

Apocalypse Now: The Planet Ravaged by Disasters and Deception

For years, we have provided ample proof that the upheavals the world is experiencing these days are connected with the prophecies about the end of this age. All the signs that Jesus Christ spoke about in connection with those prophecies have come to pass exactly as He said they would.

One such prophecy is found in the book of Revelation. What is remarkable about this prophecy is that God relates it to human activity, more specifically to human sins. Here it is in its context. Bear in mind that Revelation prophecies are highly symbolic. Even so, it is easy to relate it to our time, in particular verses 8 – 11. (For detailed analysis of Revelation prophecies, see *The Christian Herald* Nos 14 & 15).

- Rev 16:1 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth."
- Rev 16:2 So the first went and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image.
- Rev 16:3 Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead *man*; and every living creature in the sea died.
- Rev 16:4 Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood.
- Rev 16:5 And I heard the angel of the waters saying: "You are righteous, O Lord, The One who is and who was and who is to be, Because You have judged these things.
- Rev 16:6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, And You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due."
- Rev 16:7 And I heard another from the altar saying, "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous *are* Your judgments."
- Rev 16:8 Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire.
- Rev 16:9 And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory.
- Rev 16:10 Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain.
- Rev 16:11 They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.
- Rev 16:12 Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared.
- Rev 16:13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *coming* out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.
- Rev 16:14 For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, *which* go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.
- Rev 16:15 "Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed *is* he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame."
- Rev 16:16 And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.
- Rev 16:17 Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "It is done!"
- Rev 16:18 And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth.
- Rev 16:19 Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath.
- Rev 16:20 Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.
- Rev 16:21 And great hail from heaven fell upon men, *each hailstone* about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great.

Men were scorched with great heat, suffered pains and sores, yet what did they do? They did not repent of their deeds but blasphemed God even more. These things are already happening before our very eyes, however, because humans do not repent of their deeds, God is about to unleash His wrath upon this world with even more devastating plagues: islands will disappear, mountains will be flattened, and men will fall under great hail from heaven.

Two decades ago, when we perceived that biblical prophecies were being ignored, we began publishing *The Christian Herald* in an attempt to bring knowledge of these prophecies to the attention of world leaders – religious and secular – and their people. Yet instead of taking note of the danger that this world is blindly heading into, we encountered a never-ending chain of problems and obstacles from the same people. Even now, when it has become clear that humanity is on the edge of the precipice, religious leaders are still engaged in pathetic attempts to obscure and belittle our work. Have a look at this.

“Jury out on climate change?” “THE drought this year has been particularly cruel in the country. Not simply because this is the seventh year and most farmers are broke, but because there were good early rains. Hopes were high, but nothing followed. The climate has changed, but Australia has long known terrible droughts. I suspect it was not only distance that precluded a large population before European settlement, when only a few hundred thousand Aborigines had the skill to survive our harsh environment. But is human industrial activity making the weather worse?

Are we on the brink of a man-made catastrophe? Could we do anything to change global weather patterns, even in the unlikely eventuality that the Great Powers agreed and society could afford it? These are big and different questions.

I am a believer in the Catholic understanding of faith and morals. I reserve my leaps of faith for religion: e.g. the Incarnation and Redemption.

I am certainly sceptical about extravagant claims of impending man-made climatic catastrophes, because the evidence is insufficient. Climate change has always occurred. Scientific debate is not decided by any changing consensus, even if it is endorsed by public opinion. Science is a process of experimentation, debate and respect for all the evidence. Often it's dealing with uncertainties rather than certainties, so its forecasts and predictions can be spectacularly wrong. In the 1970s, some scientists were predicting a new ice age because of global cooling. Today, other scientists are predicting an apocalypse because of global warming. It's no disrespect to science, or scientists, to take these latest claims with a grain of salt.

Uncertainties on climate change abound. Temperatures in Greenland were higher in the 1940s than they are today, and the Kangerlussuaq glacier is growing in size, not shrinking.

[Wrong! The glaciers in Greenland did not melt in the 1940's at the speed they do now].

The journal *American Scientist* recently published a study on the melting glacier on Mt Kilimanjaro.

The study confirms that air temperature around the glacier continues to be below freezing, so it's not melting because of global warming. Instead, the melt pattern of the glacier is consistent with the effect of direct radiant heat from the sun. Human activity can't be blamed for that. The day before Al Gore and the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, England's High Court ruled that DVDs of Gore's documentary *An Inconvenient Truth* could not be shown in schools without teachers providing additional materials to correct nine "significant errors" in the film.

Among them were claims that Pacific atolls were being evacuated because of rising sea levels, and that polar bears were drowning because they had to swim as far as 100km to find ice. The court found there was "no evidence" to support either claim. *[Wrong again! Some islands have shrunk in size, and many people have lost their homes. Tuvalu is one of them].*

Some allege preachers raise their voices when they have a weak point. It has never worked for me, and it doesn't work in science or politics. (Cardinal Pell, *The Sunday Telegraph*, Oct 28, 2007).

This is none other than the head of the Catholic Church in Australia. He reckons that human beings have had nothing to do with the current climate change. More than that: he denies that there is even a global warming. The current worldwide increase in temperature, he says, is nothing more than a natural cycle the likes of which this world has experienced many times in its long history. If Cardinal Pell had wanted to be properly informed and kept up to date with the latest scientific discoveries, he would have read none other than the very newspaper that publishes his concoctions.

“Turning up the heat” “LOS ANGELES: Climate models predicting the Earth's temperature could rise up to 5.6C by the end of the century may have underestimated the increase by as much as 2.3C. Research at the University of California Berkeley suggested that, as carbon dioxide emissions heat the globe, hotter oceans and soils would release stored carbon dioxide, kicking up the thermostat. "We've probably underestimated the problem," University of California Berkeley ecologist John Harte said yesterday.

Current models predict a doubling of the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, which at current emissions rates should happen within the next 50 years. That would raise global temperatures between 1.5C and 4.5C. The Berkeley lab predicted a doubling of carbon dioxide production would mean more of the gas would be released naturally, pushing the global thermostat up by between 1.6C and 6.2C. By the end of the century, the rise could be as much as 7.8C. "It's a vicious cycle where more warming causes more greenhouse gas emissions, and more greenhouse gas emissions cause more warming," biogeochemist Margaret Torn said. "That could have serious consequences both for human populations and biodiversity." Global temperatures fluctuate naturally with the intensity of sunlight hitting the Earth.

The scientists studied past warm periods in a 360,000-year climate record contained in Antarctic ice cores.

Using air bubbles trapped in the ice, they estimated past global temperatures using the ratios of oxygen isotopes and deuterium, which vary with the temperature. They then checked the effect of hotter temperatures on the level of carbon dioxide and methane in the bubbles. They found that, as temperatures rose, the production of two greenhouse gases increased more than would be expected from just the increased sunlight that initiated the warming. "The extra greenhouse gas emissions that occurred would lead to a significant amount of extra warming in the future," Ms Torn said. (Betsy Mason, *The Daily Telegraph*, May 24, 2006).

Cardinal Pell preferred the opinion of a judge to that of scientists. And to make sure his message is understood in the right places, he sunk his boot into what he called "allege preachers". What he does not know, or does not want to admit, is that virtually all of God's prophets were "allege preachers" for their contemporaries, including Jesus Christ. (See the article, "Why the prophets of God have never been welcomed by this world" elsewhere in this edition). If it were not for these "allege preachers", we would have no Bible today, and the world would not know where it stands in relation to its Creator.

Let us now look more closely at the scientific evidence and see whether the jury is indeed still out on climate change. The same day Cardinal Pell published his article, Chanel Nine television network, presented two documentaries on global warming in its "60 Minutes" program. One from the Greenland, and the other from California. Here are parts of their transcripts. First the one from Greenland.

The Greenland's disappearing ice cap "The Greenland's ice cap is melting at an astonishing speed ... even as we watch, it is changing. Huge ice blocks are collapsing into the sea. "The disappearing ice is a weather vein, proof that global warming is right here, right now." "In the past 30 years, temperatures have increased by 1.5 degrees, more than double the world average ... High up into the mountain ... a glacier has retreated in the last ten years by almost 100 metres. You are really experiencing global warming. You see it happening ... "When you fly north and over Greenland's vast ice cap, the downside of global warming becomes frighteningly clear. Eighty per cent is still under ice. If it were all to melt, sea levels around the world would rise by a disastrous seven metres. That thow is already under way, and glaciers here are retreating at a rate that is shocking glaciologists like Gene Katania. "It has been increasing over the last 15 years or so. Every year we see more and more of it."

"Do you have any doubt that man has anything to do with this?"

"No!"

"Gene has been tracking the movement of the ice using satellite positioning. The glacier in this area is the fastest in the world, moving 15 kilometres a year down fiord."

"It definitely has been speeding up. We never thought that ice could move that fast ..."

"Disappearing icebergs, rising sea levels, unpredictable weather, this is the downside of a climate change, but for Greenlanders global warming gives them the best shot at a good life."

Now a transcript of the documentary from California.

"California ablaze". Reporter: It's a frightening warning for us. Enough to make you wonder what we are in for this summer. Let's just hope it's nothing like this, an absolute catastrophe. A daily fire storm that's raced through America's west coast, forcing more than half a million people to evacuate their homes. And the terrible thing is it's all part of a global pattern: fires that get worse and worse every year, at least ten times bigger than we've ever seen before. There is no doubt that we are living in the age of the mega fire."

Tom Boatner, US Fire Chief: "The fire of this size and this intensity in this country would have been extremely rare 15, 20 years ago. They are common place these days."

Reporter: "Ten years ago, a big fire was what?"

T.B.: "Ten years ago, if you had a 100,000 acres fire you were talking of a huge fire. And if we had one or two a year that was probably normal. Now we are talking of 200,000 acres fires like it is just another day at the office. It's been a huge change."

Reporter: "And the biggest fires are what now?"

T.B.: "We've had, I believe, two fires this summer that've been 500,000 acres, half a million acres. And one of those was 600,000 acres . . . Seven of the ten busiest fire seasons have been since 1999."

Naration: "It was 20 years ago that fire fighters got their first glimpse of what was to come. This is Yellow Stone 1998, when a third of the national park was burned. Since then, fires have broken records in nine States. Several mega fires like this one in Arizona have burned over half a million acres each."

Reporter: "Is it possible we get these mega fires and we just can't fight them, because they are too large?"

T.B.: "Well, we're ... we're there already. We have had to fight fires this summer that we knew we can't put them out with the resources that we have now."

Naration: "The fire season over the last 15 years has increased by 78 days due to the melting ice on top of mountains. Global warming and climate change have increased temperatures in the west by one degree and that has increased the fire season. With these super fires, some forests may never recover. In 2006, the Feds spent 2 billion dollars on fire fighting, seven times more than just ten years ago."

Reporter: "You know, there are a lot of people who don't believe in climate change."

T.B.: "You won't find them in America's west, because we've had climate change beating us in the last ten or fifteen years. We know what we are seeing and we are dealing with a period of climate change in terms of temperature, humidity and drought that's different than anything people have seen in our life time."

So, is the jury still out on climate change? Or is it a case that there is none as blind as he that will not see. Far from the case of the jury being out on climate change, scientists are alarmed by the speed with which the globe is warming.

"2008 critical for shrinking ice cap" PARIS: The Arctic ice cap has shrunk by an area twice the size of France's land mass over the past two years, the Paris-based National Centre for Scientific Research said yesterday. "The year 2008 promises to be a critical year on every level," said Jean-Claude Gascard, the body's research director and co-ordinator of the European scientific mission monitoring the effects of climate change across the Arctic.

Measurements in September last year show ice covering 4.13 million sq km, down from 5.3million sq km in 2005.

"Melting could result in the loss of another million in one (2008) summer," Mr Gascard said.

"Summer 2007 was marked by a major retreat in the ice cap, one we were not anticipating. The decline is also two or three times faster than (observed) beforehand." International models used to predict retreating ice have some "catching-up" to do, he said. Over the past 20 years, 40 per cent of the ice cap has melted, with the average thickness halved from three to 1.5 metres. Year-round ice coverage has reduced, with summer melting also lasting longer, the centre reported.

The team highlighted the role of ocean currents, namely in the northern Pacific, behind the warming of waters.

Mr Gascard's research colleague, Gerard Ancellet, also spoke of recently-formed Arctic mist, pollution clouds that "trap" Earth's naturally emitted infrared rays, thereby raising temperatures.

In last year's summer, the Northwest Passage, historically an ice-jammed potential shortcut between Europe and Asia, was "fully navigable" for the first time since monitoring began in 1978, according to the European Space Agency. It lasted five weeks, according to Canada's environment ministry." (AFP/ *The Australian*, January 25, 2008).

"Wild weather a taste of things to come" "A MONSOON dropped 35 centimetres of rain in one day across many parts of South Asia this month. Germany had its wettest May on record, and April was the driest there in a century. Temperatures reached 45 degrees in Bulgaria last month and 32 degrees in Moscow in late May, shattering long-time records. The year still has almost five months to go, but it has already experienced a range of weather extremes that the UN's World Meteorological Organisation says is well outside the historical norm and is a precursor to much greater weather variability as global warming transforms the planet.

The warming trend confirmed in February by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change - based on the finding that 11 of the past 12 years had higher average ground temperatures than any others since formal temperature recording began - appears to have continued with a vengeance into 2007. The meteorological organisation reported that January and April were the warmest worldwide ever recorded. "Climate change projections indicate it to be very likely that hot extremes, heatwaves and heavy precipitation events will continue to become more frequent," the organisation said.

The heavy rains in South Asia have resulted in more than 500 deaths and displaced 10 million people, while 13.5 million Chinese have been affected by floods, the report said. In England and Wales, the period from May to July was the wettest since record-keeping began in 1766, resulting in floods that killed nine and caused more than \$US6billion (\$7billion) in damage. The World Meteorological Organisation, which is co-sponsoring a series of meetings and reports on global climate change, is putting together an early-warning system for climate extremes and establishing long-term monitoring systems, and plans to help countries most vulnerable to climate change.

"The average Northern Hemisphere temperatures during the second half of the 20th century were very likely the highest during any 50-year period in the last 500 years, and likely the highest in the past 1300 years," the report said.

Global warming is expected to result in more extreme weather because of changes in atmospheric wind patterns and the ability of warmer air to hold more moisture, said Martin Manning, the head of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's working group on the physical science of climate change. He said that one year of heavier than normal rains and warmer than usual temperatures said nothing definitive about climate change, but they were consistent with the panel's long-term predictions. "What we have projected is an increase in extreme events as the global temperatures rise," Dr Manning said. "Floods, droughts and heatwaves are certainly consistent with that."

The World Meteorological Organisation reported the extreme weather occurred in many parts of the world. In May, a series of large waves (estimated at up to 3.6 metres) swamped almost 70 islands in 16 atolls in the Maldivian Islands off south India, causing serious flooding and extensive damage. Halfway around the globe, Uruguay was hit during the same month by the worst flooding since 1959 - floods that affected more than 110,000 people and severely damaged crops and buildings. Two months later, an unusual winter brought high winds, blizzards and rare snowfall to parts of South America. Meanwhile, two extreme heatwaves affected south-eastern Europe in June and July. Dozens of people died, and firefighters worked nonstop battling blazes that destroyed thousands of hectares. On July 23, temperatures hit the record 45 degrees in Bulgaria. (Marc Kaufman, *The Washington Post/SMH*, August 9, 2007).

"Antarctica shows need for action on climate change, Ban Ki-moon says"

"Ban Ki-moon, during his historic visit to Antarctica, the first by a United Nations Secretary-General, has said warming temperatures on the continent show the growing dangers of climate change and the need for action to address it.

"It is here where our work, together, comes into focus," Mr. Ban said in a statement issued on Friday. "We see Antarctica's beauty – and the danger global warming represents, and the urgency that we do something about it."

The Secretary-General, who has made climate change a priority issue and is working to galvanize support for an international conference to be held in Bali in December on global commitments to stop it, said he is personally determined to push forward. He said the landscapes on Antarctica are "rare and wonderful" but also deeply disturbing as the ice continues melting at a fast pace. "All this may be gone, and not in the distant future, unless we act, together, now," he warned.

"Antarctica is on the verge of a catastrophe – for the world."

The Secretary-General offered stark figures to illustrate his point, noting that the glaciers on King George Island have shrunk by 10 per cent, while some in Admiralty Bay have retreated by 25 kilometers. He also recalled how the 87-kilometer "Larsen B ice sheet" collapsed several years ago and disappeared within weeks and warned that the entire Western Antarctic Ice Shelf is at risk. "It is all floating ice, one fifth of the entire continent. **If it broke up, sea levels could rise by 6 meters or 18 feet,**" he noted, pointing out that 138 tons of ice are now being lost every year. Other "deeply worrying signs" he mentioned were the shrinking penguin population of Chabrier Rock, which has dipped by 57 per cent in the last 25 years.

"What will happen to the annual march of the penguins in the future? Will there even be one?"

At the same time, grass is growing for the first time ever on King George Island, where it rains rather than snows increasingly in the summer. "These things should alarm us all. Antarctica is a natural lab that helps us understand what is happening to our world. We must save this precious earth, including all that is here. It is a natural wonder, but above all, it is our common home," said Mr. Ban. (*eGov Monitor, United Nations*, Nov. 12, 2007).

Notice carefully: if only one fifth of the Antarctic continent were to melt, sea levels would rise by 6 metres. Add to that seven metres if Greenland's ice sheets melts, and you have a rise in the sea levels of 13 metres. If that is not a catastrophe in the making, we would like to know what it is. And this is happening right now. The question is not whether sea levels are rising, but how they could be stopped from rising any further.

Cardinal Pell said that the current phase in global warming is not caused by human activity but is a cycle like many others in the earth's history caused by disturbances in the sun which have come and gone without much damage to the earth. Well, perhaps the following story might change his mind.

"Fewer trees, less rain: study uncovers deforestation equation" "Australian scientist says they have found proof that cutting down forests reduces rainfall."

The finding, independent of previous anecdotal evidence and computer modelling, uses physics and chemistry to show how the climate changes when forests are lost. Ann Henderson-Sellers, director of environment at the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation, at Lucas Heights, and Dr Kendal McGuffie, from the University of Technology, Sydney, made the discovery by analysing variations in the molecular structure of rain along the Amazon River. Not all weather, Professor Henderson-Sellers said, was made from the recipe of two atoms of "common" hydrogen and one of "regular" oxygen. About one in every 500 molecules had its second hydrogen atom replaced by a heavier version called deuterium. And one in every 6500 molecules included a heavy version of the oxygen atom. Knowing the ratio allowed scientists to trace the Amazon water as it flowed into the Atlantic, evaporated, blew back inland with the trade winds to fall again as rain, and finally returned to the river.

"It's as if the water was tagged," she said. While the heavier water molecules were slower to evaporate from rivers and groundwater, they were readily given off by the leaves of plants and trees, through transpiration. "Transpiration pumps these heavy guys back into the atmosphere." But the study showed that since the 1970s the ratio of the heavy molecules found in rain over the Amazon and the Andes had declined significantly. The only possible explanation was that they were no longer being returned to the atmosphere to fall again as rain because the vegetation was disappearing. "With many trees now gone and the forest degraded, the moisture that reaches the Andes has clearly lost the heavy isotopes that used to be recycled so effectively," Professor Henderson-Sellers said.

Tom Lyons, professor of environmental sciences at Perth's Murdoch University, said there was now "certainly very strong evidence that changes in surface conditions have an impact on the climate. In some parts of the world the impact is very marked". The Amazon research "helps us understand the mechanism". Professor Henderson-Sellers said the average water molecule fell as rain and re-evaporated five times during its journey from the tropical Atlantic to the river's starting point in the Andes mountains. Forests played a vital role in keeping the heavy molecules, and their far more common relatives, moving through the water cycle. "People will tell you that when you remove the forests it rains less," she said, adding, however, such anecdotal evidence, and even computer modelling, did not convince everyone. "This is the first demonstration that deforestation has an observable impact on rainfall." (*Sydney Morning Herald*, March 4, 2005).

And if this is not enough, there is now a new "time bomb" for the earth resulting from human activity that is even more threatening than global warming.

“Ocean Acidification – The BIG Global Warming Story”

“This is a scary story. For decades we’ve been acidifying our oceans and we haven’t been aware of it. We already know that warmer water is bleaching the coral of the Great Barrier Reef, but just recently it was discovered that there’s a new threat to the reef’s survival ... carbonic acid. It’s only been in the science journals for the last few years but ocean acidification is a time bomb. It could not only destroy the Great Barrier Reef but it could wreak havoc on marine life around the world and, ultimately, affect land dwellers like ourselves.

“Ocean acidification is destined to be one of the biggest issues humanity has ever faced”, says reef expert Dr. Charlie Veron. Ocean acidification is a side-effect of putting too much carbon dioxide into the skies. This gas ultimately ends up dissolved in the oceans where it forms weak carbon acid. With the focus of global warming largely trained upon increased levels of CO₂ above sea level, Catalyst asks the question, what’s happening below the surface of the ocean? Presenter/Reporter Dr. Graham Phillips meets scientists who, for the first time, have found evidence that acidification is affecting marine organisms in the Southern Ocean. Will this change the delicate balance of ocean chemistry that we take largely for granted? Transcript of the program.

Narration: This is a scary story. For decades we’ve been acidifying our oceans and we haven’t been even aware of it till recently. Acidification is a time bomb.

Dr Will Howard: This problem will continue to affect the oceans even if we stopped all carbon emissions now.

Dr Charlie Veron: It’s like having a party on a railway track. You know the train is coming. And it’s really frightening. It’s terrifying.

Dr Will Howard: We have put in train a process that will probably last for centuries.

Dr Charlie Veron: It is the most serious problem of climate change. It is the big one.

Narration: The acidification of the world’s oceans is a side-effect of putting too much carbon dioxide into the skies. You may not have heard of it – it’s only been in science journals for the last few years - and the consequences could be huge. . . Acidification is caused by our carbon dioxide emissions not staying up in the atmosphere. They end up dissolved into the oceans, mixed in by the wind and waves to form carbonic acid. To understand how this acid damages coral reefs you need to know how reefs form. They’re produced by vast colonies of little sea anemone like creatures – they’re the actual corals.

Dr Charlie Veron: You can see here some really big colonies. Hundreds of colonies there all together. And the actual coral itself. Every tiny little lip here is an individual coral.

Dr Graham Phillips: So that’s a little animal. Each one of those is a little animal. . . It’s the little critters’ internal workings that are relevant here. They have a stomach to digest food and water that comes in from the mouth at the top. And here’s the key: the corals excrete limestone. A multitude of corals endlessly expelling this rocky material - for 100s and 1000s of years - builds up the vast skeleton scaffolding of a coral reef. And that’s the problem with acidification. As you learn in chemistry class...acids and limestone don’t mix.

Narration: Here’s a piece of dead coral skeleton. As you can see it’s hard – rock hard. But here’s the thing about limestone. Chemically it’s calcium carbonate and anything with carbonate in it can be dissolved by acid. Here’s a solution of weak hydrochloric acid and as you can see it bubbles instantly. Any sea creature that uses calcium carbonate to build its body will struggle as the oceans become more acidic. Now the oceans won’t become anywhere near as acidified as this and actually dissolve corals, rather slight ocean acidification will stop them growing. Check this out.

Dr Graham Phillips: These are two relatively similar looking pieces of coral.

Dr Charlie Veron: Yeah they are, yeah they are. That one’s grown in a natural environment. You can try and crush it.

Dr Graham Phillips: Pretty hard.

Dr Charlie Veron: Don’t try too hard cause you’ll just cut your fingers.

Dr Graham Phillips: Yeah.

Dr Charlie Veron: Yeah corals are tough. This guy has grown in an environment where there is artificial acidification such as would occur around the middle of this century. Now if I squeeze that.

Dr Graham Phillips: Oh yeah it’s just spongy.

Dr Charlie Veron: Yeah I can crush it. It all falls to pieces.

Narration: While corals haven’t been affected yet, there are some important critters under even more immediate threat, according to new research out of Hobart.

Dr Graham Phillips: In this beaker of clear-looking water are 1000s of little creatures...plankton. They’re not as impressive as corals, of course, because you can’t see them, but they too build their bodies out of calcium carbonate.

Narration: Could plankton have already been affected by acidification? That would be disturbing because they’re at the very base of the ocean’s food web. Plankton are eaten by krill, for instance, and krill by the larger animals.

Dr Will Howard: This will have an ecological cascade effect right up to parts of the food web that are important to human beings, that is fish, shell fish for example a lot of the organisms that we depend on as food supply sources will directly or indirectly be effected by this process.

Narration: So a scientific expedition was mounted to the wild southern ocean to study the plankton. Down here is where the effects of ocean acidification would first appear.

Dr Will Howard: We see them first in the southern ocean because the southern ocean has absorbed a disproportionate amount of the anthropogenic carbon dioxide that has already entered the atmosphere because it’s a cold ocean and carbon dioxide is more soluble in colder water than in warmer water.

Narration: Plankton samples were collected...but how would the scientists know if the critters had been changed by acidification? The trick was to compare them with plankton fossils extracted from sea floor mud. When the debris was washed away the little white flecks become visible...plankton from long before the industrial age. When cleaned and dried, it’s under an optical microscope for a first peek.

Andrew: What I’m looking at under here is, there are about 4 or 5 different planktonic foraminifera, which are calcite shells.

Narration: The foraminifera’s calcium carbonate shells are what interest the scientists. Could they be becoming thinner and more feeble with ocean acidification? To find out, it’s to the more powerful scanning electron microscope. And the answer is yes. This is the first evidence in the world that acidification is already changing organisms in the ocean.

Dr Graham Phillips: So can we see those changes here?

Dr Will Howard: Yes we can. What you see in this shell is much thicker crystals on the shell.

Dr Graham Phillips: So the crystals are here.

Narration: That shell belongs to the pre-industrial plankton. This shell is one of today’s. It’s visibly more feeble.

Dr Will Howard: This shell is a thinner shell with a lot more porosity in it.

Narration: Side-by-side, the contrast is dramatic.

Dr Will Howard: These organisms have having to make thinner smaller shells than they would have in the pre-industrial ocean.

Narration: Now it’s too early to say what the flow on effects of more frail plankton species will be, but one concern for us land dwellers is that plankton currently take carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere.

Dr Will Howard: All this extra carbon dioxide derived from fossil fuels will remain in the atmosphere that much longer because the ocean will become saturated.

Narration: What worries Charlie is, major ocean acidification has helped extinguish life before in Nature. These formations in north-western Australia are the remains of coral reefs. They suddenly died 360 million years ago.

Dr Charlie Veron: And we call those the great mass extinction events. Mass extinction. That means the extermination of a huge percentage of life on Earth. And coral reefs have taken at least four million years to recover. Now that's quite well known, and been known for most of my life.

Dr Will Howard: There really is only one mitigation strategy and that is in this case to limit the extent and rate of carbon emissions into the atmosphere.

Dr Charlie Veron: It's no use saying by 2030 that we'll do this or we'll do that, by 2030 it will all be too late. That is the problem. So we have to change. And humans are, I believe, very good at change. But there's not an ounce of hope in a world that wants to procrastinate and to say we can't do this or that. We're going to have to. (Antarctic Climate & Ecosystems CRC, ABC – Catalyst, Sept. 13, 2007).

Things are moving at break neck speed these days. The planet is being denuded of its forests, glaciers are melting, and the oceans are being acidified. Humanity is slowly waking up to the realization that this planet is no longer as accommodating as it used to be. Climate change, global warming and ocean acidification have passed from the realm of news to that of well-established grim facts. Yet, the Catholic Church would not even acknowledge that there is a crisis, let alone countenance the possibility that the life of this planet is in danger. Why? Because Rome is an "eternal city", and as such it could never have an end. You will never hear a Catholic priest talk about the end of this age, even though Bible prophecies about the end time correlate well with what is happening in the world at present.

Not long ago, when a Catholic priest wrote a book about the mysteries of Revelation, he was promptly defrocked.

Genesis and Revelation are two books that have come under severe attack by the Catholic Church. Why? The first, because if Genesis is true evolution is wrong. Since the Catholic Church has taken a firm position in favour of evolution, it follows that, according to them, the Bible must be wrong. And the second, because Revelation speaks of "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." The Catholic Church wants this to remain a mystery forever. Only that there is a problem with that. The Bible speaks of a time when the mystery of God will be finished.

Rev 10:5 The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven and swore by Him

Rev 10:6 who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer, but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel,

Rev 10:7 when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.

Little does the Catholic Church know that this angel has already spoken. If you want to know what he has revealed, read *The Christian Herald's* numbers 14 and 15.

Post Scriptum: Only hours, before we were to publish this edition, Cardinal Pell was at it again. We had to cut out other articles in order to accommodate his latest diatribe on global warming. This is what he said this time.

"Global warming is over" "Canada has experienced the coldest winter and the heaviest snowfalls since 1970-71, which was called a once-in-1000-years event. Another 18 cm of snow would set an all-time record. A Kingston newspaper had a marvellous cartoon of a tough old Canadian, rugged up against the cold and hacking the ice off the windscreen of his car. The caption read: Global warming my a***! In China, the Chinese New Year coincided with a fierce cold snap and snowstorms, which prevented many city workers returning to their village for the celebrations. Police had to deal with the ensuing riots. London has just experienced snow at Easter.

The world is much more bigger than both China and Canada combined, which might be the exceptions to the new rule of man-made global warming, but they are inconvenient facts for the climate-change bandwagon. And it is an intolerant bandwagon with loud, exaggerated claims that the issue is settled and that an unchallenged consensus among scientists confirms the hypothesis of dangerous, humanly caused global warming. In fact the issue is far from settled. Politicians sceptical of these claims would need unusual courage to resist the strong tides of public opinion. However, the rest of us are not so constrained and we should consider all information. Three points are of some significance. Last December, more than 100 international scientists, some of them members of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, warned the UN that attempting to control climate was "ultimately futile". So did 500 experts in Manhattan in March. Fighting change was distracting governments from helping the most vulnerable citizens adapt to the threat of inevitable natural climate changes, whatever they might prove to be. Futile attempts to prevent global climate change would be a tragic misallocation of resources, they claimed. Secondly, none of the natural changes observed with glaciers, sea levels and species migration is outside the bounds of known variability, including the warming of 0.1C to 0.2C per decade, in the late 20th century. But the 1930s decade was warmer than the 1990s. Most importantly, the global temperature has not increased since 2001. Global warming has ceased (New Statesman, 19/12/2007). This finding invalidates the global-warming hypotheses because the amount of carbon dioxide continues to increase and the temperature should be increasing, too. It isn't. The last point is that today's computers cannot predict climate over long periods, as there are too many unknowns and variables. We should never forget that while computers are miracles of human ingenuity, they are also limited, cannot think for themselves and are totally obedient to their last human master. More than this is needed to predict the future." (*The Sunday Telegraph*, April 20, 2008).

If this sounds like a desperate cry of one who clings on to straws in order to deny reality, is because it is. As early as 2006, *The Christian Herald No 15*, pointed out that: 1. global warming is not equally spread all over the world, and 2. there are reliable scientific discoveries which show that global warming will, in most likelihood, be followed by an even greater evil – global dimming. 500 Manhattan "experts" who deny that there is a global warming problem, sounds a lot, but when you put that against the weight of the scientific world who believe that climate change has, if anything, been underestimated, you get a different perspective. Cardinal Pell shows no suspicion that those "experts" come from the business capital of the most polluting nation on earth, which belches out gargantuan quantities of carbon dioxide into the air, the main culprit for global warming. Reducing that to a "sustainable" level would be extremely costly, something that neither its political nor its business leaders are prepared to contemplate. Cardinal Pell uses the example of Canada, which has experienced the coldest winter since 1970-71, to "prove" that global warming is over, but conveniently ignores the fact that on the other side of the world, Australia experienced the hottest summer on record at the same time.

"Climate change underestimated" "Climate-change experts have warned the rest of Australia to brace for record heatwaves similar to the one that has paralysed Adelaide for more than a week. Adelaide yesterday sweltered for the ninth day in temperatures of more than 38C – a record for an Australian capital. The city's maximum daily temperature has not dipped below 35C since March 2, raising the risk of heatstroke among the young and elderly and causing a surge in power and water usage.

The heat has spread to western NSW, with Broken Hill and Ivanhoe due to hit 40C yesterday. Edwin Jackson, policy and research director at the Sydney based Climate Institute, said the heatwave was an indication predictions of climate change may have

been conservative. "Climate change is not just something our children are going to have to worry about; it's something we are already seeing," he said. "Temperature and sea-level rises are at the top end of the range of the predictions . . . we might be significantly underestimating the extent of climate change. Based on what we are seeing in the real world this is a much more serious problem than we would have considered a year ago. It's becoming hotter, drier and **more extreme**. We're heading into dangerous uncharted territory." South Australian regional director Andrew Watson is confident the heatwave is influenced by climate change, showing global warming could be taking place quicker than forecast. "If we had the same weather 20 years ago, we doubt temperatures would have been as high. Because the greenhouse effect, the atmosphere can contain more heat than ever before," he said. (*The Sunday Telegraph*, March 16, 2008).

