By Jacob Prasch

FOR OUR STRUGGLE IS NOT AGAINST FLESH AND BLOOD, BUT AGAINST THE RULERS, AGAINST THE POWERS, AGAINST THE WORLD FORCES OF THIS DARKNESS, AGAINST THE SPIRITUAL FORCES OF WICKEDNESS IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES. WITH ALL PRAYER AND PETITION PRAY AT ALL TIMES IN THE SPIRIT, AND WITH THIS IN VIEW, BE ON THE ALERT WITH ALL PERSEVERANCE AND PETITION FOR ALL THE SAINTS (EPH. 6:12,18)

The emphasis is prayer: before you can wear the armor, you have to be strong enough to wear it. The same idea is seen in Ephesians 3:10:

so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.

Like the book of Revelation, Ephesians connects the spiritual warfare that happens on earth with the spiritual warfare that happens in Heaven.

far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come Eph. 1:21

Spiritual authority and spiritual warfare in this present age, being connected with spiritual warfare in eternity.

We usually refer to these “principalities” as “territorial spirits” but that is not found in the Bible. The New Testament in English normally calls them “principalities,” but the original Greek word is “arche”, meaning “first” or “headship”. It’s where we get the word “archetypal” or “archeology”. The Hebrew word is “roshiot” meaning “headship”. The word “prince” derives from the spiritual headship of a principality. Look at the book of Daniel 10:13...

"But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me... ...withstanding an angel of God...

... for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia.

PRINCIPALITIES

Notice that “the king of Persia” does not mean “the Shah of Iran”, it means “the principality”. A political term is used as a metaphor for the spiritual force governing that area of the world. Make no mistake about it, the kind of Islamic extremism seen with Shiah Muslims, the followers of Ayatollah Khomeini – was a kind of demonic frenzy, the mass demonization that occurred in Iran when the Shah fell from power, who claimed to be a descendant of King Cyrus (“Cyrus the Great” – “Kowresh”) who blessed the Jews. Remember, King Cyrus blessed the Jews. We read about him in the Old Testament, he’s predicted in Isaiah 44:28
and then he sends the Jews back. The Shah of Iran, similarly, was relatively friendly toward the Jews, and he certainly blessed them. For a Muslim country to have done that really meant something and it was controversial in its time.

But there was a change of power in the Ancient World; the kings of Persia fell from power and that caused the new principalities to go against the Jews when the Persian Empire fell. Eventually it resulted in Antiochus Epiphanes – the Seleucids.

Today it is the same. When the Shah fell, Ayatollah Khomeini came to power. That kind of mass demonization can be seen in the wild frenzy, the fanaticism, the people who you see in Lebanon who are Shia Muslims influenced by Khomeini from Persia, from Iran, who would put dynamite into a truck and crash it into an Israeli military barracks and get themselves killed thinking they’re going to die in a jihad and go to heaven. That is associated with the same principality, the same spiritual force that has always existed in that area of the world.

IT GOES BACK TO DANIEL

We can trace this back in the book of Daniel, verses 20-21.

Then he said, “Do you understand why I came to you? But I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia; so I am going forth, and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come. . . . etc.

However, I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth. Yet there is no one who stands firmly with me against these forces except Michael your prince.

“Michael” is “Mika’el”, “he who is like unto God”.

When we see these political conflicts happening in the Middle East, we know they have very ancient roots. And they’re bound up with the prophecies of Daniel about what would happen in the Last Days. Like all the Old Testament prophets, Daniel prophesied for two times: he prophesied for his own time, he prophesied for the First Coming of Jesus, but he prophesied for the Second Coming of Jesus in the Last Days, almost all in the same breath. There is a lot of meaning in Daniel that, for his own time, is replayed at the end of the world. And I have no doubt in my mind whatsoever that the events we’re seeing in the Middle East – in this case with the prince of Persia, what’s happening in Iran with Islamic fundamentalism – extends from what Daniel spoke of regarding the prince of Persia.

ANCIENT PRINCIPALITIES

In our study of the Antichrist we looked at what is called “the spirit of Antichrist”. When you see someone like Joseph Stalin, Adolph Hitler, Benito Mussolini, Idi Amin in Uganda, Kim Il-sung in North Korea, Ceausescu in Romania, and various other lesser known luminaries, you’re seeing a spirit of Antichrist when these political leaders almost want to have themselves deified. These influences go back a long time: they’re principalities.

In the book of Esther, on the banks of the Euphrates River was a capital city where there was a madman named Haman. We all know the story of how Haman, on the banks of the Euphrates, wanted to exterminate the Jews. But on the Feast of Esther, Haman was defeated. And Jewish people put on costumes, dress up as the characters from the story of Esther, and celebrate the Feast of Purim and children do what we call the “purimspiel”. The 14th of the Hebrew month of Adar is the Feast of Purim.

So you have someone who demands virtually to be worshiped. Now the Hebrew word for “to bow down”, “to worship”, “to prostrate”, is the same word. To bow down, to genuflect, to prostrate in Hebrew is “hish-tochvya.” It’s the same for “to worship”.

Today when you see Roman Catholics kneeling before a statue – a graven image – or genuflecting before a sacrament, that is an act of worship. It is idolatry: “Avoda vara. No other possible meaning in Hebrew.

Haman demanded that people bow down to him -- in other words, that he be worshiped. Anybody who refused would be exterminated. He had no problem getting rid of anybody who wouldn’t give him his way.

So you’ve got someone on the banks of the Euphrates River, virtually demands to be worshiped, a man who engages in all manner of treachery against anyone who gets in his way, and the people he hated the most (and the ones who got in his way the most) were the Jews, and on the 14th of Adar he’s defeated. That man, of course, was Saddam Hussein, the year was 1991. What date did Saddam Hussein surrender to the Americans and British? The 14th of Adar, the Feast of Purim, when Jewish people were dressed as the characters of Esther, dancing in the streets of Jerusalem to celebrate it after he shot all of these SCUD missiles at Tel Aviv and Haifa. The same things, the same principalities, the same territorial spirits.

SUPPRESSING TERRITORIAL SPIRITS

There are three things in the Bible that suppress territorial spirits or these principalities. There are three things God uses to restrain this evil.

The first is the Holy Spirit. Jesus, speaking in John’s gospel, says “He will convict the world concerning sin” (Jn. 16:8). Somehow, the Holy Spirit brings conviction to the world both directly through convincing people – that’s called “elenctic” in theological jargon, and through empowering the church.

The second way is the preaching of the Gospel.

And the third way is God uses human government as we read about in the book of Genesis, also in the epistle to the Romans, etc. That is why the Bible says to pray for our leaders. The early Christians prayed for the emperors because if they had an emperor who was not benevolent, the Gospel would be opposed, and if there was an emperor who was benevolent, the Gospel could go unhindered.

I do not like politicians too much, but whoever gets elected, I make sure and pray for them because I know if they’re not coming under the influences of good spirits, they’re going to be coming under the influences of a bad spirit.

Whether you like them or not, pray for them as it says to do in Romans. (Ro. 13) Those are the three things.

IN THE LAST DAYS

Now in the Last Days these three things cease to happen. God’s Spirit will not forever strive with man (Gen. 6:3). The Holy Spirit will no longer restrain evil in the sense He does now. Somehow, in the book of Revelation, God goes back to dealing with the nations the way He dealt with them in the Old Testament. Grace comes to an end. In Revelation we see the God of wrath, we see God behaving the way He did in the Old Testament.

I’m not particularly “dispensational”, but there is a truth in Dispensationalism, and God does go back and deals with man that way as clearly seen in Revelation. There is no more “Mr. Nice Guy”; we’ve reached that point. He also goes back to dealing with the world through Israel and the Jews in the Last Days. There’s a return, as it were, in some sense to the Old Testament. God’s Spirit will not forever strive with man, the Holy Spirit will be removed from the world. He will not be removed from the hearts of God’s people, but He will be removed from the world.

Secondly, the Gospel, as such, will not be preached. Jesus said, “Work while you have the light, for night will come.
when no man can work” (John 9:4). There will be an hour of darkness and testing at the end of the world before Jesus comes.

And thirdly – finally, with the advent of the Antichrist, all human governments will, for at least a 3-1/2 year period, be given into his hand. Those are the three ways that God throws back these powers.

THE EXAMPLE OF ITALY AND JAPAN

Now when these powers fail to function as God intended them, when the church stops preaching the Gospel, when Christians stop praying for the government, or when the Holy Spirit is grieved, these ancient territorial spirits will resurface.

We all know that the government of Italy has had nearly 50 governments since the end of the Second World War. We know about the Mafia in Sicily and the kinds of corruption that has been endemic in the Italian government. And we know the Vatican’s involvement with it, with the Sidona scandal and the Banco de Ambrosiano bankruptcy. The Vatican paid hundreds of millions of dollars to buy its way out of it. And then Calvi and these people were murdered in London, over 200 murders, with the Vatican at the center of it – this kind of treachery.

That is exactly what transpired in imperial Rome. There is chronic political instability in the Italian government, the kind of corruption brought about by the Mafia and organized financial corruption within the Roman Catholic Church...

Remember the Roman Catholic Church’s bank is called “The Ministry of Religious Works”. If you’ve been to Italy, you’ve seen “Banco Spiritus Sancti”, the “Bank of the Holy Spirit”, it is the tenth biggest bank in Italy. And the Vatican bank is one of the largest commercial banks in the world, and one of the largest merchant banks.

This goes back to the Middle Ages with the merchant banking families of Italy, of Florence, Florenzia, and Venice: the Borgesi family, and the Lombardi family, and the Medici family. They were all rivals to get their man into the papacy because the papal port was a brokerage house for merchant banking. But the roots of this go back to Imperial Rome.

The political instability, the hyper-inflation even, was endemic in ancient Rome, the continual corruption and the involvement of the Pontiff. Remember, the Pope’s title is “Pontiff”, but the title of the emperor was “Pontificus Maximus”. The Pope just took the title of the emperor as the head of the Pantheon of Rome, Rome’s Pagan religion. The roots of this are, again, the same territorial spirits that existed in imperial Rome that have come into modern Italy through the Mafia, through corruption in the Italian government.

The management philosophy in Japanese corporations is based on the old Shogun model. It’s tied into Shintoism. Emperor worship is almost blind allegiance to the Shogun. That is the management philosophy underlying Japanese corporations.

In the Second World War it expressed itself through Japanese Imperialism which, if you can fathom it, was in many ways worse than the Nazis – certainly crueler. They believed they were the descendants of the Sun God and therefore they were genetically superior to the other Asians in the same as the Germans believed they were genetically superior to the Jews because of the way Hitler used Nietzsche’s ideas of the “Ubersmensch”, the “superman”, etc. Same idea. These are the same principalities you find in the Shogun mentality and in Shintoism, Japanese Buddhism.

ISRAEL’S HISTORY

If Israel has a history of anything, it’s continual rebellion against God. Jacob’s name was changed to “Israel”, “he who has wrestled with God”. Jacob wrestled at Penuel with the Angel of the Lord (Gen. 32:24-32), the One the Talmud calls the “Metatrone”, “He who dwells at the center of the throne”. It is an angel with divine properties who is associated with the Messiah. Without doubt the angel that Jacob wrestled with was the preincarnate Christ. The “Angel of the Lord” is a christophany: an Old Testament manifestation of the Lord Jesus.

Jacob wrestled to the end of the night. Now “the night”, in the Bible, is a metaphor – if you don’t know – for the Great Tribulation:

“WATCHMAN, WATCHMAN, HOW FAR IS THE NIGHT?” (IS. 21:11)

“IS HE COMING IN THE SECOND WATCH OF THE NIGHT OR THE THIRD?” (Lk. 2:38)

“HE’S COMING LIKE A THIEF IN THE NIGHT”. (1 TH. 5:2)

THE VIRGINS NEEDED OIL IN THEIR LAMPS TO SEE IN THE NIGHT. (MATT. 25:1)

The night has to do with the Tribulation at the time of the end. Jacob goes all the way through it. The church doesn’t, but Jacob does. The Jews go through the Tribulation. It illustrates the point. It’s called “the time of Jacob’s trouble” in Jeremiah.

The rebellion seen among the Jewish people conveys the same thing. Their resistance to the Gospel has to do with the same resistance they had to their own prophets. Always remember this when you’re praying for Jewish people: The problem of unsaved Jewish people is not that they don’t believe that Jesus is the Messiah. The fact that unsaved Jewish people do not believe Jesus is the Messiah is not their problem. That is the tragic result of their problem. Their problem is they don’t believe the Torah. Jesus said directly, “If you believed in Moses, you’d believe Me also” (John 5:46). Their problem is they’re in rebellion against the Tanakh, they’re in rebellion against the Mitzvot, they’re in rebellion against the Law of Moses. Their rejection of Jesus is the result of it.

Israel has one of the highest abortion rates of any developed country, some would say the highest. God warned Israel about sacrificing their children as the Gentiles do. Now understand this: God’s judgment fell on Israel before the Babylonian captivity because they were sacrificing their children to demons – “Molech worship”.

In most western countries, and in Israel, if you were to take all of the major clinical reasons for abortion and put them together, altogether they would only account for a small percentage of the abortions performed. Most abortions are non-therapeutic. In other words, they’re performed for social and economic considerations.

Jesus called this “mammon worship” (Matt. 6:24; Lk.16:13). Make no mistake about it, non-therapeutic abortion is very much associated with demon worship. These abortions are the modern equivalent of when babies were sacrificed to Molech in the ancient world. And Israel has gone the way of the nations and is particularly guilty. It has one of the highest abortion rates of any country.

Japan’s is absolutely astronomical.

THE EXAMPLE OF GERMANY

And then there’s Germany. Hitler was a madman – we all know that – but when Sir Winston Churchill wrote about the Germans, he referred to them usually as “the Huns” or “the Teutonic Tribes”. Churchill had a very good and acute sense of history. He understood that when you look at the Holocaust, the Blitz, and the Blitzkrieg, that is what the Germans always did. That’s what the Huns did, what the Visigoths did, what the ancient Germanic tribes did – they always did
that. Once the preaching of the Gospel declined in Germany, the ancient territorial spirit resurfaced with a vengeance.

The Reformation and Protestantism had much of its origins in Germany. Luther came from Germany. Then the Pietists became spiritually very dry. The Moravians dissipated. Lutherranism—most of it was taken over by liberal theology—Higher Criticism—that came from Tubingen University in the last century: people who followed the ideas of Bookman and Wellhausen, the theory of Pentateuchal sources, Higher Criticism, liberal theology. "The Bible is only history and literature; it's not God's Word." When liberal theology and Higher Criticism took over Protestantism, and evangelical Protestantism declined, what happened? The ancient territorial spirits resurfaced and the Germans did what the Germans always did before they were Christianized.

THE EXAMPLE OF BRITAIN

Look at Britain. Less than 10% of the people attend church on any kind of regular basis. Most people who go to any church will go for rights of passage: sprinkling a baby, a funeral, a wedding, or something like that. That's what you have when the Gospel declines.

In the ancient world there were occultists known as "Druids" or practitioners of Wicca, the Anglo-Saxon and Celtic folk religions. Today we call them "New Age Travelers"; it doesn't matter. When do they want to have their festivals? The Summer Solstice, the Vernal Equinox. Where do they want to have their festivals? Stonehenge, Glastonbury. The police tried to tell them, "Listen, we've got to stop all these traffic jams and destroying these people's farms. Can't you go out to the highlands of Scotland or somewhere where you're not going to hurt anybody?" They said, "No, we have to have it here; it's our religion."

Once Christianity goes, the ancient territorial spirits resurface. Once the Holy Spirit is grieved, He does not convict in the same way. And once the government stops following God's principles, it's going to begin following other principles.

Remember, Parliamentary Democracy worked because it was based more than any other system of government upon biblical principles. That's why it worked. For all the mistakes the Puritans made, they brought a biblical influence into our model of democracy. That's why democracy has worked so well in the western world, particularly the English-speaking democracies and countries like Holland. Once you take the biblical influence out, the institutions based on it begin to go down.

The school system in England, the state school system, was born out of the influences of Methodism. The Trade Union movement was born out of the influences of Methodism. Building Societies were born out of the influences of Methodism, to get housing for the urban classes, for the working classes. The health system—born out of the influences of Methodism and Wesley's revivals.

Once you take Jesus out of something, then the principles go. And once the principles go, the health system cracks up, the school system cracks up, the criminal justice system cracks up, and ultimately the government cracks up. Now I'm not denying there are plausible, intellectual explanations for why a society is going the way it's going, but I'm simply saying that underneath this trend there lie spiritual reasons.

I live in a country where the Saudi Arabian government and the Kuwaiti government, with the blessings of Her Majesty's government, fund the construction of mosques all over the United Kingdom. But they will not allow one church to be built in Saudi Arabia or Kuwait. And the British government won't do anything about it.

TODAY'S SITUATION

We live in a time when the Holy Spirit is being grieved by sin, especially sin in the church. It's sin in the church that grieves God's Spirit the most. God is always more grieved by our sin than He is the sin of the unsaved.

Secondly, our government has gone away from the biblical principles upon which they were based. And thirdly, there's been a definite trend away from the preaching of the true Gospel in favor of Liberal Protestantism, Higher Criticism, Ecumenism, etc. As a result, the ancient territorial spirits are resurfacing.

In Britain, a lot of the ancient spirits—territorial spirits were involved in tribalism. The same influences cause the football hooliganism we see today, when people from Liverpool go down to London to have riots and throw bottles at each other (these people don't even care about the game, they only care about getting drunk and having a punch-out). On back of this tribalism, there are sociological reasons, but there is a spiritual influence behind it. Once the Gospel goes down, these ancient territorial spirits will in some way resurface and manifest themselves.

Football has replaced church on Sundays and people give almost a religious kind of significance to the colors and emblems of their football teams. And they'll go to war over it. That's the same kind of tribal mentality that existed in pre-Christian England. And as the church declines, and as the Gospel declines, this stuff comes back.

THE EXAMPLES OF YUGOSLAVIA AND IRELAND

Yugoslavia is another tragic example. Yugoslavia is where the Roman Empire split between the Greek-speaking East and the Latin-speaking West. It was always the cutting edge between the Roman Catholic world and the Eastern Orthodox world. The hatred you see between Croats and Serbs has very ancient roots going back before the Crusades. But also it was the cutting edge between North and South, between the Muslim world and the Christianized world, with the Saracen invasions. Same thing: Serbs and Croats hate each other, but they both hate the Muslims. There's something spiritual going on.

I was just in Northern Ireland. The graffiti on the walls of Northern Ireland in the Protestant and Catholic neighborhoods in recent years has fewer of the familiar figures like King William of Orange and things like that. You're seeing more the ancient Celtic war gods, the war goddess Ulidia: the story of an old hag who demanded the blood of the young men to be poured out so the old hag could prolong her beauty. This was a Celtic goddess, a war goddess, a semi-mythical character. I think it was based upon someone who existed actually, but he became almost deified as a war god, as the war god of Northern Ireland. And this is what you see on the walls in Belfast.

Once again, those ancient gods are demanding the blood of the sons of Ireland, and they're getting it. On back of these things are territorial spirits.

WHY ARE THEY 'TERRITORIAL'?

Where do we get this idea of spirits being "territorial"? The first is in Daniel, the principality. The spiritual ruler was identified with a principality—a region—the prince of Persia. Another example is the gods of Egypt. The Torah tells us directly that other gods are demons ("shedim" in Hebrew, "daimonoi" in Greek), but the gods of Egypt are associated with that area, that geographical location, in that principality.

I lived on Mount Carmel in Galilee where my children were born. Mount Carmel in the days of Justin Martyr in the early church—was a center of Babylonian priestcraft. We all know what happened with the story of Elijah. To this day, in the Carmel forest on the outskirts of the city of Haifa, you can still see the Canaanite
altars. It was the beginning of the Phoenician coast where Molech worship was practiced, where people would mutilate their children in worship to Molech. It was also a center of Ashereth worship. It was a high place where there were temples to the gods of the Eastern Mediterranean. Ashereth is a female deity worshiped by the Canaanites—on Mount Carmel.

Now today it’s the same territorial spirits. Remember at Gerasenes, when Jesus cast the demons out into the swine, they said, “Don’t send us out of the region” (Mk. 5:10). They didn’t want to leave their principality like the princes of Persia, the gods of Egypt, they were territorial.

You can read an account of what happened in Cambodia during the bloodbath of Pol Pot, an absolutely demonic manifestation if there ever was one, and, I believe, something that tells us what the world is going to be like when the Antichrist comes. Things like the Holocaust and the bloodbath of Pol Pot in Cambodia, those things present as clear a picture as anything of what is going to ultimately happen to the whole world when the Antichrist comes. Frightening, isn’t it? Enough to make us really want to be ready with Jesus.

Again, the missionaries and evangelists and Cambodian Christians had encounters with these demons. And they would actually speak from the Buddhist tabernacles, “We don’t want to leave. We wear the red scarves. We’re the rulers of these areas.”

THE EXAMPLE OF MOUNT CARmel

Today Mount Carmel is the center of the Baha’i cult, the Tomb of the Bab. It is their “Mecca.” Baha’is from all over the world go there to worship at the Tomb of the Bab. On this same mountain is a witch’s coven that meets in Elijah’s Cave. In the same place where Ashereth was worshiped, today you have “Our Lady of Mount Carmel.” These demonic apparitions of Mary, counterfeits that you see in Knock, Ireland and Medjugorje, Yugoslavia, in Guadalupe, Mexico, Lourdes, France, Fatima, Portugal, etc., are the same apparitions that are in Israel on Mount Carmel.

Carmelite priests had this practice where they carried a particular statue of Mary from her summer home to her winter home twice a year. If you know Mary at all well, you know she doesn’t like the cold weather. And they put a gown on her, an embroidered gown with a gold crown, and carried her up and down the mountain singing “Ave Maria.” And there was Gregory, a friend of mine, a charismatic Catholic, worshiping this idol with the rest of them.

