, 2024). Some economists fear a new global trade war is coming.

Many are concerned about the financial future of the world and wonder if there is a nation that could serve as an economic savior. The Bible foretells that a German-led European “beast” power may come to the globe’s rescue. The Apostle John prophesied that at the end of the age, “the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury” (Revelation 18:3). Germany’s strength may be questionable now, but Bible prophecy indicates that this will change!

Thousands of Toxic UK Landfills

A recent study in the *British Medical Journal* found that there are over 21,000 historic landfills across Britain that contain unknown substances (*The Guardian*, June 28, 2024). For decades, the standard way to

dispose of toxic chemicals was known as “dilute and disperse.” This meant that politicians and planners would take industrial and domestic waste, “stick it in a hole in the ground, cover it up and hope for the best.” According to the study, “80 percent of the British population lives within 2km of a functioning or closed landfill site.”

Many currently active and now-abandoned landfills are found in highly populated areas of the United Kingdom, and many of these sites leach “forever chemicals,” methane gas, and other banned chemicals into the environment. Methane gas exposure can “lead to mood changes, slurred speech, vision problems, memory loss, nausea, vomiting, facial flushing and headaches”—and even worse symptoms in some. Of particular concern are landfill sites located in floodplains and along ocean shores, where exposure to water will spread these dangerous poisons farther afield. Many toxic landfills

have been converted to green spaces and parks because permits to build on top of these sites are not attainable.

The UK is not alone in having toxic landfills. Many nations around the world face the same problem, and the toxic effects of leached chemicals are seen in humans, insects, and animals. While our modern civilization has given us many marvelous advances, we have also created dangerous poisons that will impact the environment and human life for decades to come. However, the Bible foretells that a time of refreshing and restoration will arrive when Jesus Christ returns and begins resolving these deadly problems (Acts 3:19–21).

You Can't Hide from Microplastics

According to a study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, nanoplastics are now found in human arterial plaque (*Science News*, April 2, 2024). According to this study, those

with nanoplastic particles were nearly four times as likely to experience stroke, heart attack, or death over a three-year period! A University of Louisville cardiovascular researcher who reviewed the study noted that “very, very, very few things have that much of a risk.” While evidence is still lacking that conclusively proves these plastics cause terrible diseases, the circumstantial evidence is rapidly mounting.

The extensive use of plastics in our throw-away society is well known, and tiny plastic particles have been found in the depths of the oceans and on the tallest mountains. As we dispose of plastic waste, we contribute tiny particles of plastic to the contamination of water supplies.

Humanity, with all its advancements, continues to create products that pollute every aspect of God's creation, and there appears to be no end in sight to these man-made health threats. However, the Bible reveals that there is a better, safer, healthier time coming—Jesus Christ will return to deliver the whole creation from the “bondage of corruption” that is causing so much suffering today (Romans 8:18–22).

Rise of the Weimar Triangle

In 1991, France, Germany, and Poland created a regional alliance they dubbed the “Weimar Triangle” (*Deutsche Welle*, June 27, 2024), but it has not been particularly active. Now, with the guns of war again blazing

on Europe's edges, this regional alliance has been given new life. “In March, Emmanuel Macron, Olaf Scholz and Donald Tusk met in Berlin to renew the Weimar format and primarily discussed working together in supporting Ukraine.”

In a late-June meeting in Paris, Defense Ministers from the three countries of the triangle announced concrete plans to improve NATO's strength should the United States be unable or unwilling to assist in a future confrontation. The three leaders announced plans to procure long-range cruise missiles that can strike weapons-manufacturing sites deep within Russia should a war break out. They also announced plans for joint military exercises between their nations to occur in Poland next year. These military exercises will prepare for a potential attack from Russia on NATO's eastern flank.

Many commentators have speculated that a “core” of European nations may eventually break ranks with the larger, politically cumbersome European Union in order to make real progress with defense and other areas. Could the Weimar Triangle group make such a move and be joined by others?

Bible prophecy foretells that a European “beast” power will emerge to lead Europe just before the return of Jesus Christ. This beast power will eventually be composed of ten “kings” who will be willing to work together for a time to accomplish a common goal (Revelation 17:12). TW

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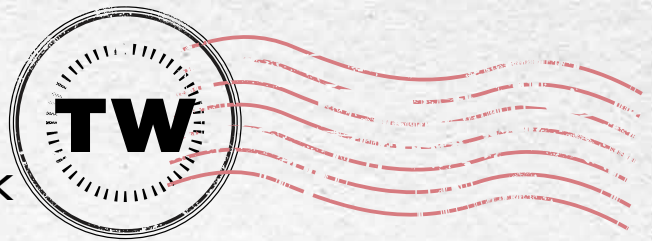
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magazine and the *Bible Study Course* lessons and free literature.