This was published less than five weeks earlier in the same newspaper, which shows how much attention Cardinal Pell gives to the newspaper that pays for his articles. As for the fact that "none of the natural changes observed with glaciers, sea levels and species migrations is outside the bounds of known variability", we do not know where he is getting his facts from, but they are plainly wrong. We have published enough on this topic to go into it again. What we did instead, was to check out the *New Statesman* which he quoted as saying that "Global warming has ceased". Well, this is what title that publication carried: "Has global warming stopped?" Notice the difference? One is a statement of fact, the other a question. When you put a question mark after a statement, it is not a fact, but a possibility. The article does nothing but raises the possibility that, based on the data from the last few years, global warming may have stopped. Since Cardinal Pell was so selective with his facts, here are some statements from the same article that show a lesser certainty on global warming.

"The fact is that the global temperature of 2007 is statistically the same as 2006 as well as every year since 2001. Global warming has, temporarily or permanently, ceased. Temperatures across the world are not increasing as they should according to the fundamental theory behind global warming – the greenhouse effect. Something else is happening and it is vital that we find out what or else we may spend hundreds of billions of pounds needlessly. . . ." "Certainly the working hypothesis of CO2 induced global warming is a good one that stands on good physical principles but let us not pretend our understanding extends too far or that the working hypothesis is a sufficient explanation for what is going on."

Saying that "global warming has, temporarily or permanently, ceased", and that we do not know all the facts about what is going on, is not the same as making a definite statement that "Global warming is over".

When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, you know that its desolation is not near

There is a prophecy in the Bible that has been much misunderstood by biblical scholars, which says: "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near". We will prove to you that in our contemporary context if Jerusalem is surrounded by armies, it cannot be the end of it. First, here is that prophecy.

Luk 21:1 And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury,

Luk 21:2 and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites.

Luk 21:3 So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all;

Luk 21:4 for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had."

Luk 21:5 Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said,

Luk 21:6 "These things which you see—the days will come in which not *one* stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down."

Luk 21:7 So they asked Him, saying, "Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign *will there be* when these things are about to take place?"

Luk 21:8 And He said: "Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am *He*,' and, 'The time has drawn near.' Therefore do not go after them.

Luk 21:9 But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end *will not come* immediately."

Luk 21:10 Then He said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.

Luk 21:11 And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.

Luk 21:12 But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute *you*, delivering *you* up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake.

Luk 21:13 But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony.

Luk 21:14 Therefore settle *it* in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer;

Luk 21:15 for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist.

Luk 21:16 You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put *some* of you to death.

Luk 21:17 And you will be hated by all for My name's sake.

Luk 21:18 But not a hair of your head shall be lost.

Luk 21:19 By your patience possess your souls.

Luk 21:20 "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.

Luk 21:21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her.

Luk 21:22 For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

Luk 21:23 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people.

Luk 21:24 And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

Luk 21:25 "And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring;

Luk 21:26 men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

Luk 21:27 Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.
 Luk 21:28 Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."
 Luk 21:29 Then He spoke to them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees.
 Luk 21:30 When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near.
 Luk 21:31 So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near.
 Luk 21:32 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place.
 Luk 21:33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.
 Luk 21:34 "But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly.
 Luk 21:35 For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth.
 Luk 21:36 Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."
 Luk 21:37 And in the daytime He was teaching in the temple, but at night He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet.
 Luk 21:38 Then early in the morning all the people came to Him in the temple to hear Him.

This prophecy parallels that of Mathew 24. Mathew however, does not mention Jerusalem. Being a relevant prophecy for our time, let us see what Mathew had to say, before we consider the implication of Luke's reference to Jerusalem.

Mat 24:1 Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple.
 Mat 24:2 And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not *one* stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."
 Mat 24:3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"
 Mat 24:4 And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.
 Mat 24:5 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.
 Mat 24:6 And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the
 Mat 24:7 end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.
 Mat 24:8 All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.
 Mat 24:9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.
 Mat 24:10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.
 Mat 24:11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.
 Mat 24:12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.
 Mat 24:13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved.
 Mat 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.
 Mat 24:15 "Therefore when you see the 'ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand),
 Mat 24:16 "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.
 Mat 24:17 Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house.
 Mat 24:18 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.
 Mat 24:19 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!
 Mat 24:20 And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.
 Mat 24:21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.
 Mat 24:22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.
 Mat 24:23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here *is* the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe *it*.
 Mat 24:24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.
 Mat 24:25 See, I have told you beforehand.
 Mat 24:26 "Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, *He is* in the inner rooms!' do not believe *it*.
 Mat 24:27 For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.
 Mat 24:28 For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.
 Mat 24:29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.
 Mat 24:30 Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.
 Mat 24:31 And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.
 Mat 24:32 "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that
 Mat 24:33 summer *is* near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!
 Mat 24:34 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.
 Mat 24:35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.
 Mat 24:36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.
 Mat 24:37 But as the days of Noah *were*, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.
 Mat 24:38 For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,
 Mat 24:39 and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.
 Mat 24:40 Then two *men* will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left.
 Mat 24:41 Two *women will be* grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.
 Mat 24:42 Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.
 Mat 24:43 But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.
 Mat 24:44 Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.
 Mat 24:45 "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season?
 Mat 24:46 Blessed *is* that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.
 Mat 24:47 Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods.

Mat 24:48 But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,'
Mat 24:49 and begins to beat *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards,
Mat 24:50 the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him* and at an hour that he is not aware of,
Mat 24:51 and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

As you can see there are some differences between the two Gospel accounts. Matthew's is much longer and more detailed. Yet he does not mention Jerusalem, or of being brought before kings and rulers for a testimony for Jesus Christ. Matthew was a Jew, and Luke was a Gentile. It appears that each wrote the Gospel from their own perspective. This may explain why Luke makes no mention of the Sabbath. What is important to realise though is that although there are some differences, they do not contradict, but merely compliment each other.

Luke's, which is the weakest Gospel of them all, is given credence in this case by a reference in the book of Revelation to a gathering of armies against the Lord in a place called Armageddon. Biblical scholars have interpreted Armageddon to mean Megiddo, a valley not far from Jerusalem. Let us look at that prophecy in its context too.

Rev 16:10 Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain.
Rev 16:11 They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.
Rev 16:12 Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared.
Rev 16:13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *coming* out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.
Rev 16:14 For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, *which* go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.
Rev 16:15 "Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame."
Rev 16:16 And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.
Rev 16:17 Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "It is done!"

The book of Revelation, like the rest of the New Testament, was recorded in the Greek language (or at least it reached us in the Greek language). Yet verse 16 is sending us to the Hebrew language; in other words, to the Jews. Now, Jesus Christ knew that the time of this prophecy would be after the Jews were returned from their long Diaspora. He also knew that this would be just prior to the Great Tribulation that would herald His return. But the Great Tribulation is a time of worldwide nuclear conflagration. This begs the question, what role would a place called "Armageddon" play in an age of ballistic missiles, if that is indeed located near Jerusalem, as so many people seem to think?

There are at least two reasons why Armageddon could not be Megiddo. 1) It is tenuous to say the least to link the two words linguistically. 2) No hostile armies could possibly gather near Jerusalem, or anywhere else in the Jewish state, under the circumstances of a nuclear-armed Israel. The Jews will not sit down and watch as another Holocaust is looming just next door to Jerusalem. The point we want to make is that just because Revelation 16:16 says that the armies of nations are gathered in a place called Armageddon in Hebrew, is no guaranty that that place must necessarily be in Israel.

It should not be forgotten that Revelation 16 is not about a war against the Jews but one against the Lord, against the return of Jesus Christ, and that is quite a difference. To say that these armies are gathered against the Jews is to assume that they are friends of Jesus Christ. I would not advise anyone to ask a Jew how much he loves Jesus Christ, for he may not like what he hears. Yet, Luke's Gospel, and other prophecies, make it clear that in the end time an attack on Jerusalem will indeed take place. The question is from where? If Armageddon is not Megiddo, where could it be? And why attack Jerusalem from Armageddon, if the armies are gathered against Jesus Christ? For one reason: He returns to Jerusalem, to stand in glory with His feet in the place in which they crucified Him – this time not to be seen by just a few of His loyal disciples, but by the entire world.

Mat 24:30 Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

You can be sure of one thing: the Jews will fight against Jesus Christ as much, or more than, the rest of the world. Remember what Revelation 16:14 said? "For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, *which* go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

The whole world, Jews included, are gathered to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

There are two other prophecies that we need to look at, if we are to understand the order in which those events will take place. Here is the first one.

Zec 14:1 Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst.
Zec 14:2 For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.
Zec 14:3 Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle.
Zec 14:4 And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, *Making* a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south.
Zec 14:5 Then you shall flee *through* My mountain valley, For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee As you fled from the earthquake In the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, *And* all the saints with You.
Zec 14:6 It shall come to pass in that day *That* there will be no light; The lights will diminish.
Zec 14:7 It shall be one day Which is known to the LORD Neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen *That* it will be light.
Zec 14:8 And in that day it shall be— *That* living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, Half of them toward the eastern sea And half of them toward the western sea; In both summer and winter it shall occur.
Zec 14:9 And the LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be "The LORD *is* one," And His name one.
Zec 14:10 All the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. *Jerusalem* shall be raised up and inhabited in her place from Benjamin's Gate to the place of the First Gate and the Corner Gate, and *from* the Tower of Hananel to the king's winepresses.
Zec 14:11 *The people* shall dwell in it; And no longer shall there be utter destruction, But Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

Zec 14:12 And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, Their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, And their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths.

Zec 14:13 It shall come to pass in that day *That* a great panic from the LORD will be among them. Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor, And raise his hand against his neighbor's hand;

Zec 14:14 Judah also will fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of all the surrounding nations Shall be gathered together: Gold, silver, and apparel in great abundance.

Zec 14:15 Such also shall be the plague On the horse *and* the mule, On the camel and the donkey, And on all the cattle that will be in those camps. So *shall* this plague *be*.

Zec 14:16 And it shall come to pass *that* everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

Zec 14:17 And it shall be *that* whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain.

Zec 14:18 If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they *shall have no rain*; they shall receive the plague with which the LORD strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

Zec 14:19 This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

Zec 14:20 In that day "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" shall be *engraved* on the bells of the horses. The pots in the LORD's house shall be like the bowls before the altar.

Zec 14:21 Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the LORD of hosts. Everyone who sacrifices shall come and take them and cook in them. In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts

Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, and their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths. This could only happen in a nuclear war. What is different about this prophecy is that, unlike others, it gives us a glimpse into what follows – a time of abundance, peace, and holiness. It also tells us that all the nations that survive the great conflagration will come to Jerusalem from year to year to, "worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles". That would seem to imply that the devastation will be so great that only a tiny fraction of the world's population will survive into the Millennium Kingdom, enough for them all to be accommodated at a Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem. What is more likely to happen is that representatives of all nations will come to Jerusalem to bring their tithes and offerings on behalf of their people to the Feast of Tabernacles while the rest of them will keep that Fest wherever they are located on the face of the earth. This is borne out by the fact that remnants of Gog and Magog will be scattered in the four corners of the earth in the aftermath of the Great Tribulation.

Rev 20:7 Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison

Rev 20:8 and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number *is* as the sand of the sea.

Rev 20:9 They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.

Rev 20:10 The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

It would be all but impossible to bring to Jerusalem all people from the four corners of the earth after the devastation of the Great Tribulation when the means of transport will be reduced to a trickle, if at all functional. And of course, it would be impossible to accommodate them all in Jerusalem, even in booths of reefs and tree branches. Even so, there is no dispute that few nations will survive this end time catastrophe.

The question we must ask now is what do we make of the first two verses of Zechariah's prophecy, which say that Jerusalem will be taken, the women ravished, and half the people taken into captivity and half left into the city?

If you have a New King James Version of the Bible, the most accurate that we know of, you will notice that verse 3 is a boldfaced numeral. This is what the translators say on page XI about that fact: "A boldfaced verse numeral in the text indicates a paragraph break." In this case, a paragraph break means a break in prophecy – a time lapse of almost two millennia. What this means is that the first two verses were fulfilled when the Roman legions, which could rightly be said to have been armies of the nations, destroyed Jerusalem and sent the Jews into their long Diaspora. The prophecy then takes us forward to the time following the return of the Jews to their ancestral land, and the return of Jesus Christ.

It is clear then that the attack on Jerusalem in the end time will no longer result in half the city being taken into captivity, and half left, for as we said earlier, in the context of a nuclear-armed Israel any attempt to do such a thing would be suicidal. Moreover, the Lord says that He will fight against the nations that came up against Jerusalem: "Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle" (Verse 3). Now why would He fight against the nations that come against Jerusalem, if the Jews continue to refuse to repent of the horrible sin they had committed against Jesus Christ? Because they do not mean to merely conquer the Jews, they want to obliterate them and Jerusalem from the face of the earth, the city the Lord had chosen as the Capital of His Kingdom, so that He would have no place to return to. That is how the nations of this world are preparing to fight against the Lord. The Jews unwittingly bear the brunt of that fight.

Zec 14:4 And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, *Making* a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward

Zec 14:5 the south. Then you shall flee *through* My mountain valley, For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee As you fled from the earthquake In the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, *And* all the saints with You.

The Jews shall flee when they see the glorious Christ standing on the Mount of Olives. That they will suffer severe devastation during the Great Tribulation, like all nations of the earth, there is no doubt, for we know that all life would perish if God Almighty does not intervene to cut those days short, but they will not be obliterated from the face of the earth.

Jer 46:27 "But do not fear, O My servant Jacob, And do not be dismayed, O Israel! For behold, I will save you from afar, And your offspring from the land of their captivity; Jacob shall return, have rest and be at ease; No one shall make *him* afraid.

Jer 46:28 Do not fear, O Jacob My servant," says the LORD, "For I *am* with you; For I will make a complete end of all the nations To which I have driven you, But I will not make a complete end of you. I will rightly correct you, For I will not leave you wholly unpunished."

Where then is Armageddon in this context? Clearly, Megiddo could not be that place, for it would be suicidal for any army to even breach the border of Israel let alone advance to the proximity of Jerusalem.

The nation that has been raving for some time now of wiping Israel off the map is Iran. Now let us assume that Iranian armies reach as far as the Megiddo. Since the Bible tells us that this will be a nuclear conflict, a massive attack on Jerusalem will affect people living dozens of kilometres from that city, including Megiddo. Of course, if the Iranians, or anyone else, will mount such an attack, they would not target just Jerusalem, but several other cities plus military targets. Given the size of Israel, that would mean nothing less than wiping off the map the entire nation. That, however, would also mean that the aggressor, or aggressors, would be wiping off the map their own armies.

If Israeli leaders wanted an assurance against a nuclear attack on their nation, they could do no better than to have a few Iranian divisions posted in various places in the country. Mind you, given the value the Islamists are putting on the life of their own people these days that may not be much of an assurance.

Can you see now why we say that if you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies it cannot be the end of it?

The truth is that in an age of nuclear missile technology, you do not look for infantry divisions in Megiddo, in readiness to attack Jerusalem. You look to where the real danger comes from, and that is hundreds and thousands of kilometres away.

In that context, Jerusalem is already being surrounded by deadly enemies. Have a look at this prophecy.

Eze 38:1 Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

Eze 38:2 "Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy

Eze 38:3 against him, and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I *am* against you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal.

Eze 38:4 I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and lead you out, with all your army, horses, and horsemen, all splendidly clothed, a great company *with* bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords.

Eze 38:5 Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya are with them, all of them *with* shield and helmet;

Eze 38:6 Gomer and all its troops; the house of Togarmah *from* the far north and all its troops—many people *are* with you.

Eze 38:7 "Prepare yourself and be ready, you and all your companies that are gathered about you; and be a guard for them.

Eze 38:8 After many days you will be visited. In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword *and* gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely.

Eze 38:9 You will ascend, coming like a storm, covering the land like a cloud, you and all your troops and many peoples with you."

Eze 38:10 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "On that day it shall come to pass *that* thoughts will arise in your mind, and you will make an evil

Eze 38:11 plan: You will say, 'I will go up against a land of unwalled villages; I will go to a peaceful people, who dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates'—

Eze 38:12 to take plunder and to take booty, to stretch out your hand against the waste places *that are again* inhabited, and against a people gathered from the nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell in the midst of the land.

Eze 38:13 Sheba, Dedan, the merchants of Tarshish, and all their young lions will say to you, 'Have you come to take plunder? Have you gathered your army to take booty, to carry away silver and gold, to take away livestock and goods, to take great plunder?' "

Eze 38:14 "Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say to Gog, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "On that day when My people Israel dwell

Eze 38:15 safely, will you not know *it*? Then you will come from your place out of the far north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great company and a mighty army.

Eze 38:16 You will come up against My people Israel like a cloud, to cover the land. It will be in the latter days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me, when I am hallowed in you, O Gog, before their eyes."

Eze 38:17 Thus says the Lord GOD: "Are *you* he of whom I have spoken in former days by My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied for years in those days that I would bring you against them?

Eze 38:18 "And it will come to pass at the same time, when Gog comes against the land of Israel," says the Lord GOD, "*that* My fury

Eze 38:19 will show in My face. For in My jealousy *and* in the fire of My wrath I have spoken: 'Surely in that day there shall be a great

Eze 38:20 earthquake in the land of Israel, so that the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all creeping things that creep on the earth, and all men who *are* on the face of the earth shall shake at My presence. The mountains shall be thrown down, the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.'

Eze 38:21 I will call for a sword against Gog throughout all My mountains," says the Lord GOD. "Every man's sword will be against his

Eze 38:22 brother. And I will bring him to judgment with pestilence and bloodshed; I will rain down on him, on his troops, and on the many peoples who *are* with him, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. Thus I will magnify Myself

Eze 38:23 and sanctify Myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD." '

Those armies from the north, from the furthest parts of the earth, that come like a cloud in the latter years against those brought back from the sword, have gained their greatness because of a misguided Hebrew atheistic philosophy, called communism. God is about to unleash those armies upon their own heads. That is what Armageddon means in Hebrew – a massive army the likes of which this world has never seen, coming against Israel not on land but by air like a cloud. An attack against which Israel will have no defence and no remedy, except a divine intervention. However, God will not intervene to save them until they atone for their sin, their decide, and turn to the only Power that can save them in heartfelt repentance. The longer they wait, the more of them will perish, in a doomsday scenario that is now in the making before our very eyes.

“Russia Sends Warships to Mediterranean” “In response to the US turnaround on Iran, Russian President Vladimir Putin decided to send six Russian warships, led by the **Admiral Kuznetsov** aircraft carrier and the **Moskva** guided missile cruiser, the Russian Navy's Black Sea flagship, to the Mediterranean. As the the first prolonged stay of a Russian carrier in the eastern Mediterranean vicinity of Israel's shores and waters patrolled by the US Sixth Fleet, the move is more than significant. The **Admiral Kuznetsov** carries on its decks 47 warplanes and 10 helicopters. The **Admiral Kuznetsov** is a Class CV carrier, built in 1991. It is 999 ft. in length, displaces 67,500 tons and has a top speed of 30 knots. It accommodates a crew of 1,700. Sources in Moscow say that the

Kremlin acted quickly to make its presence known after the NIE report was released. The Russian fleet, which has already set out for its new mission from the North and Black Seas, will reportedly have the use of naval facilities at Syria's Tartous port. Its presence for several months will be a complication for the Israel navy's operations opposite the Lebanese and Syrian coasts, especially if the Russians are joined at Tartous by Iranian submarines or warships. Russia also sent ships to the northeastern Atlantic." (*The Lekarev Report*, Dec. 6, 2007).

"Russian Ships in Syrian Ports" "For the first time since the fall of the Iron Curtain, Russian ships will again operate the Tartus and Latakia ports in Syria as permanent bases for the Russian Navy in the Mediterranean.

During a recent visit to the Russian Navy base in the Sevastopol port in Ukraine, Russian Navy commander, Admiral Vladimir Masorin said, "Being present in the Mediterranean is very important for our Navy in the Black Sea." Western media picked up on this statement, as did Arabic stations like Al-Jazeera.

According to reports, Syria plans to let the Russian use its ports as part of the large arms deal signed between the two countries a few months ago. Syria had been deeply indebted to Russia to the tune of \$11 billion but recently, Russia 'forgave' some 70% of the debt and made an 'arrangement' with Syria by which some of the remaining 30% will be paid in cash and the rest will be 'paid' through permanent services rendered to the Russian Navy in the two Mediterranean ports.

The Russian Navy is known to massively operate spy ships. Israeli officials believe that a renewed base in Syria will help the Russians carry out spy missions against Israel, particularly electronic spying aimed at observing new weapon systems and the flow of information in channels used by the army and the defense establishment. (*The Lekarev Report*, June 8, 2007).

"Iran Gets Anti-Aircraft Missile System from Russia" "Iran's Defense Minister Mostafa Mohammad Najjar announced on Iranian TV Wednesday that Russia will provide Iran with the sophisticated and powerful S-300 anti-aircraft missile defense system, vastly improving the Islamic Republic's ability to protect its nuclear development facilities. The missiles can intercept targets at an altitude of up to 27 kilometers (90,000 feet) and at ranges of up to 150 kilometers (95 miles) from the launch point. They are effective against cruise missiles and ballistic warheads as well, and are equivalent to the PAC-3 Patriot missiles which Israel is considering purchasing.

Russian military officials contend that the S-300 is of a higher operational standard than the U.S.-built Patriot missiles currently used by Israel. The S-300 systems are also a major improvement over the 29 Tor-M1 air defense missile systems delivered to Iran from Russia earlier this year. The \$700 million contract for that purchase was signed in December 2005. Former Israel Air Force Commander Eitan Ben-Eliyahu told Channel 10 TV that the missiles will make it significantly harder for Israel to attack Iran from the air, if it chooses to do so. Even aircraft that do not directly participate in the attack will be endangered by the missiles, he said, adding that AWACS planes, standby rescue planes and other planes with protective missions could be targeted by such long range missiles. Najjar did not specify how many S-300 systems would be shipped to Iran, nor did he say when this would happen. An unidentified Russian source confirmed that dozens of S-300 batteries would be transferred to Iran and that the contract had already been signed several years ago." (*The Lekarev Report*, Dec. 27, 2007).

"Russia Sending Nuclear Fuel to Iran" "In a dramatic turnaround, Russian president Vladimir Putin indicated Friday that Moscow would send uranium to Iran's atomic reactor in Bushehr. International Atomic Energy inspectors were invited to the Novosibirsk Plant on Nov. 26 to verify and seal the fuel before shipment. On that day, too, the US-promoted Middle East conference is provisionally set to open in Annapolis, Maryland. The Quartet of which Russia is a member will not be there. This decision means that Moscow has backed away from the commitments Putin gave President Bush and Israeli prime minister Olmert, after his mid-October talks with Iranian leaders in Tehran broke down in discord. He then promised to withhold the fuel from the Bushehr reactor and in fact, pulled all the Russian staff out before they had completed work on the project's final stages. Olmert received Putin's commitment to withhold the uranium fuel from Iran when they met in the Kremlin on Oct. 18 and passed it on to President Bush and later to French president Nicolas Sarkozy and British premier Gordon Brown in special trips he made to Paris and London. The Israeli prime minister announced then that Israel had a true friend in the Russian leader. Olmert is deeply embarrassed by Putin's about-face, putting it mildly. It also bodes ill for the third round of sanctions, for which the Bush administration is pushing at the UN Security Council, where Russia holds a veto, now that the nuclear watchdog confirmed in its latest report Nov. 15 that Iran had not given up uranium enrichment. **DEBKAF**'s Moscow sources report that the Russian president has reverted to his previous tactic of broadcasting to Muslim nations a message that Moscow has its own agenda and is willing, unlike Washington, to help them develop their nuclear programs. The question mark hanging over UN sanctions also affects the decision on military action against Iran's suspect military nuclear facilities, which President Bush had put on a back burner under the influence of Putin's breach with Tehran. There was a brief thaw in the tense relations between Washington and Moscow and signs of a new willingness for compromise on both sides on such matters as the US plan to deploy anti-missile systems in East Europe. The month-long détente was abruptly curtailed Friday, Nov. 16, with Moscow's decision to let Iran have the uranium to fuel its Bushehr reactor six months before its scheduled start-up. The step was gladly welcomed in Tehran - of course!" (*The Lekarev Report*, Nov. 18, 2007).

"Putin Rejects Tough Stand on Iran" "At the Russian-EU summit in Portugal Friday, Oct. 26, Russian president Vladimir Putin compared the US proposal to build a missile defense shield in Eastern Europe to the Cuban missile crisis of the 1960s. "Such a threat is being set up on our borders," he said, but then admitted that tension was much lower now than then and that the US was listening to Moscow's concerns. On arrival in Portugal, Putin compared the supporters of tough policies against Iran to "mad people wielding razor blades." On Kosovo's future, he questioned the wisdom of "encouraging separatism in Europe." Earlier, US defense secretary Robert Gates said the US has done as much as it can "to appease Russia" on its missile plans. "We've leaned about as far forward as we can." This week, the defense secretary offered to open the proposed sites in Poland and the Czech Republic to Russian observers and delay switching on the interceptors until the Washington and Moscow agreed on proof of a threat from Iran. "We are not satisfied with any of their proposals," Russian defense minister Anatoly Serdyukov commented Thursday. Regarding his future, Putin said he would not assume presidential powers if he became prime minister after finishing his term in the spring. "There will be no infringement on the powers of the president of the Russian Federation, at least while it depends on me," he declared. (*Lekarev Report*, Oct. 28, 2007).

"Iranian Opposition: Nuclear Race Continues" "An Iranian opposition group in exile acknowledged that Teheran halted its nuclear weapons development program in 2003, but vehemently insisted that the bomb-making program resumed the following year and said that the NIE Report published last week was therefore misleading in ignoring the evidence of the resumption of the program. "We announce vehemently that the clerical regime is currently continuing its drive to obtain nuclear weapons," said Mohammad Mohaddessin, a spokesman for the Paris-based National Council of Resistance of Iran, or NCRI.

Speaking at a news conference, Mohaddessin said that Iran appeared to have duped US intelligence. "The clerical regime leaks false information and intelligence to Western intelligence services, through double agents," he said. Mohaddessin acknowledged that Iran shut down the Lavizan-Shian weapons center in Teheran sometime in 2003 under international pressure. However, he claimed that the Iranian authorities merely shifted their weapons development efforts to other sites around the country, and that work had resumed by 2004. Israeli officials, citing their own sources, have confirmed this scenario. The NCRI is described as the political wing of the People's Mujahedeen of Iran, an opposition group advocating the overthrow of the government in Teheran. The Mujahedeen are considered a terrorist group by the United States and the European Union as well as Iran. There was no independent verification of the

NCRI claims, which Mohaddessin attributed to sources within Iran, including staff at covert nuclear plants. He said the group had checked with its sources in the past week and discovered that the centers were still working. (The Lekarev Report, Dec 13, 2007).

“Iranian Submarines Can Hit Tel Aviv” “The Iranian Navy is presently deploying two submarine fleets - mini-sub in Persian Gulf waters for attacks on US shipping and Gulf oil facilities, and the long-range Kilo class sub of Russian, Chinese and Iranian manufacture, for long-range targets in the Mediterranean, such as the US Sixth Fleet and Israel coastal towns, primarily Tel Aviv.

Iran's defense minister Mostafa Najjar announced today, Nov. 27, that a new Iranian-built submarine would be delivered to the navy Wednesday. He offered no details of the new item. However, two days earlier, Iran's navy chief, Adm. Habibollah Sayyari disclosed that the new submarine would operate in Persian Gulf waters in the Strait of Hormuz area. He also declared that Tehran has no intention of blocking the Strait in a flare-up with the US military.

DEBKAF's military sources note that Iran's strategic thinking has undergone a change. Up til now, the rulers of Tehran viewed the blockage of the narrow waterway to shipping that carries one-third of the world's oil needs, as its most effective reprisal for a military attack. They have revised their thinking for two reasons: First, Iran has made great strides in expanding its influence in Gulf oil states and an assault on their sole source of revenue would win more enemies than friends.

Second, Tehran has developed a new capability to deploy in the Mediterranean Kilo class submarines armed with the Russian-made "Sizzler" Klub-S (3M54) missile. This missile can be shot from underwater at a range of 300 kilometers and has a powerful 450-kilogram warhead. This possibility was outlined by an authoritative Iranian security figure, the spokesman-cum-commentator at Iran's defense ministry, Gen. Reza Naghdi, on Nov. 12. He said that if Iran were attacked, its navy - and its submarine fleet in particular - could come close enough to "reach an Israeli coastal target" from the sea.

If conditions are 'right', a strategic decision could be taken in Tehran to send a sub or two to the Mediterranean to hit American or Israeli naval shipping or the Israeli coast. The Revolutionary Guards Corps is known to have built a large fleet of mini-sub and special marine units equipped with fast boats for deployment in the Persian Gulf. Don't forget that Iran's first intervention in the Israel-Hizbullah war in South Lebanon last year was by sea. On July 14, 2006, Iranian naval officers helped Hizbullah shoot a shore-to-ship C-802 missile from a Lebanese army base, crippling the Israeli *Hanit* missile ship. The incident is still considered the most damaging suffered by Israel in that war. A month later, Iran began experimenting with firing the Sizzler missiles from its Kilo-class submarines. The Kilo class submarine is 74 meters long, has a maximum speed of up to 30 knots surfaced, diving depth of 300 meters and range of more than 12,100 km. The Kilo carries a crew of 52 sailors and, depending on the type, is armed with six to eight 533 mm torpedo tubes, 24 mines and air defense missiles. The Kilo submarines' quiet engines enable them to appear and disappear like wraiths, winning them the name of "Black Hole" from the US Navy." (The Lekarev Report, Nov 28, 2007).

“Ahmadinejad: End of Israel is Imminent” “Speaking in the southwestern town of Bushehr near the site of Iran's planned first nuclear power plant, being built with Russian help, Iranian President Ahmadinejad said today that "Israel's days are numbered." He declared, "It is time to end the puppet theatre of the fake regime," referring to the Jewish state. He insisted that Iran will not yield to western pressure and that it is reaching the "peak" of its nuclear program. "If you (Western powers) imagine that the Iranian nation will back down, you are making a mistake," he said in the televised speech. "On the nuclear path we are moving towards the peak."

Regarding Israel, Ahmadinejad said, "The religious Palestinian people will bring down the last screen with its powerful hand on the Zionists' puppet theater. It's time to end the puppet theater of this fake regime."

Turning to the Western powers supporting Israel, he said, "Those who remain silent in light of this regime's crimes and support it should know that they are taking part in the bloodshed of the Palestinian people and will be tried in the future. Defying international pressure, Iran has been working on producing its own nuclear fuel, technology the West fears will be used to make atomic bombs. Tehran says its work is peaceful and has refused to stop. Ahmadinejad delivered this speech two days after taking delivery of the Iran the eighth and final consignment of nuclear fuel from Russia for the Bushehr plant. (LR, Feb, 1, 2008).

“UNBELIEVABLE!” **“In his most provocative anti-US speech to date, Iran's president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad brazenly questioned whether al Qaeda's Sept. 11, 2001 attack on New York actually took place** in an address marking Iran's Nuclear Technology day, April 8. He went on to ask why the US had never released the names of the thousands of dead in the Trade Center attacks and how the most advanced security, intelligence and tracking devices in the world had failed to detect the hijackers' planes before they struck the two New York towers. [Apparently Ahmadinejad didn't read the papers on that memorable day when the names of all the victims were printed and beamed around the world.] Ahmadinejad is famous also for denying the Nazi Holocaust. Announcing earlier that Iran had begun installing 6,000 new advanced (P2) centrifuges for uranium enrichment at Natanz, the Iranian president claimed his country's nuclear program had passed the point of no-return technologically and politically. According to Ahmadinejad, America is disintegrating politically, militarily and economically and therefore, Iran's nuclear achievement will change the international order of power that has been in place since World War II. By going full steam ahead with uranium enrichment, Iran is flouting three UN Security Council resolutions and standing fast against threats, sanctions and incentives offered by the West to halt a process capable of producing nuclear weapons. Instead, Tehran is installing a new generation of advanced P2 centrifuges to replace the older P-1 machines and accelerate enrichment. He claims they are five times cheaper than the commercial machines." (The Lekarev Report, April 10, 2008)

“Iran's New Missile” “According to Israeli News Channel 10, Iran tested a new missile during the Annapolis summit. The *Ashoura* missile has a range of 2,000 kilometers and is capable of reaching Israel, US Army bases in the Middle East and eastern European cities. According to the report, the new missile is an improvement on the existing Shihab-3 missile. The *Ashoura* uses solid fuel instead of the Shihab's liquid fuel, giving it a significantly faster launch sequence which is harder to detect. Iranian Defense Minister Gen. Mostafa Muhammad-Najjar had announced the development of the new missile on the day of the summit, but had not specified whether it had actually been tested. He also called it one of "Iran's greatest achievements." (The Lekarev Report, Dec. 13, 2007)

“The NIE and the 12th Imam (the Islamic 'Messianic' figure)” “On August 8, 2006 Professor Bernard Lewis, the doyen of Islam studies in the West, wrote in the Wall Street Journal: "There is a radical difference between the Islamic Republic of Iran and other governments with nuclear weapons. This difference is expressed in what can only be described as the apocalyptic worldview of Iran's present rulers." And "In this context, mutual assured destruction, the deterrent that worked so well during the Cold War, would have no meaning. At the end of time, there will be general destruction anyway. What will matter will be the final destination of the dead – hell for the infidels, and heaven for the believers. For people with this mindset, MAD is not a constraint; it is an inducement." I did a quick search of the National Intelligence Estimate document "Iran: Nuclear Intentions and Capabilities" for the words "imam" or "12th" or "Mehdi". No hits. So I can judge with "high confidence" that NIE conclusions have not much to do with **WHY** Iran wants to do what it wants to do. As long as that has not changed, nothing has changed. In other words, it is irrelevant whether this is disinformation by Iran or not. The consequences of making a mistake in estimating the threat from Iran are so high, that the worst case scenario estimates should be the ones on which decisions should be made. The mistakes done in Iraq where Saddam's WMD were moved to Syria, apparently by the Russians, and the whole affair hushed up by both Democrats and Republicans since the truth would have embarrassed them both, must not be repeated. There is no room for petty partisan politics if the result is a nuclear war.