“No man can serve two masters” (Matt. 6:24). “Come out of her, My people” (Rev. 18:4). Jesus didn’t say we’re not one of His people, but because you are one of His people, get out of Babylon. And if you’re involved in a false religion like Roman Catholicism or Free Masonry and you’re a Christian, get out of it. The Holy Spirit will never lead you to sin. He is the Spirit of holiness. And by practicing idolatry, you’re sinning. To tell someone to stay a Free Mason or a Roman Catholic is no different than telling an alcoholic to keep drinking after he gets saved, to tell a homosexual to keep being one, to tell a prostitute to keep working the streets. Likewise, to tell someone to continue in a religion that prays to the dead, which practices idolatry, is no different.

So, Mount Carmel today is the tomb of the Bab and Our Lady of Mount Carmel. It doesn’t matter if you call it “Ashereth” or “Lady of Mount Carmel”, it’s the same principality.

The same pattern is seen with the Shi’ah Muslims. To commemorate the Battle of Kabalah, they hack the little children’s heads open, the sons. You see them dragging the little Arab boys to the Mullah – the clergymen – who have a hatchet. And the little boys are screaming, “No, mommy! No, mommy!” and these guys are hacking their heads open to let them bleed profusely. This is the same location where Molech worship was practiced. They do it to commemorate the martyrdom of Mohammed’s grandson Ali in the Battle of Kabalah, around the 8th Century.

The whole idea of the flagellation rituals that came into Roman Catholicism with the monks and nuns flagellating themselves, that was something that the Crusaders saw the Muslims doing, and they brought it to the Christian world. I just talked to an ex-Roman Catholic nun the other day at a Pentecostal church up near Wigan who used to practice the same thing—beating themselves with these whips to try to get rid of their sins. You have to deny the sufficiency of the cross to justify it.

IT DOESN’T MATTER WHAT IT’S CALLED

So instead of Molech worship, it’s Shiah Islam. Instead of Ashereth, it’s Our Lady of Mount Carmel. It’s Baha’i instead of Baal worship. It doesn’t matter; it’s the same thing. It may be ongoing under the guise of Baha’i or Islam or Roman Catholicism or rabbinic Judaism, but it’s still a center of false religion, and it still reflects the same idea: the headship of territorial spirits. And it’s still going on.

This country is going back to what it was in Celtic and Anglo-Saxon England: folk religion. Germany went back to what it was. And unless there’s a revival in Germany, it’s still going to revert back to what it was. That’s why you see neo-Nazism rising in Germany again. In Japan, it’s the Shogun mentality; Israel, it’s rebellion; Italy, it’s endemic corruption and the political instability it causes. It doesn’t matter what you call it, it’s all the same.

THE CASE OF AMALEK

Israel’s battles with Amalek are also revealing as seen in Exodus 17, starting in the 8th verse:

Then Amalek came and fought against Israel at Rephidim. So Moses said to Joshua, “Choose men for us and go out, fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand.” Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought against Amalek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. So it came about when Moses held his hand up...

...that’s when he prayed...

that Israel prevailed, and when he let his hand down, Amalek prevailed.

A very important principle in spiritual warfare, the first one is always prayer.

But Moses’ hands were heavy. Then they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other. Thus his hands were steady until the sun set. So Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.” Moses built an altar and named it The LORD is My Banner; and he said, “The LORD has sworn; the LORD will have war against Amalek from generation to generation.”

Reading through the Torah, the Jews were always warned to get rid of Amalek that was also known by another name: “Agag”. You can call the United Kingdom the UK or you can call it Great Britain, it doesn’t make a difference.

You had this idea in the ancient world that comes into our Bible, that the name of a patriarch or the founding member of a tribe, a clan, a people, or a nation becomes a metaphor, or a general term, for the whole nation and its descendants. For instance, Israel is often referred to as “Jacob”. Nations of the Middle East are often referred to by the names of those who founded those
nations, listed in the table of nations in Genesis 10. And Amalek is one such case.

We read about the origins of Amalek – although some scholars dispute it technically – in Genesis 36:15-16 where we first see Amalek, and then he resurfaces again in the book of Exodus. Now let’s look at Deuteronomy 25:17-19.

“Remember what Amalek did to you along the way when you came out from Egypt, how he met you along the way and attacked among you all the stragglers at your rear when you were faint and weary; and he did not fear God. Therefore it shall come about when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies, in the land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you must not forget.

GET RID OF AMALEK

As seen in the rebellion of King Saul, the reason God got rid of him and replaced him with David, was because he failed to keep this portion of the Torah. He would not get rid of Amalek. Let’s look at 1 Samuel 15:

But Saul and the people spared Agag...
...that is, Amalek...
...and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were not willing to destroy them utterly: but everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed.

Then the word of the LORD came to Samuel, saying, “I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following Me and has not carried out My commands.” And Samuel was distressed and cried out to the LORD all night. Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul; and it was told Samuel, saying, “Saul came to Carmel, and behold, he set up a monument for himself; then turned and proceeded on down to Gilgal.” Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, “Blessed are you of the LORD! I have carried out the command of the LORD.” But Samuel said, “What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?” Saul said, “They have brought them from the Amalekites, for the people spared the best of the sheep and oxen, to sacrifice to the LORD your God; but the rest we have utterly destroyed.” Then Samuel said to Saul, “Wait, and let me tell you what the LORD said to me last night.”

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...that is, Amalek...
...and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were not willing to destroy them utterly: but everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed.

Then the word of the LORD came to Samuel, saying, “I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following Me and has not carried out My commands.” And Samuel was distressed and cried out to the LORD all night. Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul; and it was told Samuel, saying, “Saul came to Carmel, and behold, he set up a monument for himself; then turned and proceeded on down to Gilgal.” Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, “Blessed are you of the LORD! I have carried out the command of the LORD.” But Samuel said, “What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?” Saul said, “They have brought them from the Amalekites, for the people spared the best of the sheep and oxen, to sacrifice to the LORD your God; but the rest we have utterly destroyed.” Then Samuel said to Saul, “Wait, and let me tell you what the LORD said to me last night.”

...and he told him.

It’s amazing to me how people will actually go against the Bible, against things specifically written about in the Bible, and call it “serving the Lord” or God told them to do it. The Holy Spirit will never lead somebody to do something contrary to the Word of God. Never. Yet I see people all the time telling me, “God showed me.”

I know a woman who told me God showed her not to be committed to any church. That’s what she said God told her to do. I know somebody else who prays to the dead, who prays to Mary, who prays to get people out of Purgatory, and says God told them to do it. God will never tell somebody to do those things. It’s rebellion. It’s sin, and God will judge it. Nonetheless, this is what happens.

They were to blot him out and Saul wouldn’t. So David comes and he has to fight the Agagites. The problem is this: if you do not fight and blot out Agag, Agag will always come after you. You’ve got to get rid of Agag.

Now I’m not suggesting we do what the Puritans did, and we go out and we kill all the Roman Catholics – that’s crazy. Nonetheless, the principle is true. There’s no place for compromising with an Agag. If you do, he’ll always come after you.

HE ALWAYS COMES AFTER YOU

Now the book of Esther tells us directly something about Haman. Haman, we’re told in the book of Esther, was a descendant of Agag (Est. 3:1). Haman came directly from Amalek. If you don’t get rid of Amalek, if you don’t get rid of Agag, he’s going to come and get you.

Once again, it doesn’t much matter if you call him “Amalek”, it doesn’t much matter if you call him “Agag”, it doesn’t much matter if you call him “Haman”, and it doesn’t much matter if you call him “Sad-dam Hussein”. It’s all the same. Do you understand? The spiritual forces in back of it – the principality, is always the same.


All the king’s servants who were at the king’s gate bowed down and paid homage to Haman; for so the king had commanded concerning him. But Mordecai neither bowed down nor paid homage.

There are Evangelical Christian ministers who’ve genuflected and kissed the Pope’s ring. That directly comes from the emperor worship of Pagan Rome. There are Christians who’ve done that. There can be no compromise with an Agag. Let’s deal with this subject.

THERE CAN BE NO COMPROMISE

Judges 2:1.

Now the angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, “I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land which I have sworn to your fathers; and I said, ‘I will never break My covenant with you, and as for you, you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars. But you have not obeyed Me; what is this you have done? Therefore I also said, ‘I will not drive them out before you; but they will become as thorns in your sides and their gods will be a snare to you.’

That’s what happens when you compromise with these demonic religions and the principalities in back of them.

You look at this country and see what’s happening. George Carey says he’s a born-again Christian – he’s the Archbishop of Canterbury. Over 2,000 evangelical Anglican clergymen signed a petition asking him to stop the inter-faith worship in Canterbury Cathedral, to stop meeting with the Pope, with the Dalai Lama (who is worshiped as god by the Tibetan Buddhists), with African witch doctors, with Zoroastrian priests, with gurus, with Hindu Brahman priests, with God knows what else, it’s all demonic. And he respects all religions.

What do you have in this country? More so-called Christians are becoming Muslim than Muslims are being called Christians. “They’ll become a snare to you and a thorn to you” (Judges 2:3). God has these Muslims and Hindus in Britain for one reason: it’s a lot easier for people from a Muslim background to be saved in a Christian country than it is for them to be saved in their own; they kill them in most cases – particularly Arab countries. There’s a battle going on. Is the church in this country going to reach the Arabs for Christ, or are the Muslims going to Islamize Britain?

Now remember the story – I’ve mentioned it several times, and it has to be said over and over because there’s still people following this stuff. In August of 1990, John Wimber, Paul Cain, and the Kansas City Prophets predicted revival would come in October of 1990 to Great Britain. And all these people from the Charismatic churches like St. Andrews Charlewood, and Holy Trinity Brompton, and the people from the house churches – the followers of Gerald Coates – were all hyped
up to hear John Wimber and Paul Cain.

Now remember Deuteronomy 18, Jeremiah 28, etc.: if somebody predicts something in the name of the Lord that doesn’t happen, they’re a “nabiy sheqer” – they’re a false prophet. We don’t stone them to death any more as the Torah decrees, but the sin is no less serious.

In the three years since the great revival of John Wimber and Paul Cain, more mosques have been built in England than churches. That is what’s happening.

THEY’LL BECOME A THORN TO YOU

In Church of England schools it’s one thing to teach about another religion, but they’re engaging in social engineering based on New Age philosophy. They’re trying to take children at the most impressionable age (according to “Educational Psychology”), ages 4 to about 11, and convey to them there’s a common legitimacy for all religions, all leading the same way, etc. They’re not teaching about other religions, but are promoting all religions. If they honestly taught about other religions they would teach them that other gods are demons (1 Co. 10:21) and Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, no one comes to the Father but by Him (John 14:6). But in schools – including church schools funded by the state – if you say that, you’re considered a racist.

They took it personally. I also asked them, “How come after six jihads 120 million Muslims can’t beat 3 million Jews?” They took it personally. I also asked them, “How come you’re always carrying on about what people are doing to Muslims, how come when King Hussein of Jordan – a Muslim himself – killed 20,000 Palestinians during Black September in 1970, nobody said a word?” They didn’t like that either. So they attacked me.

For those who don’t believe in freedom, don’t believe in democracy, don’t believe in the right to expression or opinion, they should go back to the Muslim world where there are none of these freedoms. But instead, they come here and riot in front of the British Parliament – the bastion of British democracy, born out of the influences of biblical Christianity, on the foundation of the British government – and want to kill Salman Rushdie for writing his book, The Satanic Verses.

Muslim scholars have known about the “Satanic Verses” for centuries. They’ve known that Mohammed said these three Arabian idols Lat, Uzza, and Manat were actually birds of intercession and he erased it. Muslim scholars have known that for centuries. The only thing Rushdie did was to take something that was known by Islamic scholars, to take it off a shelf of an Islamic library, and make it the title of a book. That’s all he did. They’ll become a thorn to you.

They’ll riot in your streets. They’ll try to take over your schools. They’ll tell you, you can’t practice your religion. They’ll make laws where they can build mosques all over this country, be funded by their government, but won’t allow you to build a single church in their country. And your own government will kneel down and lick their boots. They’ll become a thorn to you.

I can take you through neighborhoods in London where you can see Hindu temples, Sikh temples all over the place, more than there are churches and more people go into them. I can show you churches in London that are boarded up and later re-opened as mosques. That’s what is happening.

Here in Manchester on Oxford Road is a gothic church: “The Islamic Academy”. It used to be a church. They’ll become a thorn to you.

When you begin compromising, they become a thorn to you. You see that in Judges 2. That’s what is happening in this country right now.

Again, this is not against Muslims, it’s against Islam. The schools financed in the city of London, influence in the British government, influence in the Christian school system – all of it – they’ll become a snare to you.

HOW TO FIGHT IT

Now what do we do about this stuff? How has God ordained to fight it?

Here’s one way that I wouldn’t recommend. Every time a bus of Christian pilgrims comes from the Bible Belt (parts of Midwestern America), they come to Mount Carmel and Haifa and they surround the high place and they say, “I bind you! I rebuke you, Satan! We cast this Tomb of the Bab, the Persian Gardens, into the Mediterranean in the name of Jesus!” Well, sorry to say, it’s still there. And then the next day, another bus of people arrive from Texas and does the same thing.

How did Paul deal with it? Look at the 17th chapter of the book of Acts:

Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was observing the city full of idols. So he was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and in the market place every day with those who happened to be present. And also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him. Some were saying, “What would this idle babbler wish to say?”... etc., etc., etc. And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, and there he begins to preach the Gospel.

If you’ve ever been to Athens, you can stand on Mars Hill where the Areopagus was and you can still look up and see the ruins of the Acropolis, the Temple of Athena. You can stand right where Paul was and see where these demons, the idols that vexed him, were standing on Mars Hill. You can stand right there to this day and see what was vexing Paul’s spirit.

What did Paul do about it? Did he do his somersault, “I bind you! I rebuke you!”? No! He preached the Gospel. He preached the Gospel. I believe in prayer, in praying against these influences, that’s no problem. But when people go on with this “binding” and “loosing”, I don’t even think they know what they’re talking about.

DOING OUR PART

Let’s look once again at Daniel 10. Now as we’ve already read, verse 13... “But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days... OK? Now earlier in the chapter, in verse 3 it reads...

I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I use any ointment at all until the entire three weeks were completed.

“Three weeks” is how many days? How long was the prince of Persia withstanding God’s messenger before the breakthrough came? Twenty-one.

These things are principalities. They’re powerful, demonic forces. They’ve been around for centuries. Michael the Archangel had to fight against them. It took the angels of God weeks to break through. Do you think that some clown from Texas (God bless him) is going to come...
Look at Esther’s countenance. For Christians to really go up against the avalanche of demonic influence coming into our society, we have to have the attitude of Esther, a courageous woman. I wish more Christian men had the integrity and courage of this woman. “If I perish, I perish.”

That was the attitude of the early Christians when they went up against the Pagan religions of imperial Rome. “If I perish, I perish.” That is the only way you’re ever going to turn these things around: those who do not love their life in this world.

I don’t seek a martyr’s crown, but by the grace of God I want to be able to say if it happens, it happens. I’d rather win a martyr’s crown than compromise and extend my life. I’m not looking to be a martyr, believe me. I haven’t got the guts. But then look: she fasted and prayed. What did Daniel do in 10:3? He fasted and prayed. Not a 2-minute prayer meeting, a 10-minute prayer meeting, the Jews fasted and prayed. Esther with her handmaidens fasted and prayed three days; Daniel did it for three weeks. You’re never going to overcome these things with “I bind you! I rebuke you!” It’s crazy! Jesus said this kind only goes out with prayer and fasting (Matt. 17:21).

3RD PRINCIPLE: PREACH GOD’S WORD

Thus the Jews struck all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying; and they did what they pleased to those who hated them (Esther 9:5).

Our sword is not the physical sword any more. What does the book of Ephesians say the sword is? (Eph. 6:17) This is our sword, the Bible. Pick up the sword. Witness to Muslims. Witness to Roman Catholics. Witness to Hindus. Witness to Orthodox Jews. “If I perish, I perish.”

THOSE ARE THE PRINCIPLES

We saw what happened in this century with the Third Reich: God’s Spirit was grieved, it didn’t convict, government got away from Christian principles, Higher Criticism and liberal Protestantism replaced conservative Protestantism, replaced evangelical Protestantism. And what happens when the Gospel goes down? When God’s Spirit is grieved, and when the government comes under the influences of wrong spirits? The Huns, the Teutons, the Visigoths, the ancient Barbarians. The Germans did what they always did before they had Jesus.

What do you see in this country and throughout the West? The football hooligans, the tribalism, the New Age Travelers. It is just going back to what it always was.

What do you see in Northern Ireland? Hatred between the Catholics and Protestants! They’re actually putting on the murals names of the ancient Celtic gods such as Ulidia, and are demanding the blood of the sons of Ireland and they’re getting it.

In Japan, it’s the Shogun mentality. In Italy: corruption and instability. Israel: rebellion, sacrificing children to demons. Every country, every nation, has its principalities. There are three ways that it can be restrained:

The Holy Spirit. But when the Holy Spirit is grieved, He doesn’t do what He does in John 16:8; He doesn’t convict, He doesn’t unite or empower the church to the same degree. Unless there is repentance in the church, and the Holy Spirit stops being grieved, the Holy Spirit is not going to do what He wants to do, and it’s our fault.

Government. We need to pray for our leaders. I don’t like any of them. I don’t like the American government, I don’t like the Israeli government, I don’t like the British government, I don’t like any of them. But I have no doubt that if I was a politician I’d be just as bad as all of them. Pray for the leaders. And third, there’s the Gospel.

Esther is our model: don’t compromise. Don’t compromise with these other religions. We need to fast and pray like we’ve never fasted and prayed before. We need to pick up the sword and, like Esther, we need to say, “If I perish, I perish.”

It doesn’t matter if you call him “Amalek”, “Agag”, “Haman”, or “Saddam Hussein”. It doesn’t matter if you call her “Ashteroth” or “Our Lady of Mount Carmel”. It doesn’t matter if you call it “Shia Islam” or “Molech worship”. It doesn’t matter, it’s all the same.

But there is a war. A war is going on, and our side is losing. We are losing the spiritual war. We’re losing against the forces of New Age; we’re losing against Islam; we’re losing against ecumenism; we’re losing. It’s time to stop losing. It’s time to stop compromising. It’s time to begin fasting and praying. And it’s time to go to war. And it’s time to say, “If I perish, I perish. We’re going up against it.”

We’re going up against Islam, we’re going up against New Age, we’re going up against ecumenism. But it’s going to require people that are not going to compromise. It’s going to require people that are going to fast and pray. It’s going to require people who are going to pick up the sword. And it’s going to require people who say, “If I perish, I perish.”

and say, “I rebuke you” and that’s going to be the end of it? It’s ridiculous, isn’t it? It’s absurd. I wish it were that easy.

Jerusalem — oh, boy. When they see the Dome of the Rock and the Mosque of Aqsa where the temple used to be, they do ring-around-the-rosy on that thing and begin their taunt. That thing has been “bound” so many times I’m surprised it doesn’t have Christmas packaging on it.

There is a connection between our prayers and the spiritual battle. Remember when Moses was praying, and when he put his hands down, the enemy Amalek prevailed. Daniel had to fast and pray. We do participate in spiritual warfare.

The ability of angels to overcome against these principalities is driven in part by our prayer and fasting. We do have a weapon, but it’s not this easy formula, “I bind you! I loose you!” It’s real prayer. It’s deep prayer.

1ST PRINCIPLE: NEVER COMPROMISE

Let’s look at some more things at the book of Esther. These are the principles. Esther 3:2...

But Mordecai neither bowed down nor paid homage.

The first principle of spiritual warfare is never compromise with false religion or the powers in back of it (see Judges 2).

If you begin compromising with things like ecumenism and liberal Protestantism, they’re going to win. The Baptist Union in this country has entered the inter-church process, uniting with liberal Protestants and the Roman Catholic Church. What would John Bunyan have said to that? What would Charles Spurgeon have said to that? What would the Ana-baptists, who were murdered by the Roman church, have said to that? “They’ve begun compromising with them.”

The Church of England has not only compromised with nominal Christianity, it has compromised with other religions’ fables. Once you compromise with them, they’re going to win. That’s what it says in Judges, and that is what’s going to happen. (See Esther 3:2 and Judges 2:2-3.)

2ND PRINCIPLE: PRAYER AND FASTING

“Go, assemble all the Jews who are found in Susa, and fast for me; do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maidens also will fast in the same way. And thus I will go in to the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish.” (Esther 4:16).
By Jackie Alnor

The prosperity gospel has evolved over the past fifty years of its existence. Televangelists have adopted various elements of it from each other, customizing it to fit their own peculiar vision. There is much debate as to where it all began and who came up with various interpretations of pet verses due to the consistent boasting of preachers who claim each element as divine revelation given to them directly by God.

Though Oral Roberts takes the credit for the idea of seed-faith--give to get--revelation, others say it was given to him by an associate, Gene Ewing, who built a reputation for successful fundraising strategies.

One historian points to 1950s faith healer, A. A. Allen, as an early innovator of mixing faith with prosperity. “Allen was one of the first in the revival to gain support by appealing to the financial dreams of his followers. Implicit in the revival was a conviction that God could grant not only physical but financial healing to His children. Allen early indicated that there was a scriptural secret to financial success.”1

Apparently, it was during the healing revival movement of the post-war, mid-20th century that the Gospel of salvation for man’s souls was changed into a false gospel of prosperity. And this at a time when America was beginning to live the American dream of a car in every garage and a television set in every living room. As one teacher put it, “The money preachers -- they’re simply rewriting the Gospel as a religion of Western consumerism.”2 This was not a movement of God, but a worldly inspiration for a better life and success in the here and now.

Whether or not it was Oral Roberts who came up with the seed-faith secret to prosperity, it was Roberts who popularized it and utilized it for his own financial benefit. But it was the preaching of seed-faith that worked for Roberts, not the method of sowing and reaping itself. Roberts would preach his new gospel and really lay it on the audience who came to his tent revivals seeking a healing touch from him. At offering time, if you didn’t sow money into Roberts’ ministry, you weren’t about to benefit from his so-called healing virtue.

And because it seemed to work for Roberts, other Pentecostal ministers adopted the concept and put it to work for themselves. Word/Faith teacher Charles Capps said, “Several years ago one of Oral Roberts’ books came into my hands, entitled Miracle of Seed-Faith. I suppose this book transformed my life as much as any book I have ever read. . . Oral put it in understandable form so that I could put it to work in my life.”