—Subscriber in Nigeria

I am saddened to hear about the passing of Mr. Richard Ames. There have been some people in my life, even though I never met them personally, who have touched me deeply. Herbert W. Armstrong and Richard Ames are two of these people. I and others will surely miss him.

—Subscriber in Oklahoma

I'm sorry to hear about Mr. Ames. In many ways, he will be with us always. We have him in literature, on DVDs, even old VCR tapes as far back as the early 1990s. But most of all, we have him in our memories and in the coming resurrection. He was definitely "a good and faithful servant" and will be again.

—Subscriber in Massachusetts

I was so sorry to hear of Mr. Ames' death. I sure will miss him. I want to thank you for teaching me. Most churches don't teach about Jesus coming back and the Kingdom. I am now 93 years old and God is blessing me to have a right mind.

—Subscriber in Virginia

Just a brief note to express my heartfelt gratitude for all your help in preparing me for my role in God's soon-coming Kingdom. I consider your wonderful ministry to be one of God's greatest blessings of the modern era.

—Subscriber in Iowa

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Mail your letters to "Letters to the Editor" at one of the Regional Offices listed on page 4 of this magazine, or send email to Letters@TomorrowsWorld.org. Letters may be edited for space and clarity.

TOMORROW'S WORLD

TELEVISION LOG



AUSTRALIA

Nationwide 7TWO SU 7:00 a.m.
Nationwide 9GEM SA 8:30 a.m.

BARBADOS

St. Michael CBC 8 SU 2:00 p.m.

JAMAICA

Kingston TVJ SU 7:00 a.m.

Fiji

Nationwide Mai TV SU 5:00 p.m.

NEW ZEALAND

Nationwide TVNZ2 SU 5:00 a.m.
Nationwide TVNZ2 +1 SU 6:00 a.m.

SOUTH AFRICA

Nationwide CTV/SA SU 11:30 a.m.

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

Nationwide CNC3-TV SU 8:00 a.m.

UK & NW EUROPE

WORD (TWN) Sky TV 590 SU 11:00 a.m.
Sky TV 590 SU 12:30 a.m.
Sky TV 590 FR 12:00 a.m.



CANADA

Nationwide Networks (All times Eastern)	
Vision	SA 3:30 a.m.
Faith TV	SU 5:30 p.m. MO-FR 10:30 p.m. TU 5:00 p.m.
CHNU	MO-FR 10:00 p.m.
CTV (Maritimes)	SU 7:30 a.m.
CTV (Alberta)	SU 1:30 p.m.

UNITED STATES

Nationwide Networks (All times Eastern)	
Binge	SU 9:00 a.m.
Charge Network	SU 7:30 a.m.
COMET	SU 7:30 a.m.
The CW Plus	SU 8:00 a.m. MO 2:00 a.m.
Faith TV USA	SU 8:00 a.m.
getTV	SU 7:00 a.m.
Impact TV	SU 8:30 a.m. SU 11:00 p.m. MO 10:30 p.m. SA 11:00 p.m.
Positiv TV (POSI)	SU 8:30 a.m.
Rewind	SU 9:00 a.m.
The Word Network	SU 6:00 a.m. SU 7:30 p.m. FR 7:00 p.m.
DISH Network* (All times Eastern)	
Impact	Ch. 268 SU 11:00 p.m. MO 10:30 p.m.
DIRECTV* (All times Eastern)	
Word	Ch. 373 SU 6:00 a.m. SU 7:30 p.m. FR 7:00 p.m.