“Egypt to Sign Nuclear Pact with Russia” “Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak heads for Russia today where he is expected to get assurances of Russian assistance to build a nuclear facility. A bilateral nuclear power deal was outlined last week and is expected to be signed during the visit. Egypt’s Foreign Minister Ahmad Abu Al-Gheit said the pact would enable Egypt to tap into Russia’s extensive experience in the field of nuclear energy. The deal could allow Russia to participate in a tender to build nuclear reactors in Egypt. The pact coincides with international efforts to pressure Iran into abandoning its nuclear program. Iran insists its program is for civilian purposes of manufacturing energy, but Western countries are concerned Teheran is covertly making an atomic bomb. The technologies for creating nuclear energy and nuclear bombs are similar and involve many dual-usage elements and substances. Egypt is one of several Middle Eastern countries seeking a nuclear program. Cairo wants to revive its atomic energy program, which was aborted in the wake of the Chernobyl disaster in 1986, when the dangers of such a program became apparent.” (The Lekarev Report, March 25, 2008).

“Hizbollah Preparing for Upcoming War” “Naim Kassem, Hizbullah leader Hassan Nasrallah’s deputy, described a training exercise the group conducted at the beginning of this week as preparation for the next war with Israel. In an interview with the Arab-Israeli paper Sawt el-Balad published Thursday, Kassem said that the Shiite organization’s weapons arsenal can hit all parts of Israel. He described the maneuvers as “enormous and important and they were carried out as part of our deployment so that we won’t be caught by surprise. “Our exercise was unrestricted and was meant to cover all of the territory of the Israeli entity and not simply to strengthen our companies,” he stated. Kassem added that UNIFIL forces detected the increased Hizbullah activity but, since no militants were carrying weapons, he claimed they were acting in accordance with UN Security Resolution 1701. The drill was part of our obligation to make our presence and readiness known and (to show) that we act how we deem necessary,” Hizbullah’s number two said. (Lekarev Report, Nov. 11,2007).

“Syria Arming Itself 'Furiously'” “Jordan and Israeli security officials speaking to Aaron Klein, Jerusalem Bureau Chief for *World Net Daily*, have said that Syria, aided by Russia and Iran, in recent months has been furiously acquiring rockets and missiles, including projectiles capable of hitting the entire state of Israel. A Jordanian security official said one of the main reasons Damascus did not retaliate after Israel carried out its Sept. 6 airstrike inside Syria allegedly targeting a nascent nuclear facility was because Syria’s rocket infrastructure was not yet complete. Syria picked up the pace of acquiring rockets and missiles, largely from Russia with Iranian backing, with the goal of completing its missile and rocket arsenal by the end of the year, after the Israeli attack. The Jordanian official said Syria is aiming to possess enough projectiles to fire over 100 rockets into Israel per hour for a sustained period of time.

According to Israeli and Jordanian officials, Syria recently quietly struck a deal with Russia that allows Moscow to station submarines and warboats off Syrian ports. In exchange, Russia is supplying Syria with weaponry at lower costs, with some of the missiles and rockets being financed by Iran. “The Iranians opened an extended credit line with Russia for Syria with the purpose of arming Syria,” said one Jordanian security official. “Russia’s involvement and strategic positioning is almost like a return to its Cold War stance,” the official said.

Both the Israeli and Jordanian officials told WND large quantities of Syrian rockets and missiles are being stockpiled at Latakia, Syria’s main port on the Mediterranean Sea, as well as at Syria’s Tartus port, another major port area south of Latakia and north of Damascus.

Syria’s new acquisitions include Russia’s S-300 surface-to-air missile defense shield, which is similar to the U.S.-funded, Israeli engineered Arrow antimissile system currently deployed in Israel. The S-300 system is being run not by Syria but by Russian naval technicians who work from Syria’s ports, security officials said. New ballistic missiles and rockets include Alexander rockets and a massive quantity of various Scud surface-to-surface missiles, including Scud B and D Scud missiles.

The Wise Man Sees

In Proverbs 22:3 we read, *“The wise man sees evil coming and prepares, while the naive goes on and is punished.”* My friends, the mass of evidence growing daily that the enemies of Israel are seriously and systematically preparing for war against the state of Israel - a war they openly call the war to destroy the Jewish state - cannot be ignored. As we are exhorted by the verse quoted above, the wise see evil coming and prepare. Those who proverbially hide their heads in the sand will suffer. Top security and defense officials are saying this is not a question of “IF” but “WHEN”. So when the rockets begin falling (G-d forbid) in other parts of Israel like they have been falling on Sderot and the Negev, it will be too late to prepare. It will be too late then to get bottled water, non-perishable food and other necessities for survival. It will be too late then to get help to IDF soldiers on the frontline, like we did during the Second Lebanon war, thanks to your generous assistance. Last night, we had a call from the Sergeant Major of the IDF unit for whom you bought shoes in August 2006. His concern was evident in the phone call; there are preparations that must be made now. We cannot wait. (*The Lekarev Report*, February 7,2008).

“Israel Will Defend Its Own” “As the UN Security Council debated a resolution to condemn Israel (again!!) for the situation in Gaza, Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni declared forcefully in her speech to the Herzliya Conference that Israel will defend its own, regardless of UN condemnations or resolutions. “I believe that Israel should not have to apologize for its existence and it will continue to defend the lives of its citizens, even at the price of condemnation,” she said, adding that “it is inconceivable for Palestinians to fire rockets on Israel and then ask for our help.” Livni dedicated an extensive part of her speech to the negotiation process and the divisive core issues: “I am not here to peddle dreams nor am I here to strengthen the hands of those who have given up. . . .” Even if the Palestinians fail to implement it, this document will be of worth if in it there are Israeli interests set in writing and ratified by the international community. There will be no further claims beyond this document and it will offer a lasting solution to the conflict, one which will take the place of United Nations resolutions and proposals like the Arab Initiative,” the foreign minister added. (The Lekarev Report, Jan. 23, 2008).

“UN Fails to Condemn Jerusalem Massacre” “The United States accused Libya on Thursday of preventing the Security Council from condemning as a “terrorist attack” the deadly massacre at the Mercaz Ha Rav Yeshiva. The United States had drafted a statement that was discussed at an emergency UN Security Council session called to debate an attack by a Palestinian gunman who killed at least eight people and wounded at least 10 more at an Israeli religious school. “The members of the Security Council condemn in the strongest terms the terrorist attack that took place in Jerusalem March 6, 2008 which resulted in the death and injury of dozens of Israeli civilians,” said the draft statement. The US delegation hoped the 15 member council would unanimously support the condemnation but Libya, along with several other council members, voted it down. (The Lekarev Report, March 7, 2008).

“Can Israel Rely on America?”

“Thanks to Naomi Ragen for forwarding this article by Gerald M. Steinberg (Institute for Contemporary Affairs/Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs). The December “surprise” resulting from the publication of the U.S. National Intelligence Estimate disrupted fifteen years of Israeli policy based on working with the international coalition to pressure Iran to drop its nuclear weapons program through sanctions and the threat of military action, and has reminded Israelis of the limits of American security guarantees and strategic

cooperation.

* Within two weeks following publication of the NIE report [*that Iran is no longer pursuing nuclear weapons. Ed*], China signed a major contract on energy development and supply with Iran, and Russia quickly dispatched two shipments of nuclear fuel for the Bushehr nuclear reactor. Egypt moved to improve relations with Iran, and Saudi Arabia welcomed Iranian President Ahmadinejad to Mecca for the Haj.

* Prime Minister Olmert had explained the logic of the "Annapolis process" in terms of the coalition to stop Iran, but two weeks after Annapolis, with the release of the NIE report this rationale has lost much of its relevance.

* Another source of stress comes from differences over renewed U.S. efforts to forge a quick agreement with the Palestinian Authority at a time of continued terrorism, the violent conflict between Fatah and Hamas, the failure to develop functioning Palestinian institutions, and the PA's ongoing incitement and rejection of the legitimacy of a Jewish state.

* In addition, the overall decline of U.S. influence, as reflected in Iraq, the return of Russia as a world power, the chaos in Pakistan, and other developments, has highlighted the limits of Israeli reliance on American assistance, and the need for Israel to maintain an independent capability to act when necessary." (*The Lekarev Report*, Jan. 8, 2008).

The media and political commentators all over the world have been saying that it is not a matter of if, but of when, Israel, or America, or both, will attack Iran. However, a widespread devastation of Iran by those nations is not in the biblical prophecy. Instead, as we saw, the Bible says the opposite – it is Iran, in an alliance with Russia and a host of other countries that will attack Israel. God will magnify Himself before the world by destroying such a mighty coalition that is led by the bastion of atheism. The good news is that immediately afterwards Jesus Christ will return to set up the Millennium Kingdom – a new world order of true peace, holiness and prosperity, in which wicked people will have no place.

Where God Was During the Holocaust

The Jews never tire asking the questions: "Where was God during the Holocaust?", and, "Why did He not intervene to prevent it or put an end to it after it became obvious what was going on?"

The answer is rather clear and straightforward. God was on His throne; He did not prevent or stop it sooner because He prophesied it, He foresaw it, and He implemented it. Simple as that, and proven by the Scriptures, yet they would never accept it, always claiming innocence and victim hood.

Amo 3:6 If a trumpet is blown in a city, will not the people be afraid? If there is calamity in a city, will not the LORD have done *it*?

Psa 135:6 Whatever the LORD pleases He does, In heaven and in earth, In the seas and in all deep places.

Why then do the Jews keep on asking those questions, and never finding the answer to them? Because their spiritual leaders are as self-centred and ignorant of the Scriptures now, as they were at the time of Jesus Christ. And as dangerous for Israel as they were then. They led the nation to catastrophe then, and are about to do it again. Not because they are not making peace with their intractable duplicitous enemies, for as sixty years of history have proven, that is an impossible task, but because they continue to refuse to bend their knees before the Almighty, and acknowledge their sins and wrongdoings, and the evil they have inflicted upon the world with their anti-God, anti-life, atheistic philosophy of communism.

In order to be forgiven, all sins must be atoned for, and the Jews have a lot of atoning to do. Only then can they be at peace with God, and especially with His Son, whom they have so ingloriously crucified, and benefit once again of God's protection and blessings. Ezekiel makes the following statement in one of his prophecies:

Eze 38:8 After many days you will be visited. In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword *and* gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely.

There can be no doubt that this verse, in particular the expression, "brought back from the sword", refers to the Holocaust. No other comparable catastrophe can fall upon the Jews "in the latter years", other than the Great Tribulation which will fall upon the whole world. This means that this event was prophesied and implemented under the eyes of God. Such being the case, how is it that the Jews keep asking the question of where God was in the days of the Holocaust and why He did not intervene to prevent it or cut it short? Even Pope John Paul II asked these questions when he visited Auschwitz.

The role of spiritual leaders is to inform people of the will of God, of His laws, statutes and judgments; of His prophecies and warnings, in order to keep them on the straight and narrow path. As Jesus Christ said:

Mat 7:13 "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.

Mat 7:14 Because narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Now notice carefully what Jesus Christ said in the very next breath.

Mat 7:15 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.

Mat 7:16 You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?

Mat 7:17 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.

Mat 7:18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor *can* a bad tree bear good fruit.

Mat 7:19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

Mat 7:20 Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

Mat 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

Mat 7:22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'

Mat 7:23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

False prophets, ravenous wolves, thornbushes, thistles – strong words and extraordinary comparisons for those who would be spiritual leaders. Since Jesus Christ knew that His religion will be universal, these words apply to the spiritual leaders of Judaism, of Christianity, and of the whole world. Any wonder that the world is in such a mess, and on the brink of a universal catastrophe.

The question therefore that should be asked is not where God was in those days, or why He did not intervene to stop it, but why He implemented such a grievous prophecy to the full. The answer, like the prophecy itself, is in the Bible.

2Ch 33:1 Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem.

2Ch 33:2 But he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out before

2Ch 33:3 the children of Israel. For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down; he raised up altars for the Baals, and made wooden images; and he worshiped all the host of heaven and served them.

2Ch 33:4 He also built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem shall My name be forever."

2Ch 33:5 And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

2Ch 33:6 Also he caused his sons to pass through the fire in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom; he practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft and sorcery, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger.

2Ch 33:7 He even set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son, "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever;

2Ch 33:8 and I will not again remove the foot of Israel from the land which I have appointed for your fathers—only if they are careful to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law and the statutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moses."

2Ch 33:9 **So Manasseh seduced Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel.**

2Ch 33:10 And the LORD spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they would not listen.

2Ch 33:11 Therefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh with hooks, bound him with bronze fetters, and carried him off to Babylon.

Jer 7:17 Do you not see what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?

Jer 7:18 The children gather wood, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes for the queen of heaven; and they pour out drink offerings to other gods, that they may provoke Me to anger.

Jer 7:19 Do they provoke Me to anger?" says the LORD. "Do they not provoke themselves, to the shame of their own faces?"

Jer 7:20 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, My anger and My fury will be poured out on this place—on man and on beast, on the trees of the field and on the fruit of the ground. And it will burn and not be quenched."

Jer 7:21 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat meat.

Jer 7:22 For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt

Jer 7:23 offerings or sacrifices. But this is what I commanded them, saying, 'Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.'

Jer 7:24 Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but followed the counsels and the dictates of their evil hearts, and went backward

Jer 7:25 and not forward. Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day, **I have even sent to you all My servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them.**

Jer 7:26 **Yet they did not obey Me or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck. They did worse than their fathers.**

Jer 7:27 "Therefore you shall speak all these words to them, but they will not obey you. You shall also call to them, but they will not

Jer 7:28 answer you. "So you shall say to them, 'This is a nation that does not obey the voice of the LORD their God nor receive correction. Truth has perished and has been cut off from their mouth.

Jer 7:29 Cut off your hair and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on the desolate heights; for the LORD has rejected and forsaken

Jer 7:30 the generation of His wrath.' For the children of Judah have done evil in My sight," says the LORD. "They have set their abominations in the house which is called by My name, to pollute it.

Jer 7:31 And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into My heart.

Jer 7:32 "Therefore behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "when it will no more be called Tophet, or the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter; for they will bury in Tophet until there is no room.

Jer 7:33 The corpses of this people will be food for the birds of the heaven and for the beasts of the earth. And no one will frighten

Jer 7:34 them away. Then I will cause to cease from the cities of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride. For the land shall be desolate.

Jer 16:1 The word of the LORD also came to me, saying,

Jer 16:2 "You shall not take a wife, nor shall you have sons or daughters in this place."

Jer 16:3 For thus says the LORD concerning the sons and daughters who are born in this place, and concerning their mothers who bore them and their fathers who begot them in this land:

Jer 16:4 "They shall die gruesome deaths; they shall not be lamented nor shall they be buried, but they shall be like refuse on the face of the earth. They shall be consumed by the sword and by famine, and their corpses shall be meat for the birds of heaven and for

Jer 16:5 the beasts of the earth." For thus says the LORD: "Do not enter the house of mourning, nor go to lament or bemoan them; for I have taken away My peace from this people," says the LORD, "lovingkindness and mercies.

Jer 16:6 Both the great and the small shall die in this land. They shall not be buried; neither shall men lament for them, cut themselves,

Jer 16:7 nor make themselves bald for them. Nor shall *men* break *bread* in mourning for them, to comfort them for the dead; nor shall *men* give them the cup of consolation to drink for their father or their mother.
 Jer 16:8 Also you shall not go into the house of feasting to sit with them, to eat and drink."
 Jer 16:9 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I will cause to cease from this place, before your eyes and in your days, the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride.
 Jer 16:10 "And it shall be, when you show this people all these words, and they say to you, 'Why has the LORD pronounced all this great disaster against us? Or what *is* our iniquity? Or what *is* our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?'
 Jer 16:11 then you shall say to them, 'Because your fathers have forsaken Me,' says the LORD; 'they have walked after other gods and have served them and worshiped them, and have forsaken Me and not kept My law.
 Jer 16:12 **And you have done worse than your fathers, for behold, each one follows the dictates of his own evil heart, so that no one listens to Me.**
 Jer 16:13 Therefore I will cast you out of this land into a land that you do not know, neither you nor your fathers; and there you shall
 Jer 16:14 serve other gods day and night, where I will not show you favor.' "Therefore behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "that it shall no more be said, 'The LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,'
 Jer 16:15 but, 'The LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had driven them.' For I will bring them back into their land which I gave to their fathers.

Eze 5:5 "Thus says the Lord GOD: 'This *is* Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations and the countries all around her.
 Eze 5:6 **She has rebelled against My judgments by doing wickedness more than the nations, and against My statutes more than the countries that *are* all around her; for they have refused My judgments, and they have not walked in My statutes.'**
 Eze 5:7 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Because you have multiplied *disobedience* more than the nations that *are* all around you, have not walked in My statutes nor kept My judgments, nor even done according to the judgments of the nations that *are* all
 Eze 5:8 around you'—therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Indeed I, even I, *am* against you and will execute judgments in your midst in
 Eze 5:9 the sight of the nations. **And I will do among you what I have never done, and the like of which I will never do again, because of all your abominations.**
 Eze 5:10 Therefore fathers shall eat *their* sons in your midst, and sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments among you, and all of you who remain I will scatter to all the winds.
 Eze 5:11 'Therefore, as I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'surely, because you have defiled My sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all your abominations, therefore I will also diminish *you*; My eye will not spare, nor will I have any pity.
 Eze 5:12 One-third of you shall die of the pestilence, and be consumed with famine in your midst; and one-third shall fall by the sword all around you; and I will scatter another third to all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them.
 Eze 5:13 'Thus shall My anger be spent, and I will cause My fury to rest upon them, and I will be avenged; and they shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken *it* in My zeal, when I have spent My fury upon them.
 Eze 5:14 Moreover I will make you a waste and a reproach among the nations that *are* all around you, in the sight of all who pass by.
 Eze 5:15 'So it shall be a reproach, a taunt, a lesson, and an astonishment to the nations that *are* all around you, when I execute judgments among you in anger and in fury and in furious rebukes. I, the LORD, have spoken.
 Eze 5:16 When I send against them the terrible arrows of famine which shall be for destruction, which I will send to destroy you, I will
 Eze 5:17 increase the famine upon you and cut off your supply of bread. So I will send against you famine and wild beasts, and they will bereave you. Pestilence and blood shall pass through you, and I will bring the sword against you. I, the LORD, have spoken.' "

Does anyone still wonder where God was, or why He did not intervene to stop the Holocaust? The answer is clear for all to see: they did not obey God, they did worse than their fathers, and even worse than the nations that God removed to make room for them. Yet even after the Holocaust, still they would not obey God, repent and acknowledge their sins. They are in mortal danger again, for without repentance, God does not hear their prayers, and they cannot be saved, for this time truly it is no longer a question of survival, but one of salvation.

Those who think that they have reasons to hate the Jews, or that they are any better, should beware of the fact that after they are refined through the fire, the Jews will be leading the world back to God in the very near future.

Isa 48:10 Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. For My own sake,
 Isa 48:11 for My own sake, I will do *it*; For how should *My name* be profaned? And I will not give My glory to another.

Isa 48:17 Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: "I *am* the LORD your God, Who teaches you to profit,
 Who
 Isa 48:18 leads you by the way you should go. Oh, that you had heeded My commandments! Then your peace would have been like a
 like a
 Isa 48:19 river, And your righteousness like the waves of the sea. Your descendants also would have been like the sand, And the offspring of your body like the grains of sand; His name would not have been cut off Nor destroyed from before Me."

Eze 36:16 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying:
 Eze 36:17 "Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own ways and deeds; to Me their way was like the uncleanness of a woman in her customary impurity.
 Eze 36:18 Therefore I poured out My fury on them for the blood they had shed on the land, and for their idols *with which* they had
 Eze 36:19 defiled it. So I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed throughout the countries; I judged them
 Eze 36:20 according to their ways and their deeds. When they came to the nations, wherever they went, they profaned My holy name—when they said of them, 'These *are* the people of the LORD, *and* yet they have gone out of His land.'
 Eze 36:21 But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went.
 Eze 36:22 "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "I do not do *this* for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went.
 Eze 36:23 And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I *am* the LORD," says the Lord GOD, "when I am hallowed in you before their eyes.
 Eze 36:24 For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land.
 Eze 36:25 Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your

Eze 36:26 idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

Eze 36:27 I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do *them*.

Eze 36:28 Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.

Eze 36:29 I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. I will call for the grain and multiply it, and bring no famine upon you.

Eze 36:30 And I will multiply the fruit of your trees and the increase of your fields, so that you need never again bear the reproach of famine among the nations. Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that *were* not good;

Eze 36:31 and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations. Not for your sake do I do *this*,"

Eze 36:32 says the Lord GOD, "let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel!"

Eze 36:33 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable *you* to dwell in the cities,

Eze 36:34 and the ruins shall be rebuilt. The desolate land shall be tilled instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by.

Eze 36:35 So they will say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined

Eze 36:36 cities *are now* fortified *and* inhabited.' Then the nations which are left all around you shall know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the ruined places *and* planted what was desolate. I, the LORD, have spoken *it*, and I will do *it*."

Mic 4:1 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days *That* the mountain of the LORD's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And peoples shall flow to it.

Mic 4:2 Many nations shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion the law shall go forth, And the word of the LORD from

Mic 4:3 Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, And rebuke strong nations afar off; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war

Mic 4:4 anymore. But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, And no one shall make *them* afraid; For the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.

Mic 4:5 For all people walk each in the name of his god, But we will walk in the name of the LORD our God Forever and ever. "In that

Mic 4:6 day," says the LORD, "I will assemble the lame, I will gather the outcast And those whom I have afflicted; I will make the lame

Mic 4:7 a remnant, And the outcast a strong nation; So the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion From now on, even forever.

Mic 4:11 Now also many nations have gathered against you, Who say, "Let her be defiled, And let our eye look upon Zion."

Mic 4:12 But they do not know the thoughts of the LORD, Nor do they understand His counsel; For He will gather them like sheaves to the threshing floor.

Mic 4:13 "Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; For I will make your horn iron, And I will make your hooves bronze; You shall beat in pieces many peoples; I will consecrate their gain to the LORD, And their substance to the Lord of the whole earth."

Zec 8:13 And it shall come to pass *That* just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, So I will save you, and you shall be a blessing. Do not fear, Let your hands be strong.'

Zec 8:14 "For thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Just as I determined to punish you When your fathers provoked Me to wrath,' Says the

Zec 8:15 LORD of hosts, 'And I would not relent, So again in these days I am determined to do good To Jerusalem and to the house of

Zec 8:16 Judah. Do not fear. These *are* the things you shall do: Speak each man the truth to his neighbor; Give judgment in your

Zec 8:17 gates for truth, justice, and peace; Let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor; And do not love a false oath.

Zec 8:18 For all these *are things* that I hate,' Says the LORD." Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying,

Zec 8:19 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'The fast of the fourth *month*, The fast of the fifth, The fast of the seventh, And the fast of the tenth, Shall be joy and gladness and cheerful feasts For the house of Judah. Therefore love truth and peace.'

Zec 8:20 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Peoples shall yet come, Inhabitants of many cities;

Zec 8:21 The inhabitants of one *city* shall go to another, saying, "Let us continue to go and pray before the LORD, And seek the LORD of hosts. I myself will go also."

Zec 8:22 Yes, many peoples and strong nations Shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, And to pray before the LORD.'

Zec 8:23 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard *that* God *is* with you." ' "

Rom 11:1 I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

Rom 11:2 God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel, saying,

Rom 11:3 "LORD, THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR PROPHETS AND TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY SEEK MY LIFE"?

Rom 11:4 But what does the divine response say to him? "I HAVE RESERVED FOR MYSELF SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL."

Rom 11:5 Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

Rom 11:6 And if by grace, then *it is* no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if *it is* of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.

Rom 11:7 What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded.

Rom 11:8 Just as it is written: "GOD HAS GIVEN THEM A SPIRIT OF STUPOR, EYES THAT THEY SHOULD NOT SEE AND EARS THAT THEY SHOULD NOT HEAR, TO THIS VERY DAY."

Rom 11:9 And David says: "LET THEIR TABLE BECOME A SNARE AND A TRAP, A STUMBLING BLOCK AND A RECOMPENSE TO THEM.

Rom 11:10 LET THEIR EYES BE DARKENED, SO THAT THEY DO NOT SEE, AND BOW DOWN THEIR BACK ALWAYS."

Rom 11:11 I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation *has come* to the Gentiles.

Rom 11:12 Now if their fall *is* riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!

Rom 11:13 For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry,

Rom 11:14 if by any means I may provoke to jealousy *those who are* my flesh and save some of them.

Rom 11:15 For if their being cast away *is* the reconciling of the world, what *will* their acceptance *be* but life from the dead?

Rom 11:16 For if the firstfruit *is* holy, the lump *is* also *holy*; and if the root *is* holy, so *are* the branches.

Rom 11:17 And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree,

Rom 11:18 do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, *remember that* you do not support the root, but the root supports you.

Rom 11:19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in."

Rom 11:20 Well *said*. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear.

Rom 11:21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.

Rom 11:22 Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in *His* goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

Rom 11:23 And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

Rom 11:24 For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who *are* natural *branches*, be grafted into their own olive tree?

Rom 11:25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

Rom 11:26 And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "THE DELIVERER WILL COME OUT OF ZION, AND HE WILL TURN AWAY UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB;

Rom 11:27 FOR THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS."

Rom 11:28 Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.

Rom 11:29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

Rom 11:30 For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience,

Rom 11:31 even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy.

Rom 11:32 For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.

Rom 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

Rom 11:34 "FOR WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD? OR WHO HAS BECOME HIS COUNSELOR?"

Rom 11:35 "OR WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM AND IT SHALL BE REPAID TO HIM?"

Rom 11:36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Amen, indeed!

Why the prophets of God have never been welcomed by this world

In the beginning of the nation of Israel, God spoke to His people through anointed priests. They had the privilege of communicating with God whenever they went into the Temple's Holy of Holies adorned with the Urim and the Thummim – a special breastplate that contained twelve precious stones inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Exo 28:29 "So Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel on the breastplate of judgment over his heart, when he goes into the holy *place*, as a memorial before the LORD continually.

Exo 28:30 And you shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be over Aaron's heart when he goes in before the LORD. So Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel over his heart before the LORD continually.

Num 27:18 And the LORD said to Moses: "Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom *is* the Spirit, and lay your hand on him;

Num 27:19 set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation, and inaugurate him in their sight.

Num 27:20 And you shall give *some* of your authority to him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient.

Num 27:21 He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire before the LORD for him by the judgment of the Urim. At his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, he and all the children of Israel with him—all the congregation."

Num 27:22 So Moses did as the LORD commanded him. He took Joshua and set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the Num 27:23 congregation. And he laid his hands on him and inaugurated him, just as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.

In the course of time, however, the priests failed to perform their duties before God, forcing Him to choose a new set of servants, called prophets, to convey His messages to the people. Not surprisingly, the priests did not take kindly to the new arrangement. They have been hostile towards the prophets throughout the history of Israel, a hostility that continues to this day in both Judaism and Christendom. Take a careful look at the following passages from the book of Nehemiah, and see the disastrous consequences this hostility has had on the prophets and on the nation of Israel.

Neh 9:13 "You came down also on Mount Sinai, And spoke with them from heaven, And gave them just ordinances and true laws, Good statutes and commandments.

Neh 9:26 "Nevertheless they were disobedient And rebelled against You, **Cast Your law behind their backs And killed Your prophets**, who testified against them To turn them to Yourself; And they worked great provocations.

Neh 9:27 Therefore You delivered them into the hand of their enemies, Who oppressed them; And in the time of their trouble, When they cried to You, You heard from heaven; And according to Your abundant mercies You gave them deliverers who saved them

Neh 9:28 From the hand of their enemies. "But after they had rest, They again did evil before You. Therefore You left them in the hand of their enemies, So that they had dominion over them; Yet when they returned and cried out to You, You heard from heaven; And many times You delivered them according to Your mercies,

Neh 9:29 And testified against them, **That You might bring them back to Your law**. Yet they acted proudly, And did not heed Your commandments, But sinned against Your judgments, 'Which if a man does, he shall live by them.' And they shrugged their shoulders, Stiffened their necks, And would not hear.

Neh 9:30 **Yet for many years You had patience with them, And testified against them by Your Spirit in Your prophets. Yet they would not listen;** Therefore You gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands. Nevertheless
Neh 9:31 in Your great mercy You did not utterly consume them nor forsake them; For You *are* God, gracious and merciful.

Neh 9:34 **Neither our kings nor our princes, Our priests nor our fathers, Have kept Your law, Nor heeded Your commandments and Your testimonies, With which You testified against them.**

Neh 9:35 For they have not served You in their kingdom, Or in the many good *things* that You gave them, Or in the large and rich land which You set before them; Nor did they turn from their wicked works. "Here we *are*,

Neh 9:36 servants today! And the land that You gave to our fathers, To eat its fruit and its bounty, Here we *are*, servants in it!

Over and over again, God kept forgiving His backsliding "chosen people", until there was no further remedy, and He gave them over into the hands of their enemies. Did you notice the main reason for this disastrous outcome? Let us assemble the emphasised words together.

"Neither our kings nor our princes, Our priests nor our fathers, Have kept Your law, Nor heeded Your commandments and Your testimonies, With which You testified against them. Yet for many years You had patience with them, And testified against them by Your Spirit in Your prophets, That You might bring them back to Your law. Yet they would not listen, [but they] Cast Your law behind their backs And killed Your prophets."

In the early days of Israel, the priests, being custodians of God's laws, also served as judges of the people. However, when they ignored the law and became self-indulgent and perverters of justice, the people, instead of calling an assembly of the elders and praying to God for guidance and more righteous holy priests, demanded instead a king in order to be like their surrounding pagan neighbours.

Now notice what God told them when they made that request.

1Sa 8:1 Now it came to pass when Samuel was old that he made his sons judges over Israel.

1Sa 8:2 The name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; *they were* judges in Beersheba.

1Sa 8:3 But his sons did not walk in his ways; they turned aside after dishonest gain, took bribes, and perverted justice.

1Sa 8:4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, and said to him,

1Sa 8:5 "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations."

1Sa 8:6 But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to the LORD.

1Sa 8:7 And the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.

1Sa 8:8 According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day—with which they have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also.

1Sa 8:9 Now therefore, heed their voice. However, you shall solemnly forewarn them, and show them the behavior of the king who will

1Sa 8:10 reign over them." So Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who asked him for a king.

1Sa 8:11 And he said, "This will be the behavior of the king who will reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint *them* for his own chariots and *to be* his horsemen, and *some* will run before his chariots.

1Sa 8:12 He will appoint captains over his thousands and captains over his fifties, *will set some* to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and *some* to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots.

1Sa 8:13 He will take your daughters *to be* perfumers, cooks, and bakers.

1Sa 8:14 And he will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give *them* to his servants.

1Sa 8:15 He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants.

1Sa 8:16 And he will take your male servants, your female servants, your finest young men, and your donkeys,

1Sa 8:17 and put *them* to his work. He will take a tenth of your sheep. And you will be his servants. And you will cry out in that day

1Sa 8:18 because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the LORD will not hear you in that day."

1Sa 8:19 Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, "No, but we will have a king over us,

1Sa 8:20 that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles."

1Sa 8:21 And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he repeated them in the hearing of the LORD. So the LORD said

1Sa 8:22 to Samuel, "Heed their voice, and make them a king." And Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Every man go to his city."

The king would take their sons and daughters and make them his servants. He would also take the best of their fields, plus ten percent of their produce every year. Now is that what has transpired since that time?

Tell me a country where people pay only ten percent tax and I will tell you a happy people. I will migrate to that country in no time at all. Rather, what we have in the world is a ruinous regime of taxation that far exceeds that amount. Worst of all appear to be the countries in which the priests and ministers of religion hold sway over the people, for they demand tithes and offerings on top of the taxes people have to give to their governments. Religious leaders forget that ten per cent plus Holy Day offerings were to be the whole tax people paid to the governing authorities. Except for the Levites, who had a full time job serving in the Temple in Jerusalem, other religious leaders were to supplement people's offerings by working with their own hands, as was the case with the Apostles of Jesus Christ.