The late Jamie Buckingham, a formercolumnist for Charisma magazine, testified that it was Roberts who introduced him to Seed-Faith also. “I remember the afternoon I sat in the audience as Oral spoke. I was still struggling with his ‘Seed-Faith’ message, and what I felt was an over-emphasis on materialism, but I knew I had to be intellectually honest. That meant letting God flush from my mind all preconceived notions and listening with a clean slate.” What that really meant was drowning out the voice of his conscience and the conviction of the Holy Spirit that the Seed-Faith message was indeed carnal and unbiblical.

Oral Roberts has had a number of dramatic fund-raising appeals over the years to raise money for ministry projects he claimed were God-ordained. But his City of Faith hospital that was supposed to come up with a cure for cancer is now defunct. The university he named after himself has lost both its medical and legal studies programs and is over 33 million dollars in debt. Roberts’ record for hearing from God has proven to be pretty bad.

“How about Oral Roberts?, asked author, Dave Hunt. “You know he had a seven-hour conversation with a 900-foot Jesus who told him to build a hospital in Tulsa that anybody knew wasn’t needed. Promises that there will be miracles, a cure for cancer. 777 beds. You know three 7’s -- that’s terrific! I don’t think they ever had more than 246 of them occupied. The thing went bankrupt. No cure for cancer. No miracles. Is that a false prophecy? You have to ask yourself seriously. Was Oral Roberts just lying to us or was he hallucinating or did he really have this conversation? I mean a 7-hour hallucination? That’s pretty long. Did he really have a conversation with some 900-foot being that claimed to be Jesus? That’s quite a delusion! But he continues to be quite popular.”

His “900-foot Jesus” campaign in 1980 appealed to his supporters to donate $5 million a month to build the unnecessary medical complex and according to the Oral Roberts Evangelistic Association, it worked. Then in 1987, when Oral Roberts University was in financial trouble, Roberts announced that God spoke to him and warned him that if he didn’t raise $8 million by the end of the month of March, God would “take him home.” The secular press jumped right on the story with headlines such as: “God Will Kill Oral Without 5 Mil,” and “Roberts Hustles People.”

Right away other televangelists jumped to Roberts defense. “We’re here, Oral, to say we love you,” said James Robison, whose daily TV program is seen on TBN. “I’ve had enough of the media flak to know it’s painful.”

My own elderly aunt, a long-time Oral Roberts supporter, tried to empty her savings account, but was fortunately stopped by her grown children just in the nick of time. They could not afford to take on the expense of her retirement home all by themselves which is what would have happened had they not caught her in time. She had already signed over all the oil rights to the family farm in Oklahoma to the Oral Roberts Association. No doubt many other shut-ins were not so fortunate, and many lost their nest eggs.

The final $1.3 million that Roberts needed by the deadline of March 31, 1987, was met by a Florida man, Jerry Collins, who owned two greyhound dog racing tracks. Here is a summary of Oral Roberts’ record of hearing directly from God as compiled in 1990 by “O Timothy” magazine:

“In 1983 Oral said that Jesus Christ appeared to him and told him to find a cure for cancer. So far, he has not found a cure and it is certain that he never will. In 1986 Oral said that God told him, ‘I want you to use the ORU medical school to put My medical presence in the earth. I want you to get this going in one year or I will call you home. It will cost $8 million and I want you to believe you can raise it.”

In January of 1987 Oral said that God told him that he had not sent out any medi-
Continued: Life styles of the Rich and Famous - Pt. 7

The Lord program and both Crouches have He is still a frequent guest on the Praise greatest role-models and fathers in the faith. day to uphold Oral Roberts as one of their million more than was required by God.

In April Oral Roberts said that he had profile minister with a lust for Mammon.

In September of 1989, Oral closed the City of Faith, never having sent out a single medical missionary. And no, He didn’t refund a single dime of the money that he bilked from the faithful. You do the math.”

ROLE MODELS FOR THE CROUCHES

Paul and Jan Crouch continue to this day to uphold Oral Roberts as one of their greatest role-models and fathers in the faith. He is still a frequent guest on the Praise the Lord program and both Crouches have received honorary doctorate degrees from ORU and have served on Roberts’ ministry boards. It is easy to see from watching TBN and the Crouches lifestyle, how they were impacted by those they honor who led the way in Christian television.

Not only did the Crouches adopt their role models’ fundraising methods, but they also followed in their footsteps in living lavishly. The Crouches have praised early Christian television pioneer, Rex Humbard, whose ministry was “sullied by scandal since he first began broadcasting in 1953.” The Cleveland Press reported in 1980 how the Humbards had just bought three expensive homes in Florida for Rex Humbard and his two sons. The Crouches pay honor to Rex Humbard in their newsletters and on the Praise program as a “great Christian radio & television pioneer.”

Whenever there is a major scandal in televangelism, a love for money is at the heart of it. When prosperity teachers use their bank account balances to determine their ministry’s measure of success, they lose all sight of what God values.

Worldliness and greed were the downfall of the PTL empire. Sexual immorality played a part as well, but the love of money is the root of all evil and wealth gives access to the world’s goods and services. That’s why Jesus said, “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into heaven.”

When “Christian” leaders live in conspicuous consumption, the world looks on and Christianity is tarnished. These televangelists rant and rage at the secular press for confronting them about their lavish lifestyles as they justify themselves saying they are merely enjoying God’s promises to bless His children.

Another inspiration for TBN was Christian television pioneer, Kathryn Kuhlman. She was an eccentric faith healer who Benny Hinn identifies as the source of his anointing. She came to prominence in the 1950s and had her own religious television program, “I Believe in Miracles,” on Sundays on CBS, before there were any “Christian” networks.

Jamie Buckingham was a close associate of Kuhlman’s and wrote her biography, “Daughter of Destiny.” Though he was a friendly reporter, he described Kuhlman’s love of money and fame and her penchant for trying to capture Hollywood’s attention.

“Kathryn was, in her later years, a frequent visitor in the fashionable boutiques along Wilshire Boulevard and in Beverly Hills,” wrote Buckingham. “She loved her expensive clothes, precious jewels, luxury hotels and first class travel.” He said that Kuhlman loved living like a queen but off the donations of the commoners.

Kuhlman’s pianist, TBN regular Dino Kartsonakis, according to Buckingham, also took on the duties of her personal escort around the world until they had a falling out in late 1975. Buckingham reported that Kuhlman’s staff referred to Kartsonakis as “Kathryn’s gigolo,” and she became insanely jealous when Kartsonakis became interested in a young lady his own age, who became his first wife. Kuhlman would have Kartsonakis flown to Italy just to have his clothes tailor-made and be put up in the finest hotels. Kuhlman died a few months after their falling out and many Kuhlman insiders blamed her demise on Dino Kartsonakis.

Since the Crouches’ predecessors seemed to get away with living high on the hog off the donations of the little people, I suppose they thought they deserved the same benefits. After all, their ministries are bigger than any of their fore-runners so they deserve the same perks as any CEO of a billion-dollar empire.

PTL & TBN

When the PTL scandal hit the news in 1987, Americans were shocked when their expensive lifestyle was revealed for all to see. Remember the air-conditioned doghouse and the gold plated bathroom fixtures that the secular press made such a big deal over? Yet today the TBN regulars blatantly flaunt their riches and conspicuous consumption without shame. Few seem to question the impropriety of it nowadays. It is as if it has lost its shock value.

Paul Crouch, on Behind the Scenes, has often displayed his expensive white Arabian stallion which, it has been reported by former staff members, gets VIP treatment when he makes an appearance, and enjoys an air-conditioned portable stable when he’s brought to the Irving, Texas, studio.

And Paul Crouch’s offices in TBN’s headquarters in Costa Mesa, California, are said to be so luxurious that few people are even allowed onto the third floor of the former Full Gospel Businessmen’s Association building where it is located. It has been reported that “Paul Crouch’s 8,000-square-foot executive suite, which occupies half of the top floor of the three-story building, is strictly off-limits to the public. Behind doors kept locked throughout construction are a wet bar and sauna, a personal gym, meticulously handcrafted black walnut woodwork and ornate velvet furniture.”

The Orange County Register’s reporter was barred from seeing the suite, the report continued, “but others who have been inside or helped build the suite say it is more befitting a mansion than an office building. ‘This makes Hearst Castle look like a doghouse,’ said Steve Oliver, a master journeyman carpenter. While scores of hired hands worked on the exterior and other public areas of the building, Oliver and others in a crew of highly skilled carpenters spent several months last year on Crouch’s private third-floor quarters. The finished product is ‘really rich looking,’ said Willa Bouvens-Killeen, a Costa Mesa senior planner. ‘The wood is the very best quality, and they used the best craftsmen,’ she said. ‘It looks like something you’d expect in a mansion type of house rather than offices.’”

The L.A. Times described the new TBN headquarters as “a cross between Disneyland’s Sleeping Beauty castle and a Middle Eastern palace. Inside,
a sweeping brass and marble staircase leads to a 15-foot tall statue of Michael the Archangel stomping the head of Satan. Behind is a high-definition video theater with a 48-channel sound system and a state-of-the-art television studio.”

One Pentecostal preacher who toured the facility was so provoked by what he saw that he produced a video about TBN’s decadence entitled, “Temple To The Gods and Goddesses.” In the video Pastor Joseph Chambers shows video clips of his self-guided tour through the areas that are open to the public. As the video scans on the array of red velvet, gold trim, and mirrored walls and ceilings, Chambers gives his commentary.

“Now let’s go into the actual headquarters of this temple of the gods and the goddesses,” Chambers says while rolling the video footage he took at the newly renovated building. “Watch with me. Nude paintings of cherubim and children all over the ceilings . . . You’ll note that they have female angels, I call them new age angels, at the entrance along the way as you lead into the studio . . . Then you have a picture of two nude people hanging over a woman figure . . . I’m not sure what that picture represents, but it was quite amazing to me. Now if you look, as we take a look around at some other places, there’s ancient gods used in decoration. This is on the statues and in different places, the legs of tables. It’s all a very motif, a very presence of a temple of the gods and goddesses.”

One thing for sure -- TBN’s décor is done in miserable poor taste. Many compare the sets and furnishings to ancient brothels. Jan Crouch takes full credit for the interior design. During the Spring, 1999 Praise-a-Thon, Paul Crouch responded to all the furor that the new Spring, 1999 Praise-a-Thon, Paul Crouch responded to all the furor that the new TBN as the cover story. In the side-bar, “Jan Will Be Jan,” author J. Lee Grady wrote, “Channel surfers who visit the Trinity Broadcasting Network on weeknights often do double takes when they see Jan Crouch chatting on the flashy Praise the Lord set. Her pink bouffant wig, heavy eye makeup and constant giggling put her in a category all by herself when it comes to talk-show hosts. . . She doesn’t care if you are offended by her clothing style, her makeup or her recent decision to have cosmetic surgery.”

Certainly her appearance does grab the attention of channel-surfers, but diminishes from anything she says since she can’t be taken seriously in the minds of the casual viewer.

The Tonight Show’s host, Jay Leno, once commented on her during his monologue. He said that his wife sometimes watches Christian television and asked his audience if they have seen this woman who “looks like Tammy Faye on a bad day. White hair piled up high, eye make-up that looks like it’s applied with a trowel and wearing a fur coat.”

Jan Crouch really goes to work during the Christmas holidays. Just like PTL’s Heritage USA theme park that lit up every Christmas, TBN’s studios come alive in December. Tammy Faye was the first to boast of having one million lights hung on PTL’s property, and now Jan Crouch has outdone Bakker and has more than one million lights on the Costa Mesa headquarters alone. Unfortunately, that didn’t sit well in Southern California when residents were enduring rolling blackouts due to power shortages.


Times Staff Writer, William Lobdell’s lead paragraph read, “It’s that time of year again: to mail cards, trim the tree — and complain about the light display at Trinity Broadcasting Network headquarters in Costa Mesa. But this December, the complaints — usually centered around matters of taste — have had greater resonance as the state endures its worst energy crisis in more than two decades.”

The article went on to explain that TBN made a few concessions to the complaints, but still lit up the building, only for shorter periods of time. The locals in the vicinity say you can see the lights from the TBN building for a mile before you pass by on the 405 Freeway.

One of TBN’s brochures boasts of the Holiday decorations at their Hendersonville, Tennessee studios. “Marvel at the Yuletide beauty of Christmas City USA. Over a million lights sparkling on 30 acres of beautifully decorated grounds. Stroll through Christmas Around the World and see delightful Christmas traditions from many nations.”

Jan Crouch’s former personal assistant, Kelly Whitmore, used to have to go and purchase furniture and décor at Crouch’s command. “I felt so guilty going and buying those things,” said Whitmore. “Christmas lights were absolutely phenomenal in cost.”

What a bad portrait of Christianity TBN portrays to the world when they see the gaudy sets and the painted woman that resembles her surroundings. On a Behind the Scenes show in December, 2000, Jan Crouch gave a guided tour of the conference room at TBN’s new Costa Mesa facility. The room was full of banquet tables and chairs and decorated with red velvet curtains. Mrs. Crouch used the time to promote the seminars available to all TBN partners in Southern California.
The upcoming seminar was to be conducted by Jan Crouch’s own cosmetic surgeon and was on the topic of liposuction.

Perhaps Jan Crouch was indebted to her cosmetic surgeons to promote their businesses after all the time they put into Jan’s reconstruction that occurred in the late 1990s. Jan seemed to disappear for a while from the airwaves. She left looking like Elly Mae Clampett of the Beverly Hillbillies with her frilly pink ruffles and blonde curly wigs and came back in the style of Pamela Sue Anderson with straightened, tinted, wigs and collagen lips. Jan Crouch’s personality changed along with her new outward appearance. She now is rarely seen in a color other than black. Before her renovation she rarely wore that color. And her Elly Maeiggles were replaced with Pamela Lee’s sauciness. And the world takes notice.

One Christian reporter, Robin BANDINI, wrote of Jan Crouch, “She has reportedly used countless thousands of TBN money to get a variety of face-lifts, liposuction, tummy tucks, collagen lip implants, and breast augmentation.”

Jan Crouch’s former assistant, Kelly Whitmore, confirmed this and said “Jan has had three breast augmentation surgeries and went from a 34-b to a 40-dd. She wanted to go slowly so it wouldn’t be so noticeable. Dolly Parton was one of Jan’s idols and Jan carries Barbie dolls around with her.”

But Jan Crouch is not ashamed of these things, but rather flaunts them to the TBN viewers as some sort of fringe benefit of her prosperity gospel. She doesn’t seem to care what anybody thinks, she’s going to do what she wants to do. She has the power over the programming of the largest “Christian” network in the world.

It is reported that the Crouches have lived separately for years. This is apparent from watching TBN and seeing the Crouches refer to each other as being elsewhere very consistently. Whitmore testified of the Crouches’ condos in Tennessee being next door to each other, so the Crouches apparently hold to an idea of Charles and Diana, with “the power over the programming of the largest “Christian” network in the world.

It is reported that the Crouches have lived separately for years. This is apparent from watching TBN and seeing the Crouches refer to each other as being elsewhere very consistently. Whitmore testified of the Crouches’ condos in Tennessee being next door to each other, so even when the Crouches are together in the same place, they reside separately.

There might be some logical explanation for these reports, however the Crouches refuse to be interviewed. But it certainly does give “an appearance of evil,” something the Bible clearly warns against.

Both Jan and Paul have spoken publicly about Jan’s reputation as a flirt, so when she’s seen acting unbecomingly in public, it looks all the more incriminating. Jan shared with the TBN viewers: “When I had gotten thrown out of college -- Can you see this little sweet face? Can you believe this little sweet face ever got thrown out of a Christian college? I mean they went, ‘Out of here, child! We cannot help you! Out! Out! Out!’ And the day that I was thrown out of Evangel College in Springfield, Missouri, my little daddy that night . . . I was planning just to leave. I knew the disgrace I had brought him. My dad (Edgar Bentley) was on the board of Evangel College. I knew the disgrace. One of the big wigs in the Assemblies of God church, when his daughter going to a Christian college of the denomination was the first girl ever to get thrown out. I felt helpless.

“I heard the car motor going outside my dorm window where I had a ladder up to my window . . . They called it Jacob’s ladder. I don’t think it should have been called that -- it’s Jacob and John and Bruce and Ed and whoever will . . . I heard Bruce’s car outside the window and I was fixin to go.”

She explained how her dad’s prayers stopped her and she called him to pick her up rather than run away. Her recent behavior makes one ask if she has ever gotten over the promiscuity of her youth. As a public figure in the Christian community, she certainly is looked up to by many TBN loyalists. But her public image makes a horrible role-model for young Christian women who are sent the message that impurity and sleaze is quite OK for a believer.

Both Jan and Paul Crouch are globe trotters who stay in the finest, first-class hotels. In fact, one day on Behind the Scenes, Jan Crouch held grand-son, Calan, on her lap, talking about what a relaxing week-end she had and Calan blurted out that they stayed at the “Ritz Carlton,” an expensive five-star hotel on the beach in Laguna. Jan quickly put her hand over her mouth and made excuses that they just wanted to stay at the beach. That’s odd too since the Crouches own a house in Newport Beach and a condo near the new Costa Mesa headquarters, a mere few miles from their house. (Again, more evidence that the Crouches reside apart.)

So Jan Crouch knows her lifestyle is shameful or she wouldn’t have been embarrassed when Calan advertised it. The Crouches apparently hold to an idea of cheap grace -- “Sin all the more that grace abounds.” Insiders have reported that Jan Crouch enjoys smoking cigarettes and Paul Crouch keeps a supply of expensive cigars on hand. Once Jan joked about her smoking on the Praise-a-Thon in April, 2001. “Matt said today on the phone to me, our son Matthew. When I was talking to him, he said, ‘Mom, it sounds like you’ve been smoking for 50 years.’ I’m sorry -- No, only 48.” And she laughed about it.

Paul Crouch also has expensive taste. He recently bragged about buying a classic sports car while at the same time claiming that he controls his money, his money doesn’t control him. “The Lord gave me a desire of my heart last week, Crouch announced during the Spring 2001 Praise a Thon. “I got me a little sports car . . . Yes I did, just like Steve Brock’s. He got his a year earlier, yes.”

Steve Brock, Benny Hinn’s tenor who has also been a regular performer on TBN’s Praise-the-Lord programs for a couple of decades, got a good laugh from Crouch’s confession.

**TBN REGULARS FOLLOW SUIT**

The lifestyles of those who have shows on TBN tend to match the example set by the Crouches. There are a few exceptions, but the programming on the network tends to send the same message and give a consistent display of avarice, greed, and worldliness. The Bible is specific as to how we must respond to those whose lifestyles are so ungodly.

“But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner--not even to eat with such a person.” (1Co 5:11)

1. Harrell, Daved Edwin Jr., “All Things Are Possible,” @1975, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, p 74
2. Prasch, Jacob, “People’s Opinions or God’s,” a study of II Sam. 5 & 6, audio tape #PRA1129 on file.
10. Ibid., pp.272-273. 1998 On-line forum, Thread: “TBN is insane”: alt.fan.bob-larson
11. Apodaca, Patricia, “Southland Ranks as TV’s Bible Belt, Los Angeles Times, Orange County edition, 1/12/98

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**Continued:** Life styles of the Rich and Famous - Pt. 7

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**Moriel Quarterly • June 2007**
**To Our Much Beloved Jewish Friends**

Shalom! My name is Yacov, Jacob. I would like to speak to you about the relationship between Christianity and Judaism. I direct an international Christian organization that supports Israel and opposes anti-Semitism and seeks to educate Christians about the Jewish origins of the message of Jesus and about God’s eternal love for His ancient people Israel.

I know Jewish people are revolted by Jews who believe in Jesus so you can rest assured my mother is a Gentile, Roman Catholic. She doesn’t believe what I believe but I am not chalakikly Jewish. My wife and children, however, are. Now I grew up in the New York area and I was sent to both a Roman Catholic school and a Jewish Community Centre. I had been circumcised in infancy and I was “sprinkled” as a baby, which I no longer consider valid baptism (Baptism is originally a Jewish ritual deriving from the tevila right called Mikveh Brit by the first believers in Jesus who were all Jewish).

The Hebrew language is based on a root word system. The foundation to the roots are the letters of the alphabet. Each letter in the original alphabet is a picture which represents something that supplies meaning to the letter. When two letters are put together, a letter “parent” root is formed where the letters supply the meaning to the root. A “child” root is formed by placing a vowel (a, e, waw or yad) in front, between or behind the parent root. While the parent root is generic in meaning, the child root is more specific in meaning.

From these roots are formed words. Some words use the same letters as the roots, while others are formed by placing another letter in the word. The words are even more specific in meaning than the roots.

The above examples of Hebrew words will demonstrate the relationship between the letters and the words. When studying these words, it is essential to remember not to interpret the words from our “Western”, Greco-Roman cultural minds, but rather develop an understanding of the “Hebraic” meaning of the words. This will allow the student of the Bible a greater understanding of Biblical words which will assist in better Biblical interpretation.

Each lesson will begin by looking at the individual letters of the word. Then the combination of the letters which form a word will be examined. Remember that Hebrew is written from right to left. Some of the lessons will include related words showing the relationship between the various words derived from the same root.

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**Hebrew Lesson**

The water of life is the Word from GOD

**Note:**

‘Hebrew is read from right to left’

יִשְׂרָאֵל יִרְאֵהוּ מִן הָאֱלֹהִים

Yeshuah, Ha-Mashiach (Ba-Rooch). "Blessed Be he that cometh in the name of the LORD” – Psalm 118:26

Ye-shu’u hoo ha-ma-shi’ach.

“JESUS is the Messiah (CHRIST)” – John (Yochanan) 20:31

"b’k’orahm, et-totërê Nata’ê"

“I Will put my law into their inward parts” – Jeremiah 31:33
Stephen Sizer’s Christian Zionism: Road-map to Armageddon? (A Critical Book Review), by Calvin L. Smith


An explosion of Evangelicalism (predominantly Pentecostalism) across Latin America during the 1980s quickly captured the attention of sociologists. Since then, this ripe field of research has been extended to include the social and political impact of explosive Pentecostal growth in Africa and elsewhere, while the entire phenomenon has arguably spawned a relatively new, interdisciplinary academic field, Pentecostal Studies, which is now well-established in respected universities and centres throughout Europe and North America.