For the most up-to-date listings, please go to TomorrowsWorld.org/tune-in

AK Anchorage KYUR SU 6:00 a.m. Anchorage KTBV SU 6:30 a.m. Fairbanks KATN SU 7:00 a.m. Juneau KJUD SU 6:00 a.m.	AL DOTHAN WTVY (CW) SU 7:00 a.m. Huntsville WZDX SU 9:30 a.m. Montgomery WBMM (CW) SU 7:00 a.m. Opelika WLIZ SU 7:30 a.m.	AR El Dorado KNOE SU 7:00 a.m. Fayetteville KHOG SU 7:00 a.m. Fort Smith KFTA SU 10:00 a.m. Fort Smith KHBS SU 7:00 a.m. Jonesboro KAIT SU 7:00 a.m. Little Rock KASN SU 10:30 a.m.	AZ Tucson KMSB SU 8:30 a.m.
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Yuma KEYC (CW) SU 9:00 a.m.	CA Bakersfield KGET (CW) SU 8:00 a.m. Chico KHSL (CW) SU 8:00 a.m. El Centro KEYC (CW) SU 9:00 a.m. Eureka KECA-LD/KVII (CW) SU 8:00 a.m. Monterey KION (CW) SU 8:00 a.m. Palm Springs KCWQ (CW) SU 8:00 a.m. Salinas KION (CW) SU 8:00 a.m. San Francisco BAVC (Public Access) WE 8:00 a.m. San Luis Obispo KSBY (CW) SU 8:00 a.m. Santa Barbara KSBY (CW) SU 8:00 a.m. Santa Maria KSBY (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.	CO Colorado Springs KXTU (CW) SU 8:00 a.m. Grand Junction KJCT (CW) SU 7:00 a.m.	CT Hartford WWLP (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.	DC Washington DC WDCA SU 7:30 a.m.	DE Harrington WMDT (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.	FL Ft. Lauderdale WBFS SU 6:30 a.m. Gainesville WCJB SU 6:00 a.m. Gainesville WCJB (CW) SU 8:00 a.m. Jacksonville WCWJ SU 6:30 a.m. Miami WBFS SU 6:30 a.m. Panama City WCEP SU 7:30 a.m. Panama City WJHG (CW) SU 7:00 a.m. Tallahassee WTLF SU 8:00 a.m. Tampa Bay WTOG SU 8:00 a.m.	GA Albany WALB (CW) SU 8:00 a.m. Albany WALB SU 11:00 a.m. Atlanta WATL SU 10:00 a.m. Augusta WAGT (CW) SU 8:00 a.m. Columbus WLTV (CW) SU 8:00 a.m. Macon WMAZ SU 8:00 a.m. Savannah WSAV SU 8:00 a.m. Thomasville WTLF (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.	IA Davenport KGCW SU 7:30 a.m. Des Moines KD SM SU 9:30 a.m. Ottumwa KWOT SU 8:00 a.m.	ID Boise KBOI SU 7:00 a.m. Idaho Falls KIFI SU 7:00 a.m. Twin Falls KMVT SU 7:00 a.m.	IL Chicago WJYS SU 8:00 a.m. Chicago WJYS SU 8:30 a.m. Peoria WHOI SU 7:00 a.m. Quincy WGEM SU 7:00 a.m.	IN Evansville WTVW SU 7:30 a.m. Fort Wayne WPTA SU 7:00 a.m. Fort Wayne WPTA SU 7:30 a.m. Lafayette WLFI SU 8:00 a.m.	KS Kansas City KCWE SU 7:30 a.m. Topeka KTKA SU 7:00 a.m. Topeka KTMJ SU 8:00 a.m.	KY Bowling Green WBKO SU 7:00 a.m. Lexington WTVQ SU 7:00 a.m. Louisville WBNA SU 9:30 a.m. Paducah WDKA SU 11:00 a.m.	LA Alexandria KALB SU 7:00 a.m. Lafayette KATC SU 7:00 a.m. Lake Charles KPLC SU 7:00 a.m. Monroe KMCT SU 6:00 a.m. Monroe KNOE SU 7:00 a.m. New Orleans WNOL SU 7:00 a.m. Shreveport KSHV SU 10:00 a.m. West Monroe KMCT SU 6:00 a.m.
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MA Springfield WWLP SU 7:00 a.m.	ME Bangor WABI SU 8:00 a.m. Presque Isle WBPO SU 8:00 a.m.	MI Alpena WBAE SU 8:00 a.m. Lansing WLAI SU 8:00 a.m. Lansing WLAI SU 11:00 a.m. Calumet WBKP SU 8:00 a.m.	MN Cloquet KDLH (CW) SU 8:00 a.m. Duluth KDLH SU 8:00 a.m. Mankato KMNF/KEYC (CW) SU 9:00 a.m. Rochester KTTC SU 7:00 a.m.	MO Columbia KOMU SU 7:00 a.m. Joplin KFJX SU 8:30 a.m. Kansas City KCWE SU 7:30 a.m. Springfield KRKB SU 9:00 a.m. St. Joseph KNPQ SU 7:00 a.m. St. Louis KPLR SU 6:30 a.m.	