After the appointment of kings over Israel, the priests did their best to obscure the messages of the prophets and create a wedge between them and the king. Here is one such example.

Amo 7:10 Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel. The land is not able to bear all his words.

Amo 7:11 For thus Amos has said: 'Jeroboam shall die by the sword, And Israel shall surely be led away captive From their own land.'

Amo 7:12 Then Amaziah said to Amos: "Go, you seer! Flee to the land of Judah. There eat bread, And there prophesy.

Amo 7:13 But never again prophesy at Bethel, For it *is* the king's sanctuary, And it *is* the royal residence."

Amo 7:14 Then Amos answered, and said to Amaziah: "I was no prophet, Nor was I a son of a prophet, But I was a sheep breeder and a tender of sycamore fruit.

Amo 7:15 Then the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said to me, 'Go, prophesy to My people Israel.' Therefore,

Amo 7:16 hear the word of the LORD: You say, 'Do not prophesy against Israel, And do not spout against the house of Isaac.'

Amo 7:17 "Therefore thus says the LORD: 'Your wife shall be a harlot in the city; Your sons and daughters shall fall by the sword; Your land shall be divided by *survey* line; You shall die in a defiled land; And Israel shall surely be led away captive from his own land.'

While there are some examples of prophets who arose from the priestly line, on the whole the prophets were drawn from simple people who had no expectation of exalted positions. In fact, becoming a prophet of God not only did not confer one any special

privileges with the leaders and the people, but was a sure way of landing him into many personal and family problems. An interesting example is that of David, who was a prophet before he became a king. Had he failed to overcome his trials and difficulties during his testing period and spiritual growth, we would not have the Psalms – some of the most wonderful writings ever put on paper.

When he began to write his prayers and songs of praise to God, he could hardly have imagined that he was writing for posterity. In the course of time however, he became aware that something wonderful was happening in his life and in the life of the world. He understood that he was an instrument in the hands of a higher power.

Psa 8:3 When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained,

Psa 8:4 **What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him?**

Psa 8:5 For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. . .

Although anointed King over Israel, David endured some of the most horrific trials that could befall a human being. Was he aware that he was a forerunner for Someone who would endure even more horrendous trials and become the Saviour of the world? Many of the Psalms are about Jesus Christ, who acknowledged David as His forerunner.

Mat 22:41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,

Mat 22:42 saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" They said to Him, "*The Son of David.*"

Mat 22:43 He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'LORD,' saying:

Mat 22:44 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, TILL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES YOUR FOOTSTOOL" '?

Mat 22:45 If David then calls Him 'LORD,' how is He his Son?"

Mat 22:46 And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

It is general knowledge that Jesus Christ came into the world in order to make the Holy Spirit available to all human beings.

Joh 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments.

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

Joh 14:17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He

Joh 14:18 dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

Joh 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

The prerequisite for salvation is receiving the Holy Spirit, and the prerequisite for receiving the Holy Spirit is keeping the Commandments of God. Salvation means eternal life, and eternal life means knowing the true God and loving Him with all of one's heart, soul, mind and strength.

Joh 17:1 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You,

Joh 17:2 as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.

Joh 17:3 **And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ** whom You have sent.

Mar 12:28 Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first commandment of all?"

Mar 12:29 Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments *is*: 'HEAR, O ISRAEL, THE LORD OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE.

Mar 12:30 **AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.'** This *is* the first commandment. And the second, like *it*, *is* this:

Mar 12:31 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Mar 12:32 So the scribe said to Him, "Well *said*, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He.

Mar 12:33 And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

Mar 12:34 Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." But after that no one dared question Him.

In order to make the Holy Spirit available to all, Jesus Christ had to die and rise again, then create a New Covenant.

Heb 9:1 Then indeed, even the first *covenant* had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary.

Heb 9:2 For a tabernacle was prepared: the first *part*, in which *was* the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary;

Heb 9:3 and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All,

Heb 9:4 which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which *were* the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant;

Heb 9:5 and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

Heb 9:6 Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing *the services*.

Heb 9:7 But into the second part the high priest *went* alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins *committed* in ignorance;

Heb 9:8 the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing.

Heb 9:9 It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience—

Heb 9:10 concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.

Heb 9:11 But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.

Heb 9:12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

Heb 9:13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh,

Heb 9:14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Heb 9:15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.
 Heb 9:16 For where there *is* a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.
 Heb 9:17 For a testament *is* in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.
 Heb 9:18 Therefore not even the first *covenant* was dedicated without blood.
 Heb 9:19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people,
 Heb 9:20 saying, "THIS IS THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT WHICH GOD HAS COMMANDED YOU."
 Heb 9:21 Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry.
 Heb 9:22 And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.
 Heb 9:23 Therefore *it was* necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.
 Heb 9:24 For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, *which are* copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;
 Heb 9:25 not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another—
 Heb 9:26 He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.
 Heb 9:27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,
 Heb 9:28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

What is not so well known is that the Holy Spirit was available to select individuals since the beginning of time, such as the prophets who wrote the Old Testament. Indeed, the term "Holy Spirit" was used for the first time by King David.

Psa 51:9 Hide Your face from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities.
 Psa 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
 Psa 51:11 Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.
 Psa 51:12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me *by Your* generous Spirit.
 Psa 51:13 *Then* I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You.
 Psa 51:14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, The God of my salvation, *And* my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness.

It is interesting to note that David wrote this prayer and Psalm in connection with two grievous sins: adultery and murder. Adultery with Bathsheba and murder of her husband in order to cover his adultery. Some people may wonder how God could forgive such grievous sins. The remedy, of course, is repentance. What is repentance? Macquarie dictionary: 1. compunction or contrition for wrongdoing or sin. 2. regret for any past action. What is even more interesting is that David's sin occurred after God said that he was a man after His own heart (1 Sam. 13:14), a fact acknowledged in the New Testament too.

Act 13:21 And afterward they asked for a king; so God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years.
 Act 13:22 And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I HAVE FOUND DAVID THE SON OF JESSE, A MAN AFTER MY OWN HEART, WHO WILL DO ALL MY WILL.'
 Act 13:23 From this man's seed, according to *the* promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior—Jesus—
 Act 13:24 after John had first preached, before His coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

David's forgiveness is an important lesson for those who think that their sins are so heinous that God cannot forgive. Repentance, a broken heart, and a contrite spirit are what God loves in human beings.

Psa 34:18 The LORD *is* near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.
 Psa 34:19 Many *are* the afflictions of the righteous, But the LORD delivers him out of them all.

When people repent of their sins, their past life does not matter anymore. They become new creations in God.

2Co 5:14 For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died;
 2Co 5:15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.
 2Co 5:16 Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know *Him thus* no longer.
 2Co 5:17 Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.
 2Co 5:18 Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of
 2Co 5:19 reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has
 2Co 5:20 committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.
 2Co 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Human beings are constantly under the influence of their carnal nature, and prone to fall, but as long as they repent and come before God with a broken heart and contrite spirit, they are forgiven and given the chance of reconciliation. David's example clearly shows that even people who have the Holy Spirit can be overtaken by sin. God used him, one of the greatest personalities of the Bible, to pass on this important message to us. Willing, persistent sins, however, are a different matter.

Heb 10:26 For if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,
 Heb 10:27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.
 Heb 10:28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.
 Heb 10:29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him

Heb 10:30 who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord. And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE."

Heb 10:31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Now although David was the first to speak of the Holy Spirit, he was not the first to have the Holy Spirit. Since the beginning of the world, the Holy Spirit was available to select individuals; people who were set apart for important transcendental roles: Abel, Noah, Job, Abraham, the Patriarchs, Moses, are but a few such examples.

You may have noticed references to the Spirit in some of our earlier references. Here they are again.

Num 27:18 And the LORD said to Moses: "Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom *is the Spirit*, . . ."

Neh 9:30 Yet for many years You had patience with them, And testified against them by **Your Spirit in Your prophets**.

All people who had the Holy Spirit in Old Testament times became role models for us.

Jas 5:10 My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience.

Jas 5:11 Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

Jesus Christ connected the sufferings of the prophets that came before Him, with those who would come after Him.

Mat 23:34 Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: *some* of them you will kill and crucify, and *some* of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city,

Mat 23:35 that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.

Mat 23:36 Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

The question is, do these words apply only to the Pharisees of old, as modern day preachers would have it, or are they valid for all times? If they applied only to the Pharisees of old, Christians would have had an easy time after the Jews were dispersed by the Romans among other nations. The truth is painfully different. For more than a millennium true Christians, and others of different opinions and beliefs, were persecuted, imprisoned and even burned at stake, by none other than people who thought that they did God a service. But then what did Jesus Christ tell His disciples?

Joh 16:2 They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.

The Devil has always had servants ready and willing to do his work in the world. During Middle Ages, it was Catholic Church's Inquisition; nowadays, fundamentalist Islamists have replaced them.

Those who murdered the elect of God in the past are about to do it again to His last two prophets. You are going to see it with your own eyes, in real life or on the television screens. More than that: you will see a miracle the likes of which the world has not seen since the time of Jesus Christ. Here is the story of God's last two witnesses.

Rev 11:3 And I will give *power* to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in

Rev 11:4 sackcloth." These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth.

Rev 11:5 And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner.

Rev 11:6 These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.

Rev 11:7 When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome

Rev 11:8 them, and kill them. And their dead bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

Rev 11:9 Then *those* from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their

Rev 11:10 dead bodies to be put into graves. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

Rev 11:11 Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell

Rev 11:12 on those who saw them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them.

Things however are not going to be as simple as that. For just as it happened in the past, Satan will turn things up side down once again, presenting his servants as ministers of righteousness, and the prophets of God as anti-Christ, or "allege preachers".

2Co 11:13 For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.

2Co 11:14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing

2Co 11:15 if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

As Jesus Christ would have said: whoever reads let him understand!

What Exactly Is A “Real Church”?

In July 2007, Pope Benedict made a statement that stunned the Christian world. He told them that only the Catholic and Orthodox are “real” Churches, and that all the others are mere “ecclesial communities”.

“You are not real churches, Pope says to Protestants” “Pope Benedict ... backing traditional practices”

PROTESTANT churches have reacted with dismay to a new declaration approved by the Pope insisting they were mere “ecclesial communities” and their ministers in effect phonies with no right to give communion. Coming just days after the reinstatement of the Latin Mass, Tuesday's document left no doubt about the Pope's eagerness to back traditional Catholic practices and attitudes, even at the expense of causing offence. The view that Protestants cannot have churches was first set out by Pope Benedict seven years ago when, as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, he headed the Vatican ministry for doctrine. A commentary attached to the latest text acknowledged that his 2000 document, *Dominus Iesus*, had caused “no little distress”. But it added: “It is nevertheless difficult to see how the title of ‘Church’ could possibly be attributed to [Protestant communities], given that they do not accept the theological notion of the Church in the Catholic sense and that they lack elements considered essential to the Catholic Church.” The Pope's old department, which issued the document, said its aim was to correct “erroneous or ambiguous” interpretations of the Second Vatican Council, which ended in 1965. Quoting a text approved by the council, it said Protestant churches, “because of the absence of the sacramental priesthood”, had not “preserved the genuine and integral substance of the Eucharistic Mystery”. However, other Christians saw the latest document as another retreat from the spirit of openness generated by the council, which laid the basis for talks on Christian unity. Bishop Wolfgang Huber, head of the Protestant umbrella group Evangelical Church in Germany, said: “The hope for a change in the ecumenical situation has been pushed further away by the document published today.” He said the new pronouncement repeated “offensive statements” in the 2000 document and was a “missed opportunity” to improve relations with Protestants. The president of the Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy, Pastor Domenico Maselli, called it a “huge step backwards in relations between the Roman Catholic church and other Christian communities”.

The Church of England reacted cautiously. A spokesman for the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, said: “This is a serious document, teaching on important ecclesiological matters and of significance to the churches' commitment to the full, visible unity to the one church of Jesus Christ.” The Vatican's statement had fewer misgivings about the Orthodox Church, which had “true sacraments” and a genuine priesthood. But its failure to acknowledge the Pope's authority meant it suffered from a “defectus”, politely translated from Latin as “a wound”. Last Saturday the Pope freed Catholics to ask for Masses to be celebrated according to the Latin rite abolished by the Second Vatican Council. This meant the reinstatement of a Good Friday prayer describing Jews as blind to the Christian truth. (John Hooper in Rome and Stephen Bates in London, *Sydney Morning Herald*, July 12, 2007).

Now although we are not enamored with the papacy, we agree that this time the Pope did the right thing in raising the question of what a “real” church is and what is not. The first thing we wanted to know is what he understood by the term “ecclesial communities” which he applied to Protestant congregations which he says are not real churches. In four decades of rather intensive Bible and religious studies, we have never come across that kind of distinction between “church” and “ecclesial communities”. So we looked in an English Dictionary. This is what Macquarie says:

Ecclesia = /uh'kleezeeuh/ *noun, plural ecclesiae* /uh'kleezeeeee/. 1. an assembly, especially the popular assembly of ancient Athens. 2. a congregation; a church. [L: assembly of the people, LL church, from Greek *ekklesia*]

“Ecclesia” means “church” according to this dictionary. But that cannot be; the Pope is a wise man, and if he says that “ecclesial” does not mean church, it could not mean church. The problem must lay with Macquarie Dictionary. This is an Australian Dictionary, and what would the colonials know. So we looked into Webster's “school and office” Dictionary, one of the most popular these days. This is what that one says.

Ecclesia = a church, a religious assembly.

Short and to the point, but basically the same thing. Could it be that an Aussie had surreptitiously found his way into Webster's editorial team and sneaked in that term? We decided to look into an old English Dictionary, Funk & Wagnalls.

Ecclesia = 1. The popular or legislative assembly in Athens and other ancient Greek states in which every free citizen could vote. 2. A body of Christians organised for worship and religious work; a church; congregation.

Wherever we looked, ecclesia meant, among other things, church or religious congregation. There was only one other thing for us to do – look into the Bible and see what Jesus Christ and His apostles meant by the term “church”.

This term appears for the first time in the New Testament. Remarkably, it was used by Jesus Christ in relation to Apostle Peter, whom He designated as head of His congregation of followers.

Mat 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and *the* gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

That explains why the Popes think that only their followers form a “real” church, for they claim to be the inheritors of Peter's mantle and “Vicar's of Christ on Earth”. Well, we had much to say on that; those interested should read “Why Apostle Peter Could Never Have Been the First Pope Of Rome” in *TCH 16*, and the article on the same topic in this edition.

Now, even if the Popes are wrong in believing that they are Vicars of Christ on earth by virtue of Peter's mantle, it is still possible that the Catholic is a real Church. We have examples in the Bible in which the apostles of Jesus Christ were excluded from the very churches that they themselves set up. This is what Apostle John said in his first epistle:

3Jn 1:9 I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us.

3Jn 1:10 Therefore, if I come, I will call to mind his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words. And not content with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting *them* out of the church.

Extraordinary, isn't it? The Apostle, whom Jesus loved the most, was excluded from a Church of God by one who loved to have preeminence among the members. And why would he want to do that? The Bible tells us why.

Rom 16:16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ greet you. Now I urge you, brethren,

Rom 16:17 note those who cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.

Rom 16:18 For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

Php 3:17 Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. For many walk,

Php 3:18 of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ:

Php 3:19 whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is* their belly, and whose glory *is* in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things.

Php 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

Php 3:21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Those, whose god is their own belly, who set their minds on earthly things, would do anything to clamor up to the leadership of churches, because that guarantees them a full belly for life.

Now consider the implications of these statements. Apostle John could have turned around and put the onus on Diotrepes and his followers to prove that they are a "real" church. He could simply have said that since only the apostles and the true disciples of Jesus Christ had the authority to baptize and pass on the Holy Spirit, any other congregation would not be a real Church of God. He could have empowered Gaius, to whom he wrote that epistle, to take out the genuine believers and form a rival but true Church of God. The fact that he did not do that is quite extraordinary and speaks volumes.

Instead, Apostle John let that wretched Diotrepes remain leader, at least until he arrived, at which time he would "call to mind his deeds which he does". He did not even imply that he would put him out of the church, just to give him a good verbal chastening. Now what does that tell you? Undoubtedly, Apostle John had the ear of Jesus Christ, for he received the book of Revelation in direct communication with the glorified Christ in heaven. Therefore, the glorified Christ approved of impostors leading His Churches. Unless one believes and understands this fact, he cannot understand the mysteries of the book of Revelation, which says so much about today's churches, including the Catholic Church (See *TCH* Nos 14 & 15).

Now far be it for us to suggest that the Pope is an impostor of the like of Diotrepes. Even if he were, if he is leading a "real" Church of God, no one could complain against him, for he would be approved by Jesus Christ. What is at stake here, is not the authority, or otherwise, of the Pope, but the definition of a "real" church. For that, we have no other choice but to go to the New Testament and see what the apostles understood by this term, and especially what Jesus Christ called, and expected, of a Church of God. This may surprise some people, but this is what Jesus Christ said is a Church of God.

Mat 18:19 "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father

Mat 18:20 in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

Two or three people gathered in the name of Jesus Christ form a church. And not just any church, but a "real" Church of God. By this definition, the question is, are Protestant congregations "real" churches, or are they not? First of all, let us define the term, "Protestant". Catholic and Orthodox Churches define as "Protestant" any church that does not belong to their camp. That is not correct. This is what Macquarie Dictionary says about Protestantism.

Reformation = the religious movement in the 16th century which had for its object the reform of the Roman Catholic Church, and which led to the establishment of the Protestant Churches.

There are many churches in the world these days that did not originate in the Protestant Reformation. They used to be defined by the term, "fundamentalist", meaning they sought to go back to the fundamentals of the Bible. They pointed out that although the Protestants had revolted against the excesses of the Popes, and separated from them, they retained almost all of the Catholic doctrines such as going to heaven or to hell after death, Catholic Holy Days, sainthood after death, etc.

Lately, since the term "fundamentalist" has been identified more and more with Islamic extremists, fundamentalist churches have adopted the term, "evangelical". Did the Pope have in mind evangelical churches also when he told the Protestants that their congregations are not "real" churches? Most likely, yes. That is just as well, because on a close analysis, there are enough deviations from the standards of the early Churches of God among evangelicals, to make them hardly any better than the Protestant churches.

This brings us back to the definition of a Church of God according to Jesus Christ and His apostles. As we saw, Jesus Christ is in the midst of two or three people that are gathered in His name. You cannot have a clearer definition of what makes a Church of God than that. Apostle Paul said that Christians are only those who have the Spirit of Christ.

Rom 8:8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit,

Rom 8:9 if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

Rom 8:10 And if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.

Rom 8:11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

The Spirit of Christ is none other than the Holy Spirit. And how does one get the Holy Spirit?

Act 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

This creates a real problem. Apostle Peter was speaking to adult people here. In asking them to repent, he was telling them to make a turn around in their life, to change from a life of sin and dissipation, to one of holiness and righteousness.

The problem comes from the fact that neither the Catholic, nor the Orthodox Churches, which the Pope anointed as the only "real" churches, preach and practice adult baptism. Which means that even if they are "real" churches according to the Pope's definition, they do not have the Holy Spirit. And if they do not have the Holy Spirit, they are not Christ's. And if they are not Christ's, they go neither to heaven nor to hell, but to everlasting perdition. The Bible simply does not preach judgment after death, but judgment after resurrection at the last day.

Joh 11:23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

Joh 11:24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

Joh 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.

Joh 11:26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

Joh 11:27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

People who have the Holy Spirit, who believe and die "in Christ", go neither to heaven nor to hell when they die, but are "asleep" in their graves until the resurrection of the last day. This is true as much of the New, as of the Old Testament.

Dan 12:8 Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, "My lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things*?"

Dan 12:9 And he said, "Go *your way*, Daniel, for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

Dan 12:10 Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand,

Dan 12:11 but the wise shall understand. "And from the time *that* the daily *sacrifice* is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, *there shall be* one thousand two hundred and ninety days.

Dan 12:12 Blessed *is* he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.

Dan 12:13 "But you, go *your way* till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days.

Clearly, the Popes, or their predecessors, have added something to the Scriptures which changes the meaning of salvation. And what did Jesus Christ say about that?

Rev 22:16 "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David,

Rev 22:17 the Bright and Morning Star." And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

Rev 22:18 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to

Rev 22:19 him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

Rev 22:20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

Rev 22:21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

Now is the Pope aware that his church does not conform to the standards of Jesus Christ, and that far from being a "real" church, its doctrines, teachings and practices make it worse than any of the "ecclesial communities"? And if that is not convincing enough, here are some other major differences between the Catholic Church and the early Churches of God.

- Sabbath keeping. All Churches of God observed the Sabbath as the day of rest and worship. Jesus Christ Himself expects to find His followers observing this day when He returns to this earth.

Mat 24:20 And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great tribulation,

Mat 24:21 such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Here Jesus Christ was talking about the "Great Tribulation" that marks the end of this age and heralds His return to set up the Millennium Kingdom. His followers are to pray that their flight may not be in winter, because it is cold, and not on the Sabbath, because on that day they are not allowed to carry heavy burdens.

Now do you know any Christians that pray for that? Do you dear reader pray for that? If you don't, why don't you?

People do not pray for that because the Roman Catholic Church has changed the day of rest and worship from the seventh day, to the first day of the week; from the Sabbath, to the Day of the Sun. Now does that church have the people's wellbeing in mind when it obscures the message of Christ and prevents them from doing what they need to do in order to escape the horrors of the Great Tribulation and benefit from God's protection and salvation? If you still have qualms about what a true church is, as opposed to a "real" church, perhaps this might convince you. There is a Holy Day without which no church is "real" or a true Church of God – the Feast of Passover.

1Co 11:20 Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper.

1Co 11:21 For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of *others*; and one is hungry and another is drunk.

1Co 11:22 What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise *you*.

1Co 11:23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was

1Co 11:24 betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for

1Co 11:25 you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me."

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

1Co 11:27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks *this* cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood

1Co 11:28 of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

1Co 11:29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

1Co 11:30 For this reason many *are* weak and sick among you, and many sleep.

Go and ask a Catholic, an Orthodox, or a Protestant churchgoer, in what day or date he or she observes the Feast of Passover, the one of which Jesus Christ gave specific instructions on how to be observed. It is not in their Calendars.

It is not enough for two, three or more people to gather in the name of Jesus Christ for Him to come and be in their midst. They must observe all the requirements that make a true church, and that includes the Sabbaths, the Holy Days, and all the beliefs that characterized the early Churches of God. For as Jesus Christ said:

Mat 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

Joh 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments.

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

Joh 14:17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He

Joh 14:18 dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

Keeping the Commandments of God, loving God and Jesus Christ, and not observing "doctrines of demons", is what makes a true Church of God. If you do not know, or never heard of "doctrines of demons", this is what Apostle Paul said:

1Ti 4:1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines

1Ti 4:2 of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and

1Ti 4:3 commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the

1Ti 4:4 truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving;

1Ti 4:5 for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good

1Ti 4:6 minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.

By this standard, the Catholic, the Orthodox, the Protestants, the evangelical, nor any other church, makes the grade for a true Church of God. Neither keeps the Holy Days of God and all have restrictions on food and/or on marriages.

More proofs that Apostle Peter could not have been the first Pope of Rome

Among the articles that seem to have struck a cord with many people, is the one about the Catholic claim that Apostle Peter was its first Pope. We thought we had exhausted all the reasons why Peter could not have been the first Pope of Rome, but a further study of the Scriptures reveals even more proofs that that is an unfounded claim. First, let us recap briefly what we have exposed so far.

- Apostle Paul ended his epistle to the Romans by mentioning the Christians of that city by name. Apostle Peter was not among them.
- The Jews of Rome knew nothing of this "sect". Apostle Peter could not have been in Rome without speaking to the Jews of that city, for he was primarily the apostle to the circumcision.
- Rome's 'Christians' were involved in some pretty un-Christian activities, including homosexuality. Someone was complaining about that to Apostle Paul in Jerusalem. Now why would he do that if Apostle Peter was their leader?
- At his moment of trial, all Christians of Rome, fearful no doubt of a similar fate, abandoned Apostle Paul. Could Apostle Peter have done that if he were in Rome at that time?
- The spirit did not allow the apostles to duplicate each other's work. The fact that Apostle Paul was the one that was brought by God to Rome, tells us that Apostle Peter could not have been there either before or after Paul.
- Apostle Peter signed his epistles from Babylon, a city in opposite direction to Rome from Jerusalem.

Now here are further proofs that Apostle Peter could not have been the first Pope of Rome.

The Churches of God claimed their legitimacy from the Scriptures and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Act 17:11 The Bereans "were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

Act 17:12 Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men".

It was "fair minded" to receive the Word of God with readiness, and search the Scriptures daily to find out whether those things were so. No such fair minded readiness these days, and hardly any searching the Scriptures. God is no longer part of the intellectual milieu of our time. People have created themselves through evolution, therefore God has little role to play in their lives anymore. Who says that? The leading religious institution of our time, the Catholic Church!

"The hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church has published a teaching document instructing the faithful that some parts of the Bible are not actually true. The Catholic bishops of England, Wales and Scotland are warning their five million worshippers, as well as any others drawn to the study of scripture, that they should not expect "total accuracy" from the Bible . . . Some Christians want a literal interpretation of the story of creation, as told in Genesis, taught alongside Darwin's theory of evolution in schools, believing "intelligent design" to be an equally plausible theory of how the world began. But the first 11 chapters of Genesis, in which two different and at times conflicting stories of creation are told, are among those that this country's Catholic bishops insist cannot be "historical". At most, they say, they may contain "historical traces".

Similarly, they refute the apocalyptic prophecies of Revelation, the last book of the Christian Bible, in which the writer describes the work of the risen Jesus, the death of the Beast and the wedding feast of Christ the Lamb. The bishops say: "Such symbolic language must be respected for what it is, and is not to be interpreted literally. We should not expect to discover in this book details about the end of the world, about how many will be saved and about when the end will come." (*The Times*, Oct. 2005).

"The Vatican today warned Catholics that if they do not listen to the contentions of modern science – regarding the origin of life and other issues – they risk falling prey to "fundamentalism." "When asked about the debate raging between evolution and intelligent design in the United States, a papal representative reaffirmed John Paul II's 1996 assertion that evolution was "more than just a hypothesis." Said Monsignor Gianfranco Basti, director of the Vatican project STOQ, or Science, Theology and Ontological Quest: "A hypothesis asks whether something is true or false. (Evolution) is more than a hypothesis because there is proof." (*WorldNetDaily.com*, Nov. 3, 2005).

No, there is no proof, what there is, is mere speculation. Slowly, but surely, the scientific world is waking up to the realisation that Darwin's concoction was never more than a half baked theory. Yet while more and more scientists are turning away from the theory of evolution, the Catholic Church finds itself more and more attracted to it. It praises that theory while it seeks to demolish the credibility of the Bible.

What would Jesus Christ say about those who claim to preach the truth of God yet do not believe in His word, in His creation, in prophecy, and in the end of this age? We know what He said about hypocrites.

If the Catholic Church is based on the teachings of Apostle Peter, how is it that it believes so little of his theology?

Being a disciple of Jesus Christ, Apostle Peter held the same beliefs as those of his Master. Now we know that Jesus Christ believed that the entirety of the Bible is true, a fact attested in both the Old and the New Testaments.

Psa 119:160 "The entirety of Your word is truth, And every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever."

John 17:17 "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."

Where then does the Catholic Church stand when it claims that the Bible is not reliable, throwing aspersion on Genesis and Revelation, the first and last books of the Bible? Would an institution founded by Apostle Peter do such a thing?

Jesus Christ made two very important statements about the Scriptures:

1) They cannot be broken, meaning they cannot be changed or contradicted:

John 10:35 "If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), "do you say

John 10:36 of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?

2) The Scriptures are letter of the law, literally, and no one is allowed to add or take anything away from them.

Rev 22:18 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book;

Rev 22:19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

How much respect does the Catholic Church have for Jesus Christ, whose "Vicar on Earth" its leader claims to be, when he so blatantly disregards His warnings about not tampering with the Scriptures?

Let us now consider some of Apostle Peter's beliefs and see how different they are from those of the Catholic Church.

1Pe 1:17 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the

1Pe 1:18 time of your stay *here* in fear; knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers,

1Pe 1:19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

1Pe 1:20 He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him

1Pe 1:21 believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

1Pe 1:22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,

1Pe 1:23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,

1Pe 1:24 because "ALL FLESH IS AS GRASS, AND ALL THE GLORY OF MAN AS THE FLOWER OF THE GRASS. THE GRASS WITHERS, AND ITS FLOWER FALLS AWAY,

1Pe 1:25 BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

In this short passage, Apostle Peter touched on the most basic beliefs of Christianity:

1. The impartiality of God. It does not matter who a person may have been in this world, if he has preached contrary to the Scriptures, he will face the wrath of God. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (**Heb 10:31**).

2. Christ shed His blood for us that we may be born again, receive the Holy Spirit, and benefit of God's gift of eternal life. Being born again means an adult decision to repent, be baptised, and have hands laid on by the elders of the church for the receiving of the Holy Spirit. Apostle Peter himself was the originator of this process.

Act 2:22 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know— Him, being delivered by the determined purpose

Act 2:23 and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;

Act 2:24 whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.

Act 2:32 This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.

Act 2:33 Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

Act 2:37 Now when they heard *this*, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men *and* brethren, what

Act 2:38 shall we do?" Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Act 2:39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

Act 2:40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."

Act 2:41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added *to them*.

Act 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Few other passages of the Bible could be as damning of the Catholic Church as this one. Here is a statement by its supposed founder who says that Patriarch David "did not ascend into the heavens". Only a few chapters later, we find the statement that Patriarch David was a man after God's own heart.

Act 13:22 And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'HAVE FOUND DAVID THE SON OF JESSE, A MAN AFTER MY OWN HEART, WHO WILL DO ALL MY WILL.'

Now if a man after God's own heart has not ascended into the heavens, who has? According to the Catholic Church, all of its faithful members go the heaven after death. Once again, this Church preaches doctrines that are contrary to the beliefs of its supposed founder. More than that, it preaches doctrines that are contrary to the teaching of Jesus Christ too.

Joh 3:13 No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, *that is*, the Son of Man who is in heaven.

Joh 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

Joh 3:15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

3. Apostle Peter said that Jesus Christ was foreordained to shed His blood for us "before the foundation of the world." In the Bible, the term "foundation of the world" is always associated with the book of Genesis. It is something Jesus Christ, His apostles, the prophets, the patriarchs, and members of the Churches of God, believed in. Yet, the Catholic Church is telling the world that the theory of evolution has rendered the account of Genesis obsolete.

A final proof that Apostle Peter could never have been the founder of this Church is found in a conversation Jesus Christ had with Apostle Peter before He ascended into heaven.

Joh 21:17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My

Joh 21:18 sheep. Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish."

Joh 21:19 This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me."

Now how old was Apostle Peter when he died? He was younger than Jesus Christ. Masters do not normally choose disciples that are older than themselves. Indications are that although Peter was the oldest of twelve apostles (he was the only one who was married), we are safe to assume that he was at least three years younger than Jesus Christ. Therefore, when Jesus Christ died in the year 33 AD, at the age of thirty-three, Apostle Peter would have been about thirty years of age.

The Catholic Church says that he died in the year 65 AD while he was Pope of the Roman Church. That would have made him about 62 years old when he died. Now is it conceivable that Peter would have been so blind and handicapped at that age that another would gird him and lead him to where he did not wish to go? In addition, would anyone do that to a Pope?

One wonders what he would say in the resurrection when told that for nearly two millennia, the Catholic Church, which made all those fraudulent claims, had boasted of having had him as founder and mentor.

No Second Chance For the Wicked, Much As They Like To Preach It

Jesus Christ gave His life that we may live eternally. What is required of us in exchange is that we repent of our life of lawlessness and dissipation, and turn to one of righteousness and obedience to the Law of God.

This would appear to be a simple matter of choice for the wise and brave, except that a spanner in the works is being thrown by the false prophets of this world. Have a look at the following statement from *The Good News* magazine, a publication of the United Church of God, an offshoot of the Worldwide Church of God.

"The seven-day Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:33-43) depicts 1,000 years of peace and prosperity that will envelop the earth and its inhabitants (Revelation 20:4-5; Isaiah 11).

"The Eighth Day (Lev. 23:36,39), signifies the time when all who didn't know the true God will be resurrected to learn His truth and receive their opportunity for salvation (Revelation 20:11-12; Ezekiel 37)."

This doctrine, which used to be the mainstay of the Worldwide Church of God, is now common in virtually all the siblings and daughters that ensued from the disintegration of that church. It is a popular notion with the ministers of those churches because it serves them well: it keeps in tow their members who are completely isolated from their unconverted family members. They are told that they must have no regrets for that, because at the resurrection from the dead of their family members they would be there to help them in their second chance at repentance and salvation. Leaving that church would lose them that privilege.