If several decades of scholarly Pentecostal studies have taught us anything, it is the movement’s heterogeneity. Pentecostalism’s diverse histories, beliefs, and practices underpin various expressions of global Pentecostalism, which in turn demands a nuanced approach to the movement. Some scholars viewing Pentecostalism as essentially homogenous have discovered this to their cost, producing research that has ultimately proved flawed and been ridiculed within the academic community.

Yet despite these apparently disparate expressions of Pentecostalism, nevertheless there are features common to most. These include styles of worship, pneumatology, and especially charismata (spiritual gifts), especially glossolalia (speaking in tongues). Another, arguably, is Zionism. Several years ago, when I delivered a lecture to a Pentecostal Studies group at the University of Birmingham, the subject of Israel was raised. Given Pentecostalism’s diverse nature, together with the various expressions represented there, I sought students’ views on the modern state of Israel. Of more than a dozen postgraduates, I do not recall any student expressing other than a positive view of Israel. I suppose this should not be that surprising. After all, Pentecostalism’s eschatology is historically strongly influenced by dispensationalism, which has helped to ensure that classical Pentecostalism is strongly Zionist by nature. Even though one can find Pentecostals today who are not Zionist or support the modern state of Israel, nonetheless Zionism has become a defining feature of classical Pentecostalism which has since been embraced by other expressions of Pentecostalism throughout the world.

It is because of this pro-Israel stance that Pentecostals (or, for that matter, any other Christians who believe the Jews remain God’s people and who support the modern state of Israel) should be aware of Stephen Sizer’s book, Christian Zionism: Road-map to Armageddon? which is highly critical of Christian Zionism. In his book, Sizer traces the roots and history of Christian Zionist dispensationalism, its theological emphases, and what he considers to be its damaging political implications. The book concludes with what Sizer refers to as a ‘a covenantal alternative’.

Sizer argues that British dispensationalism was instrumental in creating the necessary political will within the British political establishment to create a Jewish homeland within the land that fell at that time under the British Mandate. He also states that British dispensationalism, which predated the American variant, went on to influence U.S. Christian perceptions of Israel. Thus, the book argues that whereas British dispensationalism helped to create the modern state of Israel, U.S. dispensationalists (and those influenced by it) provide Israel with ongoing legitimacy and active support. Among those at the forefront of garnering political support for Israel are several leading Pentecostal televangelists, which brings us right back to where this essay began, namely, Pentecostal attitudes towards Israel.

Sizer’s book is unnecessarily polemical and pejorative. It is also strongly biased. Sizer is strongly associated with a Palestinian ecumenical and liberation theology movement called Sabeel, which sides very strongly with the Palestinian cause and vociferously condemns Israel. Although Sabeel’s founder, Naim Ateek, has condemned suicide bombings, his statement is qualified by seeking to understand why suicide bombers do what they do. It is interesting to see also how, in the context of suicide bombings against Israel, Naim Ateek and Sabeel refer to Samson’s last act in the Philistines’ temple of Dagon. Thus, Sabeel’s position on suicide bombings appears somewhat ambiguous. (For details, see http://www.sabeel.org/old/news/cstone25/suicidebombers.htm), http://www.sabeel.org/old/news/cstone25/suicidebombers.htm).

Its pejorative and biased nature means the book is not as objective as it might be, which weakens its scholarly impact. Actually, these flaws are a pity because Sizer makes some valid points concerning extreme dispensationalism. He also highlights some of the dangers of an “Israel right or wrong” mentality which some Christians hold. (Even many Jews do not take this position.) Other valid points Sizer makes are how at times dispensationalism is theoretically arbitrary, the extreme nature of what he calls “political dispensationalism”, the very real theological pitfalls of seeking to read every piece of news and current affairs through the spectacles of biblical prophecy, and the desire by some pro-Israel Christians to offer God a ‘helping hand’ in seeing those prophecies fulfilled. God does not need our help to fulfil His own prophecies, but Sizer manages to highlight how some Christian leaders think in precisely these terms, especially in the U.S., where they engage in political lobbying to bring pressure to bear on government policy so as to fulfil biblical prophecy on God’s behalf. Such a mentality is no different from anthropocentric postmillennialist Kingdom Theology attempts to usher in and present the Kingdom to Christ, thus hastening His return.

A major problem with the book is that it dwells almost exclusively on extreme political dispensationalism, without any meaningful or fair discussion of theological support for the Jews by Evangelicals who are not dispensationalist. The view that the Jews continue to be God’s cho-
sen people does not necessarily translate into the expressions of the forms of extreme Christian Zionism which Sizer describes. Moreover, a pro-Jewish theological stance is nowhere near as new as Sizer would have us believe. He looks back to the Puritans as the progenitors of a pro-Jewish doctrinal stance which he argues reaches maturity in nineteenth century dispensationalism. Yet arguably, support for the doctrine of the Jews as God’s people is the longstanding historic view for the doctrine of the Jews as God’s people, which, ironically, led to terrible anti-Semitism excesses by medieval Christians frustrated that God’s very own people had rejected Christ. Even that anti-Semite Martin Luther recognised the Jews still retained a special place in God’s hand.

Sizer’s book also raises questions about his hermeneutical methodology. For example, as a typical covenantalist he believes most biblical prophecy has been fulfilled already (this position is known as preterism). A case in point is his interpretation of the abomination of desolation, referred to by Jesus in Matthew 24. Clearly, Jesus was alluding to the fall of Jerusalem to Titus in AD 70. Yet the passage also has eschatological significance: it is, after all, located in Matthew’s so-called eschatological discourse, and even a superficial reading demonstrates Jesus is using a soon-to-occur event to describe an eschatological scenario. Thus a Jewish understanding of prophecy as repeated history which can have several partial or illustrative fulfillments is lost on Sizer. Lest he think such a view is clear evidence of someone unable to shed their dispensationalist mindset, one need only consider Isaiah 7:14, which found an expression in Isaiah’s day, but also when Jesus was born. Both children represented a sign that marked the salvation of God’s people Israel.

This leads to another hermeneutical problem with the book. Sizer correctly identifies how a dispensationalist hermeneutic (like any other) can predetermine the interpretation of the Bible. In this case, Sizer argues, a dispensationalist will always read the Bible along Zionist lines, leading to a tunnel vision which rejects all other interpretations. Yet Sizer falls into precisely the very same trap, quite unable to break away from his own strongly covenantal hermeneutic, to the extent that his interpretation of biblical prophecy is allegorised and perverted along established covenantal lines. Thus, Sizer engages in the very same dogmatic hermeneutics he condemns, rather than the exegetical objectivity he appeals for.

All this aside, Sizer’s book throws down the gauntlet to Christian Zionists, and by extension, many Pentecostals, and thus merits closer inspection. After all, support for Jews as God’s people, and by extension the Jewish state, does not necessarily or automatically translate into support for a secular government of Israel, which is arguably somewhat more theologically difficult to justify. Aside from this book, there are several other recent academic Evangelical attempts to push anti-Zionism. There have been several theologically-meaty rebuttals, and Christians who support the Jews as God’s people do well to familiarise themselves with the current debate and seek to defend their position persuasively and effectively in a manner which is exegetically and theologically viable and nuanced.

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www.moriel.org
moriel online

• MORIEL is an evangelistic ministry to people of other faiths, beginning with the Jews and nominal (non-evangelical) Christians, such as Roman Catholics and liberal Protestants. We also hold seminars on Messianic apologetics, and on Islamic evangelism, and cult evangelism

• MORIEL seeks to plant Messianic fellowships where none exist. These are “fellowships” and not congregations, designed to evangelize Jews and to provide a practical way for Jewish believers and those called to the Jews to preserve and express their identity in Yeshua as Messiah

• MORIEL helps believers to plant churches in situations where bible-based congregations do not exist. We call this Missag Vadacha Hebrew term meaning “shelter for the oppressed”.

• MORIEL will stand against serious doctrinal error where it threatens the credibility of the gospel or undermines the authority of scripture. This will be particularly true concerning areas likely to prove detrimental to Jewish evangelism - such as “Dual Covenant Theology” and “Christian Anti-Semitic”, and “Anti-Zionism”

Your Letters ...

Dear Mr. Prasch,
I just read your article you had written about David Wilkerson. We had received his pulpit newsletters for over 20 years and supported him financially. As of about 2 years ago we cancelled our subscription to his newsletters. We were not really aware of what was going on with him of what we read on the article you had written, but that his pulpit newsletters had changed so much we didn’t want them anymore and wondered what had happened to him. We know about the confrontation of his ministry and the “holy laughter” of Rodney Howard Browne when Browne was in N.Y. for a crusade, and also felt he changed after that. Is it so sad, what a day of apostacy we live in. We quit attending churches totally a few years ago and am amazed how the church is in apostacy. We are truly living in the very last days before our Lord Jesus returns. I believe the deception that we are experiencing is nothing to what is coming soon. Lord Jesus help us...

Randy B.

Dear J. Smith:
Thank you for your letter. It is a shame how the mighty have fallen. We had long endorsed David and agreed with his teaching, but you are right something happened. If it happened to David, who can it not happen to? May the Lord preserve us!

We do agree that it is the time of the great apostasy, but we agree even more with the Lord in his direct command that we should not forsake the gathering together of ourselves, especially as we see the day of the Lord approach. Also, those who remain alone argue against all sound wisdom. While we understand that churches have many problems, we do encourage people the solution for bad church is not no church but good church. We hope and encourage people if they are not in church, to at least be in small group home fellowships, or bible studies.

In Peace,
David
Recently at the new Moriel church-plant in Pittsburgh I did a series of messages on the last couple of weeks of Jesus’ life and the instructions that he left His followers. The following came from one of those lessons.

John 13 shows us some relationships that Jesus had and in those relationships we can learn spiritual truths for our relationships with others and for our Christian walk.

The first relationship was Jesus and His Father in Heaven (John 13:1-5). With Jesus on a divine timetable, He knew His hour was come (13:1). And with that knowledge He knew it was the time when He would be glorified through His death, resurrection, and ascension. Jesus’ relationship with His Father taught Him certain truths. He knew who He was, where He came from, what He had, and where He was going, He was complete master of the situation. But, He wanted to teach some last lessons to His own.

These lessons are on Humility, Holiness, and Blessedness. For us we are children of God, born again, and by knowing this fact we know where we are going. So by following Jesus’ examples and having the type of relationship He had with the Father, we can experience a blessed life.

The Scriptures show us that at this point of the evening during what is called the last supper, Jesus gets up and lays aside His outer garments, wraps a towel around His waist, takes a basin of water, and starts to wash the feet of the disciples. This must have been shocking for the disciples. No Jew, not even a Jewish servant would do this, as this was left for the Gentile servants to do. But, the disciple’s master kneels down and gives them a lesson in humility. Jesus knew that there was a competitive spirit in the hearts of His disciples. In fact, within a few minutes, the men were disputing over which of them was the greatest (Luke 22:24-30). But He wanted to teach them and by extension, us! This lesson must have sunk in for Peter because later in his epistle he would write that we are to “be clothed with humility” (1 Peter 5:5).

Jesus was Lord of all and He makes Himself a servant. All things were His and He picks up a towel to dry His disciples’ feet. He was Master, but He chose to serve. It has well been said that humility is not thinking meanly of yourself; it is simply not thinking of yourself at all. True humility grows out of our relationship with the Father. True joy can be found when we follow His example and do the Father’s will. Out of this will come the glorification of His name. We today, just like the disciples that night, desperately need this lesson on humility. The church is filled with a worldly spirit of competition, a spirit that one seeks a church that will meet one’s own need instead of finding a church where one can serve. Also, we often vie to see who has the biggest and best ministry. If Jesus served His disciples because of His humility and because of His love so should we.

During this time Peter spoke out with his usual impulsiveness and ignorance giving us the next lesson on Holiness. It should be noted here that the word translated “wash” in John 13:5-6, 8, 12, and 14 is nipto and means “to wash a part of the body.” It is important as Jesus is not using the word louo(13:10) which means “to bathe all over.” He is drawing a distinction in this lesson about the importance of a holy walk! When someone becomes a believer he is washed all over (1 Cor. 6:9-11; Titus 3:3-7). As we come in contact with this world it is easy to be defiled, to get dirty. Jesus tells Peter, “‘If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.’” (John 13:8). It is important to understand the word here “part” for clarification. It means, “participation, having a share in someone or something.” What is being said is what James says, that we have to be “unspotted from the world” (James 1:27). Our communion with Him is broken by our sin. So it is of the utmost importance that we be Holy as He is holy, that our walked is marked by holiness.

I love Old Testament pictures and typology and there is an illustration in Exodus 29 that should help us to understand this passage’s meaning and the interaction between the Lord and Peter. When the priest was consecrated, he was bathed all over (Ex. 29:4), and that experience was never repeated. However, during his daily ministry, he became defiled; so it was necessary that he wash his hands and feet at the brass laver in the courtyard when he served there. (Ex. 30:18-21). After washing he could trim the lamps, top off the oil or perform whatever job the lot had fallen to him.

For believers today the Lord cleanses us through the blood of Christ, from His work on the cross (1 John 1:5-10), and through the application of His Word to our lives (Ps. 119:9; John 15:3; Eph. 5:25-26). The “water of the Word” can keep our hearts and minds clean so that we will avoid the pollutions of this world. Yet when we sin, we have we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; who will hear our prayers of confession and forgive us (1 John 2:1-2).

Finally for our last lesson, want to give a definition: Blessedness: A state of well-being and contentment. The primary sense of the word “blessed” here is the sense of approval. It is saying that God has expressed His approval on the Disciples and those that do His will. To be blessed is to be approved by God!

With these words, Jesus sums up the first two lessons, “If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.” (John 13:17). Jesus tells us very simply, a life lived in humbleness and holiness produces blessedness. It is not just knowing these things as Jesus clearly states and James 1:22-27 restates for us, but the Word has to be put into action in the life of the believer to produce the desired effect of a blessed life. If the servant is not greater than the master and the Master bends down to serve where does that put us. It puts us into a position to do what our Lord did, serve others in humility and holiness. And in this we find the joy and that state of being that our souls so desire. With the world and especially the western world so caught up in being served, this lesson ought to be on our hearts and at the forefront of our lives in order that we will experience life and life abundant. By His service, He dignified sacrifice and service, so let us go and do likewise.

In Peace,

David
For the last fifteen years or so when I have heard Hank Hanegraaff, host of the Bible Answer Man radio program, field questions on eschatology (end times prophecy) it was very clear that he has been against the futurist perspective from the get-go. Hanegraaff has told his audience for years that he was studying the field of eschatology and would announce his views in a book one day. Hanegraaff’s book has now been released, entitled The Apocalypse Code [1] and has confirmed his rhetoric and tone heard for the last fifteen years on the radio as Hanegraaff has been treating dispensationalism as if it were a cult. Yes, Hanegraaff has been “culting” dispensationalism! Even though Hanegraaff always insisted that he was open to and had not adopted a specific view of eschatology, it has always been equally clear to anyone who is schooled in the various views that he had all along rejected dispensationalism and embraced his own version of a preterist/idealist scheme. Yet, he has never admitted this; and even after the release of his book still refuses to classify his own conclusions in spite of the fact that he assigns labels to virtually everyone else.

**SOME FACTUAL ERRORS**

As I first started reading the book, I noticed a number of factual errors. Let me chronicle just a couple of them. Hanegraaff says Tim LaHaye is “Unlike early dispensationalists, who believed that the Jews would be regathered in Palestine because of belief in their Redeemer.” [2] Hanegraaff gives no documentation for this statement, which is factually in error. In fact, J. N. Darby (the earliest of dispensationalists) believed that the Jews would return to their land in unbelief. He says, “At the end of the age the same fact will be reproduced: the Jews returned to their own land, though without being converted—will find themselves in connection with the fourth beast.” [3] Historian David Rausch in his Ph.D. dissertation entitled: Zionism Within Early American Fundamentalism 1878-1918, says, “The Proto-Fundamentalist believed that the Jewish people would return to Palestine, the “Promised Land,” without converting en masse to Christianity.” [4]

More examples could be given, but it is clear that most dispensationalists have always agreed with LaHaye on this matter.

Another error in fact by Hanegraaff is his statement that Author James Balfour “was raised on a steady diet of dispensationalism.” [5] Lord Balfour was foreign secretary when the British government issues a statement in 1917 supporting the reestablishment of a Jewish state in Israel called the Balfour Declaration. Balfour was a Zionist, but his views were not based upon eschatology, let alone dispensationalism. His sister and biographer said the following:

Balfour’s interest in the Jews and their history was lifelong. It originated in the Old Testament training of his mother, and in his Scottish upbringing. As he grew up, his intellectual admiration and sympathy for certain aspects of Jewish philosophy and culture grew also, and the problem of the Jews in the modern world seemed to him of immense importance. He always talked eagerly on this, and I remember in childhood imbibing from him the idea that Christian religion and civilization owes to Judaism an immeasurable debt, shamefully ill repaid. [6]

Historian Barbara Tuckman tells us that Balfour was “not ardent but a skeptical, not a religious enthusiast but a philosophical pessimist, . . . that Christian religion and civilization owes to Judaism an immeasurable debt, shamefully ill repaid.” [7] Hardly one influenced by dispensationalism as Hanegraaff would have his readers believe. In fact, it is probably true that none of the Christian Zionists of the early twentieth century in Britain were influenced at all by dispensationalism. Most of the Christian Zionists in Britain at this time were usually members of the Church of England. [8]

**Humble Hank**

Humble Hank Hanegraaff ridicules Hal Lindsey’s 1997 book, Apocalypse Code [9] as one who claimed to understand the book of Revelation. “Until the present generation,” declares Hanegraaff of Lindsey, “the encrypted message of the Apocalypse had remained unrealized” until Lindsey cracked the code. [10] Now Hanegraaff meekly declares of the release of his new book: “I think it will create a major paradigm shift in our understanding of the end times that is long overdue.” [11] He believes it will be away from dispensational futurism and toward his preterism/idealism scheme.

Hanegraaff contends that his book is about “Exegetical Eschatology to underscore that above all else I am deeply committed to a proper method of biblical interpretation rather than to any particular model of eschatology.” [12] If that is his goal then he has fallen far short of the mark! Hanegraaff’s proposed interpretative approaches, if implemented, would send the church back to the Dark Ages hermeneutically. He may want to produce only a method of interpretation, but the moment anyone applies a method it produces an outcome or model of eschatology. Further, the book of Revelation is not written in code (where does Revelation say that?), thus, no need to break the code as Hanegraaff contends.

The great majority of the book is a rant against Hanegraaff’s distorted view of dispensationalism in general and Tim LaHaye in particular. There is precious little actual exegesis, if any at all, to support his preterist/idealistic eschatology, however, there are great quantities of some of the most vicious tirades against LaHaye and many other Bible prophecy teachers that I have ever read in print.

Hanegraaff appears rather proud to tell readers that the principles of his methodology is “called Exegetical Eschatology or e 2,” [13] as if no one before he came along had ever produced a view of eschatology from proper exegesis. Interestingly, for someone who claims such a deep commitment “to a proper method of biblical interpretation” [14] it is stunning to realize that Hanegraaff’s “method” is stated as principles, rather than an actual method like the historical-grammatical. “I have organized the principles that are foundational to e 2 around the acronym LIGHTS.” [15] says Hanegraaff. The letters of the acronym LIGHTS stands for the following principles: L refers to the literal principle, I represents the illumination principle, G stands for the grammatical principle, H for the historical principle, T means the typology principle, and S is for the principle of scriptural synergy. [16] Only half of Hanegraaff’s...
principles can even be classified as interpretative methods, the other three are best classified as theological beliefs. Illumination is a work of the Holy Spirit on the believer that enables him to see or understand God’s Word. An unbeliever is blinded to the truth of God (1 Cor. 2:14), however, a believer is in a state in which he is able to see and understand God’s truth (1 Cor. 2:9-3:2). This theological truth is not an interpretative method. Typology is not a method for exegeting Scripture, instead, as Paul says, some Old Testament events were types, patterns, illustrations, or examples to help us live the Christian life (1 Cor. 10:6, 11). Hanegraaff defines his principle of scriptural synergy as a belief “that the whole of Scripture is greater than the sum of its individual passages. . . . that individual Bible passages may never be interpreted in such a way as to conflict with the whole of Scripture.” [17] Traditionally this is called the analogy of faith, that Scripture interprets Scripture. This also is a theological outcome and not a method. This principle also presupposes that one already properly understands the meaning of all of the other passages that are supposed to shed light upon the one in dispute. Such is not the case.

TIM LAHAYE RACIST AND BLASPHEMER?

Hanegraaff’s new book anoints Tim LaHaye as the head of this new cult, replacing Hal Lindsey the former whipping boy, and is the prime target in his sub-Christian attack on LaHaye and other Bible prophecy advocates. Strangely, Hanegraaff is known for often quoting Bible prophecy advocates. Strangely, Hanegraaff believes that God has chosen Israel, but like all dispensationalists, he also believes that Israel will be saved in the future by the same gracious gospel that is available to all mankind-Jew or Gentile.

Anti-Israel and Pro-Palestinian

Hanegraaff’s blend of preterism and idealism produces an eschatology that is viciously anti-Israel and pro-Palestinian. His brand of replacement theology teaches that national Israel has no future since she is replaced by the church.

Just as Joshua is a type of Jesus who leads the true children of Israel into the eternal land of promise, so King David is a type of the “King of Kings and Lord or Lords” who forever rules and reigns from the New Jerusalem in faithfulness and in truth (Revelation 19:16; cf. 19:11). In each case, the lesser is fulfilled and rendered obsolete by the greater. [22]

As is typical within systems of replacement theology, Hanegraaff renders much of the Old Testament obsolete by what is said to have happened in New Testament theology. He says, the “relationship between the Testaments is in essence typological.” [23] Future prophetic promises, which usually relate to Israel, are rendered as mythical or mere types and shadows of something else, but never what they actually say. Through alleged hermeneutical ideas, such as Hanegraaff’s so-called, “typology principle,” he interprets future promises to Israel allegorically as fulfilled through the church. Such deconstruction of God’s Word renders the future promises to Israel as mythological and not true historical records of God’s veracity. [24] Thus, the reader is not surprised that Hanegraaff does not believe that the seventy weeks of years (490 years) in Daniel refer to literal years that actually elapse in specific history, instead, he says, “the seventy sevens of Daniel encompass ten Jubilee eras and represent the extended exile of the Jews that would end in the fullness of time—the quinntessential Jubilee when the people of God would experience ultimate redemption and restoration, not in the harlot city, but in the holy Christ.” [25] Hanegraaff regularly calls Jerusalem “the harlot city.”