MS Biloxi WXXV SU 7:00 a.m. Columbus WCBI SU 7:00 a.m. Greenwood WBWO SU 7:00 a.m. Hattiesburg WHLT/WXXX SU 7:00 a.m. Meridian WTOK SU 7:00 a.m.	MT Billings KVIS/NSVI (CW) SU 7:00 a.m. Butte KCWB (CW) SU 7:00 a.m. Butte KXLF SU 7:00 a.m. Glendive KWZB SU 7:00 a.m. Great Falls KCWG (CW) SU 7:00 a.m. Helena KTVH SU 7:00 a.m. Missoula KCVM (CW) SU 7:00 a.m.	NC Asheville WGGG SU 9:30 a.m. Asheville SU11:30 a.m. Charlotte WAXN SU 9:00 a.m. Charlotte WMYT SU 8:30 a.m. Charlotte WMYT SU 10:30 a.m. Greenville WNCN SU 8:00 a.m. Hickory WHKY MO 7:30 p.m. Raleigh WFLF SU 8:00 a.m. Wilmington WWAY SU 8:00 a.m.	ND Bismarck KXMA (CW2) SU 7:00 a.m. Fargo KJXB (CW) SU 7:00 a.m. Williston KXMD SU 7:00 a.m.	NM Albuquerque KBWQ SU 8:00 a.m.	NV Reno KOLO SU 7:00 a.m.	NY Binghamton WBNG SU 8:00 a.m. Brooklyn BRIC SU 7:00 p.m. Brooklyn BRIC MO 12:30 a.m. Elmira WENY SU 8:00 a.m. Watertown WWTI SU 7:00 a.m. Utica KYWKTV SU 8:00 a.m.	OH Cincinnati WSTR SU 9:00 a.m. Cleveland WUAB SU 8:30 a.m. Columbus WOXB/WXC/WGCT/WOIZ SU 8:00 a.m. Toledo BB CA SU 7:30 p.m. Zanesville WBVZ SU 8:00 a.m.	OK Ada KTEN SU 7:00 a.m. Lawton KAUZ SU 7:00 a.m. Tulsa KQCW SU 8:00 a.m.	OR Bend KTVZ SU 8:00 a.m. Eugene KMTR SU 8:00 a.m. Medford KTVL SU 8:00 a.m.	PA Erie WSEE SU 8:00 a.m. Philadelphia WPSG SU 7:30 a.m. Pittsburgh WPCW SU 7:30 a.m.	SC Charleston WCBD SU 8:00 a.m.
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Columbia WOLO SU 11:00 a.m. Florence WWMB SU 8:00 a.m. Greenville WYCW SU 9:30 a.m. Greenville WGGG SU 11:30 a.m. Myrtle Beach WWMB SU 8:00 a.m. Rock Hill WAXN SU 9:00 a.m. Rock Hill WMYT SU 8:30 a.m.	SD Rapid City KCLO (ION/CW) SU 7:00 a.m. Sioux Falls KFSY SU 7:00 a.m.	TN Jackson WBJK SU 7:00 a.m. Knoxville WRNX SU 12:00 a.m. Knoxville WRNX SU 7:00 a.m. Knoxville WKNX SU 7:30 a.m. Knoxville WRNX SU 6:00 p.m. Memphis WLMT SU 10:00 a.m. Nashville HZTV (CW) SU 7:30 a.m.	TX Abilene KTXS SU 7:00 a.m. Amarillo KVIH/KVII SU 7:00 a.m. Beaumont SU 6:30 a.m. Beaumont KFDM SU 7:00 a.m. Corpus Christi KRIS-DT2 SU 7:00 a.m. Laredo KXLX SU 7:00 a.m. Lubbock KLCW SU 7:00 a.m. Lufkin KLTV SU 6:00 a.m. McAllen KCWT/KNOV SU 7:00 a.m. Midland KOSA/KCWO SU 7:00 a.m. Odessa KOSA/KCWO SU 7:00 a.m. San Angelo KTXE SU 7:00 a.m. San Antonio KABB SU 5:30 a.m. Sherman KTEN SU 7:00 a.m. Tyler KLTV SU 6:00 a.m. Tyler KYTX SU 7:00 a.m. Wichita Falls KAUZ SU 7:00 a.m. Victoria KVCT SU 7:00 a.m.	VA Charlottesville WVIR SU 8:00 a.m. Chesterfield TH 6:30 p.m. Harrisonburg WSVW SU 8:00 a.m. Norfolk WSKY SU 9:30 a.m. Roanoke WWCW SU 8:30 a.m.	VT Burlington WFFF SU 6:00 a.m. Burlington WNNW SU 2:00 a.m. Burlington WNNW SU 8:00 a.m.	WA Everett KSTW SU 6:00 a.m. Kennewick KEPR SU 8:00 a.m. Pasco KEPR SU 8:00 a.m. Richland KEPR SU 8:00 a.m. Seattle KSTW SU 2:00 a.m. Yakima KIMA SU 8:00 a.m.	WI Eagle River WYOW (CW) SU 7:00 a.m. Eau Claire WEAU (CW) SU 7:00 a.m. La Crosse WXOW/WEAU SU 7:00 a.m. Wausau WSAW (CW) SU 7:00 a.m. Wittenberg WZAW (CW) SU 7:00 a.m.	WV Bluefield WVVA (CW) SU 8:00 a.m. Charleston WQCW SU 7:00 a.m. Clarksburg WVFV SU 8:00 a.m. Parkersburg WOVA (CW) SU 8:00 a.m. Wheeling WBWO (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.	WY Casper KGWN (CW) SU 7:00 a.m. Cheyenne KGWN (CW) SU 7:00 a.m. Laramie KGWN (CW) SU 7:00 a.m.
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