One could hardly think of a more devilish doctrine. On the one hand it keeps in bondage those who are already in the church, and on the other it encourages those in the world to indulge in whatever sins they wish in the belief that they would have a second chance at repentance and salvation.

This is what they preach in the, so-called, Churches of God and in their host of publications that they send to the world. *The Good News* magazine used to be the elite publication of the Worldwide Church of God; elite in the sense that it used to be available only to the ministers of the church. Ordinary members were to be satisfied with *The Plain Truth*, a magazine that hardly knows what truth is. These days, the Worldwide Church of God is a mere relic of its former self, and the *Good News* magazine has transmigrated to the United Church of God, an offshoot of it. The theme of second

chance for the wicked who have not repented in the "first life" is so absurd it is astonishing that anyone could possibly believe it, when it is so easy to prove that it is a dangerous fallacy. Let us look at the two references they give for its veracity. First Revelation 20: 11-12.

Rev 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.

Rev 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

Do you see anything in the passage that would suggest sinful human beings "who didn't know the true God will be resurrected to learn His truth and receive their opportunity for salvation"? Rather, what this passage describes is the time of the last judgment, when all human being will be judged "according to their works". There is nothing here that would even remotely suggest that human beings will have a second chance at repentance.

Perhaps Ezekiel 37 might say something about it. Here is that chapter.

Eze 37:1 The hand of the LORD came upon me and brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones.

Eze 37:2 Then He caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, *there were* very many in the open valley; and indeed *they were* very dry.

Eze 37:3 And He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" So I answered, "O Lord GOD, You know."

Eze 37:4 Again He said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD!

Eze 37:5 Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: "Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live.

Eze 37:6 I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD." ' ' "

Eze 37:7 So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and suddenly a rattling; and the

Eze 37:8 bones came together, bone to bone. Indeed, as I looked, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them over; but *there was* no breath in them.

Eze 37:9 Also He said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live." ' ' "

Eze 37:10 So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet,

Eze 37:11 an exceedingly great army. Then He said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, 'Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!'

Eze 37:12 Therefore prophecy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I *am*

Eze 37:13 the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves.

Eze 37:14 I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken *it* and performed *it*," says the LORD.' "

Eze 37:15 Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

Eze 37:16 "As for you, son of man, take a stick for yourself and write on it: 'For Judah and for the children of Israel, his companions.' Then take another stick and write on it, 'For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel, his companions.'

Eze 37:17 Then join them one to another for yourself into one stick, and they will become one in your hand.

Eze 37:18 "And when the children of your people speak to you, saying, 'Will you not show us what you *mean* by these?'

Eze 37:19 —say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Surely I will take the stick of Joseph, which *is* in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will join them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand." ' "

Eze 37:20 And the sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes.

Eze 37:21 "Then say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land;

Eze 37:22 and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again.

Eze 37:23 They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God.

Eze 37:24 "David My servant *shall be* king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them. Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob,

Eze 37:25 My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children's children, forever; and My servant David *shall be* their prince forever.

Eze 37:26 Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore.

Eze 37:27 My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Eze 37:28 The nations also will know that I, the LORD, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore." ' "

We have to ask the same question: do you see any indication of second chance for the wicked here? None whatsoever!

A close look at these Scriptures indicates that they refer to the same event as Revelation 20: the end-time judgment and salvation of those who are found worthy of eternal life in the Kingdom of God. It is the same story with all their references.

Those people are not resurrected to a normal earthly life again, but to a heavenly eternal life under King David. Well, in fact, David here stands for Jesus Christ, but that is another topic. The extraordinary thing is that we have brought this error to the attention of those apostate ministers years ago, yet they continue to shamelessly preach it unabated.

Now let us look at their justification for insisting with this gross misrepresentation of the Scriptures. They say that there are people who "didn't know the true God", therefore they need to be resurrected to a new life, and given their opportunity for repentance and salvation. There is one big problem with that statement: people are not judged on the basis of whether they knew the true God, but on account of their works. Here are the very words of the glorified Christ:

Rev 22:10 And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.

Rev 22:11 He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still."
 Rev 22:12 "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, **to give to every one according to his work.**
 Rev 22:13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End, the First and the Last."
 Rev 22:14 Blessed *are* those who **do His commandments**, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. But outside *are* dogs and sorcerers
 Rev 22:15 and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.
 Rev 22:16 "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."
 Rev 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

Here would have been a perfect place for Jesus Christ to tell us that there is still hope for those who have not availed themselves of the chance of repentance in their 'first life'. But what do we find instead? "He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still."

The apostles also preached that human beings will be judged according to their works. Here is Apostle Paul.

Rom 2:1 Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.
 Rom 2:2 But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things. And do you think this,
 Rom 2:3 O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God?
 Rom 2:4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads
 Rom 2:5 you to repentance? But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,
 Rom 2:6 who "WILL RENDER TO EACH ONE ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS":
 Rom 2:7 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honour, and immortality;
 Rom 2:8 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath,
 Rom 2:9 tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek;
 Rom 2:10 but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
 Rom 2:11 For there is no partiality with God.
 Rom 2:12 For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by
 Rom 2:13 the law (for not the hearers of the law *are* just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified;
 Rom 2:14 for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law,
 Rom 2:15 are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves *their* thoughts accusing or else excusing *them*)
 Rom 2:16 in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

So, the Gentiles, who do not have the law, "who have never heard of the 'true God'", "by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, because the law was written in their hearts. Therefore, "as many as sinned without Law will also perish without Law. And as many as have sinned within Law shall be judged through Law."

Second chance for the wicked? Not on your life! No, because men only live once and die once, then the judgment.

Heb 9:27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many.
 Heb 9:28 To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

Can you see now why people in the far corners of the earth do not need to hear the Gospel of the Worldwide Church of God and its sibling and daughter Churches in order to be saved? It is because God has put in their heart and conscience the laws by which they must conduct their lives. This is why Jesus Christ will judge all human being according to their works, because wherever they have lived on this earth they have known the difference between right and wrong, and true and false. This is why people should make the best of this life, and not listen to fables that will bring them nothing but perdition.

Those who give assurance to the wicked that they have a second chance at salvation, even if they do not repent in this life, preach against Jesus Christ, against the apostles, against the prophets, and against the entire Bible.

Phil 3:17 "Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. For many walk, Phil 3:18 of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ."
 Rom 16:18 "For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple."

These ministers will not only miss their salvation for preaching falsehood to their followers, but also incur the wrath of God for adding to the Scriptures contrary to the warnings of Jesus Christ.

Rev 22:18 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy,
 Rev 22:19 God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.
 Rev 22:20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!
 Rev 22:21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

Consider now what Apostle Paul said in the following passage.

Rom 9:1 I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit,
 Rom 9:2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart.
 Rom 9:3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, who are

Rom 9:4 Israelites, to whom *pertain* the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises;
 Rom 9:5 of whom *are* the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ *came*, who is over all, *the* eternally blessed God. Amen.
 Rom 9:6 But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they *are* not all Israel who *are* of Israel,
 Rom 9:7 nor *are* they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "IN ISAAC YOUR SEED SHALL BE CALLED."
 Rom 9:8 That is, those who *are* the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed.

Why did he have great sorrow and continual grief in his heart for his unconverted compatriots if he believed that they would have another chance at salvation? He went on to say that, "they are not all Israel who are of Israel", that only those who are of faith are the true children of Abraham, not those who are of flesh. In other words, the Jews of Israel are not true children of Abraham because they are not of faith but of flesh. The children of Abraham according to the flesh seek to re-establish the kingdom of Israel in the Middle East, whereas the children of Abraham according to faith are waiting in hope for the Kingdom of God and of Jesus Christ that will be set up in another world and on another earth.

Joh 18:36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here."

Rev 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.
 Rev 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the* Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.
 Rev 20:13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.
 Rev 20:14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.
 Rev 20:15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Rev 21:1 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more
 Rev 21:2 sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
 Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and* be their God.
 Rev 21:4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no
 Rev 21:5 more pain, for the former things have passed away." Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."
 Rev 21:6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the
 Rev 21:7 water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.
 Rev 21:8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Nowhere in the Scriptures is there support for the idea that those who have not heard of Christ in this life and have not repented of their evil deeds now, would be given the chance of doing so in another life. The problem comes from the notion that people cannot be saved if they have never heard of Christ. Herbert W Armstrong used to preach that people in the far away countries could not be condemned to perdition simply because they had never heard of Christ, a point that continues to be preached by his disciples.

But as we've seen, Jesus Christ said that He will judge people not on the basis of whether they have heard of Him or not, but on their works. The question is could people lead a righteous life outside Christianity? Fundamentalist churches say they cannot, a belief that I myself held at one time when I was under the influence of the Worldwide Church of God. It is extremely difficult to find the right path when your mind has been infested with such negative influences. This is why so few people who had been brainwashed in that manner manage to extricate themselves from their masters.

Scriptures and real life give us examples that prove there have been many people in the world who had never heard of Christ, yet who, to the best of their abilities and understanding, led righteous lives. To begin with, the men and women of the Old Testament have never heard of Christ, yet many of them were righteous and close to God. Here are just a few examples: Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Job, and Daniel, all of which had the testimony from God that they would be raised to eternal life in due time. Similarly, the Gentiles who did not have the law, yet by nature kept the law of God, will be in the Kingdom of God no less than the Israelites who had and kept the law. Here is such example:

Act 10:1 There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, a devout
man
 Act 10:2 and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always.
 Act 10:3 About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him,
 Act 10:4 "Cornelius!" And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, "What is it, lord?" So he said to him, "Your prayers and your
 Act 10:5 alms have come up for a memorial before God. Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter.
 Act 10:6 He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. He will tell you what you must do."
 Act 10:34 Then Peter opened *his* mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality.
 Act 10:35 But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.
 Act 10:36 The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all—
 Act 10:37 that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John
 Act 10:38 preached: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.
 Act 10:39 And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they
 Act 10:40 killed by hanging on a tree. Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly,
 Act 10:41 not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, *even* to us who ate and drank with Him after He

Act 10:42 arose from the dead. And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead.

Act 10:43 To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of

Act 10:44 sins." While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.

Act 10:45 And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.

Act 10:46 For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, "Can anyone forbid

Act 10:47 water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"

Act 10:48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

Isn't that wonderful? "Peter opened *his* mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him. Clearly, there are people in every nation who work righteousness and are accepted by God, who shows no partiality.

People do not need a second chance in order to be righteous and keep the law of God. Gentile people in the furthest corners of the earth know the meaning of righteousness, regardless of religion, ideology, education, or status in life. This is why people will be judged and saved according to their works, and not on any other criteria.

If one does not know what works lead to salvation, here is Jesus Christ again.

Mat 25:31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.

Mat 25:32 All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd

Mat 25:33 divides *his* sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

Mat 25:34 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food;

Mat 25:35 I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in;

Mat 25:36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

Mat 25:37 "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink?

Mat 25:38 When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You?

Mat 25:39 Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' And the King will answer and say to

Mat 25:40 them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it*

Mat 25:41 to Me.' "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

Mat 25:42 for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink;

Mat 25:43 I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and

Mat 25:44 you did not visit Me.' "Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or

Mat 25:45 thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' Then He will answer

them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do *it* to one of the least of these, you did not do

Mat 25:46 *it* to Me.' And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

It is interesting to note that Worldwide Church of God, which invented (as far as we can ascertain) the satanic doctrine of second chance, also used to preach that the Devil could never be destroyed because he is a spirit being. Well, Jesus Christ said otherwise. The wicked shall be cast into the lake of fire "prepared for the Devil and his angels". You do not prepare a lake of fire and brimstone for someone who is going to live forever.

Other Scriptures tell us that the Devil himself will become ashes under the feet of the righteous.

Eze 28:12 "Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

Eze 28:13 You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created.

Eze 28:14 "You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.

Eze 28:15 You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you.

Eze 28:16 "By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the

Eze 28:17 midst of the fiery stones. "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you.

Eze 28:18 "You defiled your sanctuaries By the multitude of your iniquities, By the iniquity of your trading; Therefore I brought fire from your midst; It devoured you, And I turned you to ashes upon the earth In the sight of all who saw you.

Eze 28:19 All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; You have become a horror, And *shall be* no more forever." ' ' "

Wherever one lives in this world he must turn to God now, in this life and not hope for a second chance in a world that will never exist; for if he has not been righteous and not used this life for good purpose now, he will just as surely waste a thousand lives if given to him.

And isn't it the height of hypocrisy that those who preach the demonic doctrine of second chance also make a big deal of the fact that they keep the Sabbath and the Holy Days, which are the signs that identify the people of God? This proves that keeping the Holy Days and the Sabbaths, means nothing without being righteous in all things, and being faithful to the Scriptures.

What you never knew about the Devil

In the book of Revelation, we find a statement that encapsulates much of what is happening in the world at present:

Rev 12:12 Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time."

Two questions need to be answered in connection with this event: 1) When was the Devil thrown out of heaven to come down to earth? And 2) What exactly does that mean for human beings?

At one time, Jesus Christ told His disciples: "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." (Luke 10:18). That obviously must have happened before He came into the world, therefore the account of Revelation refers to a different event.

Rev 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they

Rev 12:11 overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

Clearly, Satan was cast out of heaven more than once. The first time must have occurred when he rebelled against God, when he transformed himself from Lucifer the shining star into Satan the Devil, the king of darkness.

Isa 14:12 "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened

Isa 14:13 the nations! For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north;

Isa 14:14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'

Isa 14:15 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit.

The question is, how could Jesus Christ have seen the ousting of Satan from heaven when He was born into this world thousands of years later? Well, He came into this world as a human being, but He existed as a spirit being long before that.

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 He was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

Joh 8:57 Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"

Joh 8:58 Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."

After being cast out of heaven, Satan was allowed to come back under close supervision in order to perform the role assigned him – that of Adversary to God and accuser of His people.

1Pe 5:6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

1Pe 5:7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

1Pe 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Jas 4:7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Jas 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded.

Rev 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they

Rev 12:11 overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

Having fulfilled and finished the role assigned to him, Satan was cast out of heaven for good, at the conclusion of this age.

Rev 20:1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

Rev 20:2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;

Rev 20:3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

Rev 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then *I* saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Rev 20:5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection.

Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy *is* he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Rev 20:7 Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison

Rev 20:8 and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to

Rev 20:9 battle, whose number *is* as the sand of the sea. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.

Rev 20:10 The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

It should be obvious then that Satan has played an important role during the time of God's creation. He has been the instrument by which God had chastened and corrected His people, the elect that needed trials and tribulations in order to develop the right character for the Kingdom of God.

Heb 12:1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,
Heb 12:2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
Heb 12:3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your
Heb 12:4 souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.
Heb 12:5 And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "MY SON, DO NOT DESPISE THE CHASTENING OF THE LORD, NOR BE DISCOURAGED WHEN YOU ARE REBUKED BY HIM;
Heb 12:6 FOR WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE CHASTENS, AND SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES."
Heb 12:7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?
Heb 12:8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.
Heb 12:9 Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected *us*, and we paid *them* respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?
Heb 12:10 For they indeed for a few days chastened *us* as seemed *best* to them, but He for *our* profit, that *we* may be partakers of His
Heb 12:11 holiness. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.
Heb 12:12 Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees,
Heb 12:13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be *dislocated*, but rather be healed.
Heb 12:14 Pursue peace with all *people*, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

This brings us to the second question: What exactly does it mean that Satan has been cast down to earth?

Most people have no idea how Satan works. They do not know that he could take control of their mental faculties and they become his servants, without them being aware of it. There are many examples of satanic possession in the Bible. The most obvious one comes from the time of Jesus Christ.

Luk 8:26 "Then they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee.
Luk 8:27 And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs.
Luk 8:28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!"
Luk 8:29 For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness."

This is an extreme case which involved a number of demons, the fallen angels through whom Satan does his work. It is unfortunate that this kind of behaviour has come to be most commonly associated with the Devil, most people not realising that he works through "normal" human beings just as easily as he does through those whose minds he has completely taken over.

The book of Job gives us the best example how the Devil manipulates "normal" human beings.

Job 1:1 There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God
Job 1:2 and shunned evil. And seven sons and three daughters were born to him.
Job 1:3 Also, his possessions were seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys, and a very large household, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the East.
Job 1:4 And his sons would go and feast *in their* houses, each on his *appointed* day, and would send and invite their three sisters to
Job 1:5 eat and drink with them. So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings *according to* the number of them all. For Job said, "It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did regularly.
Job 1:6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.
Job 1:7 And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it."

Notice how, like the angels of God, Satan and his demons are considered sons of God.

Job 1:8 Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is* none like him on the earth, a blameless and
Job 1:9 upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing?
Job 1:10 Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.
Job 1:11 But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!"
Job 1:12 And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has *is* in your power; only do not lay a hand on his *person*." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

Satan does nothing but what God allows him! Do you understand now why God said that He created the Wicked for the day of doom? "The LORD has made all for Himself, Yes, even the wicked for the day of doom" (Pro 16:4). Back to Job:

Job 1:13 Now there was a day when his sons and daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house;
Job 1:14 and a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them,
Job 1:15 when the Sabeans raided *them* and took them away—indeed they have killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I
Job 1:16 alone have escaped to tell you!" While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you!"

Job 1:17 While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands, raided the camels and took them away, yes, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!"

Job 1:18 While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their

Job 1:19 oldest brother's house, and suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you!"

In this example, Satan took control of the Sabeans and the Chaldeans, who most certainly would have thought that they were normal people, to fulfil his job. Few people realise that aggression, and especially murder, are works of the Devil.

Satan is allowed to control people and the forces of nature, such as fire, wind, cold and heat, up to a point. Therefore, when you see disasters in the world, it is Satan who does them, but God who approves of them. And why would He approve of them? For the same reason that He allowed them to happen to Job: to turn people back from sin and self-righteousness. Until God showed him his true nature, Job maintained that he was innocent before God. However, notice what happened after God reproved him.

Job 1:20 Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped.

Job 1:21 And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has

Job 1:22 taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD." In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.

Job 42:1 Then Job answered the LORD and said:

Job 42:2 "I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You.

Job 42:3 You asked, 'Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.

Job 42:4 Listen, please, and let me speak; You said, 'I will question you, and you shall answer Me.'

Job 42:5 "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You.

Job 42:6 Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes."

When things happen to you, do you say, "The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD", and "repent in dust and ashes", or do you ask, "why me?" "Why do these things happen to me and my family?"

What these examples show is that the Devil manipulates human beings as if they are mere toys. How does he do that? Through human nature! It may surprise people to know this, but carnal human beings just naturally belong to the Devil.

Rom 8:5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit,

Rom 8:6 the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Rom 8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

Rom 8:8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit,

Rom 8:9 if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

Only when one repents and receives the Holy Spirit can he or she escape the wiles of the Devil. Notice what Jesus Christ told His disciples about themselves and about human beings in general.

Luk 13:1 There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their

Luk 13:2 sacrifices. And Jesus answered and said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things?"

Luk 13:3 I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.

Luk 13:4 Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other

Luk 13:5 men who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."

Until they repent, human beings belong to the Devil. Why then does he not destroy them at every opportunity? Because without human beings he would have no kingdom and no one to reign over. Satan does not want to destroy people altogether. He merely wants to control them, to make them worship him and turn against God. He dominates them from birth to death, unless they respond to God's call and they repent, are baptised, and receive the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands of someone who already has the Holy Spirit.

David, the famous King and Psalmist of Israel, said this of himself when he discovered how weak he was in the face of sin: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me." (Psa 51:5). This was not a mere rhetorical statement; it was the unadulterated truth, for he indeed committed horrendous sins (See 2 Sam. 11 and 12). This is what James wrote about human beings too.

Jas 4:1 Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?

Jas 4:2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do

Jas 4:3 not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.

Jas 4:4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Jas 4:5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"?

Jas 4:6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "GOD RESISTS THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE."

Jas 4:7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

Clearly, each one of us was born in sin with a little devil inside us. The purpose of life then is to wrest control of the body from the Devil and present it a living sacrifice to God.

Rom 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to

Rom 12:2 God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

How does one do that? There is only one way – the way shown by Jesus Christ and His apostles.

Mat 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Act 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Act 2:39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

Act 2:40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."
Act 2:41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added
Act 2:42 to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

These are some of the most important statements of the Bible. Only after mature conversion and receiving of the Holy Spirit can one begin to take control of his human nature. And that comes only after turning to Jesus Christ.

Joh 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth;
Joh 16:13 for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

So although the Devil has come down to us, and is wrecking havoc with the world, we can escape his clutches, because He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world.

Joh 16:33 These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

1Jn 4:4 You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because **He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.**

Jesus Christ warned His followers to beware of false prophets, who do the work of the Devil by trying to deceive even the elect if that were possible.

Mat 24:24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

Mat 24:25 See, I have told you beforehand.

They do not just preach false gospels, but show great signs and wonders: healings, weeping statues, apparitions, etc. Remember, even the Pharaoh's magicians, worshipers of the god of the underworld, of the Devil in other words, were able to perform miracles up to a point.

If you have the Holy Spirit and are peace with God, no one will ever deceive you.

It is not multiculturalism that is undermining the Western world, but multi-religionism

Like the communist experiment, multiculturalism, on whose model it was conceived, suffered from the same deadly disease – atheism. To its proponents, it did not matter that newcomers held strongly to their religions, they felt that by exposing them to the "enlightened" atheism of the West, and its secular irreligious education, they would discard their beliefs in favour of the Western culture of indulgence and free spirit, and thus create a universal multicultural family of nations.

Well, it did not quite work out that way. Subjected to the crime ridden atheistic society of the West, newcomers felt an even stronger bond to their ancestral religions. That gave rise to pockets of religious fanaticism by people of second and third generation of migrants from former colonial countries that otherwise would have blended in, and embraced, those cultures.

The leaders of the Western world have not understood that religion is not merely the opium of the people, as Marx would have us believe, or figments of uncultured imagination, as the "illuminati" of modern world are telling us, but a powerful inborn feeling – the lifeblood of the soul, sustained by powerful spirit beings – angels of God, or demons of the Devil.

Eph 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Eph 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

Eph 6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

Eph 6:15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

Eph 6:16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

Eph 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

Eph 6:18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—

Eph 6:19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,

Eph 6:20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Multiculturalism, the way the West has understood and applied it, has become a license to unrestrained libertine freedoms, to ethnic ghettos of fundamentalist extremists, and to sin and blasphemies against God.

"With The Accent, A New Emphasis" "What a startling headline it was on the front page of the *Herald* on Thursday: "Words of hate – with an Aussie accent." Hate? From an Australian mouth? That's not cricket. The man, now suspected to be a former Australian soldier, dressed in balaclava, scarf, and combat jacket and bearing an AK-47, spat out thick rage on Arab television: "The honourable sons of Islam will not just let you kill our families in Palestine, Afghanistan, Kashmir and the Balkans, Indonesia, the Caucasus and elsewhere. It is time for us to be equals. As you kill us, you'll be killed. As you bomb us, you will be bombed." The

rhetoric of terror, hate and aggression is utterly at odds with the way we think of Australia. Especially Islamic fundamentalist hate. . . Opponents of the war in Iraq – of which I was one – are rightfully suspicious of patriotism, aware that all religions can be welded into violence by the sharp heat of vengeance, and that when we fight wars we are fighting other human beings, usually disastrously. But al-Qaeda still must force us to eschew passive avoidance for an active engagement, and make clear what we stand for rather than against. Peter Beinart, the editor of the New Republic, argued in December that liberal democrats should reassert themselves against those who refuse to recognize tyranny is a real threat, in keeping with the 20th-century liberal democratic tradition of fighting totalitarianism: “Today, the war on terrorism is partially obscured by the war in Iraq, which has made liberals cynical about the purposes of US power. But, even if Iraq is Vietnam, it no more obviates the war on terrorism than Vietnam obviated the battle against communism.

Global Jihad will be with us long after American troops stop dying in Falluja and Mosul. And thus, liberalism will rise or fall on whether it can become, again, what [Arthur] Schlesinger [Jnr] called ‘a fighting faith’. . . “If the struggle for gay marriage and universal health care lay rightful claim to liberal idealism, so does the struggle to protect the United States by spreading freedom in the Muslim world. It, too, can provide the moral purpose for which a new generation of liberals yearn.” (Julia Baird, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13-14 August 2005).

“Why Britannia’s got a real identity crisis” “Britain wants to discover its “Britishness” as unlike Australia, it becomes increasingly fractured by migration.” “British MP David Davies was living in Sydney and learning to surf at Bondi Beach in the early 1990’s when he experienced his first Australia Day.

The then backpacking future prominent Tory MP could not believe the party atmosphere and celebration with the streets festooned with flags and singing the national day. He later moved to Surfers Paradise, worked as a nightclub tour guide and at a hostel and saw a culture, particularly in the surfing fraternity, that was identifiably Australian, rich in mateship and national identity.

“Every day was a bloody Australia Day,” he said of his one year in the country. But last week it was a very different Mr Davies, who was leading the condemnation of a plan by the British government to introduce an Austrakia Day-style national day as part of a raft of measures to recapture the nation’s “Britishness”. Since late last year, the UK has been plunged into a deep and divisive debate as to what it means to be British, following the release of a report by the Commission for Racial Equality which concluded **multiculturalism had segregated and fractures society, leaving the country in danger of “breaking up”**.

Ask anyone on the street and they will readily tell, only half in jest, that there is nothing united about the United Kingdom or great about Great Britain and hasn’t been since 1966 (when England won the football World Cup).

In a rallying call following the bleak assessment, Prime Minister Gordon Brown, announced a national search for a motto in a speech that included the term Britishness of Britain 71 times. “There is no weakness in Britain today that cannot be overcome by strength of the British people,” he declared. He then tasked former attorney general Lord Goldsmith to come up with review into UK citizenship.

That 138-page review was released last week, reigniting the debate and again stirring racism disguised as patriotism, which spilled over into the wider issue of Briton’s distrust and dislike of the European Union.

Lord Goldsmith played down notions of a divided nation but said a US-style oath of allegiance and Australian-style national day could bring back pride. “Certainly there’s not a crisis of national identity,” he said. “I’m sure we’d all see it if there were. But certainly the research does tend to show there has been a diminution in national pride in the sense of belonging, and it’s particularly a generational thing.”

Mr Davies has been leading the chorus of opposition and told The Sunday Telegraph Australia Day was good for Australia but its equivalent would not resolve the society crisis that was Britain. “It’s not Australia Day that makes Australia Australian,” he said. “Far from it. It’s a good excuse to party and a good reason to feel good about yourself. I’m not against it or saying we shouldn’t have it in Britain, but it doesn’t address the fundamental problem in Britain.

“Australians have a wonderful culture and a wonderful sense of national identity that’s been forged through difficult times. “You can’t suddenly pick a day and impose that on Britain and think everything’s rosy.” Mr Davies said **the deep-seated problem in Britain began about 30 years ago when millions of pounds were being spent on projects that effectively ensured the incoming migrants would remain segregated**. Indeed, in Britain, as in Australia, small things like driving tests can be taken in languages other than English for migrants who can’t read or write the tongue of their adopted country – **or don’t want to speak the language**.

In the UK, all government documents are also translated into other languages and a blind eye turned to cultural traditions such as arranged marriages, particularly among the country’s Indian and Pakistani communities.

There is no encouragement to learn the English language or British customs and ways. “We are actually creating cities where a significant number of minorities don’t consider themselves British,” Mr Davies said. **“Multiculturalism has been basically about allowing people not to feel British, but to feel that they can continue and maintain the identity of the country they or their parents came from, which has been a mistake. “What the government should be saying is: ‘If you want to come into this country you’re going to have to learn the language and abide by the customs and traditions and understand it’s up to you to change a little to live here and not up to the host country to change to accommodate you and your beliefs’.”** Matters in the UK are made worse by people in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland wanting more independence and flatly refusing to swear allegiance to a united nation.

Under former British Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair, the three were given unprecedented autonomy with decentralisation of power and regional parliaments. With Gordon Brown, it is a desperate attempt to recapture a glory and unity that no longer exists or can exist, and the Britishness theme of his first year as Prime Minister is having the opposite effect. “Given devolution, it’s very hard to identify any real sense of Britishness,” said Anand Menon, the director of Birmingham University’s European Research Institute. “As people look into this, they may realise there is no such thing. I think this country is very, very fractured.” Human rights and Equality Commission chief Trevor Phillips suggested correcting this by rewriting history, such as recording how the Muslims and Turks saved the nation by holding up the Spanish Armada at the behest of Queen Elizabeth I. He said rewriting the story could make it “truly conclusive we have an identity which brings us together”. Meanwhile, a record number of people, as many as 500 a day, are fleeing the UK to begin new lives in other countries, including Australia where 71 000 resettled Last year, of which a number will become citizens and honour their newfound nationhood on Australia Day, January 26. “Having a national day that’s based on an Australian experience or swearing an oath or allegiance to the Queen based on what the Americans do won’t make matters worse but it won’t improve things,” Mr Davies said.

“I think there is a danger that the government are going to use these gimmicks as a means to pretend they are doing something when the fundamental problems remain.” (Charles Miranda, *The Sunday Telegraph*, March 23, 2008).

In its true form, multiculturalism would not be a bad idea, except that what our leaders have understood by that term seems to be not a community of various cultures complementing each other for the good of all, but a multiplicity of segregated cultures and religions without any bond of nationhood or common purpose. In most cases, they have confused religion with culture, and that is what has led to the problems of today. One may accept an unflattering remark about his culture, aware that not everyone has the same test in food, fashion, social customs, etc., but woe betides him who offends his religion.

The fact that the Christian world no longer punishes blasphemers as Muslims do is because non-believers, who have been in ascendancy for some two centuries now, have wrested control of their societies. Far from punishing those who offend the Christian

faith, they honour and promote them. The so-called Civil Liberties Organisations are nothing but a smokescreen for the protection of the un-godly.

Then they are surprised that other people have not acquired a similarly lax attitude towards their religion.

Neither Islam nor Christianity are cultures as such, for they encompass vast territories that comprise peoples of different social customs, music, fashion, food and other aspects that define a culture. The Arabs, for example, have a culture that has little similarities to the Muslim people of sub-Sahara, of Indonesia, of Turkmenistan, and others.

By their nature, cultures enhance life by complementing each other. They have no reason to fight against each other the way religions do. The greatest problems for the world have arisen where people have identified their culture with their religion: the Middle East, the Balkans, Northern Ireland, are but some of the most striking examples.

Religions not only stir up powerful passions and feelings, but are easily manipulated by ill meaning people with a different agenda than the common good. Muslim imams are on record as saying that their followers have a duty first to Islam and then to Australia, as if the two are in competition with each other. I do not know whether Islam condemns those who cause divisions, but Christianity clearly does.

Rom 16:17 Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which you learned,
Rom 16:18 and avoid them. For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

When European countries embarked upon colonial expansion, they did not use their culture as the main reason for expansion, but their religion – a convoluted form of Christianity that often did more harm than good to those it conquered.

Even so, as long as they spread literacy in the name of Christ, and the Bible was made available in the native languages, it was a venture approved in heaven. People could fulfil the primary purpose of their life – seeking out the divine truth for themselves.

Things went well until the “wise” men of the West entered the picture with their atheistic philosophy. Denying a creator God lost the West its legitimacy for colonial expansion. Atheism did not go well with the people of the new world. The best example of what atheism can do to people can be seen in that bastion of anti-God philosophy, Russia. The social problems of that country are so great – alcoholism, AIDS, drugs, lawlessness, suicides, etc. – that our problems in the West, grave as they are, pale by comparison. Yet instead of spending that country's income from its vast resources on its people, its leaders have embarked again upon a frantic program of rearmament. President Putin is on record as saying that Russia now has a new generation of missiles and nuclear technology that are far superior to those of the West. How did he achieve that? By acquiring the technology from the West after the abysmal failure of the Soviet technology!

Western media, intelligentsia and political leaders have been so mesmerised by Putin's furtive smiles and occasional friendly gestures towards the West that they have quickly forgotten the gross human rights violations and multiple murders of his critics and political opponents.

Putin described the disintegration of the Soviet Union as the greatest catastrophe of the 20th century. Now he is doing his best to restore what he can of that “evil empire”. He is still the undisputed leader of Russia, even though he stepped down from the position of President to that of Prime Minister. With the FSB (former KGB), behind him, clearly he is manipulating the political system of Russia towards one in which the President is a non-political figurehead, and the Prime Minister the real holder of power.

A strong Russian leader without the fear of God, with the finger on the nuclear button, is the West's worst nightmare.

Putin is not merely trying to raise Russia to new greatness for the sake of it; the gigantic Secret Service apparatus inherited from communist times is baying for revenge against the West, which it blames for the fall of their former atheist empire – the Soviet Union.

Western politicians think they can escape that by appeasing Putin as they did with Hitler. They could never be more wrong. Bible prophecy tells us that the man is destined to become the scourge of the West.

Humanity is blindly heading towards catastrophe because it does not believe the Scriptures. The Great Tribulation, which will produce destructiveness the likes of which this world has never seen, and threaten the very life of this planet, is now menacing like a dark cloud over the horizon. Out of that fiasco, a new world order will emerge – the Millennium Kingdom of Jesus Christ, which will have one King, one religion, and as many cultures as there are peoples, tribes, tongues and nations on this earth. Only a few elect from each one will survive into that Kingdom.