CONCLUSION

This book is not only filled with factual error throughout, but teaches that most Bible prophecy has already been fulfilled and advocates the following pre-terist viewpoints: Nero was the beast of Revelation (i.e., the antichrist), Christ’s Olivet discourse and most of the Book of Revelation were fulfilled by events surrounding the a.d. 70 destruction of Jerusalem, and the tribulation was also fulfilled in the first century. Hanegraaff is certainly no lover of Israel since he teaches that God divorced the harlot Israel (he needs to read the end of Hosea) and took a new bride—the church, supports the pro-Palestinian claims against Israel, and even accuses Israel of the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians. Hanegraaff embraces and argues for many viewpoints that are detrimental to sound Bible study and interpretation. Not surprisingly, I do not recommend this book, unless one is looking for an example of how not to study the Bible for all its worth. Maranatha!

ENDNOTES

June 2007 • Moriel Quarterly  19

Continued: The Apocalypse Code

I

n the case of CRI/Hanegraaff vs. Alnor, CRI/Hanegraaff did not appeal the court’s ruling. This means that besides the meritless defamation suit filed against me being thrown out of court, Hanegraaff and CRI has been ordered to pay all of my legal bills. As you might remember, the court ruled that CRI/Hanegraaff violated California’s anti-SLAPP statutes by filing the lawsuit. Today my legal team petitioned the court for recovery of my legal expenses, which are in the six-figure range. I will give the exact figure in the near future.

At the same time, Hank Hanegraaff is begging for money again, claiming that CRI has experienced “a virtual shutdown in giving.” In an unusual appeal in today’s (6-12-07) Bible Answer Man broadcast, Hanegraaff claimed that CRI is $775,000 short, and that “income from giving evaporated from where it was this time last year.” CRI is so short that they are considering shrinking back from some of its operations...

Here is today’s Bible Answer Man Broadcast: http://tinyurl.com/3ymps3 The pitch for money begins around minute 39.

6-12-07

Hank Hanegraaff transcript:

“I just want to take a few moments to share with you a very important concern that is before us right here at the Christian Research Institute. You see, lately we’ve experienced a virtual shutdown in giving from listener’s and donors.

“Income from giving seems evaporated from where it was this time last year. It has produced a shortfall that is in the neighborhood of $775,000. In addition, we are coming up on the end of our fiscal year and by all accounts we are projected to come up substantially short as we close our books.

“With only a few days remaining in CRI’s year-end, a HUGE GAP needs to be closed between where we are right now financially and where we need to be. Add all those factors together and we find ourselves in a CRITICAL situation. The last thing we want to do during this critical time is to shrink back from the outreach and the equipping we engage in each and every day. We receive innumerable letters, emails, phone calls from Christians and nonchristians alike who are asking about God, the Bible life after death, Islam, the reality of Christ, end times prayer, and so much more. The only way the Christian Research Institute can keep up with this outreach and then make headway with these substantial financial challenges is through YOUR prayerful and financial support. If you are regular or even semi regular listener to the Bible Answer Man broadcast and you have seen first hand the difference this ministry has made in presenting the truth of God’s word, then I am asking for you for you financial and prayerful help. It’s CRITICAL that we hear from you today.

Respectfully,

William M. Alnor, Ph.D.

COMMENT

Moriel & Jacob Prasch recognize God’s judgment on Hank Hanegraaff for his financially unethical malconduct, his contra-scriptural litigation against other believers, and his false doctrine that includes a hyper Calvinist anti Israel bias and propagation of the erroneous dogma of replacement theology (Genesis 12:1-3).

On top of this is his compromise on the ecumenical issue and the unbelievably hypocritical of publicly hanging others for the same cheap brand of financial low financial integrity he exercises himself.

May The lord continue to raise His hand against this deceiver.
New Spiritual Disciplines From Ancient Roman Catholic Sources

Promoters of the emergent conversation say we are on the verge of an era that promises renewed spiritual awareness. “Spiritual disciplines” are being touted as the avenue to a “spiritual reformation” that will take Christianity to a new and higher level of spirituality drawing all participants closer to God.

Books published by major Christian publishers written by well known authors are plentiful on this topic. For example, J.P. Moreland and Klaus Issler are both professors at Talbot School of Theology at Biola University in southern California. Moreland is professor of philosophy. Issler is professor of Christian education and theology. In 2006, Navpress published a book they co-authored titled The Lost Virtue of Happiness: Discovering the Disciplines of the Good Life. [1] On the back cover, the following statement is made:

Authors J.P. Moreland and Klaus Issler illustrate how we are happy only when we pursue a transcendent purpose—something larger than ourselves. This involves a deeply meaningful relationship with God through a selfless preoccupation with the spiritual disciplines. The Lost Virtue of Happiness takes a fresh look at the spiritual disciplines, offering concrete examples of ways you can make them practical and life transforming. [2]

The title gives a good overview of what the book is about. Moreland and Issler believe they have rediscovered important spiritual principles that have been lost. If you follow these principles and they become part of your everyday Christian life, you can be transformed.

One of the spiritual disciplines the authors have recovered is outlined in a chapter titled “Gaining Happiness by Losing Your Life.” Under the subheading “Two Friends: Solitude and Silence” the authors make the following statement:

The disciplines of solitude and silence are absolutely fundamental to the Christian life, are naturally practiced in tandem. In solitude we choose to be alone and to reflect on how we experience the facets of life (family, job, relationship with God, finances) and what they mean to us while in isolation. We unhook from companionship with others; we take ourselves physically and mentally out of our social, familial, and other human relationships. [3]

While it is true, getting away and alone somewhere is often the best way to concentrate and evaluate life’s most important decisions, the isolation and solitude that Moreland and Issler are promoting as a spiritual discipline in the name of Christianity has some eastern mystical overtones. Further, the authors attempt to add credibility to this rediscovered “spiritual discipline” by quoting Roman Catholic mystic and priest, Henri Nouwen, who once said:

The man or woman who has developed this solitude of heart is no longer pulled apart by the most divergent stimuli of the surrounding world but is able to perceive and understand this world from a quiet inner center. [4]

This “quiet inner center” Nouwen wrote about is suspect, especially in light of spiritual disciplines practiced by those involved in the Buddhist and Hindu faiths.

Further, it seems that Nouwen’s Roman Catholic mystical beliefs and teachings have strongly influenced the authors. Continuing to develop their idea of the importance of rediscovering the lost art of finding the “quiet inner center,” they state:

Go to a retreat center that has one of its purposes the provision of a place for individual sojourners. Try to find a center that has gardens, fountains, statues, and other forms of beautiful artwork. In our experience, Catholic retreat centers are usually ideal for solitude retreats…We also recommend that you bring photos of your loved ones and a picture of Jesus…Or gaze at a statue of Jesus. Or let some thought, feeling, or memory run through your mind over and over again. [5]

I have searched the scriptures. Gazing at a picture or statue of Jesus or concentrating on a thought or feeling in order to establish “a quiet inner center” just isn’t there!

God’s Word or Man’s Word

It is apparent to me after reading countless books published by mainline publishers on the subject of the emerging church movement that there are two underlying common denominators.

First, it is apparent that the “new kind of Christian” that is being groomed by emergent teachings is being conditioned to accept, embrace and promote a “new mysticism” under the banner of spiritual formation. However, the so-called spiritual disciplines that are promoted as part of this spiritual formation are not new. They are the same methods and techniques that have seduced the masses since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden.

Second, the teachings and beliefs of Roman Catholic mystics who embraced eastern mysticism in the past are being reintroduced, and for many, are taking precedence over the Word of God. The onslaught of ideas promoted by these Roman Catholic mystics is staggering. Why is this so? Is it possible many are being seduced and don’t realize what is happening? Why can people not see the Roman Catholic connection? Have they been blinded?

For example, in a section of The Lost Virtue of Happiness: Discovering The Disciplines of The Good Life, Moreland and Issler provide tips for “developing ongoing prayer.” Here are some of the points they made:

- We recommend that you begin by saying the Jesus Prayer about three hundred times a day. [6]
- When you first awaken, say the Jesus Prayer twenty to thirty times. As you do, something will begin to happen to you. God will begin to slowly occupy the center of your attention. [7]
- Repetitive use of the Jesus Prayer while doing more focused things allows God to be on the boundaries of your mind and forms the habit of being gently in contact with him all day long. [8]

You don’t have to be Bible scholar to understand that repetitive prayers designed to get one into a state of consciousness in order to bring one clos-
er to God, is not in the Word of God.

Further, Moreland and Issler attempt to justify their case for the practice of repetitive prayer in their book, claiming that such a “spiritual discipline” is biblically and historically valid. Encouraging the unsuspecting reader to be at ease, they say:

Now, before you role your eyes in disbelief, hang in there with me. Derived from Luke 18:38, the Jesus Prayer has had a powerful impact on people at various times in church history. [9] And while it comes in different forms, the wording we prefer is “Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me!” If you take up the challenge, I think you’ll see some remarkable results. [10]

Then, attempting to add more convincing biblical grounds to place a seal of approval on such antibiblical practice to get closer to God, Moreland and Issler stated:

You may be thinking that repeating a prayer over and over again violates Jesus’ warning, “And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition [do not keep on babbling, NIV] as the gentiles do, for they suppose they will be heard for their many words” (Matthew 6:7, NASB). On the contrary, the use of repetitive prayer as a spiritual training exercise does not fall under this prohibition. As New Testament scholar Don Carson said, Jesus is not forbidding all long prayers or all repetition. He himself prayed at length (Luke :12), repeated himself in prayer (Matt 26:14), and told a parable to show His disciples that “they should always pray and not give up” (Luke :12). His point is that His disciples should avoid meaningless, repetitive prayers offered under the misconception that mere length will make prayers efficacious. [11]

This apologetic, if it was written by J.P. Moreland who is a well known apologist, justifying meaningless repetitive short word prayers verses long prayers is difficult for me to accept. This would mean that for centuries Christians who have spoken out against the very thing the authors are promoting were mindless fools. This is just too much to accept.

I have been to the country of Myanmar (formerly called Burma) twice. On both occasions I observed (and have video footage) of both Roman Catholics and Buddhists practicing the spiritual principle of repetitive prayer. By the way, in both cases they were chanting these prayers over and over again while they were counting beads. Yes, Roman Catholics and Buddhists both have a “rosary” technique to keep track of how many times they have chanted a prayer.

I have also taken the time to interview Roman Catholics and Buddhists in the country of Myanmar. I have asked them what they are doing and why they are doing this. Each time that I have asked this question I have been told the same thing. It is a way to concentrate and focus their thoughts and get in tune with the spirit world.

Chanting repetitive phrases to get closer to God is not biblical, it is Satanic. If I am wrong in what I am saying, then please show me from the scriptures. In light of what the Bible warns about repetitive prayer and the fact that Satan has a significant plan to seduce believers in the Last Days, if you are headed down this path, I implore you to stop in your tracks. Repent and turn back to Jesus and His Word!

[2] Ibid. back page
[3] Ibid. p. 51
[7] Ibid. p. 92
[8] Ibid. p. 93

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Roger Oakland

As a lecturer at MBC, Jacob Prasch recommends the College as a place of study for those wishing a more in-depth understanding of God’s Word. Distance-learning Bible courses ranging from beginner through to fully accredited degree-level available in either electronic study pack or traditional cassette and printed notes format.

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Quotes of the Quarter!

“Restoring the Jews to their national home in Palestine...is a Nobel dream and one shared by many Americans”.

By: Abraham Lincoln
RFC website is growing and expanding. We will be soon adding a scheduled audio Biblical messages stream, selection of messages on demand by speaker, topic, or title, and scheduled live chats with RFC speakers.

**Upcoming Conferences**

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The time is fast approaching where true believers may be forced underground to avoid persecution; nations will attempt to restrict the preaching and teaching of God’s Word, but “The Word of God is not bound.”—2 Timothy 2:
Israel is like a museum. You will see relics that date from antiquity, buildings that are not considered old unless they were built thousands of years ago. Israel offers you a time portal, almost like the ones you see in a science fiction movie, through which to see the past.

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By Albert James Dager

A recent phenomenon described as a “move of God,” termed “Apostolic Reformation,” is implementing a plan for world evangelization through the efforts of Global Harvest Ministries (GHM) under the direction of C. Peter Wagner. It has taken a few years for this move to get into high gear, but it is now impacting a large number of churches.

Apostolic Reformation posits that God is restoring the offices of apostles and prophets, and that C. Peter Wagner, in particular, is the apostle God is using to implement that restoration. Says Wagner: Back in the 1990s we began hearing the Holy Spirit speaking about restoring apostles and prophets as the foundation of the church as God originally designed (see Eph. 2:20). As I have explained in my book, Apostles and Prophets: The Foundation of the Church (Regal Books), I gradually came to the realization that God had given me the gift of apostle, and that certain spheres of the body of Christ were recognizing that I had the office of apostle as well. Consequently, developing apostolic leadership in today’s church has now become an important function of GHM.

C. Peter Wagner was at one time mentor as well as disciple of the late John Wimber, who took over the Vineyard Christian Fellowship and developed it into an international church denomination. The Vineyard’s focus under Wimber was an emphasis upon what he believed were true signs and wonders. By integrating psychology with inner healing, the laying on of hands, and a peculiar form of mysticism which resulted in many bizarre manifestations, Wimber’s movement left the objective reality of God’s Word to turn to charismania. Wagner championed Wimber’s philosophy and has never repented of doing so.

Wimber also believed in the restoration of the offices of apostles and prophets and considered himself to be a latter-day apostle to all the churches. Now Wagner is promoting himself as the “Presiding Apostle” over an organization called International Coalition of Apostles (ICA). Wagner lists this and other avenues through which the Apostolic Reformation is taking shape:

- International Coalition of Apostles (ICA). I am the Presiding Apostle over this organization with John Kelly, Chuck Pierce, and Doris Wagner as my leadership team. At present, 229 apostles are members, and we meet every December in Dallas.
- New Apostolic Roundtable (NAR). I convene this account ability group of under 25 apostles once a year in Colorado Springs.
- Apostolic Council of Prophetic Elders (ACPE). A select group of prophets who feel the need to build personal relationships with peers-level prophets meets together once a year (sometimes more) in Colorado Springs.
- Apostolic Council for Educational Accountability (ACEA). The ACEA provides a creative alternative to accreditation for schools designed to serve the New Apostolic Reformation. Currently some 40 schools have ACEA membership.
- Apostolic Roundtable for Deliverance Ministers (ARDM). Many deliverance ministers feel a need for meeting regularly with peers to keep up with this rapidly-developing field. I convene this group of under 25 every year in Colorado Springs.

In addition to these apostolic groups, John Kelly, Chuck Pierce, and I do a series of one-day ICA Leadership Seminars across the country in order to introduce Christian leaders to the trends in apostolic leadership. This “move of God,” according to Wagner, requires millions of dollars in the development of facilities for offices, classrooms, and a conference center where apostles and prophets can be trained. Some of the apostles promoted by Wagner:

- Ché Ahn
  Harvest Rock Church
  Pasadena, California
- Bob Beckett
  The Dwelling Place Family Church
  Hemet, California
- Rice Broocks
  Morningstar International
  Brentwood, Tennessee
- Naomi Dowdy
  Trinity Christian Center
  Singapore
- John Eckhardt
  Crusader Church/IMPACT
  Urbana, Illinois
- Michael Fletcher
  Manna Church
  Fayetteville, North Carolina
- Bill Hamon
  Christian International
  Santa Rosa Beach, Florida

WHAT IS APOSTOLIC REFORMATION?

During the 1990’s, Wagner felt he perceived a new worldwide reformation taking place among churches. Because of his thirty plus years as a “professor of church growth,” as well as some sixteen years as a missionary to Bolivia and a specialist in world missions, Wagner became aware of church growth in third-world countries such as Africa, China and Latin America. He saw this growth as being the result of non-traditional leadership.

Wagner saw a pattern emerge when he noticed that these different movements had a number of things in common, even though they were not associated with one another. “That’s when it first became clear to me that we had something to look into,” he recalls Wagner. “When we did, the most important characteristic that we found in these new churches was that they had a new authority structure which was different than that of traditional Christianity. That played itself out on the local level, with the pastor being the leader of the church in stead of an employee, and on the translocal level, with the authority of the apostle over a number of churches.”

What struck Wagner was that, partic-
ularly in Latin America, his major field of missions, large churches were operating in urban areas under the leadership of people who had had no contact with Western mis ionaries or mission-initi-
ated institutions. Yet, says Wagner, “they had churches of several thousand people and were leading them with a degree of authority that most of us were not used to.” 6 This led Wagner to believe that a new reformation was taking place which was reshaping the face of Christianity.

“Every time Jesus began building His Church in a new way through out history, He provided new wineskins. The growth of the Church through the ages is, in part, a story of new wineskins,” says Wagner. “These new wineskins appear to be at least as radi-
cal as those of the Protestant Reformation almost five hundred years ago.” Immediately, in trying to de scribe what was occurring, he used the term, “Postdenominational Churches,” which was eventually rejected because of strong protests from denominational friends and the fact that many of these new churches have remained within their denom-
inations. The name he then settled on was the New Apostolic Reformation.

“The New Apostolic Reformation is an extraordinary work of God at the close of the twentieth century that is, to a signifi cant extent, changing the shape of Protestant Christianity around the world,” Wagner explains. “For al most five hundred years, Chris-
tian churches have largely functioned within traditional denominational structures of one kind or an other.” Particularly in the 1990s, but hav-
 ing roots going back for almost a cen-
tury, new forms and operational procedures are now emerging in areas such as local church government, interchurch relationships, fi nancing, evan gelism, missions, prayer, leader-
ship selection and training, the role of supernatural power, worship and other important aspects of church life.

“Some of these changes are being seen within denominations them-
selves, but for the most part they are taking the form of loosely structured apostolic networks. In virtually every region of the world, these new apos-
tolic churches constitute the fastest growing segment of Christianity.” 7

Wagner believes that what he calls “new wineskins” are needed to contain the “new truths” being revealed by the new breed of apostles and prophets. He says that new wineskins have always been needed for all the new movements through out the history of the churches:

Every time Jesus began building His Church in a new way through out history, He provided new wineskins. While He was still on earth, He said that such a thing would be neces-
sary... (Matt. 9:17). The growth of the Church through out the ages is, in part, a story of new wineskins. 8

He gives ex amples of how Je sus has built His “Church” over the cen turies: How do these biblical principles unfold in real life? For 2,000 years, the Church of Jesus Christ has grown and spread into every continent. Jesus said, “I will build My church,” and He has been doing it. As we review those 2,000 years, how ever, it is quite obvi-
ous that Jesus does not al ways build His Church in the same ways. He did it one way in the Roman Empire before Constantine; another way after Constantine; another way in the Mid-
dle Ages; an other way following the Reformation; another way during the era of European colonization; and yet another way post-World War II, just to name a few. 9

According to Wagner, the new wine-
skin by which Jesus will continue to build His “Church” is the Apostolic Reforma-
tion. But the basic premise upon which He builds his case is faulty. In the first place, the new wine of which Jesus spoke was not a method for building His body of called out saints. It was the New Covenant which could not be contained by the Mosaic Law. The Old Covenant under Moses’ Law was the old wine skin. That’s the extent of Jesus’ refer-
ence to new wineskins. To suggest that He meant anything else, such as the movements Wagner presents as evidence for his case is naïve at best, and/or in tel-
lectually dishonest.

Are we to believe that the Holy Roman Empire under Constantine was a new wine skin for the building up of the Body of Christ? On the contrary, it was a disas-
ter to the purity of the Gospel. How can a true apostle think otherwise? Wagner also believes that the apostles and prophets of his reformation will bring new truths to the Body of Christ:

God has been speaking to me, both in my spirit and through other proph-
eths, during the last fi ve years about ac-
cepting increased responsibility to train and ever see those called to pro-
phetic and apostolic ministry. Apostles and prophets must have their fingers accurately on the pulse of what God is doing and they must be able to righ-
teously demonstrate His power and plan. Christian International Network of Churches was birthed from this de-
sire to not only see ministers trained and activated, but also to provide a place of accountability and over sight. Just as Samuel and Elijah headed schools of the prophets scattered through out Israel, so I believe God con-

tinue the work of “fathering” and school-
ing His people into ministry through similar means. God uses indi-
viduals, their messages and their minis-
tries to help propagate new truth. The same principle seems to be at work in His desire to restore and establish the offices of all fi ve fold ministries within the Church. 10

Wagner of ten speaks about new truths emanating from the apostles and prophets of his reformation. By “new truths,” Wagner is not speaking about new understanding of God’s truth. By pointing to the various movements in his tory as valid manifestations of Jesus build-
ing His “Church,” he is endorsing the “new truths” of those movements, which “truths” of ten contradict Scripture. The subjective nature of these “new truths” has been evident of late in the weird signs-and-wonders move ment.

While we’re on the subject of this “apostle” misunderstanding God’s Word, he falls into the same error as that of the Latter-Rain proponents who believe that the “school of prophets” was some sort of training center. In reality, a “school” is an association. There is no evidence in Scripture of any “school” in the sense of academia regarding God’s prophets. God chooses His apos tles and prophets and endows them with the gifts they need to serve Him in those capacities.

Wagner sees evolving out of his new reformation apostles and prophets who represent a new form of spiritual author-
ity. He believes this apostolic reformation is beginning to take hold in the West as well, and will result in tremendous church growth and revival.