Rev 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
Rev 5:10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth."

Yes, it is all right to donate blood and body organs

Apostle Paul made an important statement that gives us some light concerning donating blood and body organs.

Rom 5:7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.

Rom 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

When we were still sinners, Christ died for us. In so doing, He saved us from eternal damnation and made the Holy Spirit available to us that we may also inherit eternal life.

Now if Jesus Christ gave His life that we may live, is it much of a sacrifice for us to donate a bit of us – whether blood or body organs – that others may live, especially when such an act has little bearing on our own life?

I suffer from a modern disease – kidney stones, I am told from not drinking enough water and drinking too much juice – so when I went to the hospital to have one removed, I was asked whether I had any objection to blood transfusion. I said I do, and explained that I am very happy to give my blood to other people, but under no circumstance would I accept other people's blood. Even if my life was in danger? Yes, even if my life was in danger.

That created a conundrum that needed further explanation. You see, I have lived my life, I have achieved the purpose for which I was born, now I am at peace with God and with myself, and I am ready to face my Creator any time. Any unnecessary prolongation of my life could endanger my achievements. This is why I would be happier to depart and be with God and with my Saviour than be in this world. As Apostle Paul said:

2Ti 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

2Ti 4:8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Bear in mind also what the Scriptures say about the saints of God.

Psa 116:15 Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints.

Now the saints of God are different from the saints of traditional churches, but that is a different story.

The question is why would God be happy with the death of His saints? The answer is simple: because having achieved the purpose of their life, they are safeguarded from falling into sin again. Now that is worth dying for.

No one knows, except God and the respective person, when they have achieved that state.

Before His sacrifice, Jesus Christ said this:

Luk 13:32 And He said to them, "Go, tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day **I shall be perfected.**' Nevertheless I must journey today,

Luk 13:33 tomorrow, and the *day* following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.

Luk 13:34 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen *gathers* her brood under *her* wings, but you were not willing!

Luk 13:35 See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until *the time* comes when you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!' "

Jesus Christ believed that He would be perfected through death, and He was not wrong. As long as He was in this world, He was no different from us. He suffered pain, hunger, and thirst; had emotions and disappointments like all of us, but after resurrection, He put all of these behind Him. While in the world, He explained to His disciples what eternal life is all about.

Joh 17:1 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son

Joh 17:2 also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have

Joh 17:3 given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

So, the primary purpose of one's life is to know God and Jesus Christ. However, knowing God and Jesus Christ is not possible without the Holy Spirit, and He comes only to those who keep the Commandments of God.

Joh 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments.

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth,

Joh 14:17 whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

And where does one find the Commandments? This is one place:

Exo 20:1 And God spoke all these words, saying:

Exo 20:2 "I *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

Exo 20:3 "You shall have no other gods before Me.

Exo 20:4 "You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of *anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth;

Exo 20:5 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me,

Exo 20:6 but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

Exo 20:7 "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold *him* guiltless who takes His name in vain.

Exo 20:8 "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Exo 20:9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

Exo 20:10 but the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who *is* within your gates.

Exo 20:11 For *in* six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that *is* in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Exo 20:12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

Exo 20:13 "You shall not murder.

Exo 20:14 "You shall not commit adultery.

Exo 20:15 "You shall not steal.

Exo 20:16 "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Exo 20:17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that *is* your neighbor's."

And this is another one:

Mar 10:17 Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

Mar 10:18 So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good but One, *that is*, God.

Mar 10:19 You know the commandments: 'DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,' 'DO NOT MURDER,' 'DO NOT STEAL,' 'DO NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS,' 'Do not defraud,' 'HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER.'"

Mar 10:20 And he answered and said to Him, "Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth."

Mar 10:21 Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me."

Mar 10:22 But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Mar 10:23 Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!"

Mar 10:24 And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, "Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God!

Mar 10:25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

Mar 10:26 And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, "Who then can be saved?"

Mar 10:27 But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men *it is* impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible."

In this passage, Jesus Christ did not list all the Commandments, but left no doubt which once He was referring to. He knew that His enquirer being a Jew had no problems with the first four Commandments, which regulate man's relationship with God, and went straight to the last six, which deal with man's relationship with man.

Now did you notice what Jesus Christ said of Himself? "Why do you call Me good?" To which He gave the answer: "No one is good but One, that is, God." Now if there ever was a Man who deserved to be called good by virtue of the fact that He had never sinned, surely it was Jesus Christ. Yet, He knew that "goodness" or perfection are not possible in a carnal body, and that it can only be achieved in a body that comes after resurrection from the dead for those who are found righteous. Such righteousness can be achieved only through the Holy Spirit.

Joh 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

Joh 16:13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

Joh 16:14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you.

Joh 16:15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare *it* to you.

Why can we not achieve righteousness without the Holy Spirit? Because the law of sin reigns in our bodies, and keeps us slaves to sin!

Rom 7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.

Rom 7:15 For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.

Rom 7:16 If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that *it is* good.

Rom 7:17 But now, *it is* no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

Rom 7:18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform what is

Rom 7:19 good I do not find. For the good that I will *to do*, I do not do; but the evil I will not *to do*, that I practice.

Rom 7:20 Now if I do what I will not *to do*, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

Rom 7:21 I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.

Rom 7:22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members,

Rom 7:23 warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

Rom 7:24 O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Rom 7:25 So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Now why do we need to be reminded about these things in a discussion about donors? This is why:

1Co 11:23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

1Co 11:25 In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me."

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

1Co 11:27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks *this* cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood

1Co 11:28 of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

1Co 11:29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

1Co 11:30 **For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.**

1Co 11:31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.

1Co 11:32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.

1Co 11:33 Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. But if anyone is hungry,

1Co 11:34 let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.

Most Christians would have no idea what Apostle Paul was talking about here. That is because He was talking about the Passover, the most important Holy Day in the Christian calendar, yet one that very few Christians observe. Yet, what are the consequences of not observing this Feast in the appropriate manner at the appropriate time? Sickness and death!

People wonder that the world is full of illness, diseases, plagues, famine, wars, social unrest, and the like, and ask why. The answer is simple: because they ignore the Scriptures, the Commandments of God, and the will of Jesus Christ.

They desperately seek to prolong life in this miserable world by all sorts of ungodly means, rather than by making peace with God and with Jesus Christ, and seeking eternal life in the Kingdom of God where there is no more pain and suffering but pleasures forevermore

Psa 16:11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence *is* fullness of joy; At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

Rev 21:1 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more

Rev 21:2 sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned

Rev 21:3 for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God.

Rev 21:4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

Rev 21:5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and

Rev 21:6 faithful." And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.

Rev 21:7 He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

Rev 21:8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Yes, the Alpha and the Omega is revealing these things to us. This is why I fear no death, and why, like Jesus Christ, I look forward to the time of my "perfection".

Psa 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Psa 23:2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

Psa 23:3 He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley

Psa 23:4 of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

Psa 23:5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.

Psa 23:6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

Not all people have this faith, however, and many feel they are not quite ready to face God and would rather receive blood or body organs in order to prolong life and give themselves a longer time and a better chance of making peace with God.

From the Scriptural point of view, it is perfectly all right to do that. If Jesus Christ gave His life that we may live, is it much of a sacrifice if we donate blood or a body organ – a kidney or bone marrow for example – that a loved one may live?

Certainly not! You lose nothing, but you may gain merit in heaven that may stand you well with God at the time of judgment. This, however, comes with a caveat: donations should occur only among people of the same character. This requires another explanation.

There are two kinds of spirits in the world: the spirit of the world, and the spirit of God, the Holy Spirit.

1Co 2:11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of

1Co 2:12 God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

1Co 2:13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual

1Co 2:14 things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

1Co 2:15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is *rightly* judged by no one.

1Co 2:16 For "WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD THAT HE MAY INSTRUCT HIM?" But we have the mind of Christ.

When you receive other people's blood or body parts, you may inherit not only hidden diseases that the donor may have had, but emotions and character traits that you may not like or may harm you. That is because you inherit part of his spirit too. Television documentaries have shown that people who received body parts from dead people, have acquired or developed character traits of the dead person. This raises the question of a live donor versus a dead one. An elect of God should never accept body parts from dead people, even if that person had been an elect of God. That is because when a person dies, a different spirit takes over his body, and you do not want to have anything to do with that spirit.

Jud 1:8 Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries.

Jud 1:9 Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

Moses was one of the greatest men of God, and yet, when he died his body was taken over by the wicked One. This is why, in the Old Testament, when a person touched the carcass of a dead person, he became unclean until sunset. After that, a certain cleansing ritual was needed in order to restore that person to the community.

At that time, the Israelites were the "chosen people of God", yet that made no difference when they died. Notice what Jesus Christ told one of His disciples who wanted to go home to bury his father

Mat 8:21 Then another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."

Mat 8:22 But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

Transposed to our case, that would be, let the living dead donate to their own, and the people of God to their own.

You do not expose yourself to dangers if you receive blood or body parts from an elect of God, and may even receive a little of the Holy Spirit. The reverse is not true: an elect of God would have no advantage whatsoever by receiving blood or a body part from a person of the world. Having left behind the spirit of the world when one repented, was baptised and received the Holy Spirit, he can only harm himself by contaminating himself again with the spirit of the world.

It is not advisable that an elect of God subject himself or herself to such procedures even from another elect. However, this is a matter of personal choice. But remember: having repented of your old life and began a new one, your past has been wiped clean. You should therefore no longer fear death, like the people of the world, and be ready to face God any time.

Heb 2:14 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,

Heb 2:15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Therefore, while others may benefit from our donations, there is little that an elect of God may benefit from them. The problem we are having is that more often than not medical practitioners do not understand or agree with our position. There is not much we can do about that other than pray, but we must stand firm and make a forceful point that while we agree to donate our blood and body parts, we ourselves cannot be subjected to just any medical procedure in order to prolong our life just a little bit longer, particularly if we lose our consciousness.

I once witnessed the case of a man who went into hospital with a knee injury. The medical practitioners dressed his wound and gave him the usual medication and antibiotic course of drugs. Yet instead of getting better, he got worse and quickly fell into a coma. He was immediately placed in intensive care where they inserted tubes through his neck and back in order to help his breathing and other body functions. It was a shuddering and sobering experience for me, and felt very uncomfortable just by looking at it.

I have a good opinion of the medical profession, unlike the law practitioners of whom I find few redeeming features, but I think that sometimes even doctors go a bit too far. It is a pity that their Hippocratic Oath has no provision for people of strong faith and beliefs, who while accepting moderate surgical procedures, do not wish to have their life prolonged by any means, at any cost, and for just any length.

(Not long after finishing this article, *Sydney Morning Herald* had a cartoon about Doctors. The Wizard of Id asked one, "What do you want to be when you grow up? A Doctor! What are you doing to prepare yourself? Golf lessons!" (*S.M.H.*, June 4, 2008). I thought I would throw that one in there too)

Lawyers have no equivalent "Hippocratic Oath", which frees them to act as mercenaries for hire, defending any cause that pays, with little regard for truth and justice. Their ethos is strongly condemned in the Bible. Having abandoned the Law of God and devised

their own justice systems, they have created a toxic environment in which it is impossible for one to practice Law and retain a clear conscience and a righteous attitude before God. When one defends the guilty and condemns the innocent, he has crossed a line and embarked upon the road to perdition. Have you ever heard a lawyer say that his client is guilty of anything?

Isa 59:8 The way of peace they have not known, And *there is* no justice in their ways; They have made themselves crooked paths; Whoever takes that way shall not know peace. Therefore justice is far from us,
Isa 59:9 Nor does righteousness overtake us; We look for light, but there is darkness! For brightness, *but* we walk in blackness!
Isa 59:10 We grope for the wall like the blind, And we grope as if *we had* no eyes; We stumble at noonday as at twilight; *We are* as dead *men* in desolate places.
Isa 59:11 We all growl like bears, And moan sadly like doves; We look for justice, but *there is* none; For salvation, *but it* is far from us.
Isa 59:12 For our transgressions are multiplied before You, And our sins testify against us; For our transgressions *are* with us,
Isa 59:13 And *as for* our iniquities, we know them: In transgressing and lying against the LORD, And departing from our God, Speaking oppression and revolt, Conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.
Isa 59:14 Justice is turned back, And righteousness stands afar off; For truth is fallen in the street, And equity cannot enter.
Isa 59:15 So **truth fails, And he who departs from evil makes himself a prey.** Then the LORD saw *it*, and it displeased Him that
Isa 59:16 *there was* no justice. He saw that *there was* no man, And wondered that *there was* no intercessor; Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; And His own righteousness, it sustained Him.

As opposed to that, the work of "physicians" is approved in the sight of God.

Mar 2:16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw Him eating with the tax collectors and sinners, they said to His disciples, "How *is it* that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?"
Mar 2:17 When Jesus heard *it*, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

Interestingly enough, Physicians will have a role to play in the Kingdom of God too.

Rev 22:1 And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.
Rev 22:2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, *was* the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each *tree* yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.
Rev 22:3 And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him.
Rev 22:4 They shall see His face, and His name *shall be* on their foreheads.
Rev 22:5 There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light.
Rev 22:6 And they shall reign forever and ever. Then he said to me, "These words *are* faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place.
Rev 22:7 "Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed *is* he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

While people will still be injured – in work, sport and other activities – and need healing, they will not need law adjudicators, because the law will be written in their hearts and no one will transgress wilfully anymore. Hence no lawyers!

Jer 31:31 "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house
Jer 31:32 of Judah—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD.
Jer 31:33 But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his
Jer 31:34 neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Clearly then, our attitude to life in this world in general, and to donating and receiving blood and body parts in particular, could have an effect on our salvation and eternal life. It is wrong, a sin in fact, to deny someone the chance to life if that depends on receiving a little blood. Similarly, it is wrong to force someone to accept blood or body parts if he feels he is at peace with God and has no need of such procedures.

Now back to our man in intensive care. After a few days, when it became obvious, to me at least, that there was little chance of him recovering, I suggested that he should not be subjected to that torment anymore and be left to die naturally. It was the worst thing I could possibly have said. He was my father in law, and it infuriated just about everyone and made them suspicious of my motives. When he still died a few days later, they had me investigated for possibly having done something to hasten his death. No one could understand why a man, who appeared to be healthy, would die so quickly of a knee injury. That was until they performed an autopsy and discovered that some of his internal organs were putrid because of alcoholism. His body was no longer able to heal itself and the slightest infection brought him down. Somehow, he managed to keep from his family that he was a chronic alcoholic. He drank at work, or after work, and not so much at home. He was barely in his sixties, and by looking at him you would have thought that he was a healthy man and upon death suitable for organ donor. But who would accept a body organ from such a corpse? I suppose a desperate person, in danger of immediate dying, might, if only for a few more days. Such however, should never be the case with the people of God.

It is not only a great honour to be called to join the elect of God, but a great responsibility.

1Co 6:9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers,
1Co 6:10 nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed,
1Co 6:11 but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.
1Co 6:15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make *them* members
1Co 6:16 of a harlot? Certainly not! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body *with her*? For "THE TWO,"
He
1Co 6:17 says, "SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH." But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit *with Him*. Flee sexual immorality
1Co 6:18 Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.
1Co 6:19 **Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is** in you, whom you have from God, and

1Co 6:20 you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

The last two verses would have sufficed for our point, but as it is often the case, we take pleasure in giving people the whole context so that even those who do not have a Bible, or may not be bothered opening it, may get the full picture of the wonders of the Scriptures.

Here now is John 17 in its entirety, which proves conclusively that this world is made up of two kinds of people: those who obey God, and those who remain slaves to their carnal nature. You have a choice in which camp you place yourself.

Joh 17:4 I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.

Joh 17:5 And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

Joh 17:6 "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me,

Joh 17:7 and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You.

Joh 17:8 For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received *them*, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.

Joh 17:9 **"I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.**

Joh 17:10 **And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them.**

Joh 17:11 Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those

Joh 17:12 whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We *are*. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

Joh 17:13 But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

Joh 17:14 I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

Joh 17:15 I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

Joh 17:16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

Joh 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

Joh 17:18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.

Joh 17:19 And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

Joh 17:20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one,

Joh 17:21 as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

Joh 17:22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:

Joh 17:23 I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

Joh 17:24 "Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

Joh 17:25 O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me.

Joh 17:26 And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare *it*, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

Pure poetry and healing for the heart, mind and soul.

In conclusion, it is one thing to exchange blood and body parts with the people of God, and quite another with the people of the world. The two spirits shall never mix, and neither should their carriers.

State of the World (2008)

"The New Plagues" "Why 'superbugs,' TB, leprosy and other pestilences are invading U.S." Americans have long taken the wonders of medical science for granted, watching as disease after disease has been conquered with antibiotics, vaccines, better nutrition and pharmaceutical "miracle drugs." But today, the magic isn't working ... and something scary is happening. Thanks to self-destructive "alternative lifestyles," out-of-control immigration, the overuse of antibiotics and other causes, long-"vanquished" illnesses are once again ravaging the U.S., puzzling scientists and terrifying millions of victims and their loved ones. That's the explosive subject of the February edition of WND's elite monthly Whistleblower magazine, titled **"THE NEW PLAGUES."** Consider this:

- The once-"conquered" scourge of tuberculosis has made a terrifying comeback, especially in America's inner cities (the American Lung Association has called TB "out of control"), and drug-resistant TB accounts for more and more new cases. The Record legal and illegal immigration levels. Indeed, the highest numbers of multi-drug-resistant TB cases are in New York, California, Texas and Florida – states with the highest populations of new immigrants.

- Leprosy, the contagious skin disease evoking thoughts of biblical and medieval times, is now making its mark in the United States, and many believe the influx of illegal aliens is the main factor.

- A new study reveals that homosexuals are much more likely to become infected with the dreaded "superbug" MRSA – methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* – than are heterosexuals. Some are even calling MRSA the "new HIV." Although previous MRSA contagion has been confined primarily to hospitals, it is now being spread in major cities through homosexual contact. But since staph is also transmissible through non-sexual contact, the University of California researcher who headed up the study warns: "Once this reaches the general population, it will be truly unstoppable."

- Avian influenza – or "bird flu" – has caused such concern at the highest level of the U.S. government that in 2005, the Congressional Budget Office reported that a severe pandemic of avian flu hitting the U.S. would kill 2 million Americans and throw the country into a major recession.

- Other diseases once virtually unknown in America, like Chagas disease and Dengue fever, are cropping up in southern border areas, while old and much-feared plagues like polio and malaria are also on the upswing. Compounding all of this, the astronomical number of illegal aliens swarming into the United States is forcing the closure of dozens of hospitals, spreading previously vanquished diseases and threatening to destroy America's prized health-care system." (*WorldNetDaily*, February 4, 2008).

“Bed-sharing good for mum, baby” “MOTHERS should take their babies into their beds and allow older children to share their room indefinitely, an American sleep expert advised yesterday.

Anthropologist James McKenna told a parenting conference in Adelaide bed-sharing was natural and beneficial for babies and parents -- a view not endorsed by NSW Health because of safety concerns. Professor McKenna, director of a mother-baby sleep lab at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, also said there was no cut-off point at which children should sleep in a separate room. "If you have healthy relationships during the day, there's no damage to children." Tresillian Family Care Centres chairperson Professor Catherine Fowler was against the idea of baby-parent bed sharing. "Lots of parents take their children into their beds to feed them but once that is done, the babies should sleep elsewhere." (*The Daily Telegraph*, May 26, 2006).

“Nicotine trap for children” “CHILDREN who try a single cigarette by the age of 11 then don't smoke for three years are twice as likely to take up the habit in their mid-teens, a study found. The Cancer Research UK study, published in the journal *Tobacco Control*, tracked the smoking habits of more than 2000 schoolchildren. Of the 260 who, by age 11, said they had tried smoking just once, 18 per cent became smokers at 14. This compared with only 7 per cent of those who had not had a cigarette by 11. Those who took up smoking had at least a three-year break between their first and second cigarettes." (*The Daily Telegraph*, May 26, 2006).

“The Great Myth Of Singledom” ”Being on your own is no fun. Believe me, Bridget Jones realises this better than anyone, says Amanda Platell. With Bridget Jones's big bottom back on movie screens again, we'll laugh with her and at her, we will cry, and we will all hope she ends up with Mark Darcy rather than the cheating Daniel Cleaver. But for however much people mistakenly portray Bridget author Helen Fielding's modern masterpiece as a celebration of "singledom" -- it is in fact the reverse. It is an hilarious, but chilling warning to every woman of the horrors of being single. And they are horrors. Being permanently on your own is no fun and, believe me, a life without a partner is an empty one, however successful you are. *Bridget Jones's Diary* was one of the defining social portraits of a generation -- of my generation. But it could equally have been called Bridget Bible Of Loneliness. Because beneath the gags was a more tragic truth: my generation is increasingly single -- not by choice but because we are too infatuated with our careers, too protective of our independence and too unrealistic in our demands of relationships. Being single at 30 can be funny, but try it for laughs at 40 or 50.

The Bridget Jones phenomenon has been almost wilfully misunderstood to serve the agenda of the Left, the people who believe marriage is outmoded and who consider traditional family values to be but chains around a woman's neck. It infuriates me when I read that Bridget Jones has become a key player in the housing market, with the number of singletons buying their first home alone doubling in the last 20 years. This speaks the fashionable liberal elite, those who would sound the death knell for marriage. But such an attitude is akin to encouraging young women to take out a pre-nuptial agreement before they've even started dating, as if to say it won't work so be prepared to be disappointed and alone. Is it any wonder that women are increasingly particular about whom they will marry and quicker to leave a marriage if they're unhappy, when this is the kind of message they are hearing? Has such thinking made expectations of love and lifetime together totally unrealistic? Many of us are indeed disappointed in our relationship -- just as we disappointed others. But is that a reason to give up on hope? The time I spent alone in my house with my huge mortgage, was among the saddest I have ever had. Having just broken up from a six year relationship, walking around empty rooms at night, all I could think was this was a house for a family, not a lonely career woman. I didn't feel proud of my achievements, just empty that I didn't have things I wanted most. Combine a generation of independent career women with a generation of commitment-phobic men and what you end up with is a potent recipe for loneliness. Because between us, that is exactly what we are creating -- millions of lonely people. What on earth have we done to each other? The flip side of loneliness is selfishness. Nothing makes a person more self-centred than living alone, without partner or family to make allowances or to compromise for. WE are not meant to be alone, we're social creatures. Bridget's search is not for a successful life as a single, or even the more fashionable child-free existence now sought by a staggering one in five women, nor for the highly dubious solution to partnership of sharing a life but never sharing a home. There is no compromise, no ambiguity here. She wants to get married, she wants to walk down the aisle in a big white frock and she wants to grow old with Mark Darcy, hopefully having a pile of little Bridgetes and Marks along the way.

There is nothing more remotely modern or post feminist about Bridget's desires. She is the ultimate traditionalist. And if we women are honest with ourselves, however successful we become, there's a big bit of Bridgetes in all of us. Helen Fielding made single women realise we weren't alone. That was *Bridget Jones's Diary* -- funny, but hardly a eulogy of the single life. Which is not to say being single is all bad. But being single is -- or should be -- just a phase when we're searching for love. And for anyone doubting the horrors of singledom -- beware, Christmas is approaching, the loneliest date in the single's calendar. I spent one Yuletide alone, not seeing anyone for three days except a group of friends at church on Christmas morning. When they asked me to join them for lunch, I pretended I had somewhere to go, a new man on the scene. In fact, I had none. I had nothing. But now I have all that -- and with apologies to singles everywhere -- I wouldn't change it for the world. (*The Daily Telegraph*, Nov. 22, 2004).

“Campus considering birth control for 11-yr old girls” “Contraceptives could be dispensed without knowledge of parents” (NaturalNews) A middle school in Portland, Maine is considering a proposal to provide birth control pills and patches to students as young as 11 years old. King Middle School launched a reproductive health program after five of the 135 students who visited the school's health center in 2006 reported being sexually active. The program already provides condoms to students, but the new proposal would expand this to include prescriptions for birth control pills and patches (which would then have to be purchased at a pharmacy). The contraceptives could be dispensed without the knowledge of **parents**, although written permission would be required for children to receive (unspecified) services from the health center. The proposed program has attracted controversy, with some people accusing the schools of taking away parental power and encouraging children to have sex too early. But school officials dispute these claims. "We do certainly sit down and speak with them about why [being sexually active] is not a good choice," said Amanda Rowe, the school's nurse coordinator. "But there are some who persist... and they need to be protected." Logan Levkoff, a sexologist and relationship expert, said that while the school may be stepping into a role that would better be filled by parents, many parents do not feel comfortable enough to do so. "Parents should be the sex educator for their children," Levkoff said. "The problem is not every parent feels empowered [to do so]." Parents interviewed by ABC News were split on their feelings about the proposal. "I don't think I would want my child in middle school to be getting **birth control** pills unless I had something to do with it," one woman said. But another woman, a mother, disagreed: "I think that education at that age is appropriate because our culture is saturated with messages about sex," she said. (NaturalNews.com; WorldNetDaily.com, April 7, 2008)

“Youth lead crime spree” “A quarter of all violent home invasions are carried out by teens and children”. "NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research data reveals 24.4 per cent of people linked by police to home invasions last year were aged between 10 and 17. The figures come as Youth Off The Streets founder Father Chris Riley revealed one of his south-west Sydney refuges was targeted by a teen home invader last Saturday night. "Those statistics don't surprise me, but then nothing surprises me anymore," a dejected Father Riley said. "The law and punishment have really hardened people. These kids get to the point where they just don't care anymore." An age breakdown of males and females connected by police to home invasions was even more disturbing, according to the data. Nearly 32 per cent of the female suspects were aged between 10 and 17, up from 14.3 per cent in 2001. Twenty five per-cent of male suspects were aged 10 to 17, compared with 18.4 per cent in 2001. The data was compiled for *The Sunday Telegraph* by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research. Since there is no category for home invasions,

statisticians used figures for robberies on residential premises where the victims were at home. Youth Off The Streets city cluster manager Kervin Ko said the prime suspect in their robbery was a drug-addicted former client. "Often, they will choose people they know, or premises where they are familiar with the layout," Mr Ko said. "And, these kids are on ice or other drugs." (*The Sunday Telegraph*, June 11, 2006).

"Adult world must let girls be girls" "To be "hot, hot, hot" is not a fitting encouragement for five- and six-year-olds, writes Emma Rush." BRAS for eight-year-olds. Lip gloss for six-year-olds. Fashion and gossip magazines for girls from age five. The sexualisation of children is changing the experience of childhood, yet there has been little public discussion of its implications.

Children, particularly girls, are under increasing pressure from advertisers and marketers to adopt a "sexy" persona from very young ages. Those who apply the pressure claim they are simply responding to little girls' interest in looking "pretty". However, the forms "prettiness" now takes, which include "bralettes" for girls as young as three, as well as the language used to describe appearance in girls' magazines directed at readers from five up ("hot, hot, hot"), give the game away. This sexualising pressure places children at risk in a number of ways.

The emphasis on "ideal" appearances brings some of the agonies of adolescence forward many years. In one recent study, about one-third of seven-year-old Australian girls wanted to be thinner, despite the fact that they were all within a normal healthy weight range. The pressure to have a "perfect" appearance places children at greater risk of developing eating disorders at an age when nutrition is crucial - while they are still growing. The focus on sexual couplings found in girls' magazines, pitched at readers aged five to 13, may have dangerous implications for children who are approached by predatory adults. These magazines encourage girls to have "crushes" on men older than themselves, with heavy coverage of adult female celebrities and their boyfriends, as well as articles on and posters of adult male actors and singers. In a cultural context where sex is heavily glamourised and represented as highly desirable, is it wise to actively encourage girls of primary-school age to have romantic fantasies about older men? How do we then expect them to behave if an older man approaches apparently offering romance? To sexualise children in the way that advertisers do - by dressing, posing, and making up child models in the same ways that sexy adults would be presented - also implicitly suggests to adults that children are interested in and ready for sex. This is profoundly irresponsible, particularly given that it is known that pedophiles use not only child pornography but also more innocent photos of children. One less obvious risk to children as a result of an excessive focus on "sexy" appearance and behaviour is that other important aspects of their lives can suffer. The developmental period known as "middle childhood" (about six to 11 years old) is critical to children developing a sense of self and self-esteem. (*SMH*, Oct, 10, 2006)

"Ben Stein to battle Darwin in major film" "Actor-commentator stars in 'Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed' Ben Stein, the lovable, monotone teacher from "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" and "The Wonder Years" is back in the classroom in a major motion picture release slated for February 2008. But this time, the actor will be on the big screen asking one of life's biggest questions: "Were we designed, or are we simply the end result of an ancient mud puddle struck by lightning?" That's right. Evolution – and the explosive debate over its virtual monopoly on America's public school classrooms – is the focus of the film "**Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed.**"

In the movie, Stein, who is also a lawyer, economist, former presidential speechwriter, author and social commentator, is stunned by what he discovers – an elitist scientific establishment that has traded in its scepticism for dogma. Even worse, say publicists for the feature film, "along the way, Stein uncovers a long line of biologists, astronomers, chemists and philosophers who have had their reputations destroyed and their careers ruined by a scientific establishment that allows absolutely no dissent from Charles Darwin's theory of random mutation and natural selection." "Big Science in this area of biology has lost its way," says Stein. "Scientists are supposed to be allowed to follow the evidence wherever it may lead, no matter what the implications are. Freedom of inquiry has been greatly compromised, and this is not only anti-American, it's anti-science. It's anti-the whole concept of learning." As "Expelled's" official website asks: "What freedom-loving student wouldn't be outraged to discover that his high school science teacher is teaching a theory as indisputable fact, and that university professors unmercifully crush any fellow scientists who dare question the prevailing system of belief? This isn't the latest Hollywood comedy; it's a disturbing new documentary that will shock anyone who thinks all scientists are free to follow the evidence wherever it may lead."

"Expelled" documents how teachers and scientists alike are being ridiculed daily, denied tenure and even fired believing there is evidence of "design" in nature and challenging the current orthodoxy that life is entirely a result of random chance. For example, Stein meets Richard Sternberg, a double Ph.D. biologist who allowed a peer-reviewed research paper describing the evidence for intelligence in the universe to be published in the scientific journal *Proceedings*. Shortly after publication, officials from the National Center for Science Education and the Smithsonian Institution, where Sternberg was a research fellow, began a coordinated smear-and-intimidation campaign to get the promising young scientist fired. The attack on scientific freedom was so egregious that it prompted a congressional investigation. In the film, Stein meets other scientists like astrobiologist Guillermo Gonzalez, who was denied tenure at Iowa State University in spite of an extraordinary record of achievement. Gonzalez made the mistake of documenting the design he has observed in the universe. And there are others, like Caroline Crocker, a brilliant biology teacher at George Mason University who was forced out of the university for briefly discussing problems with Darwinian theory and for telling the students that some scientists believe there is evidence of design in the universe.

Unlike other popular documentary films, "Expelled" isn't one-sided – it confronts scientists like Oxford evolutionist Richard Dawkins, author of "The God Delusion," influential biologist and atheist blogger P. Z. Myers, and Eugenie Scott, head of the National Center for Science Education. In fact, the creators of "Expelled" spent two years travelling the world and interviewing scores of scientists, doctors, philosophers and public leaders for the film. . . The production delivers to viewers "a startling revelation that freedom of thought and freedom of inquiry have been expelled from publicly funded high schools, universities and research institutions" . . . "People will be stunned to actually find out what elitist scientists proclaim, which is that a large majority of Americans are simpletons who believe in a fairy tale. . . We believe the greatest asset of humanity is our freedom to explore and discover truth." (WorldNetDaily.com, Sept. 27, 2007)

"Food Prices Are Out of Control" "Now, a Massive Pesticide-Resistant Fungus is Threatening Worldwide Wheat Crops and About to Send Prices to Record Highs A massive pesticide-resistant fungus known as "wheat rust Ug99," is threatening billions of dollars of wheat crops in Asia. This fungus, which is named for the place and date of its first discovery (Uganda in 1999), has spread across East Africa and the Middle East and is now threatening wheat crops in Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India with chilling implications so far NO cure has been found to kill this fungus! The last outbreak of stem rust in North America in 1954 wiped out 40% of the region's wheat crop, sending food prices through the roof. The fungus is destroying wheat harvests at a time when the world's supply of wheat is already stressed to the breaking point. The consumption of wheat has outstripped the available supply during six of the past seven years. The increased demand for crop-based fuels is forcing prices of wheat, corn and other grains higher as well. This latest need for these types of alternative energy sources is putting pressure on food prices throughout the world and unleashing a unique source of inflationary pressure. Global grain supplies are at their lowest level in more than three decades and some experts fear the situation could get worse if more crops are set aside to make ethanol or other forms of alternative energy. A major crisis is about to unfold. The warning signs are everywhere:

- On August 31 wheat futures in Chicago hit a record high on track for the biggest monthly gain in 34 years!
- Skyrocketing demand from South Korea and India reduced inventories to dangerously low levels.

- Prices for the grain have doubled in the past year as poor weather in Australia, parts of Canada, and Europe, damaged crops;
- According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, global stockpiles of wheat have fallen to the lowest level in 26 years. Furthermore, China's growing demand for food products has quadrupled over the past five years, and continues to rise today. In fact China and India are coming dangerously close to a situation where nothing short of a miracle harvest will be enough to meet their needs and prevent additional increases in already surging food prices. Fuelled by rapid economic growth, China and India, as well as scores of other emerging economies, expect to see food prices soar even higher in the coming year. And like the current housing crisis in America, the news will get worse before it gets better. The good news for investors is that most crises also create opportunities to make big profits". (*News Max Media*, Jan 17, 2008) [And that was before the worst winter on record caused widespread damage to China's agriculture and urban infrastructure, and before a massive earthquake killed tens of thousands of people and caused yet more damage].

“Food crisis needs action: UN chief” New York: UN chief Ban Ki-moon appealed yesterday for emergency and long-term action to tackle the growing food crisis, warning that it could trigger political upheavals and security risks. “The rapidly escalating crisis of food availability around the world has reached emergency proportions,” he told a joint meeting of key UN financial, economic and trade institutions. Food security has become a major concern in recent weeks as supplies of basic commodities have dwindled in the face of soaring demand, triggering riots and outbursts of violence from Haiti to Indonesia. Mr Ban's appeal echoed World Bank president Robert Zoellick's warning the day before that a doubling of food prices over the past three years could push 100 million people in developing countries further into poverty and called on governments to tackle the issue. “We need not only short-term emergency measures to meet urgent needs and avert starvation in many regions across the world, but also a significant increase in long-term productivity in food production,” Mr Ban told the meeting. The gathering brought together the UN Economic and Social Council, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organisation and the UN Conference on Trade and Development. “The international community will also need to take urgent and concerted action in order to avert the larger political and security implications of this growing crisis,” the secretary-general said. (*The Canberra Times*, April 16, 2008)

“Poor left in lurch if world overheats” “THE world's richest countries, which have contributed by far the most to the atmospheric changes linked to global warming, are spending billions of dollars to limit their own risks from its worst consequences, such as drought and rising seas. But despite long-standing treaty commitments to help poor countries deal with warming, these industrial powers are spending just tens of millions of dollars to limit climate and coastal hazards in the world's most vulnerable regions - most of them overwhelmingly poor. On Friday, a report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a United Nations body that has been assessing global warming since 1990, will underline this growing divide, say scientists involved in writing the report. Wealthy nations far from the equator will not only experience fewer effects, but will withstand them better, they say. Climate change will inflict steadily rising costs that could become astronomical if greenhouse gas emissions rise unabated and countries delay preparations for the likely impacts, the report will say. Two-thirds of greenhouse gas emissions come in nearly equal proportions from the US and Western European countries. These and other wealthy nations are investing in windmill-powered desalination plants, in flood barriers and floatable homes, and in grains and soybeans genetically altered to flourish even in a drought. By contrast, Africa accounts for less than 3 per cent of the global emissions of carbon dioxide from fuel burning since 1900, yet its 840 million people face some of the biggest risks from drought and disrupted water supplies, according to the latest scientific assessments. As the oceans swell with water from melting ice sheets, it is the crowded deltas in southern Asia and Egypt, along with small island states, that are most at risk. “Like the sinking of the Titanic, catastrophes are not democratic,” said Henry Miller, a fellow with the Hoover Institution. “A much higher fraction of passengers from the cheaper decks were lost. We'll see the same phenomenon with global warming.” Although rich countries are hardly immune from drought and flooding, their wealth will largely insulate them from harm, at least for the next generation or two, many experts say. Cities in Australia, Texas and California, for example, are already building or planning desalination plants. “The inequity of this whole situation is really enormous if you look at who's responsible and who's suffering as a result,” said Dr Rajendra Pachauri, chairman of the UN climate panel. Dr Miller said the world should focus less on trying to cut greenhouse gases rapidly and more on helping regions at risk become more resilient. Relief organisations, including Oxfam and the International Red Cross, foreseeing a world of worsening climate-driven disasters, are turning their attention towards projects such as expanding mangrove forests as a buffer against storm surges, planting trees on slopes to prevent landslides and building shelters on high ground. Industrialised countries bound by the Kyoto Protocol, the climate pact rejected by the US and Australian governments, project that hundreds of millions of dollars will soon flow via that treaty into a climate adaptation fund. But for now, the actual spending in adaptation projects in the world's most vulnerable spots, totalling about \$US40 million (\$50 million) a year, “borders on the derisory”, said Kevin Watkins, the director of the UN Human Development Report Office, which tracks factors affecting the quality of life around the world. (Andrew Revkin in New York, *Sydney Morning Herald*, April 2, 2007).

“Window closing on planet's chances” “A sensitive report offers a sobering assessment of what kind of world to expect if action on global warming is not taken soon, write Marian Wilkinson and Deborah Smith. An Indian woman carries drinking water as she walks on the dried-up Osman Sagar lake on the outskirts of Hyderabad, the capital of the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, in a file picture. WORLD leaders must urgently deal with the impact of climate change and stop it accelerating or it will be beyond the capacity of humans to cope, a new report by a United Nations body of leading scientific experts warns.

The report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, whose wording was agreed in Brussels only yesterday after all-night disputes between scientists and governments and last-minute objections from the US, China and Saudi Arabia over wording and graphics, bluntly says: “Unmitigated climate change would, in the long term, be likely to exceed the capacity of natural, managed and human systems to adapt.” The report challenges world leaders to begin producing and costing plans to handle the huge changes that will be wrought this century by global warming. It lays out the devastating effect around the world from Australia to the Americas, Africa to Europe and the Pacific islands to the polar regions if global temperature rises between 1.5 and 2.5 degrees.

In a sobering assessment, the report finds this warming would mean “approximately 20 per cent to 30 per cent of plant and animal species assessed so far are likely to be at increased risk of extinction”.

It also warns of malnutrition, water shortages, disease and injury from predicted increases in heatwaves, droughts, storms and other severe weather events. An author of the report, Kevin Hennessy, of CSIRO Marine and Atmospheric Research, said it details the result of climate change on animals and plants in the oceans and on land. “It clearly shows that human activities are already affecting some natural systems. That's a very new finding.” Dr Bryson Bates, director of the CSIRO Climate Program, another lead author, said this generation and the next would be affected by a warming world. “Climate change is real and the time to act is short. Adaptation to climate change is as important as the mitigation of greenhouse gases.” The Great Barrier Reef is among the ecosystems likely to be hardest hit by rising sea temperatures and acidic oceans. Professor Terry Hughes, of James Cook University, who contributed to the report, said time was running out for coral reefs. “We have a narrow window of opportunity - no more than 20 years to achieve decisive cuts in greenhouse gases - to protect coral reefs from massive degradation,” he said. The report by the panel is designed to help governments understand the effects of climate change and how to adapt to them. It warns that “hundreds of millions of people are vulnerable to flooding due to sea level rise”, with millions more facing increases in malnutrition, disease and injury as severe weather affects farmland, infrastructure and coastal property.

The experts say the cost of climate change will fall disproportionately on poor and developing nations in Africa and Asia where governments will be unable to bear the brunt of the effects. Water shortages in Africa, the report says, will “lead to large increases in

the number of people at risk of water scarcity" and increased risk of hunger. In Asia, glacier melts in the Himalayas are virtually certain to increase related flooding, rock avalanches and disruption of water resources. The coastal areas in the big Asian river deltas are "likely to be at greatest risk of increased flooding from rivers and sea", while rises in temperature and changing rainfall patterns "will increase the risk of hunger in Asia, especially in developing countries". Small island states, including those in the Pacific, face the highest relative increase in risk from sea level rise, which will threaten vital infrastructure that supports their communities.

Their water supplies "are likely to be seriously compromised", the report says, and they will face a fall in income from tourism.

Another of the authors, Professor Colin Woodroffe, of the University of Wollongong, said coasts were already highly vulnerable to a range of hazards, including tsunamis and cyclones. "Those hazards will be exacerbated by climate change," he said.

Developed nations such as Australia and the US also face severe challenges from drought, fires and inundation caused by sea-level rises. One likely impact will be withdrawal on private insurance on coastal properties. Australia faces increased water security problems, the report finds. Areas of the coast, especially Cairns and south-east Queensland, face increased risks from sea-level rises and "increases in the severity and frequency of storms and coastal flooding". The panel report calls on the Government to identify how it can reduce the nation's vulnerability to climate change, especially in "hot spot" regions like the Murray-Darling Basin, south-east Queensland, Kakadu, the Queensland wet tropics, the Snowy Mountains and the drought-prone south-west of Western Australia. The draft summary noted that many of these hot spots include World Heritage sites, but the Federal Government had this reference cut during the process where every line of the report's summary for policy makers is debated. The report stresses that "more needs to be done" in Australia to assess its vulnerability to climate change, and calls for priority to be given to assessing the impact on infrastructure, agriculture, water, fisheries, coastal communities, tourism and natural ecosystems. It finds the implications for Australia's immigration and security are poorly understood as climate change begins to affect the large Asia-Pacific populations. It advocates a mix of strategies to cope with climate change, including cutting greenhouse gases and adapting to change through technology, infrastructure design and land use planning. (SMH, April 7, 2007).

"Migration killing planet" "LONDON: The rising number of people migrating from developing countries to over-populated Western states in search of a better life is seriously damaging the planet, a think-tank said yesterday.

Governments and aid agencies should encourage people to stay put rather than promoting migration, Optimum Population Trust, a British group which campaigns for a sustainable population, said. The think-tank told a British parliamentary inquiry on population that parts of the planet damaged by climate change, soil erosion and water shortages merely deteriorated further once their inhabitants fled. Migrants also typically increased their ecological footprint – the damage each person inflicts on the environment – by moving from low-consuming to high-consuming countries. The number of migrants worldwide surged from 175 million to 185-192 million between 2000 and 2005, with 30 million forced from their homes by a variety of environmental factors including floods, famine and over-population. "The priority must surely be to prevent or cure environmental damage, and help people to remain in their homes and communities, not abandon damaged areas of the planet," the group said in a report. "Currently, however, excess immigration into countries which are already densely populated can cause substantial environmental damage and economic costs, the effects of which may not be seen until the pressures on land and natural resources become intense," the report warned. Britain, for example, is more densely populated than China. England is the world's fourth most crowded country behind Bangladesh, South Korea and The Netherlands with migration accounting for more than 80 per cent of population growth.

OPT patron Professor Aubrey Manning said Britain was morally obliged to accept some migrants "but we need immigration like we need a hole in the head". (Deborah Haynes, *The Daily Telegraph*, May 31, 2006)

The Energy Challenge: The Cost of Coal" "HANJING, China — One of China's lesser-known exports is a dangerous brew of soot, toxic chemicals and climate-changing gases from the smokestacks of coal-burning power plants. [Previous Articles in the Series](#) Coal-burning factories like the Gu Dian steel plant have given Shanxi Province in China a Dickensian feel. In early April, a dense cloud of pollutants over Northern China sailed to nearby Seoul, sweeping along dust and desert sand before wafting across the Pacific. An American satellite spotted the cloud as it crossed the West Coast. Researchers in California, Oregon and Washington noticed specks of sulfur compounds, carbon and other byproducts of coal combustion coating the silvery surfaces of their mountaintop detectors. These microscopic particles can work their way deep into the lungs, contributing to respiratory damage, heart disease and cancer.

Filters near Lake Tahoe in the mountains of eastern California "are the darkest that we've seen" outside smoggy urban areas, said Steven S. Cliff, an atmospheric scientist at the [University of California](#) at Davis. Unless China finds a way to clean up its coal plants and the thousands of factories that burn coal, pollution will soar both at home and abroad. The increase in global-warming gases from China's coal use will probably exceed that for all industrialized countries combined over the next 25 years, surpassing by five times the reduction in such emissions that the Kyoto Protocol seeks. The sulfur dioxide produced in coal combustion poses an immediate threat to the health of China's citizens, contributing to about 400,000 premature deaths a year. It also causes acid rain that poisons lakes, rivers, forests and crops.

The sulfur pollution is so pervasive as to have an extraordinary side effect that is helping the rest of the world, but only temporarily: It actually slows [global warming](#). The tiny, airborne particles deflect the sun's hot rays back into space. But the cooling effect from sulfur is short-lived. By contrast, the carbon dioxide emanating from Chinese coal plants will last for decades, with a cumulative warming effect that will eventually overwhelm the cooling from sulfur and deliver another large kick to global warming, climate scientists say. A warmer climate could lead to rising sea levels, the spread of tropical diseases in previously temperate climates, crop failures in some regions and the extinction of many plant and animal species, especially those in polar or alpine areas. Coal is indeed China's double-edged sword — the new economy's black gold and the fragile environment's dark cloud. Already, China uses more coal than the United States, the [European Union](#) and Japan combined. And it has increased coal consumption 14 percent in each of the past two years in the broadest industrialization ever. Every week to 10 days, another coal-fired power plant opens somewhere in China that is big enough to serve all the households in Dallas or San Diego. To make matters worse, India is right behind China in stepping up its construction of coal-fired power plants — and has a population expected to outstrip China's by 2030. Aware of the country's growing reliance on coal and of the dangers from burning so much of it, China's leaders have vowed to improve the nation's energy efficiency. No one thinks that effort will be enough. To make a big improvement in emissions of global-warming gases and other pollutants, the country must install the most modern equipment — equipment that for the time being must come from other nations. Industrialized countries could help by providing loans or grants, as the Japanese government and the [World Bank](#) have done, or by sharing technology. But Chinese utilities have in the past preferred to buy cheap but often-antiquated equipment from well connected domestic suppliers instead of importing costlier gear from the West.

The Chinese government has been reluctant to approve the extra spending. Asking customers to shoulder the bill would set back the government's efforts to protect consumers from inflation and to create jobs and social stability. But each year China defers buying advanced technology, older equipment goes into scores of new coal-fired plants with a lifespan of up to 75 years. "This is the great challenge they have to face," said David Moskovitz, an energy consultant who advises the Chinese government. "How can they continue their rapid growth without plunging the environment into the abyss?" (Keith Brasher and David Barboza, *New York Times*, June 11, 2006)

"Backyard answer to energy crisis" "A return to 1950s suburbia may be the answer to our needs in a low-energy future, writes Fran Molloy. With crude oil now more than \$US110 a barrel and the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries announcing this month that it will not succumb to demands for raised production quotas, dark predictions

of an imminent descent into a global energy crisis appear to be coming true. But the permaculture co-founder David Holmgren, who has been warning of such events for decades, believes the energy crisis heralds the beginning of a low-energy future - a future that may involve a return to 1950s suburbia. These days Holmgren is a quietly spoken farmer in his 50s, his ponytail the only hint of the radical visionary behind the frameless spectacles. Thirty years ago Holmgren was a university student who came up with the concept of permaculture, a blindingly simple idea: why not design our living spaces so that human needs for food, water and shelter imitated natural self-sustaining ecosystems?

Bill Mollison, a university lecturer who had worked as a wildlife biologist and helped to start the Tasmanian Organic Gardening and Farming Society, was Holmgren's mentor and co-creator of the idea. Leaving as dux of his Fremantle high school in 1973 to hitch-hike around Australia, Holmgren became fascinated by a growing culture of self-sufficiency that he saw; ecological building, alternative technology and organic gardening gathered momentum, spurred on by the oil crisis. He enrolled in the revolutionary Environmental Design School in Tasmania, which he calls the most radical experiment in tertiary education in Australia's history. With no fixed timetable or curriculum, it was the perfect environment in which to devise something as divergent as permaculture, which borrowed from landscape architecture, ecology and agriculture. In 1978 Holmgren and Mollison published *Permaculture One*, describing their research in detail. Human ecosystems could harvest and recycle water; they could plant food in companion plantings, generating self-renewing food forests, they could use animals to provide food and manage pests and weeds and fertilise gardens. There was a flood of interest from all over the world and Holmgren, an inexperienced 23-year-old, was happy to leave it to Mollison to spread the word. Spread the word he did, travelling to more than 120 countries, publishing further texts and founding the Permaculture Institute, which gave qualifications to thousands of future permaculture teachers. "While I was the co-originator of the concept, I definitely describe Bill Mollison as the founder of the permaculture movement," Holmgren says. Though he and Mollison remain close, their paths have diverged widely. While Mollison became the public face of permaculture, Holmgren wanted to ground his theoretical ideas in practice. He left university without completing his higher degree, working with a builder friend to learn some self-sufficiency skills. Holmgren moved to a remote valley in northern Tasmania where he grew food, learning skills in hunting, forestry, building and agriculture. His mother had moved to Wyndham, on the South Coast of NSW, aiming to become self-sufficient. Holmgren helped her develop her property, which became a permaculture case study. Holmgren says he has been influenced by the ecologist Haikai Tane. He went to New Zealand to work with him in 1979. "In a way I was putting myself through a permanent training course for permaculture design consultancy - which has really been my continuous, if small, livelihood over many years."

Holmgren and his partner, Su Dennett, now live on a small farm near Daylesford in Victoria, where they grow most of their own food, selling and swapping the excess with neighbours. The one-hectare property supports chickens, geese and goats, a small dam hosts fish and yabbies, and more than 100 fruit and nut trees supply produce. While permaculture in the 1970s focused on the suburbs, with edible front-yard landscapes, chooks in the backyard and food trees on the streets, by the mid-1980s most advocates had moved to rural properties, with a global return to cheap energy and strong conservative politics making "hippy" a four-letter word. But the modern consumer-driven lifestyle is driving families mad, with moves back to sustainable living, where Holmgren believes suburbs may hold the key. "It's technically possible that the traditional older suburbs could actually produce all of the food needed to sustain the people living there," he says. "The amount of open space - both public and private space in backyards - means that you've got a population density not that much greater than some of the densest traditional agricultural landscapes in the world." It is a return to the 1950s, Holmgren adds. Traditionally, broad-scale agriculture provided basic grains and staples, but in most countries gardening provided a huge part of the perishable food supply. "The suburbs offer an opportunity for people to gain more food security and social insurance at home and in their neighbourhood than in systems where everything is dependent on the government and corporations managing to keep the supply lines of everything running smoothly." Rebuilding the structure of the community is an important part of retrofitting the suburbs. "Without saying anything, we can create a revolution in society; I can exchange some food with you and we can direct the roof run-off from your shed into our water tank and then you can have some of that water back." In 2006 Holmgren joined the US peak oil commentator Richard Heinberg on a speaking tour around Australian cities. "It was like a rock'n'roll road show. I've never done anything like that before," he reflects. Holmgren joins many other luminaries in the permaculture world, including Mollison and Professor Tane, over the Easter weekend at a conference celebrating the movement's 30th anniversary. (Fran Molloy, *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 19, 2008).

“School pupils all pumped up to do their bit” “THE children at Lapstone Public School have no use for watering cans and buckets - they use pedal power to water their organic vegetable gardens. Every week students take turns atop a rusty red exercise bike, pedalling to pump water from the school's rainwater tank to the garden beds a few metres away. Until last year an electric pump did the job, but a local garden co-ordinator, Kristin Wohlers, knew there had to be a greener way. One evening she spotted an old bike on a pile of junk left out for a council collection. With the help of a retired engineer and a couple of year 6 boys, Ms Wohlers installed the innovative new pump. "In the end the bike pump cost less than \$30, and the kids climb over each other to have a go every time we garden," she says. "We've killed two birds with one stone - it's environmentally friendly and it just burns through the kids' excess energy."

Parents set up an organic permaculture garden at Lapstone in 2003. Now every class has a plot, and gardening generates almost as much excitement as lunchtime. However, it is not being outside or getting their hands dirty that the children really enjoy.

"The best part about gardening is eating," says Anna Thieben, 6. "I like to eat the peas and the lettuce the most because they're really yummy." Twice a year the children harvest their crop of tomatoes, capsicums, celery, lettuce, basil, parsley, carrots, peas, corn and potatoes, and parents cook a sumptuous organic feast for the students to share. A parent volunteer, Gina Cirillo, a doctor, says this is the biggest benefit of the garden. "A lot of kids haven't even seen some of these vegetables before," she says.

"The garden shows them that food doesn't always have to come processed and packaged. Healthy, fresh food is available, and they can grow it themselves." Cirillo says growing their own veggies was a good way for children to overcome their fear of "green things".

"Kids that wouldn't normally touch anything green are happy to eat raw spinach, parsley and even bitter cos lettuce at school," she says. "As a doctor I try to foster healthy eating, and this is a great way to teach kids to enjoy healthy food."

The garden has also made the children more environmentally aware. "Gardening has brought up environmental issues that the kids probably wouldn't have even thought of otherwise," Wohlers says. "They've learnt to reuse scraps from morning tea and lunch to make compost, that littering is wrong and the importance of not wasting water and electricity." And they are taking these lessons home. Benjamin Green, 11, shares everything he learns in the garden with his family. "We're really careful not to waste water and power at home now. I think all schools should have gardens so all kids get the chance to learn how to look after the environment, because it's the only one we've got."

"Has your school gone green?" (Kerry Coleman, *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 19, 2008).

“Russians Suspected in Shooting of Kremlin Critic Near D.C.” “One year ago, Kremlin critic Paul Joyal was gunned down in the driveway of his suburban Maryland home. The case remains unsolved — but some see the hand of Russia in the shooting. Joyal, 53, is the former chief of security for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and a former business partner of retired Soviet KGB Gen. Oleg Kalugin. In February 2007, Joyal appeared on NBC's "Dateline" and accused the Kremlin of seeking to silence its critics abroad. Joyal said he suspected the regime of Russian President Vladimir Putin was involved in the assassination of dissident former Russian intelligence agent Alexander Litvinenko, who died from a dose of the rare radioactive isotope polonium-210 in London in 2006. On March 1, 2007, four days after his "Dateline" appearance, Joyal was returning to his home in Adelphi, Md., after meeting with Kalugin in Washington, D.C. As he stepped out of his car in his driveway, two men jumped out

of nearby bushes. One grabbed him from behind, and Joyal was shot in the abdomen. He spent the next 20 days in an induced coma and underwent five operations to repair the damage to his intestines, Congressional Quarterly reports. Prince George County police considered the shooting a random street crime. But Karl Milligan, a retired Prince George County police detective who knows Joyal, thinks otherwise. For one thing, Milligan noted that Joyal's home is located in a remote subdivision with no drive-through traffic. "It's so secluded you'd hardly know anybody lived there," Milligan, who spent decades in homicide before becoming chief of the intelligence unit, told CQ. "Crime was very low there and still is. There were no [violent] incidents prior" to the attack and none since. What's more, Joyal's assailants ran off after the shooting without taking his wallet, computer, briefcase or car.

Kalugin told CG: "Why were they waiting for him? That's not how robbers act. There are dozens of houses in the neighborhood. Why would they pick his? And why would they wait for him in the bushes at the house?"

The day after Joyal was shot, Russian journalist Ivan Safronov fell to his death from his 5th-story window in Moscow.

"A military correspondent for the daily Kommersant, Safronov was working on a story about the Kremlin's furtive sale of anti-aircraft missiles to Iran and jet fighters to Syria," said journalist Alex Shoumatoff. The FBI was briefly involved in the Joyal case, but did not pursue it for long. Paul Goble, a U.S. government specialist on Soviet and post-Soviet states, told CG:

"If the Russians were behind the attack on Paul Joyal, then they crossed a line that they had not [crossed] earlier even in Soviet times — attacking a native-born American citizen on American territory." (News Max Media, Feb. 26, 2008).

"Retire the term 'Old Testament'" "A few weeks ago I attended the annual dinner of the National Bible Association, which admirably seeks to promote the reading of the Bible across the United States. I was seated at a table with other Orthodox rabbis, one of whom had kindly invited me. Things did not go smoothly. One of the honorees was a Jewish-born Christian chaplain from the armed forces who spoke of his conversion away from Judaism and how he had chosen Jesus as his personal Messiah. Fair enough. People are free to believe what they want and, sadly, there are Jews who, sometimes out of ignorance of their own faith, find their spiritual home in Christianity. But what bothered me more was how one Christian clergyman after another got up and spoke of their admiration for "the Old Testament." It had a bad ring to it. "New" connotes vibrant, alive and fresh. "Old" brings to mind stodgy, musty and out-of-date. I am a rabbi who enjoys an extremely warm relationship with the Christian community and has the highest admiration for my Christian brothers and sisters. And I had, of course, heard and read the phrase "Old Testament" on countless occasions. But that night something about the phrase grated. To be sure, Christians have used the expression for millennia to portray the Jews, in whose stubbornness Jesus was rejected, as God's old, forsaken people; while Christians, who embrace the savior, are the "new" Israel. But this organization's mandate was to promote a love for the Bible and instill within the American breast an appreciation of its wisdom and values. Would they be successful if they referred to 70 percent of it as something turgid and dreary? WERE THE speakers who lauded the wondrous values contained in the "Old Testament" not aware of how they contradicted themselves by referring to the Hebrew Bible as obsolete? The time has come for our Christian brothers and sisters to finally retire the "Old Testament" pejorative and begin referring to Jewish scripture as "the Hebrew Bible," in contradistinction to the "The Christian Bible," which is what the New Testament is.

We live in an age when we have begun cleaning up the language of so many past slights. We no longer call twentysomething women "girls" or "gals." We no longer insultingly refer to Native Americans as Redskins, or to African-Americans as Negroes. Why, then, would our Christian brothers and sisters unnecessarily refer to our Bible as "Old?" Can we really be successful in promoting biblical values in America, most of which are based on Hebrew Scripture (as opposed to the New Testament), when we look at those scriptures as having been rejected because of their irrelevance? You can't have it both ways; insisting, on the one hand, that America is based on the principles of the "Old Testament," which suggests an eternal relevance, while describing those same scriptures as archaic and prehistoric. This follows a much broader need for Christian reexamination. Christianity is one of the world's greatest religions, and it has brought the knowledge of God and the Bible to more people than any other. But it has always suffered from a critical flaw, namely, its claim to a copyright on all spiritual truth.

NO DOCTRINE has done more harm to Christianity than its insistence on the uselessness of other religions. And this doctrine of exclusivity lies in stark contrast to the incredible humanity one otherwise finds among believing Christians.

In New York City on December 8, our Jewish Values Network will host a high-powered discussion featuring leaders in politics, media and the arts debating whether religion is a blessing or a curse to America. Truth be told, it is both. On the one hand, religion is the source of America's most cherished values, none more so than religion's emphasis on the infinite value of human life. The Bible is what inspired a faith-based army to fight on behalf of a severely mentally-handicapped woman named Terry Schaivo.

The elders of Sparta would carefully inspect newborn infants and, if they were judged to be weakly, would cast them into a chiasm off Mount Taygetos. The Romans behaved similarly with adults of significant mental disability, throwing them from the Tarpeian Rock.

By contrast, a Godly America declared on its most famous monument, the Statue of Liberty, that it embraced the "poor, your huddled masses... the wretched refuse of your teeming shore." But somehow, in a rejection of biblical values, Terry Schaivo's life did not even rise to the level of "wretched refuse," and she was condemned to the monstrosity of death by starvation in the richest country on earth. Such are the consequences of rejecting religion and its value-system. ON THE other hand, religion has become the single most divisive issue in our country, inspiring a culture war of Right and Left. This was never necessary. People can disagree on abortion and gay rights without assassinating each other's character. Religion can use the power of rational argument and win over its critics, but not when it insists on wholly irrational and immoral doctrines, such as the conviction that whoever lacks belief is going straight to hell. That our evangelical brothers and sisters continue to insist that irrespective of a non-Christian's righteous actions he or she is going to burn forever because of a wrong belief seems utterly incompatible with the lofty ideal of Christian love. Jews can be guilty of the same sin. We sometimes hear religious Jews speak of "goyim," a word that, while meaning "nation," has also assumed a pejorative connotation and should therefore likewise be retired. We even sometimes hear religious Jews speak of the superiority of the Jewish to the non-Jewish soul, in direct contradiction to the biblical declaration that all humans are created equally in the image of God. Chosenness has never meant that Jews are better than any other people. Precisely the opposite is true: The Jews are chosen to bring the light of God to all nations as a permanent reminder that God loves and values all his human children, and wishes for them all to share in the bounty and glory of His light. That is the cornerstone of all religious belief. It comes from the Hebrew Bible, and there is nothing old about it. (Shmuley Boteach,

The Lekarev Report, Nov.27, 2007.

"Stalin's Jews: We mustn't forget that some of greatest murderers of modern times were Jewish"

"Here's a particularly forlorn historical date: Almost 90 years ago, between the 19th and 20th of December 1917, in the midst of the Bolshevik revolution and civil war, Lenin signed a decree calling for the establishment of The All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage, also known as Cheka. Within a short period of time, Cheka became the largest and cruelest state security organization. Its organizational structure was changed every few years, as were its names: From Cheka to GPU, later to NKVD, and later to KGB. We cannot know with certainty the number of deaths Cheka was responsible for in its various manifestations, but the number is surely at least 20 million, including victims of the forced collectivization, the hunger, large purges, expulsions, banishments, executions, and mass death at Gulags. Whole population strata were eliminated: Independent farmers, ethnic minorities, members of the bourgeoisie, senior officers, intellectuals, artists, labor movement activists, "opposition members" who were defined completely randomly, and countless members of the Communist party itself. In his new, highly praised book "The War of the World," Historian Niall Ferguson writes that no revolution in the history of mankind devoured its children with the same unrestrained

appetite as did the Soviet revolution. In his book on the Stalinist purges, Tel Aviv University's Dr. Igal Halfin writes that Stalinist violence was unique in that it was directed internally.

Lenin, Stalin, and their successors could not have carried out their deeds without wide-scale cooperation of disciplined "terror officials," cruel interrogators, snitches, executioners, guards, judges, pervers, and many bleeding hearts who were members of the progressive Western Left and were deceived by the Soviet regime of horror and even provided it with a kosher certificate. All these things are well-known to some extent or another, even though the former Soviet Union's archives have not yet been fully opened to the public. But who knows about this? Within Russia itself, very few people have been brought to justice for their crimes in the NKVD's and KGB's service. The Russian public discourse today completely ignores the question of "How could it have happened to us?" As opposed to Eastern European nations, the Russians did not settle the score with their Stalinist past.

And us, the Jews? An Israeli student finishes high school without ever hearing the name "Genrikh Yagoda," the greatest Jewish murderer of the 20th Century, the GPU's deputy commander and the founder and commander of the NKVD. Yagoda diligently implemented Stalin's collectivization orders and is responsible for the deaths of at least 10 million people. His Jewish deputies established and managed the Gulag system. After Stalin no longer viewed him favorably, Yagoda was demoted and executed, and was replaced as chief hangman in 1936 by Yezhov, the "bloodthirsty dwarf." Yezhov was not Jewish but was blessed with an active Jewish wife. In his Book "Stalin: Court of the Red Star", Jewish historian Sebag Montefiore writes that during the darkest period of terror, when the Communist killing machine worked in full force, Stalin was surrounded by beautiful, young Jewish women.

Stalin's close associates and loyalists included member of the Central Committee and Politburo Lazar Kaganovich. Montefiore characterizes him as the "first Stalinist" and adds that those starving to death in Ukraine, an unparalleled tragedy in the history of human kind aside from the Nazi horrors and Mao's terror in China, did not move Kaganovich. Many Jews sold their soul to the devil of the Communist revolution and have blood on their hands for eternity. We'll mention just one more: Leonid Reichman, head of the NKVD's special department and the organization's chief interrogator, who was a particularly cruel sadist. In 1934, according to published statistics, 38.5 percent of those holding the most senior posts in the Soviet security apparatuses were of Jewish origin. They too, of course, were gradually eliminated in the next purges. In a fascinating lecture at a Tel Aviv University convention this week, Dr. Halfin described the waves of soviet terror as a "carnival of mass murder," "fantasy of purges", and "essianism of evil." Turns out that Jews too, when they become captivated by messianic ideology, can become great murderers, among the greatest known by modern history. The Jews active in official communist terror apparatuses (In the Soviet Union and abroad) and who at times led them, did not do this, obviously, as Jews, but rather, as Stalinists, communists, and "Soviet people." Therefore, we find it easy to ignore their origin and "play dumb": What do we have to do with them? But let's not forget them. My own view is different. I find it unacceptable that a person will be considered a member of the Jewish people when he does great things, but not considered part of our people when he does amazingly despicable things. Even if we deny it, we cannot escape the Jewishness of "our hangmen," who served the Red Terror with loyalty and dedication from its establishment. After all, others will always remind us of their origin. (Andrei Bădin, Communism, www.badin.ro, Jan 8, 2008).

“The Whole World Hates You” “From his spacious apartment overlooking the glamorous Dominique Street in Paris, **Boutros Boutros Ghali** has leveled an unprecedented offensive against Israel. It's hard to hear such severe criticism from one of the architects of Israel's first peace agreement-the 1977 Camp David Accords with Egypt-but Ghali has no intentions of hiding his anger with Israel behind diplomatic formalities. "After 30 years, I don't see even a centimeter of progress," Ghali said in an interview with Yedioth Ahronoth. "It's completely possible to say that people hate you-not only in Egypt, but throughout the entire Arab world."