“The biggest difference between New Apostolic Christianity and tradi-
tional Christianity is the amount of spiritual authority delegated by the Holy Spirit to individuals,” Wagner emphasizes. “In traditional Christian-
ity, authority resided in groups such as church councils, sessions, congrega-
tions, and general assemblies. New Apostolic Christianity sees God en-
trusting the gov ernment of the church

June 2007 • Moriel Quarterly
to individuals.”

Within New Apostolic Christianity, Wagner sees this governmental authority being exercised in the local church by the pastor and on a translocal level by apostles who operate with a relational authority rather than a hierarchical, bureaucratic one that had typically been exercised through denominational structures.

“The other important thing with regards to this authority is that allegiance or relationship with the apostle is voluntary,” adds Wagner.

“There is nothing that holds the pastor or the church related to the apostle in the apostolic network except the perception that the apostle is adding value to their life and ministry.”

Along with this new authority, Wagner perceives that the new contemporary form of worship is a commonality among these fast-growing churches. Financial solvency is also a plus, according to Wagner, because the leadership of these churches expect their people to be faithful in their tithes and offerings.

**A NEW THING?**

While Wagner says that the Apostolic Reformation is a new phenomenon that will bring spiritual reformation to the churches, in reality it is a rehash of the Latter Rain Movement of the mid-twentieth century. It is Pentecostalism gone amok, led by such notorious men as Franklin Hall, William Branham, and, lately, Paul Cain, recently exposed as a homosexual by some in his own ranks.

What Wagner is promoting is an apostolic concept inherited from the Latter Rain Movement primarily among charismatic churches and Pentecostal denominations. (For an in-depth study of this move see my book, Vengeance is Ours: The Church in Dominion.)

The impact of this movement in North America has been observed in the “Toronto Blessing,” the “Pensacola Revival” (AKA “Brownsville Revival”) and other similar charismatic foolishness. The unscriptural nature of these movements is a clue to their ungodliness.

**FELLOW TRAVELERS**

One is known by the company one keeps. Not that we don’t all have family members, friends, and associates that are not true believers. Nor do all true believers agree on every point of Scripture. But those whom we promote and with whom we engage in ministry reveal much about what we think. A true apostle would not associate his min is try with some one whose theology and/or methodology is unscriptural.

As we look at a few of the “apostles” with whom Wagner claims to be in association, we can judge whether he is legitimately an apostle himself.

**CHE AHN, HAR VEST ROCK CHURCH, PASADENA CALIFORNIA**

Harvest Rock Church bills itself as a “multi-ethnic, spirit-filled Christian congregation,” and sponsors “apostolic conferences.” Speakers scheduled for the July, 2005 apostolic conference are Jill Austin, Paul Keith Davis, Lou Engle, James Goll, and Chuck Pierce.

Jill Austin is part of the “prophetic team” at Metro Christian Fellowship (formerly Kansas City Fellowship, whence sprang the Kansas City prophets). She conducts “Master Potter” conferences at which “holy laughter” is promoted.

Paul Keith Davis is an associate of Kansas City “prophet” Bob Jones, and founder of White Dove Ministries. White Dove Ministries spreads the Latter Rain doctrine of apostolic and prophetic revival with an emphasis on youth.

Lou Engle is founder of Elijah Revolution, a call to take America and the world for Jesus. His group “runs bled in the heavens for justice!” with the “Reverse the Decree of ’73 Conference,” a call to reverse Roe v. Wade in January, 2005.

Speakers and worship leaders were charismatics and Latter Rain proponents: Lou Engle, Dutch Sheets, Che Ahn, Bishop Harry Jackson, Cindy Jacobs, Bonnie Chavda, Patricia King, Kirk Bennett, Jason Upton, Jay Swallow, Dr. Negiel Bigpond, Will Ford, Kevin Kleint, Laura Woodley, and Rick Joyner.

James Goll is head of Encounters Network and has written books on “prophetic” ministry. He promotes so-called “contemplative prayer and worship” designed to bring God into one’s presence, as if that were possible. Contemplative prayer and worship is rooted in Roman Catholic mysticism and has wormed its way into non-Catholic churches primarily through the charismatic movement.

Chuck Pierce is the apostle of Glory of Zion International Ministries. He promotes deliverance and spiritual warfare.

**BOB BECKETT, THE DWELLING PLACE FAMILY CHURCH, HEMET, CALIFORNIA**

Bob Beckett has taught the local church’s role in prayer and community transformation as part of Peter Wagner’s World Missions Class and his Spiritual Issues in Church Growth classes at Fuller Seminary. He believes that the “Church” is gifted to “conquer” through spiritual warfare and deliverance.

**RICE BROOCKS, MORNINGSTAR INTERNATIONAL, BRENTWOOD, TENNESSEE**

Morning Star International calls itself “a world wide family of churches and ministries whose vision is to reach ‘Every Nation in Our Generation.’” Rice Broocks collaborates with Bob Weiner, a proponent of the Latter Rain, Manifested Sons of God heresy which they spread on college campuses.

**NAOMI DOWDY, TRINITY CHRISTIAN CENTER, SINGAPORE**

Naomi Dowdy is a global leader for apostolic strategies and Founder-President of Global Leadership Network and Global Business Network Partners. She is also said to be Apostle/Senior Pastor of Trinity Christian Center, and is highly sought after by Christian leaders around the world for her counsel and wisdom.

(Now we have female apostles, as if female pastors were not unscriptural enough for these people.)

Interestingly, Wagner says church offices are reserved for men. So why is he compromising here?

**JOHN ECKHARDT, CRUSADERS CHURCH/IMPACT, URBANA, ILLINOIS**

John Eckhardt founded the IMPACT Network (International Ministries of Prophetic and Apostolic Churches Together) in 1995. It has grown to include over 400 churches and ministries in 25 nations. IMPACT Net work is a vehicle for global apostolic reformation. As an “apostle” himself, Eckhardt is ordaining apostles and prophets around the world to facilitate the current “reformation.” He also conducts “apostolic breakthrough” conferences in many nations.

**SANTA ROSA BEACH, FLORIDA**

Bill Hamon is a classic Manifested Sons of God apostle whose doctrine centers on the belief that before Jesus can return to the earth (if He returns at all), certain overcomers in the “Church” will become immortal through submission to the new apostles and prophets for the Last Days. (See my book, Vengeance is Ours: The Church in Dominion for an in-depth analysis of dominion theology, including the Latter rain, Manifested Sons of God heresy.) This is based on the belief that Jesus first returns “in” His
“Church,” not in His flesh.

AN APOSTLE? REALLY?

So Wagner thinks himself an apostle. And an apostle of apostles at that!

Interesting, since his discernment is, at best, around zero. How does a true apostle of God hob nob with wackos who call barking like a dog and cackling like a chicken a manifestation of the Holy Spirit? How does a true apostle of God endorse some one like John Wimber and brag that Wimber was his “mentor”? How does a true apostle of God give credibility to Latter Rain teachers?

Can such lack of discernment, as well as unequivocal endorsement of these people qualify such a person to be a true apostle of God? I say no. And if not, then the entire concept of his “Apostolic Reformation” is not merely in doubt, it must be refuted.

TRAINING OF APOSTLES?

There is an issue which requires addressing here. It is Wagner’s statement that millions of dollars are needed for the development of facilities where apostles and prophets can be trained.

Where in Scripture do we find apostles and prophets being “trained”? One can not be “trained” in the gifts of God. That is man’s way of trying to control the gifts to further some religious belief system. In Wagner’s case the belief system is the Latter Rain philosophy. True apostles may mentor one another, but they are largely independent and led by the Spirit of God. Most of what they say and do is rejected. They do not find the popularity that to day’s self-proclaimed apostles and prophets enjoy.

Another issue is Wagner’s erroneous belief that what he perceived in third world countries is somehow different from what he sees in the West. The form and function may appear different because of a lack of denominational oversight, but there really is no difference.

For example, Wagner says the pastor in the type of church he credits with having a different authority structure is “the leader of the church in stead of employee.” What’s so different about churches in the West? Pastors are generally absolute leaders as well as employees. But pastors in those third-world churches are employees also. Most of them receive their living from the contributions of their constituents.

IS THERE A REFORMATION?

There is no Apostolic Restoration. Apostles and prophets have been operative through out the centuries, but have been relegated to the realm of the unknown and unheralded. They may not have been called apostles and prophets, but they have operated in those capacities among small, humble gatherings of believers apart from the denominational structures. They were persecuted and martyred for standing against the heresies of Romanism, Calvinism, Anglicanism and other “Christian” authoritarian structures. They have stood against the heresies of the Latter Rain Movement that sought to usurp the positions of apostle and prophet for the benefit of a satanic deception. The true apostles and prophets have not touted themselves as such, but have worked in relative anonymity.

We must understand, however, that the role of apostle is not the same in all respects as that of the first-century apostles. Those apostles defined the faith, and some gave us the Scriptures. Their revelations sealed the revelations of God as they pertain to the entire Body of Christ. The similarity between those apostles and subsequent apostles through the ages is the role of “beingsent.” That is, apostles are those sent under the anointing of the Holy Spirit to establish assemblies of believers and to over see them to the point where they may appoint elders to serve the assemblies.

The role of apostle has been largely usurped by “missionaries” who are sent by denominational institutions to establish churches in accordance with those institutions’ dictates. True apostles operate apart from religious structures whether denominational or, in the case of Wagner’s “apostles,” beholden to aberrant religious philosophies (such as the Latter Rain Movement).

If there is a restoration of apostles and prophets it is not through any of the churches or para-church organizations that operate in an unscriptural manner. More and more of the true believers are coming out of the religious institutions and are gathering in homes, their eyes being opened to the true pattern for the gathering of the saints. It is in this setting that apostles and prophets will in crease, but not to their own profit, and not by their own pro motion.

That’s not to say that everyone meeting in homes is led by God, or that all house assemblies are of God. It is to say that the megachurch phenomenon is not the place where true believers can grow in wisdom, knowledge and understanding beyond the elementary truths of Scripture. Yet that is where C. Peter Wagner points for evidence that his newly-discovered, old Latter Rain authority structure is at work.

NOTES

1. www.globalharvestministries.org/in-dex.asp?action=about
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. (New Apostolic Reformation, Arise, September, 2000)
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS JEWISH WARRIOR?

Have you seen this Jewish Warrior? He may well be dangerous (that is if you are a Benny Hinn, a Kenneth Copeland, a Rodney Brown or any other false prophet out there). The above picture shows this unidentified stranger will be partaking in a pre-war ritual, which we believe could signal a sudden departure from previous methods he has deployed against these rivals. We have reason to believe he could now be turning to more tried-and-tested methods of eliminating these seducers of the Church. If you have seen him please let us know. Thank you for your co-operation.

MORIEL MINISTRIES

June 2007 • Moriel Quarterly • 27
We could almost begin this month’s letter with the words of the Passover song, “Why was this month different from all other months?” And the answer would come back, “Because all other months are filled with rushing from place to place, and this month found me in a hospital bed for two weeks” I was admitted with high eye pressure after a botched cataract operation, and remained until my surgeon was able to do a laser treatment, which he hopes will solve the problem. I should know in about three weeks’ time whether it has been successful or not.

Meanwhile, the set-up is such, that with or without me, the meetings go on. I have a lady called Shoshana living in my house. She kindly prepared the house, and the meeting was packed. Unfortunately, I spent my birthday in hospital, which was the meeting Saturday, so a good number of them came to visit after the meeting, and I was greatly cheered.

Staying in hospital was not without its humor or its brighter side. Khalil came to give me a summary of who had come to the meeting, and it turned out that on that particular Shabbat, more Arabs had come than Jews or anyone else! Then Khalil turned to me and said, “Those Arabs, they get everywhere!” (Khalil himself is an ex Moslem waiting to go into ministry) We had a good laugh. But while I was relating this to Gideon of CJF Ministries, son Sammy, who was listening on the loudspeaker, quipped, “You’re going to have to rename your organization, to “the Christian Arab Foundation!”

In the next bed to me was a nurse who was quite ill. One day her whole family, including her parents came to visit, and our Karen was also visiting me. Somehow, instead of having a private visit, we all became one happy family, chatting freely to one another. At one point, the whole family had to go somewhere, and left the old mother alone with us.

She fixed her eyes on us and said quite deliberately, “I learned English in Tunisia, I learned it in a mission School. They did not pray to Mary, but only believed in Jesus. They were wonderful people” “Yes,” I said, “My husband visited such schools in Cairo and India, and they were run by the Anglican Church. He loved them too.”

Karen then asked her, “Did they try to teach you their beliefs?” “Yes they did”, she said, “and I have loved Jesus since I was five years old.” At this point Karen went to sit next to her and said, “We also love Jesus, and there are thousands of Jews in this country who believe like us” “What a blessed day this is,” she said, “that I came here to meet you two. As soon as I saw you, I knew there was a different spirit, and you reminded me at once of those Anglican ladies” She reads the Bible secretly, as her husband is against, but asked us to visit her and have a meal with her, and bring Khalil with us, whom she also met later on. Her daughter also wants us to visit her, which we will do next week. What amazed us, is that this dear lady has had no fellowship for at least 65 years, (she is now 77), and she was able to discern that we were believers, without a word being said. Both Karen and I were astounded! Last Shabbat was a little sad, as we said farewell to Jim and Vera, refugees from the Lebanon. After knowing them for some years, it was with heavy hearts that we took our leave of them, as they go to find a new life in Canada. Jim and family brought to the meeting the biggest and most delicious chocolate birthday cake that we have ever seen or eaten, made at home by a fellow Lebanese who lives not far from us. It was difficult not to cry. And again we stress, that in the Messiah, there is neither Jew, nor Arab, nor Lebanese, nor Gentile. God loves them all, and though our primary task is to reach Jews, he is not unmindful of all the others that make up the colorful mosaic of peoples, which is this country.

This week, we hope to baptize two new Russian believers, a mother and her daughter. They have come a long away, and still have much to learn, but are strong in their desire for baptism and to follow the Lord. Please pray for them, as their life is far from easy.

Shoshana, my former neighbour, and I continue to meet almost every week. Last week she treated me to a Chinese meal. Next week we will return to our breakfast schedule. At the moment, her heart is shut to the things of God, at least outwardly, but there is always a breakthrough. One has to wait patiently. The two sick sisters are definitely not doing well, and we have had to step back about from them. Cindy visits us frequently, but is still sitting on the fence, and two other non believers come to the meetings quite frequently, but whether they take anything in, is anyone’s guess!

Our Teacher will be leaving us for 6 weeks after the next meeting, and in his place we hope to have an Arabic Pastor, who has kindly agreed to fill in for that period of time.

There is one more thing. There is constant talk of war. This time, it is not only Hezbollah, but also maybe Iran who is threatening to wipe us off the map, and Syria, which wants the Golan Heights (and Lebanon!). The town of Sderot has been rocketed from the Gaza strip unmercifully for weeks, in fact ever since Israel withdrew completely nearly two years ago. Remember us in your prayers, as we get ready for another round of bombings. Pray for wisdom for our government, which does not appear to be unduly blessed with it. Pray for us, as we prepare for this situation. Pray that all may be to the furtherance of the Kingdom of God, and the spread of the good news of the Gospel.

With greetings in Yeshua,
From Ruth and the congregation

Dear Friends,

Another month has taken wings and flown by, each day full of unexpected experiences and opportu-
nities, and also trials and blessings. We continue to be more than busy, with the usual and unusual visitors from all over the world, and also from within our town, expected and unexpected. Sometimes people call to ask what we are doing, and go away promising to pray for us. Others come because they are distressed or curious, and want to hear what we have to say.

One day, Paul dropped in. He used to be a neighbour, and moved to a nearby town, but still keeps in touch. He and his wife are both Jewish, but into new age, and open to listen. He stayed for breakfast and a long chat, and then invited me to come together with another lady who lives with us, and also to bring Halil, whose faith in Yeshua (as a former Moslem) really interested him. We plan to visit him for lunch shortly, and ask prayer for this man who is a descendent of the priestly tribe, but knows so little of the God of Israel.

Cindy is also one who drops by frequently. She is educated, intelligent and searching, and finds a refuge in our home. She has read a number of books about the faith, including my poetry book, and loves everyone in the fellowship. One of her sons died of a heart attack before he reached the age of 40, and the other is sick. She is so sad, and needs to know the God of all comfort.

Shoshana and I continue to meet on a weekly basis. Yesterday I visited her, and she greeted me with such a warm smile, and such obvious pleasure. Sometimes we have lively discussions, as we did when she also met Halil some weeks back, but she still holds out stubbornly.

After a year or more, the parents of R. came again to visit him. I was as usual invited to a meal out, and what a discussion ensued. These are also Jews of the priestly tribe, who have long since given up any faith in God, but now owing to their son’s faith in Yeshua and immigration to Israel, they want to understand and get to the bottom of everything. The day before yesterday, they all came over for a Chinese take-away, and Cindy joined us. These “eating together” evenings are wonderful barrier breakers, and we have formed a number of loving friendships this way.

The meetings continue to be well attended, and our sitting room is packed to capacity, and always we have problems seating so many people for the meal afterwards, but these are again great times of fellowship, and opportunity for believers and non-believers to talk and exchange. Our teacher is back, and somewhat improved in health, for which we are grateful. We are hoping that two of our newer believers will soon be able to confess their faith in Baptism, and to this end we have started mid-week meetings where we endeavor to teach basic doctrine. Halil is doing this and getting practice for possible future ministry.

The two sick sisters are not doing so well, although the health of Elana has improved. They are still walking in darkness, confused and troubled, and although intelligent, have great difficulty understanding the plain facts of the Gospel.

Please keep praying for Abdullah and Hashem. The last we heard of Hashem was that he was waiting for his turn to go for surgery to fit a new leg, after the Fatah shot his off! Nageeb, the Arab Pastor, is hoping to see Abdullah shortly in Bethlehem, and we should have some news soon. Pray that the Gospel will take deep root in their hearts.

God bless you all, and please continue to remember us.

In Yeshua’s service,
Ruth Nessim.

Watch Jacob Prasch & Friends On Webcast 
Internet TV

Jacob & Friends can also be seen at GodlyConferences.com & Radio Free TV

Israel is held wholly responsible for the situations in Lebanon in 2006 and the current crisis in Gaza. Only Ehud Olmert is seen to be stirring the pot or deliberately leaving it to boil over depending on one’s interpretation. Either way, the poisonous pen of Brandon, who titles his cartoon “Chef’s Specialty”, leaves no doubt as to whom he believes to be at fault.

This conveniently ignores Hezbollah’s primary responsibility for provoking the Lebanon war and the chaos and violence in the Gaza Strip, as Palestinian terror gangs fight each other and launch barrages of Qassam missiles at Israeli civilians in Sderot and the western Negev.

Comments to South Africa’s Business Day - <mailto:busday@bdfm.co.za?bcc=letters@honestreporting.com>busday@bdfm.co.za

Please be on the lookout for similar attempts to unjustly blame Israel and absolve the Palestinians from responsibility for the current situation.

For more on anti-Israeli media sentiment in South Africa, see the <http://supernatural.blogs.com/weblog/2007/05/business_day_to_1.html>It’s Almost Supernatural blog.
NEWSLETTER FROM ISRAEL:

Well, the good news is that Syria is on the way to Democracy. New elections were had for the presidency recently and, surprisingly, Bashar Assad was elected for another seven year term. He received an unbelievable 97% of the vote. Okay, he was the only candidate but look at those figures! The other 3% were probably not in town at the moment being that they were driving weapons to Lebanon for Hezbollah so their absentee votes will be a couple of days coming. Hopefully they won’t sway the outcome. Since we’re on the subject...Syria has made a formal complaint to the U.N. that weapons are being smuggled into Syria from Lebanon! It is said that Bashar Assad has shown photos proving this to the U.N. Sect. General Ban Ki-moon. Many of the U.N. members look upon this as a joke but are trying to keep straight faces.

What I don’t quite understand is - Hamas has been firing Kassam rockets into the Israeli city of Sderot for the past two weeks continuously, the world hasn’t said a word, I don’t even think the U.N. knows or cares about this and everyone has sort of, accepted this as the “norm”. Israel has limited retaliation, pinpointing its targets, over 70 Hamas terrorists have been welcomed into the open arms of Israel. The Israeli government until now, doesn’t know how to cope with the refugee problem and, in the meantime, the refugees are under detention for crossing the border illegally. Humanitarian aid is afforded them but they are in a state of “limbo”. The government is trying to find a solution or a more permanent status for these people. And that’s that.

Ronnie Cohen; rontour@hotmail.com

In order for Ahmadinejad to bring his plans [of eliminating Israel] to fruition, however, he has to demonize the Jews and the State of Israel. Demonization is a necessary precondition for genocide. As we well know, Hitler first engaged in a major campaign of demonization of the Jews before actually murdering them en masse. Ahmadinejad and the Iranian regime are taking the same path, and are conducting a similar virulent, antisemitic campaign of demonization.

To this end, Iranian state-controlled television produces various TV series dedicated to the demonization of Jews. These include classic blood libels, depicting Jews as using the blood of non-Jewish children to bake their Passover matzos, and as kidnapping non-Jewish children to steal their body parts. Jews are reduced to sub-human levels, depicted as pigs and apes. They are accused of persecuting the Prophet Muhammad in voodoo ritualistic scenes, and as tormenting a historic figure reminiscent of Jesus on the Cross. All these TV series exist alongside others that deny the Holocaust.

Again, it should be stressed that all these phenomena are interrelated, and are state-directed at the highest level. It is most indicative that Ahmadinejad’s first public appearance after coming to power was state-directed at the highest level. It is most indicative that Ahmadinejad’s first public appearance after coming to power was made before television producers.

All this is done in order to achieve the goal of demonization of Jews and Israel, which, as I mentioned earlier, is vital for their elimination. However, it is not possible to demonize a people as long as it is viewed as a victim of the Holocaust. Therefore, as long as the Jews are perceived as victims of the Holocaust, this demonization cannot take root. Holocaust denial is thus vital, in order to wipe out the image of the Jews as victims.

This is the reason why these three elements - Holocaust denial, the elimination of the State of Israel, and demonization of the Jews - are constantly present in statements by Ahmadinejad and other senior Iranian officials.
Dear Friends

Greetings in Jesus name.

The Apostle Paul tells us that his life and ministry were fraught with perils, in fact from 2Cor 11:21-29, it show’s us the life he led was not a comfortable one with dangers from all angles, even from his own countryman.