The former UN Secretary General says he cannot think of any reason to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's historic visit to Jerusalem - far from it. Ghali's blame for the failure to promote Arab-Israeli peace falls squarely on one recipient: Israel. As far as he is concerned, all the problems of the Middle East are Israel's fault.

He attacks Israel for peace negotiation failures, defends the Iranian nuclear program and protests that the whole world complains about suicide bombings but is silent on IDF targeted killings. But the former UN Secretary General refuses to distinguish between suicide bombers who kill and maim innocent civilians and the defensive operations against known terrorists who seek to kill even more Jews.

Very curiously, The former UN Secretary General shares his elegant Paris apartment with his **Jewish wife**, Leah. The two are the same age. They met in 1956 and married after a whirlwind romance. Leah is a descendant of a Romanian family that immigrated to Alexandria, Egypt. She has never been interviewed and has never visited Israel. "She keeps a low profile," her husband says. When asked if he ever ran into difficulties for being married to a Jew, Ghali's face hardened as he responded: "I never had any trouble at all, in my eyes Leah although from a Jewish background, is more Catholic since she spent more time in Catholic schools than in Jewish ones."

“Nuclear Bunkers Being Built” “According to a report this morning, a nuclear bunker is being built in the Prime Minister's official residence in Jerusalem and another one is being built in another location in Jerusalem to house government officials in case of nuclear attack. Mark Regev, a spokesman for the Prime Minister, refused to comment on the report other than to say, "Obviously all governments have the responsibility to ensure the ongoing and efficient functioning of the government in crisis situations." A bunker under the building where the Prime Minister's office is located has recently been renovated, prepared for leading government ministers to convene in case of nuclear attack. According to this morning's report, the other bunker is being built in the Jerusalem hills on the edge of the city and will be accessible via tunnels beneath the major government offices in central Jerusalem. (Lekarev Report, Dec. 20, 2007).

“Sudanese teddy saga lays bare Islamic inferiority complex” “That the British teacher Gillian Gibbons required a presidential pardon to avoid 15 days' imprisonment in Sudan for blasphemy over the naming of a teddy bear surely represents the high watermark of absurdity in relations between the Muslim and Western worlds. Even Samuel Huntington, as he theorised of an impending clash of civilisations late last century, could not have foreseen an odyssey so surreal. The story begins normally enough. Gibbons introduced her seven-year-old students to a teddy bear they would each take home throughout the year, in the manner of a class pet. Asked to name it, the children chose "Muhammad". Gibbons wrote to parents to inform them of the activity. Of course, none objected. Then one day, the police came to call, arresting Gibbons for "insulting religion". At this point, flabbergasting mysteries abound. Why would the alleged blasphemy be Gibbons's when it was the children who chose the name? And perhaps more fundamentally, what is so offensive about a teddy bear named Muhammad? Certainly, it is the name of the greatest prophet in the Islamic tradition, but it is also the most popular name in the world, and a very common one in Sudan. Indeed, one of Gibbons's students says the bear was named after him. There is no evidence the children intended the teddy bear to be some prophetic representation, and even in the bizarre event that it was, it is scarcely the most offensive representation one could imagine. This is not remotely akin to the Danish cartoons. Perhaps if the name had been chosen for a pig ... Nonetheless, after Gibbons's imprisonment last week, protesters shrieked that it was not enough. They insisted, with unfathomable idiocy, that she be put to death. Some even specified that it should be by firing squad. "No tolerance - execution," they chanted as they turned the arrest into a matter of geopolitics: "Shame, shame on the UK."

And here, it seems, is the key to this unmitigated farce. Had Gibbons been Sudanese, or just non-Western, there would be no controversy here. Indeed Muslims have not generally been averse to naming their toys (and their children) with the names of prophets. For years, the Islamic Society in Britain sold a soft toy named "Adam the Prayer Bear", while in the US, a Muslim multimedia organisation continues to produce children's videos starring a Muppet-like character also named "Adam" - the name of Islam's first prophet. This saga ultimately has nothing to do with teddy bears, and everything to do with anti-Western sentiment - a fact most nakedly revealed by the collective response of senior Sudanese clerics, who branded Gibbons's conduct "a calculated action and another ring in the circles of plotting against Islam". This discourse is deeply implausible, especially when you consider Gibbons's love for the

Sudanese people and long-term desire to assist with their education. This kind of response discloses a siege mentality; one that must position the Muslim world as the victim in a global - but particularly Western - conspiracy against it. As a corollary, the West must have a singularly oppressive role in the conspiratorial imagination. It exists to repress Muslims, and makes its policy decisions only to undermine Islam, as though the West has no independent interests of its own. There is arrogance in this assumption that the humiliation of Muslims must be the central goal of others, but more deeply it is the expression of an inferiority complex. Such stifling paranoia is not a trait of the confident, but of the humiliated. The result is a disposition that is avid for scandal, a seemingly incurable desperation to be offended, and to pin the blame on Western civilisation. By responding violently to such offence, the humiliated feel a sense of faux-empowerment. They rehabilitate their status by lashing out.

Accordingly, the evidence on which they do so is usually flimsy. During the Danish cartoons furore, protesters in Pakistan burnt effigies of George Bush and set fire to a KFC as they denounced the "American cartoons". Just over a year ago, we witnessed pseudo-clerics calling for the Pope to be killed for daring to suggest Islam is inherently violent - indicating that they had utterly failed to grasp his meaning.

It is, of course, the tiniest of minorities that engage in this sort of behaviour. Many Muslim groups have condemned each of these outbursts, just as they called for Gibbons's release. Even Muslim Facebook groups formed in her cause. But the problem for the Muslim world is that this splinter faction is so loud it is defining the Muslim public image.

Ultimately, it is Muslims who have the most to lose. Perpetual victimhood, though an emotional balm, is disempowering and self-fulfilling. By clinging to it, and even imagining ourselves victims when we are not, we are ultimately victimising ourselves." (Waleed Aly, *Sydney Morning Herald*, Dec. 6, 2007; Waleed Aly is author of *People Like Us: How Arrogance Is Dividing Islam And The West* (Picador)).

"One Brave Woman: Arab Psychologist Blasts Muslims" "An Arab-American psychologist, **Wafa Sultan**, appeared live on the Al-Jazeera Arab satellite network, where she confronted an Egyptian Islamic cleric, and declared that *"the clash we are witnessing around the world is a clash between a mentality that belongs to the Middle Ages and another mentality that belongs to the 21st century."* The February TV appearance, which has been widely circulated around the internet, was made available by the Arabic translation service MEMRI. *"It is a clash between civilization and backwardness, between the civilized and the primitive, between barbarity and rationality. It is a clash between freedom and oppression, between democracy and dictatorship. It is a clash between human rights, on the one hand, and the violation of these rights, on other hand. It is a clash between those who treat women like beasts, and those who treat them like human beings. What we see today is not a clash of civilizations. Civilizations do not clash, but compete,"* the psychologist stated. Responding to the host's question, "Who came up with the concept of a clash of civilizations? Was it not Samuel Huntington? It was not Bin Laden," Sultan said: *"The Muslims are the ones who began using this expression. The Muslims are the ones who began the clash of civilizations. The Prophet of Islam said: 'I was ordered to fight the people until they believe in Allah and His Messenger.' When the Muslims divided the people into Muslims and non-Muslims, and called to fight the others until they believe in what they themselves believe, they started this clash, and began this war. In order to start this war, they must reexamine their Islamic books and curricula, which are full of calls for takfir and fighting the infidels."* Speaking about Jewish history, Sultan declared: *"The Jews have come from the tragedy (of the Holocaust), and forced the world to respect them, with their knowledge, not with their terror, with their work, not their crying and yelling. Humanity owes most of the discoveries and science of the 19th and 20th centuries to Jewish scientists. 15 million people, scattered throughout the world, united and won their rights through work and knowledge. We have not seen a single Jew blow himself up in a German restaurant. We have not seen a single Jew destroy a church. We have not seen a single Jew protest by killing people. The Muslims have turned three Buddha statues into rubble." "We have not seen a single Buddhist burn down a Mosque, kill a Muslim, or burn down an embassy. Only the Muslims defend their beliefs by burning down churches, killing people, and destroying embassies. This path will not yield any results. The Muslims must ask themselves what they can do for humankind, before they demand that humankind respect them,"* she added. The New York Times has reported that since appearing on Al-Jazeera, Sultan has been condemned by Islamic clerics, and been subject to death threats left on her answering phone. The Los Angeles Times quoted Sultan after the interview as saying: *"I am not against Muslim people, they are my people. I am just trying to change their mentality and their behavior. (The Lekarev Report, March 13, 2006)*

"Charles takes crusade for Islam to Washington" "London: Prince Charles will try to persuade President George Bush of the merits of Islam this week because he thinks the US has been intolerant of the religion since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. The Prince, who leaves tomorrow for an eight-day tour of the US, has said privately that he is concerned about the US's "confrontational" approach to Muslim countries and its failure to appreciate Islam's strengths. Charles raised his concerns when he met senior Muslims in London in November 2001, two months after the attacks.

"I find the language and rhetoric coming from America too confrontational," a leader at the meeting quoted him as saying.

Khalid Mahmood, a Labour MP who was also at the meeting at St James's Palace, said: "His criticism of America was a general one - of the Americans not having the appreciation we have for Islam and its culture."

Other Muslims present stressed that Prince Charles did not criticise the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001, Mr Mahmoud said. More recently, Charles has been careful not to express his views on Iraq. The Prince also spoke of his sympathy for the US after the 2001 terrorist attacks, which killed nearly 3000 people. He said he wanted to promote better relations between the different religions of the world. Those present at the meeting in 2001 included Sir Iqbal Sacrani, the secretary-general of the Muslim Council of Britain, and Hashir Faruqi, the chief editor of *Impact International*, a respected Islamic affairs magazine. Charles wants Americans - including Mr Bush - to share his fondness for Islam. He has agreed to attend a seminar on religions at Georgetown University, Washington, on Thursday.

"The seminar will look at how faith groups can alleviate social problems in their community," an aide said. Charles and his wife, the Duchess of Cornwall, will attend functions with the Bushes at the White House on Wednesday." (*The Telegraph*, London, October 31, 2005).

"Bible-store owner riddled with bullets" "Islamic terrorist pegged for allegedly torturing, killing Christians"

JERUSALEM - A senior Hamas militant is suspected of torturing and killing the manager of a Christian bookstore in the Gaza Strip who was found dead last month, according to Palestinian security officials. The body of Rami Ayyad, who managed the only Christian bookstore in Gaza, was discovered last month riddled with gunshot and stab wounds. Ayyad, a Baptist, was accused by Gaza-based Islamic groups of engaging in missionary activities. His bookstore, owned by the Palestinian Bible Society, was firebombed in April after which he told relatives he received numerous death threats from Islamists. The day of his abduction, Ayyad reportedly said he was being followed by a car that had no license plates. Security officials associated with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah organization told WND yesterday there is information Ashraf Abu Layla, the central Gaza chief of Hamas' so-called military wing, the Izz al-Din Al Qassam Brigades, was behind the murder which is widely viewed as an anti-Christian attack. The security officials said Hamas forces closed the investigation into the death of Ayyad in spite of what they said was evidence of Layla's involvement. A Hamas spokesman denied the accusation while a top member of Hamas' "military wing," contacted by WND and speaking on condition of anonymity, would neither confirm nor deny his group was behind the Ayyad killing. Hamas and Fatah have been at odds since last June, when Hamas took complete control of the Gaza Strip, seizing all U.S.-backed Fatah security compounds. Last month, **WND quoted witnesses** stating Ayyad was publicly tortured a few blocks from his store before he was shot to death. The witnesses said they saw three armed men, two of whom were wearing masks, beat Ayyad repeatedly with clubs and the butts of their guns while they accused him of attempting to spread Christianity in Gaza. The witnesses said that after sustaining the beating, Ayyad was shot by all three men. Ayyad left behind a pregnant wife and two young children. No group has taken responsibility for the attack.

“Christians warned: Accept Islamic law” “Sheik Abu Saqer, leader of Jihadia Salafiya, an Islamic outreach movement that recently announced the opening of a "military wing" to enforce Muslim law in Gaza, told WND in a recent interview all Christians in Gaza engaged in missionary activity will be "dealt with harshly." Jihadia Salafiya, allied with Hamas, is suspected of a slew of Islamist attacks, including firebombing Internet cafes and one in May against a United Nations school in Gaza after it allowed boys and girls to participate in the same sporting event. One person was killed in that attack. When Hamas seized control of the Gaza Strip in June, there were widespread fears it would impose hardline Islamic rule in the territory, and that life for Christians might deteriorate. About 3,000 Christians live in the Gaza Strip, which has a population of over 1 million. Immediately after Hamas' Gaza coup, Abu Saqer told WND in an exclusive interview Christians could continue living safely in the Gaza Strip only if they accepted Islamic law, including a ban on alcohol and on women roaming publicly without proper head coverings. "[Now that Hamas is in power,] the situation has changed 180 degrees in Gaza," said Abu Saqer, speaking from Gaza. "Jihadia Salafiya and other Islamic movements will ensure Christian schools and institutions show publicly what they are teaching to be sure they are not carrying out missionary activity," he said. Abu Saqer accused the leadership of the Gaza Christian community of "proselytizing and trying to convert Muslims with funding from American evangelicals." "This missionary activity is endangering the entire Christian community in Gaza," he said. Abu Saqer claimed there was "no need" for the thousands of Christians in Gaza to maintain a large number of institutions in the territory. He said Hamas "must work to impose an Islamic rule or it will lose the authority it has and the will of the people." (Aaron Klein, WorldNetDaily.com, Nov. 12, 2007).

And to think that Gaza survives only because of generous donations of Christian nations. They don't want Christians in their land; they just want Christian money. These are the people with whom Israel is expected to make peace.

Does anyone still doubts why the anger of the Lord is raised against those people, and why Gaza will become a land without inhabitants? No less than four warnings of doom has the Almighty given against that land of ingratitude, terror, bloodshed, and blasphemy.

Jer 47:1 The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Philistines, before Pharaoh attacked Gaza.

Jer 47:2 Thus says the LORD: "Behold, waters rise out of the north, And shall be an overflowing flood; They shall overflow the land and all that is in it, The city and those who dwell within; Then the men shall cry, And all the inhabitants of the land shall wail.

Jer 47:4 Because of the day that comes to plunder all the Philistines, To cut off from Tyre and Sidon every helper who remains; For the LORD shall plunder the Philistines, The remnant of the country of Caphtor.

Amo 1:6 Thus says the LORD: "For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away its *punishment*, Because they took captive the whole captivity To deliver *them* up to Edom. But I will send a fire upon the wall of Gaza,

Amo 1:7 Which shall devour its palaces. I will cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod, And the one who holds the scepter from Ashkelon;

Amo 1:8 I will turn My hand against Ekron, And the remnant of the Philistines shall perish," Says the Lord GOD.

Zep 2:4 For Gaza shall be forsaken, And Ashkelon desolate; They shall drive out Ashdod at noonday, And Ekron shall be uprooted.

Zep 2:5 Woe to the inhabitants of the seacoast, The nation of the Cherethites! The word of the LORD is against you, O Canaan, land of the Philistines: "I will destroy you; So there shall be no inhabitant."

Zep 2:6 The seacoast shall be pastures, With shelters for shepherds and folds for flocks.

Zep 2:7 The coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; They shall feed *their* flocks there; In the houses of Ashkelon they shall lie down at evening. For the LORD their God will intervene for them, And return their captives.

Zec 9:5 Ashkelon shall see *it* and fear; Gaza also shall be very sorrowful; And Ekron, for He dried up her expectation. The king shall perish from Gaza, And Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.

Zec 9:6 "A mixed race shall settle in Ashdod, And I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.

Zec 9:7 I will take away the blood from his mouth, And the abominations from between his teeth. But he who remains, even he *shall be* for our God, And shall be like a leader in Judah, And Ekron like a Jebusite.

Zec 9:8 I will camp around My house Because of the army, Because of him who passes by and him who returns. No more shall an oppressor pass through them, For now I have seen with My eyes."

“Palestinian Children’s ‘Heaven’” “After a three year absence, Palestinian television re-aired a clip featuring Palestinian child Mohammed a-Dura, calling to other children to join him in a shaheed heaven for children. The dramatic heart-wrenching footage of a-Dura, shot dead in crossfire in a clash between Israeli and Palestinian forces in the Gaza Strip in the beginning of the intifada in September 2000, was broadcast around the world. The clip, which caused much controversy when it first aired, was taken off the air in the fall of 2003, after Palestinian Media Watch director Itamar Marcus, presented the clip at a U.S. Senate hearing. Following the hearing, senators slammed the clip and criticized it as "horrifying abuse of children." In the clip, a child portraying a-Dura is peacefully playing in heaven, and calls to other children, "follow me." The popular singer Aida performs the song in the clip, which describes how the earth longs for the deaths of children, saying, "How pleasant is the smell of the earth whose thirst is quenched by blood pouring out of young bodies." Another clip that aired this week after a long absence depicts a young girl witnessing her mother's murder and then singing about how she misses her mother. She sings, "If you can't come to me, I can come to you." Palestinian Media Watch reported that the 2000-2003 Palestinian television campaign to recruit young children was so effective, that 70 to 80 percent of Palestinian children during that time wanted to die as shaheeds, according to three separate polls. (The Lekarev Report, July 3, 2006).

“Children Taught to Prefer Death to Life” “In the latest bulletin released by the Palestinian Media Watch organization, we read a chilling account about the "death culture" in Gaza. A Palestinian reporter wrote the article focusing on Hamas but don't think this "culture" is limited to Hamas. Abbas' Fatah organization holds to the same convictions, as do other terror groups. Ghassan Zaqtan, a Palestinian journalist, wrote the article which appeared in the June 18 edition of the PA's Al-Ayyam newspaper. I quote just part of the article - it's more than enough to disturb anyone with basic human values! Speaking of the Hamas takeover of Gaza, he wrote: "We knew that they would do it, especially in Gaza, where a mother brushes her young son's hair at 7:00, so that he will be killed at 7:30, and where the children learn that death is preferable to life! We knew that they would do this, it was clear to us: with language overflowing with the rhetoric of death and the norms of killing, in the religious rulings [fatwas] and in Friday and holiday sermons." And, "The concept of shahada for him [the child] means belonging to the homeland, from a religious point of view. Sacrifice for his homeland. Achieving shahada in order to reach Paradise and to meet his God. This is the best. We also teach our children to protect the homeland, belonging and to reach shahada." "The result of such virulent PA indoctrination is apparent," Marcus and Crook conclude, "when listening to the interview on PA TV with two 11-year-old Palestinian girls talking about shahada and describing it as a primary ideal and personal goal. They explain that 'all Palestinian children' view shahada as more worthwhile than living, because of its promised grand Afterlife." (The Lekarev Report - June 27, 2007).

“Activist 'banned for life' from criticizing homosexuality” “Offending pamphlets quoted ad: 'Man seeking boys ... age not so relevant'. A lifetime ban on public criticism of homosexuality was upheld against a Catholic activist in Canada by his province's superior court. Bill Whatcott was fined 17,500 Canadian dollars by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission in a complaint by four homosexuals who charged he "injured" their "feelings" and "self respect" in pamphlets denouncing the "gay lifestyle" as immoral and dangerous. Saskatchewan's Court of Queens Bench, which hears criminal and civil cases, upheld a 2006 decision Tuesday by the provincial Human Rights Commission. "This fine is for telling the truth [that] homosexual sodomites can change their behavior and be set free from their sin and depravity through the forgiveness of sins and shed blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus

Christ," Whatcott said. A licensed practical nurse, Whatcott regularly campaigns against the political movement that is rapidly advancing homosexual rights in the Canadian legal system, LifeSiteNews said. "Shame on the Saskatchewan Court of Queens Bench for pandering to homosexual activism and ignoring the truth," he said. The provincial Human Rights Commission noted Whatcott was "ordered to discontinue distributing any materials that promote hatred against people because of their sexual orientation." The tribunal held that "preventing the distribution of such materials was a reasonable limit on Whatcott's right to freedom of religion and expression as guaranteed by Section 2 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms." Whatcott says his pamphlets used "verbatim" a text from a classified personal advertisement in a local homosexual publication that said, "Man seeking boys ... age not so relevant." LifeSiteNews noted Ottawa Citizen columnist David Warren criticized the tribunals as "kangaroo courts" and "star chambers" with "quasi-legal powers that should be offensive to the citizens of any free country ... in which the defendant's right to due process is withdrawn." A petition to Prime Minister Stephen Harper is being circulated calling for abolishment, or at least curtailment, of the powers of the commissions. **Last month, a Canadian political party leader's posting of a WND article on homosexuality** brought him before the country's **Human Rights Commission** to face accusations he was motivated by "hate and defamation." Ron Gray of the Christian Heritage Party said he was told directly by an employee of the Human Rights Commission that the Canadian Human Rights Act, under which he is being accused, is "about censorship." Two of the three complaints filed by Edmonton man Rob Wells relate to the posting of an April 2002 WND story titled "**Report: Pedophilia more common among 'gays.'**" The third complaint against Gray is for several commentaries he wrote and distributed to party members. One, titled "Sitcom prophet," compared the current climate of debate about homosexuality in Canada to the "Cone of Silence" in the 1960s-era television comedy "Get Smart." (*WorldNetDaily*, Dec. 15, 2007).

"They don't allow religion in schools, but they allow homosexuality" "BRAVE NEW SCHOOLS. Homosexodus! Students flee forced 'gay' agenda. California parents start reacting to new 'education' requirements. Parents in California have started reacting to the state's newly mandated homosexual indoctrination program by pulling their children out of classes, and state Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell is warning districts they'll lose money if that happens. A spokeswoman for **a ministry called Considering Homeschooling** said she already has seen an overwhelming increase in requests for information about homeschooling. As a result, spokeswoman Denise Kanter told WND that her group is sending out 5,000 DVD packages to churches around the state that include basic "how-to" information to provide parents a direction to turn when they choose to protect their children from the new school agenda. The new law demands, "No teacher shall give instruction nor shall any school district sponsor any activity that promotes a discriminatory bias because of a characteristic [including perceived gender.]" With the passing of SB 777, a Christian parent cannot, in good conscience, send their child to a public school where their child will be taught or coerced into a lifestyle or belief system that is contrary to the faith they hold dear," Kanter told WND. "Fortunately, SB 777 has caught the attention of many churches and pastors here in California, and as they should, they are calling on their congregants to take their children out. To help in this endeavor, our ministry has sent and will continue to send out free packages directly to churches containing information on how they can encourage their congregants to homeschool their children, as well as how to create in-church parent led schools," she said. "We hope our resources will encourage Christians to focus on the importance of not leaving Christ out of a child education," she said. **WND columnist Olivia St. John** reported California's "raging ideological" battle prompted students to pack up their backpacks and stage a two-day boycott to protest the plan that has the state "force-feeding children perverse material and videos vile enough to garner at R-rating in the local multiplex." "Evidently, some are beginning to wake up to the fact that their children are no longer receiving true education, but are being clandestinely recruited into sick social movements threatening to tear families apart at the seams," she wrote. "When it comes to actively promoting sin to public school children, the homosexuals are light years ahead of adulterers, fornicators and substance abusers, who haven't yet implemented student-run organizations to convince children that such lifestyle choices are normal," she continued. In California, parents told the Inland Valley Press Enterprise they were pulling their children from public school classrooms in protest of the law. Donna Myers, whose three daughters were attending Norte Vista High in Riverside, said the new law has no application to reading, writing and arithmetic. "We have rights, too. Enough is enough," she told the newspaper. And Betty Voltz also told the newspaper her son and daughter were boycotting the public district. "They don't allow religion in school but they're going to allow homosexuality in schools. That makes no sense," she said. Randy Thomasson, president of **the Campaign for Children and Families**, said there is reason for alarm. He said the new law effectively requires school instruction and school activities to portray homosexuality, bisexuality and transsexuality to the six million children in public schools in a positive light. He said he's gotten hundreds of contacts from concerned parents, and is encouraging families to leave the public school system entirely. All of this has O'Connell alarmed. "We must encourage students to stay in school and resist calls for a protest and walkout over SB 777," he wrote in a notice to all "county and district superintendents." "What I find most troubling is that possible student absences may lead to missed opportunities for them to learn and that this lost time may not be recaptured," he said. "Additionally, there may be fiscal consequences to school districts for funds lost due to student absences," he threatened. He also said the bill "simplifies and clarifies existing civil rights protections for California students." Meredith Turney, the legislative liaison for **Capitol Resource Institute**, reacted to that in a column. "Mr. O'Connell, the bill's author Sen. Sheila Kuehl and **Gov. Schwarzenegger** have all maintained the party line that SB 777 merely 'streamlines' existing anti-discrimination laws. However, these attempts to discredit the public outcry against SB 777's policies are disingenuous and misleading. In fact, SB 777 goes far beyond implementing anti-discrimination and harassment policies for public schools." Turney said that already was accomplished by a 2000 plan by the same lawmaker. "The new law states that 'No teacher shall give instruction nor shall a school district sponsor any activity that promotes a discriminatory bias because of ... (homosexuality, bisexuality, and transsexual or transgender status). Including instruction and activities in the anti-discrimination law goes much further than 'streamlining.' This incremental and deceitful approach to achieving their goals is a favorite and effective tactic of liberals. Expanding the law is not 'streamlining' the law," Turney wrote. "Mr. O'Connell's doublespeak reveals his – and his peers' – arrogant attitude toward their 'gullible' constituents. In fact, parents are not stupid and they recognize that their authority is being undermined by such subversive school policies. This is nothing less than an attempt to confuse the public about the true intention of SB 777," she said. "The terms 'mom and dad' or 'husband and wife' could promote discrimination against homosexuals if a same-sex couple is not also featured," said Turney. "Parents want the assurance that when their children go to school they will learn the fundamentals of reading, writing and arithmetic – not social indoctrination regarding alternative sexual lifestyles. Now that SB 777 is law, schools will in fact become indoctrination centers for sexual experimentation," she said. (*WorldNetDaily*, Dec. 5, 2007).

"Movieguide: Hollywood Continues Attacks on Christian Values" "Ever since the critical and box office success of movies like Michael Moore's "Bowling for Columbine" and "Fahrenheit 9/11," the atheist, left-wing elitists in the mass media have stepped up their attacks on the patriotic, traditional and orthodox values of America and Christianity, say officials of "Movieguide: A Biblical Guide to Movies, Entertainment and Culture for Families." Clearly, these people feel threatened by the success of conservative evangelical Christians and other traditionalists in the entertainment industry with such hits like "The Passion of the Christ" and "The Chronicles of Narnia," not to mention their success in electing George W. Bush in 2000 and 2004, maintains Movieguide. According to the Biblical Guide, not only has there been an increase in the number of explicitly left-wing, anti-American, anti-Christian documentaries in the last two years (such as "The Road to Guantanamo," "Jesus Camp," "Jimmy Carter Man from Plains," and "For the Bible Tells Me So"), but there has also been an increasing number of anti-American, anti-Christian, anti-American mainstream movies such as "The Da Vinci Code," "Brokeback Mountain," and the recent box office bombs "In the Valley of Elah" and "Rendition."

Two upcoming movies will continue these attacks, Robert Redford's already outdated propaganda movie against the War in Iraq, "Lions for Lambs," and a new movie, "The Golden Compass," based on the first book in secular humanist Philip Pullman's anti-Christian children's trilogy, "His Dark Materials." Redford's new movie, which we have seen already, contains a slew of shallow arguments against the Republican Party, the War in Iraq, the Vietnam War, and the United States military, spiced with a vague secular humanist

call to political action, presumably against those “evil” conservatives in the Republican Party and their supporters, the so-called religious right.

Pullman’s books not only mock and belittle God, they also attack the Christian Church (labelled “the Church” and “the Magisterium” in the books). In the trilogy, Pullman rejects the orthodox view of God and presents a nebulous, personal and demonic-sounding spirituality with no philosophical roots or ultimate meaning. Pullman’s world is a sad, animalistic universe. Since this is the only world there is, the trilogy ends in hopelessness. Love is not selfless giving, because that would be useless in a materialistic world. Love instead is the lust of pleasuring each other. In Pullman’s world, there’s no hope of eternal life where the lame and the blind and the deaf and dumb can walk and hear and talk, where the old are made youthful, there’s no heavenly banquet, there’s no loving God, there’s no order, and there’s no peace.

The logical consequences of Pullman’s atheism can be found in the lives of the leading atheists of the 20th Century – Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot – men who killed millions of their own people and had no respect for justice or love. Ultimately, it is a road that only leads to meaninglessness, murder and social chaos. Reportedly, the new movie based on Pullman’s book has toned down some of Pullman’s virulent attacks on the Christian religion. Whether or not that is true, however, we do urge people of faith and values not to bother to corrupt their children with this odious atheistic worldview. Of course, there are other attacks to come next year, including another movie based on one of “Da Vinci Code” author Dan Brown’s scurrilous attacks against orthodox Christian teachings and the Bible and perhaps a movie about the religious right planned by none other than Michael Moore. Every year, however, we present an Annual Report to the Entertainment Industry, which looks at the content of the Top 250 Movies at the Box office each year. Year in and year out, our statistics show that movies with very strong anti-biblical, anti-Christian, anti-American values don’t do well at the box office. For instance, movies with very strong anti-biblical, anti-Christian content only averaged \$23, \$22.6 and \$21.4 million at the box office in 2004, 2005, and 2006, respectively. Movies with anti-patriotic, anti-American content did even worse on the whole, averaging only \$26.8, 10 and 19.6 million, respectively – as much as two to six times worse than movies with very strong biblical, Christian, patriotic, and pro-American content. Thus, movies in 2007 like “In the Valley of Elah,” “Delta Farce,” “Home of the Brave,” and “Rendition” have made only \$6.6 million, \$8 million, \$40,000, and \$7.8 million in North America, but movies like “World Trade Center,” “Spider-Man 3,” “Saving Private Ryan,” “Forrest Gump,” “Top Gun,” “Passion of the Christ,” and “Sergeant York” have made \$70 million, \$336 million, \$302 million, \$516 million, \$315 million, \$393 million, and \$317 million when adjusted for inflation!!! Of course, the antidote to all of these attacks on America and Jesus Christ is to teach your neighbors, and your children and grandchildren, to reject the bad and support the good. Supporting the Good, the True and the Beautiful is what our upcoming 16th Annual Movieguide Faith & Values Awards Gala and Report to the Entertainment Industry, set for Feb. 12 in Los Angeles, will be doing. There, we will reward movies like “Amazing Grace,” “Spider-Man 3,” and “The Game Plan,” movies that inspire, enrich and celebrate our lives, our country and our faith, and that give glory to God, His Word and His Church. (Dr. Ted Baehr and Dr. Tom Snyder, *NewsMax.com*, Nov. 1, 2007).

“Devil’s already got your number” “Be very wary today. It’s absolutely a case of devil take the hindmost.”

Today’s date is June 6, 2006 – or 6 6 06 – hardly a day to be devil-may-care as you go about your daily chores. Forb 666 is Satan’s number – you can leave a message if it’s busy. It is not encouraging for devil worshippers to support a being who is supposedly all-powerful but cannot organise a conference phone. But Satan’s fans frequently have difficulties with their allegiances. One dyslexic Satan-lover once sold his soul to Santa. Even so today is Satan’s special day. A day when creepy crawlies residents of the nether world and other frightening things may happen like the release of the remake of the satanic ‘70s film *The Omen*. It was originally a sort of cult film, benefiting greatly from Gregory Peck’s gravitas. If early reviews are anything to go by, it will take a miracle for the sinful 2006 version to become a hit. And miracles are not exactly the devil’s playground. The cinema is actually a portal between us and the devil’s preoccupation with paternity. Remember *Rosemary’s Baby*, then *The Omen*, not to mention his inhabiting a female body in *The Exorcist*. If I’m ever confronted by someone bewitching me I hope it involves Elizabeth Montgomery or Nicole Kidman. I support “bewitch with a twitch”. It is also a day when millions of children will be born, making mothers around the world apprehensive. For what more appropriate day could there be for the birth of an antichrist then on the 6-6-06. The association between 666 and the devil comes in St John the Evangelist’s book of Revelation about the end of the world. Verse 18 says: “Let he that hath understanding count their number of the beast . . . his number is six hundred three scores and six”. Plenty of parents already know about the problems of raising little devils. Now it could get worse. There are no clues, biblical or otherwise, about when the Antichrist will arrive [*my comment: cf Revelation and Daniel’s prophecies*]. But a pentagram suddenly appearing on the floor of a pre-natal clinic should not be seen as promoting a Wiggles concert. All the Book of Revelation says is that the arrival of the Antichrist will herald Armageddon, when heaven will eventually triumph over evil after a titanic battle that devastates Earth. The Antichrist is also predicted to be charismatic, popular and a natural leader, which probably eliminates Kim Beazley, South’s rugby league board and anyone on *Australian Idol* or *Big Brother*. The Bible doesn’t go into detail but the Antichrist will cause havoc. Public transport will be chaotic, there will be blackouts, roads will be gridlocked, taxes will soar, property values will be the new god, unemployment will skyrocket and political leaders will be exposed as mercenary. Oh, God help us. He is already here. (Ray Chesterton, *The Daily Telegraph*, June 6, 2006).