South Africa over the years has become a place of danger. The statistics are frightening and the truth is that most of us here know someone who has either been hijacked, raped or murdered. South African residents are leaving in their droves for more peaceful countries such as Australia and New Zealand. But most South Africans have to live here and ride this wave of shocking violence that has gripped this land. However in contrast we see that not only are people leaving for a better life, we also see people from these ‘safer’ countries coming to South Africa with a burden to help the situation. People such as Dianne from New Zealand, who has swapped a comfortable life as a college lecturer to help young pregnant mums from our neighbors on Kwazinzele. Young ladies like Becca and Suzie who have swapped the peaceful hills of Yorkshire for a life helping HIV orphans. Take Erin as another example who could be leading a comfortable life by the sea in Formby who chooses to come to South Africa to help school our children. So why do they come? It’s a simple answer; they like Paul have become obedient to Gods call, and everyone of us in the Church and particularly in Moriel who love the idea that we must shake us from our complacency.

The reality is that this is a wake up call for everyone of us in the Church and particularly in Moriel who love the idea that we are now missioning on several continents. It’s a wake up call to the fact that missionaries need love. It’s a wake up call to the fact that missionaries need support. It’s a wake up call to the fact that God may want you to go in their place after they have left for home. It is a wake up call to the cost of mission in terms of our priorities. As for my wake up call? Well I am glad it went as it did, God has been compassionate with us. These young people could have been killed. Our Son could have been killed. I have become awake to the fact that God uses the foolish things of this world to confound the wise and the fact is, He has chosen to use even young girls fresh out of school to go in the place of men and women who are better equip. Let me ask, what will it take to awake you today.

In Jesus
Dave Royle
has meant the construction of a small
building with its own fenced play area,
then plenty of paint and posters. A leaf-
let has been produced in English and
Zulu explaining the project and this is
being distributed around Kwazinzele.

Erin has been busy assisting Lyn with
the school work as well as researching the
children’s special needs. This has led to
the production of several leaflets that are to be
used in future staff training and orientation.

Becca spends a great deal of her time
with the babies, especially Deven. Deven
has a special place in her heart and it would
not surprise me if Becca goes on to do
study in special needs child development.

Susi’ being a farmer’s daughter has
undertaken the task of developing our
garden. Along side this she man-
gages to look after the children as well plus
help Aaron in the kitchen – a busy girl.

Although he is our son, Aaron has
come back to South Africa to work and
so he has been given the role of chief
cook and bottle washer. Aaron produc-
es a meal for 20 people and snacks for
most of the week (I Brai on Saturdays).

This year we have more visitors. Judith
from the Netherlands, Mari-
 anne, Hannah and Jonathan from Swe-
den. Bob from the USA and Suzie from
Singapore. There is even rumor that
our favorite possum Marge Godwin
from Australia is coming over as well.

BEZALEEL

Things are fine at Bezaleel; they have recently been blessed with til-
ing which has meant Aletheia Fel-
lowship has temporarily been relo-
cated to the school room at Ebyown.

This month Ruth, one of the young-
sters, had a very bad illness that caused
a lot of worry. Ruth has two strains
of the virus and her health has to be
watched extra carefully. This culimat-
ed with an emergency run to the hospi-
tal. But praise God she pulled through.

ROME MISSION 15TH-22ND MAY

PART 1

Ciao!

This month has been very busy and
productive. We have recently moved
house into a bigger home ready for the
baby to come and nearer our church. Dur-
ing this time I also had a few preaching
engagements and haven’t really had timeto
settle in our new home. (The new address
and phone number is below) Then shortly
after I went to Rome for a weeks mission
to evangelise, teach, and learn about the
body of Christ there and seek God’s will
in calling us to Rome. Unfortunately I had
to visit Rome alone as Liz is too far gone
with her pregnancy to have flown with me
and keep the pace of the trip. It was a very
hard decision to go and even harder to
leave her here and be apart especially while
she is pregnant. But by God’s grace she
was surrounded by friends and family and
we were able to keep in touch regularly.

This trip has been a real test of faith
and a time of much growth for Liz and I.
So much happened and so much I wish
to share with you. So I will share a few
days at a time over the next few weeks.

Tuesday 15th May

Landed in Rome at 8.30pm. Pastor
Brent Harrel picks me up at the airport
and have fellowship with him for the rest
of the evening talking about end times,
church issues, families and life in Italy.
The short term mission team from Amer-
ica had cancelled their trip last minute.
Probably works out for the better as I’d
get more time to spend with the leadership.

Wednesday 16th May

Woke up early and caught the metro
to the Vatican. Brent’s wife, Hope, was hav-
ing her second scan for their baby they are
expecting (same time as Liz), so had to go
gospelising on my own. Well, Jesus was
with me and so who else did I really need?

When I arrived there I began handing
tracts out to Pizzeria guys handing outleaf-
lets with menu’s on trying to get custom-
ers to eat at their place. So I offered them
spiritual food for physical food. I made
my way to St Peter’s Square and walked
around waiting for the Holy Spirit’s lead-
ing in who to talk to. There is just so many
people who come and visit the Vatican on
a daily basis, some locals, some tourists
and some on pilgrimages. I noticed a guy
praying with some rosary beads looking
fairly distressed and sad. I walked up to
the man and said “parla Inglese?” (Do you
speak English?) He said “No.” I though
“here we go, this will be difficult” and
pointed to his rosary beads and said “Ro-
sary?” “Si” He said, “Rosario” I turned to
Matthew 6. “Ah, Matthau” he said with
amazement, and put his rosary beads
away. I then gave him a tract in Italian
amazed at Gesu, at the Rosary. I said “No, Gesu? No Jesus?” They shook
their head. They didn’t want to know.

After spending a few hours at the Vati-
can I made my way back to Brent’s. In
the evening we had Bible Study at a
young ladies house near the centre of
Rome. They asked me to share my tes-
timony and a message of exhortation. I
spoke from Matthew 9v35-38 saying how
we need compassion when evangelising.
Times in my life when failing to share
the gospel has been down to the fact of
a lack of compassion. I related this
back to the guy with the Rosaries as
I saw the bondage he was in and felt
compassion to share the good news to
free him from his heavy burden. And
a lot of people in Rome are distressed,
like sheep without a shepherd. Another
reason we fail to evangelise as much
as we should do because of the fear of
rejection and/or the futility we feel when
sharing the good news to those who
are stubborn. But in Matt 9v37 Jesus
says the harvest is plentiful, the prob-
lem is that the workers are few.

Thursday 17th May

I went by the Vatican again for an
hour or so and talked to a few people in
queue’s and spoke to some American
tourists. They were catholic but didn’t
attend church or take mass. I asked them
how they were getting to heaven and
they told me good works. Through go-
ing through the ten commandments with
them they realised they were sinners
and also pointed out that good works
are like filthy rags in they eyes of
the Lord and presented the gospel to
them. I realised I could just plant the
seed with a few of these people, I
pray that the Lord sends someone to wa-
ter and that he does the growing! One
lady didn’t believe she could go to
heaven and I told her Jesus died for
every sin, there is nothing He can’t for
give you for. She then agreed but I
pray that the Lord sends someone to wa-
ter and that he does the growing! One
lady didn’t believe she could go to
heaven and I told her Jesus died for
every sin, there is nothing He can’t for

the pain she was feeling. She then stopped speaking to me.

In the afternoon and early evening Brent discipled a lady from Ethiopia who speaks Italian and a fair amount of English. He asked me to take the discipleship for Him and share what Joel and I have been going through. I went through the Messianic prophesies in Genesis and noted where Satan had tried to thwart God’s plan of redemption. That the Messiah would come from the seed of a woman and then the sons of God (fallen angels) corrupted the seed and God saved the only family that was not corrupted (Noah). The he used a specific line of that family for the messiah to come from and separated the nations and set boundaries but then the tower of Babel was built to stop that distinction. But God then scattered man and confused their language and then we see God use the nation of Israel and how Satan has come against their patriarchs, bringing them into shame, disputes, wars and trying to corrupt their seed and moral standing.

To Be Continued...

**PRAYER REQUESTS**

- Liz and Babies health
- God’s will concerning our calling
- Pastor Brent, Hope and kids
- Calvary Chapel Rome
- God to convert souls in Rome
- Against oppression of Babylon (Roman Catholic Church)
- Against slavery of Egypt (The worldliness of people in Rome)

**EVANGELISM**

Salvador has continued to coordinate things and have people like Mike Lillenfield and Ps John from Tsakane work alongside him. We have also received a nice donation for Bibles and tracts from Australia which we will use with Pastors we work with.

**FURTHER AFIELD**

Pastor Norbert and Pastor Moses in Tanzania and Western Kenya have reported tremendous growth. Norbert over the last few months has distributed over 500 wheelchairs to the disabled in Tanzania. Moses also is busy and runs conferences for pastors.

The one thing that is a constant concern for me is the need for resources to support these men. What little support they get is usually from the little that’s left over because of our huge commitment to South Africa. Norbert and Moses never ask for a penny even though personally they go through financial frustration with their ministries and families and yet they constantly encourage me with their emails and zealous endeavor. In the years that I have known them they have planted churches, pastured churches, run bible schools and looked after orphans. Surely something can be done to raise regular support for these men? It would be a crying shame if for our lack of support we lose anyone of them.

Ps Chanti and his wife Lilly held a special place in our heart and we plan to put a mission team together to visit in November. Chanti wants to put together a pastor’s conference for between 500 and 1000 pastors as well as do village to village evangelism. The team will only be a small one so there are not many places. You will need your air fair, Visa, any shots required and a contribution towards food and accommodation. By the way the Guest house they also run is first class with air conditioning. If you are interested then I will need to know by the end of July.

**AUSTRALIA TRIP**

It was wonderful to catch up with old friends and make some new friends during my itinerary down under. I had not been to Aussie for two years to speak but was there last year for the funeral of my good friend Ross Godwin; so it was great to catch up with Marg and her team who are now in their new office.

Can I say a big thanks to all who were involved in my visit, especially to those who hosted me and even more Aunty Marg who organized events, flights, hotels etc.

It was great to have my dear Lyn with me at the latter end of my tour in Melbourne. The people at Pilgrim fellowship showed her great hospitality. Finally I was able to whisk her off to Cairns to celebrate our 25 years of marriage. Cairns is a beautiful city and we really enjoyed a good rest before coming back home into the work again. I know I keep saying this but Thank You to all who made our trip possible, for your love and generosity.

**USA TRIP**

I will be away again from July 9th to speak in the States. Please pray for the ministry and my family again while I have the opportunity to teach and share about the work in Moriel Missions.

**MAIN TEACHING**

Since Jacob’s visit is almost upon us I have decided to print his teaching on Midrash, so that we can become accustomed again to Jacobs teaching style. I know its an oldie, but it’s a goodie.

**THE WAY THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS HANDLED THE OLD TESTAMENT**

Midrash is the method of hermeneutics (Biblical interpretation) used by the ancient rabbis in the time of Jesus and Paul. Midrash incorporates a grammatical-historical exegesis, vaguely similar to the western models of Biblical interpretation that the Reformers borrowed from 16th century Humanism, but it sees this as simply a first step.

In its handling of various Biblical literary genre — such as narrative, wisdom literature, Hebrew poetry and apocalyptic — it seeks cognate relationships between different scriptural texts in order to interpret them in light of each other. The approach is more topical than linear.

The clearest set of guidelines in Midrash are the Seven Midroth attributed to Rabbi Hillel, the founder of the Pharisaic School of Hillel, where St. Paul was educated as a rabbi by Rabbi Gamaliel, the grandson of Hillel.

Midrash makes heavy use of allegory and typology to illustrate and illuminate doctrine, but never as a basis for doctrine. It sees multiple meanings in Bible texts found in strata, but this is very different in certain fundamental respects from the Gnostic and Alexandrian uses of figurative interpretation associated with Philo and Origen, reflecting more of Hebraic, rather than Hellenistic philosophical world-view and view of theology.

Midrash interprets prophecy as a cyclical pattern of historical recapitulation (prophecies having multiple fulfilment), with an ultimate fulfilment associated with the eschaton, which is the final focal point of the redemptive process. A classical work of Midrash in Judaism is the Midrash Rabba on Genesis (Beresheet). Another is Lamentations Rabba.

Midrash follows certain formats. One is the Mashal/Nimshal format seen in Proverbs or the parables, where physical things are representative of things spiritual. Figurative midrashic exposition in the New Testament is viewed, for instance, in Jude’s epistle or Galatians 4:24-34. It is Midrash which accounts for the manner in which the New Testament handles the Old Testament.

Another format is the parashiyot; sections opening with a petihah in which a base verse is followed by commentary. In addition to exegetical midrash, there are
homiletic midrashim, arranged in topically argued pisaqaot. These frequently follow a yelammedenu rubbenu format used by Jesus in the gospels. Both of these kinds of midrashim are haggadic. There are also wide bodies of midrashic literature which are halakik, but these are of less importance to New Testament scholarship.

Unless someone has been educated in Judaism, Hebrew, or theology, it is easier to demonstrate midrash than to explain it. Moriel provides various tapes and videos where midrashic exegesis is practically applied and demonstrated in interpreting Scripture. One example would be “The Woman at the Well,” a midrashic interpretation of John chapter four, used to expound the Scriptures relating to the subject of Roman Catholicism.

If you look at the way the New Testament quotes the Old Testament, it is clear that the apostles did not use western Protestant methods of exegesis or interpretation. Jesus was a rabbi. Paul was a rabbi. They interpreted the Bible in the way other rabbis did—according to a method called Midrash.

Something went wrong in the early Church; it got away from its Jewish roots. And as more Gentiles became Christians, something that Paul (in Romans 11) warned should not happen, happened. People lost sight of the root.

Whenever you have a change in world-view, you’re going to have a change in theology. A positive way to handle that change is called recontextualising; a negative way is called redefining. Recontextualising the gospel when Wycliffe Bible translators translated Isaiah 1:18, “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow, for tribal people in equatorial Africa — a place where the people had never seen snow — they translated it as they shall be white as coconut. That is recontextualising — taking the same truth and putting it into the context of somebody else’s language or culture or world-view. That is perfectly valid; it does no harm to the message, in contrast to redefinition.

Instead of re-explaining what the Bible means, redefinition changes what the Bible means. That is wrong. And that is what happened in the Early Church. After Constantine the Great turned Christianity into the religion of the state, people began redefining the gospel in increasingly radical ways. Some of the Early Church Fathers believed that what was best in Greek theosophy, for example the monotheistic ideas of Plato and Socrates, helped to prepare the Greek world for the coming of Jesus, in the same way that the Torah (the Old Testament) prepared the Jewish world.

Up to a point, that is a fair statement.

There is a Greek (Hellenistic) way of thinking and there is a Hebrew (Hebraic) way of thinking. Paul used both. When Paul spoke to the Jews he used the Hebrew way of thinking, but in Athens when he was preaching the gospel to the Areopagites (Acts 17:22-31), he used the Greek way of thinking. Jews seek a sign, Greeks seek wisdom. There is validity in both, if they are used biblically.

A problem arose when people began to Hellenise a Jewish faith. Instead of recontextualising the gospel for Greeks, they began redefining it in Greek terms. This happened especially in Alexandria in the time of Origen, but it became a major problem after Constantine. With the introduction of the teachings of Augustine of Hippo, and the people who influenced him — Cyprian of Carthage, Ambrose, and others.

The Greeks knew many things from Plato and Socrates that were true such as the fact that man is made in God’s image and likeness. Anybody — even people with no Judeo-Christian background and no access to the Bible — can know by natural reason there is one true God and that man is sinful (Romans 1:18-20).

We can agree with the things in Greek theosophy up to the point they agree with the Bible. But when people begin reinterpreting and redefining the gospel in the light of a Greek world-view, we have a problem. The Greeks believed in Dualism. They thought that everything of the flesh was bad and everything of the spirit was good. A Greek reading the words, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1), could agree with them. But he could not agree with the statement, “The Word became flesh” (John 1:14). The Greeks believed that something physical was bad, simply because it was physical. The Bible teaches that the spiritual and the physical were meant to work in harmony with each other. There was not to be any contradiction or any conflict between the two. The flesh is fallen, that is true, but there is nothing wrong with the physical elements themselves.

When Augustine came along he did not recontextualise but, rather, redefined Christianity as a Greek, Platonic religion. Augustine said things like, “The only good thing about marriage is having children who will be celibate.” The Manicheans, who said that the first sin was having marital relations, introduced these ideas into the Greek world. That is why, to this day, Roman Catholicism cannot handle sexuality, and why it has so many restrictions and hang-ups, and why Roman Catholics are even hung about marital sex.

People began reinterpreting the Bible, not using the Jewish method of midrash, but using Greek methods. Typology and allegory Midrash uses typology and allegory — symbols — in order to illustrate and illumine doctrine. For instance, Jesus is “the Passover Lamb.” The symbolism of the Jewish Passover perfectly illustrates the doctrine of atonement, but we never base the doctrine of atonement on the symbolism. The symbolism illustrates the doctrine, which is itself stated plainly elsewhere in Scripture. In the Gnostic world of Greek thinking, the opposite happens. Gnostics claim to have received a subjective, mystical insight — called a gnosis — into the symbols. They then reinterpret the plain meaning of the text in light of the gnosis. For Gnostics, symbolism is the basis for their doctrine, contrary to the ancient Jewish methods.

These methods first started to creep into the Church through people who were influenced by Philo. His teachings progressively entered into Roman Catholicism, to the point where Augustine would say, “If God used violence to convert Paul, the Church can use violence to convert people,” which led to the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition and so on. Instead of recontextualising, they were redefining Scripture. They were reading a Jewish book as if it were a Greek book. That was a mistake.

It started with Origen in the East and Augustine in the West, and steadily worsened over the centuries. It became much worse in the Middle Ages with something called Scholasticism. Aristotle’s ideas were absorbed into Islam, and the Crusades brought those ideas back to Europe, and into medieval Roman Catholicism. Moses Maimonides rewrote Judaism as an Aristotelian religion, then Thomas Aquinas rewrote Christianity as an Aristotelian religion.

The Reformers came along and tried to correct what had gone wrong in medieval Roman Catholicism. Unfortunately, although the Reformers were dynamic personalities, they were not dynamic thinkers. The Reformation was born out of something called Humanism. (Note: the first Humanists were not secular, they were Christians.) The best of the Humanists were men like Thomas a Kempis, John Colet, and Jacques Lefebvre. But the greatest of them all was Erasmus of Rotterdam. Luther, Calvin, Zwingli and most of the other Reformers got their ideas from Erasmus. Erasmus and the other Humanists attempted to study and teach the Bible in its plain literal meaning, in order to undo the medieval abuses of Roman Catholicism. They placed the emphasis on reading the Bible as literature and as history, and gave us the system of grammatical-historical exegesis that has been
used in the Protestant churches ever since.

The problem with the Reformers is that they only went so far. They made rules governing the application of their grammatical-historical system in order to refute medieval Roman Catholicism, and many of those rules are still taught in theological seminaries today. One such rule is this: There are many applications of a Scripture but only one interpretation. That is total rubbish! The Talmud tells us there are multiple interpretations. Who did Jesus agree with? The Reformers? Or the other rabbis?

Jesus said, A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah (Matthew 12:39). What was “the sign of the prophet Jonah?” In one place Jesus says it was this, that “as Jonah was three days and nights in the stomach of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matthew 12:40). But, at the same time, He says that it was the fact that the men of Ninevah repented at the preaching of Jonah (Luke 11:32). The Gentiles would repent when the Jews did not, that is also the sign of the prophet Jonah. He gave two equally CO-valid interpretations of what that sign is. So, where Protestant hermeneutics say that there is only one interpretation, all the rest is application, it is out of step with Jesus.

Another rule of Reformed Hermeneutics says that, if the plain wording of Scripture makes sense, seek no other sense. Take it at its face value, full stop. That is also total rubbish! A First or Second Century Jewish Christian reading John’s Gospel, chapters one, two and three, would have said it was the new Creation narrative — the story of the new Creation. He would have seen that God walked the earth in Genesis, and now God walked the earth again in the new Creation in John. He would have seen that the Spirit moved on the water and brought forth the Creation in Genesis, and now the Spirit moved on the water and brought forth the new Creation in John. He would have seen that there was the small light and the great light in the Creation in Genesis, and now there was the small light — John the Baptist — and the great light — Jesus — in the new Creation in John. The fig tree, midrashically, in Jewish metaphor, represents the Tree of Life that we see in the garden in Genesis, in Ezekiel 47, and in the Book of Revelation. So when Jesus told Nathaniel, “I saw you while you were still under the fig tree” (John 1:48), He was not simply saying to Nathaniel that He saw him under a literal fig tree (although He did), He was telling him that He had seen him from the garden, from the Creation, from the foundation of the world.

By reading the Bible as literature and history, as the Humanists did, you only see part of it. The Humanists were reacting to medieval Scholasticism and the Gnosticism that much of Roman Catholicism is based upon. Nonetheless, their approach prevents people from seeing much of the depth of Scripture. Using the grammatical-historical method, the Reformers were able to discover truths such as Justification by Faith and the Authority of Scripture. But that is all they could see; they could not go beyond it. Martin Luther considered Romans to be the main book of the Bible. He totally rejected the Book of Revelation. Yet the Book of Revelation is the book for the Last Days. Luther admitted that you cannot understand it with a Protestant mind.

What is wrong? Is the Book of Revelation wrong? Or is the Protestant mind wrong? Be very careful. Daniel (Daniel 12:4) and John (Revelation 10:4) were told “to seal these things up” until the time of the end. In the fullness of God’s time, the interpretation of these books will be manifested to the faithful. When you see people writing out diagrams and charts, saying that they have got the whole eschatological program and all of Revelation figured out, be very cautious. It is sealed up until the appropriate time. God will unveil it in His way and in His time. And that will be done step by step. The first step is going back to reading the Bible as a Jewish book, instead of as a Greek one.

The Epistles are commentary on other Scripture; they tell you what other Scripture means on a very practical level. It is fine to read the Epistles as literature and history, using grammatical-historical methods. But there are different kinds of literature in the Bible, different literary genre that God put in there for different reasons. Psalms (Hebrew poetry), Revelation (apocalyptic literature), the Gospels (narrative), and Proverbs (wisdom literature).

You do not read a letter in the same way as you read poetry. You do not read The Narnia Chronicles (C.S. Lewis) in the same way as you would read a letter from Aunt Harriet back in England. If you read the Epistles, you will see that the apostles did not interpret the other books of the Bible by the grammatical-historical method. The book of Hebrews is a commentary on the symbolism of the Levitical priesthood and the Temple. Look at Galatians 4:24 onwards, the story of the two women — it is a midrash on the purpose of the Law. Look at the epistle of Jude, it is midrashic literature. The apostles did not handle the Scriptures according to Protestant grammatical-historical methods.

There are different kinds of prophecy in the Bible. The two kinds that are important in understanding the Last Days are Messianic prophecies and, connected to those, eschatological prophecies. When we come to consider biblical prophecy, this is very important. Because the Western mind, with its basis in Sixteenth Century Humanism, says that prophecy consists of a prediction and a fulfillment. To the ancient Jewish mind, it was not a question of something being predicted, then being fulfilled. Rather, to the ancient Jewish mind, prophecy was a pattern which is recapitulated; a prophecy having multiple fulfillments. And each fulfillment, each cycle, teaches something about the ultimate fulfillment. For example: In a famine, Abraham went into Egypt (Genesis 12:10-20). God judged Pharaoh. Abraham and his descendants came out of Egypt, taking the wealth of Egypt with them, and went into the Promised Land. Abraham’s descendants replayed the same experience. In a famine they went into Egypt (Genesis 42). God judged Pharaoh again, a wicked king. Abraham’s descendants came out of Egypt, taking the wealth of Egypt with them (Exodus 12:36), and they went into the Promised Land.

What happened to Abraham happened to his descendants. Then the same thing happened with Jesus. When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.” So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son” (Matthew 2:16).

Matthew says that when Jesus came out of Egypt, after the wicked King Herod died, that fulfilled the prophecy of Hosea. “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son” (Hosea 11:1-2). Very plainly, Hosea chapter 11 is talking about the Exodus, about what happened with Moses. In its grammatical-historical context, it is talking about the Exodus, not about the Messiah. But Matthew appears to take the passage out of all reasonable context and twist it into talking about Jesus. We have to ask, is Matthew wrong? or is there something wrong with our Protestant way of interpreting the Bible?

There is nothing wrong with Matthew, and there is nothing wrong with the New Testament. But there is something wrong with our Protestant mentality. The Jewish idea of prophecy is not prediction, but pattern. Abraham came out of Egypt, when Pharaoh was judged;
his descendant’s came out of Egypt when the wicked king was judged; then another wicked king was judged and the Messiah came out of Egypt. There are multiple fulfilment’s of prophecy. Midrashically, “Israel” alludes to Yeshua (Jesus) the Messiah. When you see verses like: “Israel my glory and Israel my first born,” they are midrashic allusions to the Messiah.

Then, in 1 Corinthians 10, something else happens: We come out of Egypt, which Paul tells us is a symbol of the world. Pharaoh, who was deified by the Egyptians and worshipped as God, is a symbol of the devil, the god of this world. Just as Moses made a covenant with blood and sprinkled it on the people, so did Jesus. Moses fasted forty days, and so did Jesus. Jesus is the prophet like Moses, predicted in Deuteronomy 18:18. Just as Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt, through the water, into the Promised Land, so Jesus leads us out of the world, through baptism, into heaven. It is a pattern.

Then the horse and its rider are thrown into the sea (Exodus 13:1). We sing the song of Moses — the horse and rider thrown into the sea — in Revelation 15:3. Why? Because it is a pattern. The ultimate meaning of “coming out of Egypt” is the resurrection and rapture of the Church. The judgments that happen in Exodus are replayed in Revelation. And just as Pharaoh’s magicians were able to counterfeit the miracles of Moses and Aaron, so the antichrist and False Prophet will counterfeit the miracles of Jesus and His witnesses. They brought Joseph’s bones with them when they came out of Egypt (Exodus 13:19). Why? Because the dead in Christ will rise first. It is a pattern.

The ancient Jewish mind that produced the New Testament looks at prophecy, not as prediction, but as pattern. To understand what is going to happen in the future, you look at what did happen in the past. There are multiple fulfillments, and each successive fulfillment teaches something about the ultimate one.

You will never understand the Book of Revelation with the kind of limited approach to biblical interpretation that is taught in Protestant seminaries. Midrash is like a quadratic equation or a very complex second order differential equation, a thirteen or fourteen step equation. Some people take the first step of grammatical-historical exegesis and think the equation is solved. There is nothing wrong with what they do, but there is plenty wrong with what they don’t do. The equation is not solved. There is nothing wrong with grammatical-historical exegesis. It is a necessary first step, it is a necessary preliminary, and it is okay for reading the Epistles. But that is all.

It takes the wisdom of the ancients to really understand these things — Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast... (Revelation 13:18) — not the wisdom of the 16th century, but the wisdom of the first century.

**Fellowship**

Having recently spoken in Sydney on this subject matter, I decided to transcribe it in three parts in case any of our readers find it edifying.

**TRUE FELLOWSHIP**

Acts 2: 42 – 47

“And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need. And day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved.”

I was speaking to someone a while ago, and they were reminiscing about a church many years back. They said that at this particular church the fellowship was sweet like nothing they have experienced before or since. In fact over the last few years, I’ve spoken to quite a few people who have told me the same thing. In fact I, myself, as a youth leader in the late 70’s, early 80’s, have memories of a few? Or is there a possibility that fellowship can be lived and experienced among believers today? Despite what we see so often in our churches, despite the apparent shallowness of some of our relationships, I believe fellowship is a distinct possibility for you and I, if we endeavor to do two things. Firstly — We fellowship to the depth and breadth which the New and Old Testaments indicate.

Secondly — We see fellowship as what it really is; something which needs to be constantly worked at. I don’t know about you but I carry baggage that hinders my fellowship; stuff that I need to let go of if I desire to grow in this area. The text we are looking at is probably the text that most people would come up with when thinking about New Testament fellowship and that’s why I chose it. For here we see a group of believers who shared everything together in those early days straight after Pentecost. But today I am not going to exegete that text fully because when one looks at the original Greek and Hebrew texts concerning the whole area of fellowship, we begin to see a lot deeper into what God desires for us. For example, the word ‘fellow’ in the Hebrew has four uses.

- **It can just mean man or ‘ish’. ‘Isha’ is the feminine for woman. It’s a generic term.**
- **Another is ‘Reya’, an associate, an acquaintance.**
- **Another is ‘Amiyth’, which means a comrade, a closer word than ‘Reya’.
- **And finally there is ‘Kawbare’, which literally means ‘to be knitted together’ or intermeshed.**

When we look at the Greek we get an even more in depth look, because it suggests what we must do or be with our fellows.

- **In Ephesians 2: 19, it says we must be ‘fellow citizens’ or ‘Soompolytare’. In other words a native of the same town or faith.**
- **In John 11: 16, we are called ‘fellow disciples’ or ‘Soommathetes’. In other words we have a co-learner under the same master.**
- **In Ephesians 3: 6, Paul says we are ‘fellow heirs’ in Christ, in other words we participate in a common inheritance. ‘Soongklayronomos’. We are also fellow members of the body, fellow partakers of the promise.**
- **In 1 Thessalonians 3: 2, we are called ‘fellow laborers’, or ‘helpers’. It’s the same Greek word ‘Soongeros’, a companion in labor.**
- **In Romans 16: 7, we are called ‘fellow prisoners’, ‘Soonaheekmalotos’, a co-capture in Christ or for Christ.**
- **In Colossians 1: 7, we are to be found as fellow servants, ‘Soondoulolos’, co-ministers with the same Master.**
- **Then in Philemon verse 2, the word suggests ‘fellow soldier’, ‘Soostiateotare’, a companion in battle.**

So when we look just at the depth in the way scripture suggests how you and I are to interrelate in Christ, we see that even here, sometimes what we know as ‘church’ pales into insignificance. But there is one more ‘fellow’ which even makes these fall short of what I believe God really desires and that ‘fellow’ is ‘fellowship’. In the Hebrew we have several words;

The first is, ‘Tesoometh’ or to be friends with. The text we are looking at is probably the text that most people would come up with when thinking about New Testament fellowship and that’s why I chose it. For here we see a group of believers who shared everything together in those early days straight after Pentecost. But today I am not going to exegete that text fully because when one looks at the original Greek and Hebrew texts concerning the whole area of fellowship, we begin to see a lot deeper into what God desires for us.
ally, and can be used to both grasp and also smack if necessary. Thirdly is ‘Kawbar’, similar to ‘Kawbare’ and it literally means ‘to be fascinated’ by one another.

In the Greek it is just as fascinating.

Firstly, ‘Soongkoynoneho’, to share company with someone. Secondly, ‘Metuche’ which means ‘fellowship’, but not at a particularly deep level. But thirdly we have that word for fellowship, mentioned not just in Acts 2; but in many places. It is a word that lies at the heart of all relationships – ‘Koinonia’. Literally to have everything in common.

So let’s look at three points in this word study, which we will cover over three teachings.

• Firstly What is Koinonia? How could it affect us? That is this teaching.
• Secondly Who and what we have Koinonia with and who we don’t. We will look at this in the next teaching.
• Thirdly Obstacles to Koinonia, which will be our final lesson.

Koinonia, according to Vine is ‘Communion, fellowship, sharing in common, that which is the outcome of fellowship, a contribution.’ When we look at our picture of the early church in the book of Acts we do indeed see all these things occurring. Five in particular which to me stand out significantly in our text are;

1. In verse 44 they had all things together! It is impossible to have fellowship unless we meet as an extended family and as Hebrews 10: 25 says “all the more as you see the day approaching”. It upset me terribly when I see the amount of Christians out there, keeping away from a local church because of heavy shepherding churches and the abuses of the word of faith movement and other heresies. I understand, I sympathize, even empathize BUT someone once said and I agree, ‘The answer to bad church is not no church, but good church.’ But these believers were together.

2. Again in verse 44, they had all things in common. Now let me make a point here because this is where quite a few churches go wrong. You see when we look at other contemporary groups of the time, we see some living lifestyles in a similar way to communes. The Qumran documents show clearly that the Essenes and the Qumran sects lived in a similar fashion; being together and having all things in common. In Acts 4: 32 – 5: 11 though, it clearly shows that the selling of possessions was voluntary, and the fact that the Christians moved from house to house in verse 46 shows that the Christians were distinct from the communes from the time. In fact what it does mean is that to hold together and have things together does not mean you join a Kibbutz or a commune; what it does mean is that even though you may own land, things, finances, a cricket bat, lawn mower – whatever, we can make them available to the community of believers if there is a need. In other words if you have 2 coats, food, whatever you should share with who ever has none. Many years ago the welfare system of society was ‘The Church’. Justine the Apostate, enemy of the Church, said “These followers of Christos, they not only look after their own poor, they look after ours as well.” When we look at some of the Great welfare movements of all time with people such as Shaftesbury, Muller, Barnado etc, we see that it was always the Christian at the forefront. We see that the Church played a prominent role. In the UK after the 1st and 2nd world wars, we see a Paternal state taking the place of the Church. And now as these systems become so expensive to maintain and institutionalized, we see the failure of the state and people unchurched and adrift in poverty. In our society, times are economically difficult and I believe once again the fellowship of believers must fill the GAP as we see brothers and sisters in terrible need, children orphaned, as we see an HIV pandemic shattering lives and families. We must respond in Christ’s love.

3. Verse 46 says they had one mind, one accord, in the temple. Their act of worship was an act of unity, and this overflowed into their very houses because…

4. It goes on to say they broke bread from house to house, even taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart; praising God and having favor with all the people. So their ‘Koinonia’ involved communion, fellowship, having a sharing in common and, what an outcome their fellowship had with gladness, praise, joy and sincerity of heart! Let me ask, when was the last time you had fellowship of this quality! Let me ask again, is our fellowship a present day reality? Or is it confined to the limitations of nostalgia? But like I said earlier, there are two things which we need to understand. A) That we must fellowship to the breadth and depth of the biblical term. B) And also we must understand then, that if we claim to be in Christ Jesus then we are fellow – together.

5. That we are fellow citizens in Christ, fellow disciples in Christ, fellow heirs in Christ, fellow laborers in Christ, fellow prisoners in Christ, fellow servants in Christ, fellow soldiers in Christ. And in Christ as we come to understand these terms, we must work at it.

Koinonia does not happen overnight but it begins to happen when we worship together, when we work together, when we eat together, when we have fun together, when we show hospitality to one another. Then, when we begin to trust, then we begin to heal from our past mistrusts, then we stop judging according to our misconceptions, then we begin to have Koinonia.

Let me ask;

• In Christ do you desire to work at Koinonia?
• Are you fed up of a pale imitation?
• Do you long for the real thing?
• Next time we will look at “Koinonia with who?”

TEACHING MATERIAL

A catalogue of Moriel teaching material can be obtained from Christopher at the following email address, I have also brought back from Aussie some new stuff which I will be catalogued for next month. Meanwhile to stir the hearts of some, I have obtained a DVD called “The Revival Hymn”. We will send it out for next to nothing at cost +P+P. It’s a 30 minute DVD set to music using inspirational words from revival preachers and includes descriptions of the great Hebrides revival in the 1950’s. <mailto:morielmissions@gmail.com> morielmissions@gmail.com

PRAYER ITEMS

1. Dianne’s tenants in New Zealand are leaving. This leaves her with the problem of getting new people or she may have to go home.
2. Praise the Lord for Ant’s Mission to Rome. We are looking for sponsors for Ant and Liz to carry out this work. If you are interested please get in touch with them.
3. For Norbert and Moses in Tanzania and Kenya and their growing work
4. For Chanti and Lilly at Good News Ministries in Vijayawada in India
5. For The whole team here at Moriel in Africa
6. For the children as they continue to fight their ailments
7. For Salvador and his team as they preach the gospel
8. For all our missionaries those who are yet to come
9. For all our needs both temporal and spiritual

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Prayer is important, but also the helping hands and the finances that enable us to do what we do. So please consider the following.

Receive a regular News update either by email or hard copy. Just send your address to us and we will pop one in the post for you or email it to you. (although email to save mail size will be without pictures)

Secondly you can apply to be a short or long term missionary. If the Lord burdens you and you want to investigate more please contact us.

Finally you can give a one off gift or a regular monthly amount to cover the costs of mission. This is simple to do. Just contact the following people or you can contact any Moriel office and they will assist you.
Dear friends,

Our days begin with the household erupting into wakefulness and ending in the blissful sounds of sleeping children. We go about the mornings to the strains of a Baroque Minuet and the beginning halting efforts of Hava Nagila rendered by Lizzie on the piano. As she conscientiously practices each day in preparation for her upcoming exams and the Music Festival in August and September, her improvement is obvious and it adds a festive air to our chores. On completion she moves to her recorder and practices with quiet confidence. She is also preparing for the London Trinity Exam for recorder. Thabo pipes out notes on his recorder, and as a beginner his progress pleases his teacher. Ruth doggedly plucks on her guitar in counts of 4: B, C, D, E, F and G with Allen or my encouragement. She was not able to attend her music lesson this week because the teachers and pupils were threatened by the union that they would be shot if they went to school. At present, government institutions like schools and hospitals are striking for an increase in wages.

Autumn on the highveld in South Africa is probably my most favourite season. The stillness and colours of autumn leaves have a peaceful effect on me. It was short lived however as winter arrived with such sudden forcefulness, plunging us into record lows long before it’s expected arrival about the middle of June. We also had record rainfalls for the month of June. In one night we had 30 mm of rainfall in an area that is normally dry in winter. Needless to say it is very cold.

We are grateful to the Lord for ordinary days, filled with the activities of children growing, learning and playing. Roxanne has returned to work and I teach all the children. After some experimenting with schedules and who to teach what, when and with whom we have a busy but comfortable timetable worked out for academics. The four younger ones are delighted that I am teaching them again and their eyes shine brightly as we read stories with requests for them to be read over and over again. I tried to teach math to Ruth, Rose and Walter together, but abandoned the idea when Rosie was coping far better. This did not bode well with Ruth and she gave Rosie withering stares whenever she responded to one of the questions I asked. Ruth and Walter are comfortable being taught together and respond spontaneously. Rosie is in between the others with math, so she gets my undivided attention for her math work.

Six of the children and I had an opportunity to visit the Walter Sisulu Botanical Gardens near Roodepoort with the music school to hear a jazz big band play outdoors. In front of us the Magaliesburg Mountains towered, with a lone male Black Eagle soaring over it and a waterfall cascading from it. We shared a picnic on a blanket while we listened to Girl Talk by Bill Fairley’s Big Band. Adrian, our oldest son who lives nearby the gardens in Centurion, Pretoria joined us for an hour or so. It was Mothers Day and we had a wonderful time together, once Ruth overcame her apprehensiveness of the mountain and people thronging about. Ben settled too once he became accustomed to the loudness of the music. He has always been sensitive to high pitched sounds and cries when it is too loud.

During the week I went with seven of the children to see a play at the local theater by a local company. It was The Sound of Music and the children enjoyed it greatly. They have watched the DVD a number of times and they love stories about other families who have a lot of children.

One night one of our chickens died and at the breakfast table the next morning Rosie said to the children they must pray for it. Thabo emphatically stated that we don’t pray for the dead. On another occasion the children were discussing how many children they were going to have when they grow up. Lizzie said she was going to have three children, an older child to look after them. Rosie said she is only going to have two because too many children make too much noise. Ben says he’s going to have lots of children because he likes noise. (He is the noisiest in the house.) Ernie informs everyone that it is not their decision to make as to how many children they’re going to have. Mmm… I wonder if he’s being listening to Bill Randles and the Christ in the Family series.

With regards to the children’s health we had a scare with Ruth in April. She had a severe infection and fever and in the run around to get her to a doctor and have a urine test done, I was overwhelmed by the kindness and assistance of those in the medical profession around me. Through this experience, as well as a book I was reading at the time by Edith Schaeffer titled Affliction and through God’s word, I was reminded that He is our comforter in times of trouble. Jesus was without comfort on the cross, forsaken, so that we could be comforted Is: 53:3 and 2 Cor 1:3-7. As the Holy Spirit, our paraklesis, the One who comes alongside us and does not leave us alone but rather comforts us, so should we come alongside one another bringing comfort. Ruth recovered completely and is still well. We, at last, after scouring pet shops, S.P.C.A’s and the like found a dog for Ruth to replace Max. She looks just like him and Ruth has named her Maxine. Rosie has been seeing an occupational therapist that specialises in hand related injuries and has had a splint made to support her wrist and thumb. She has also been given exercises to prevent shortening of muscles through lack of use in her arm. Wearing the splint has given Rosie far more mobility in her hand and she is delighted. Thabo had a seizure in April. The last one happened in November last year. What precipitates it we don’t know. Little Thembha is responding very well to his ARV’s. According to his skin specialist his skin condition is directly related to HIV. His skin is clearing rapidly though and we suspect that it’s as a result of an improved CD4 count. His dad David regularly picks him up every second weekend. Thoko has settled in very well. She is eager to learn and participates in the life of the family. She is a helpful child and Lizzie, Thoko and Thabo have long discussions and sing together when they do dishes in the evenings. Her dad visited last week after an absence of three months due to serious illness. He has virtually wasted away and looks skeletal. He has not seen a doctor and I suspect he may have T.B. I encouraged him to go to the clinic for tests. Please pray for him. His name is Christopher. Walter, Ernest, Thembha and Precious are all well. Walter is more confident in his school work although still markedly behind. He enjoys his lessons. Ernest is playing soccer again this year for the same club he played for last year. Thembha’s chest tightens up every now and again and Precious is our cuddly
little girl. Over the last three months much has happened in Jowie’s life. She has had a chance in a safe environment to come to terms with her status and begin to move forward in making decisions for herself and her twins. It’s not been easy but she is determined and appears to be leaning on God. She is spending more time with her family and is staying with them at the moment to attend a course to improve her chances for finding employment. Please continue to pray for her and we thank the Lord for all He’s done for her.

On Sunday nights Alethia meets at our place for fellowship together, usually over ice-cream and coffee and to listen to a teaching. While Dave, Lyn and Morne have been away we have had a very relaxed time together, normally with Salvador from Ebyown, Mike from Alethia, Becca and Susie from the UK, Dianne from New Zealand and Allen, myself and Clayton from Bezaleel. On most occasions we’ve watched DVD’s of Jacob’s teachings and as he eloquently renders the truth of God’s word, we banter back and forth in lively conversation about what he’s saying, his expressions, antics etc. Some are normally about 2 hours long and Dave would show it over a few weeks but we forgot and listen to the whole teaching. (We much prefer the DVD’s) Somewhat in surprise we realise the time and everyone rushes home. How does the old adage go? While the cats away the mice will play? Never a dull moment with Jacob and we look forward to his visit in August.

As I approach my 49th birthday (so soon?), I look back and see what the Lord has done in and through our lives with the comfort of the people He has given us, to share in the joy and make possible His work in this part of His vineyard. Truly the Lord has set our feet in a broad place. Thank you for your love and prayers, the support you give us that makes possible what we do. Please continue to pray for the matters mentioned in this letter with thanksgiving for His faithfulness in all things.

- Vindicate the weak and fatherless;
- Do justice to the afflicted and destitute;
- Rescue the weak and needy;
- Deliver them out of the hand of the wicked.

Psalm82:3, 4. NASB

May the Lord’s joy be your strength.
Allen and Sue.
bezaleel@saol.com

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**PERTINENT “FACTOID”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 26, 1933</td>
<td>The Gestapo is born, created by Hermann Göring in the German state of Prussia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 22, 1938</td>
<td>Nazis prohibit Aryan “front-ownership” of Jewish businesses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 26, 1938</td>
<td>Nazis order Jews to register wealth and property.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 19, 1939</td>
<td>Slovakia passes its own version of the Nuremberg Laws.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 30, 1939</td>
<td>Jews lose rights as tenants and are relocated into Jewish houses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 10, 1933</td>
<td>Burning of books in Berlin and throughout Germany.</td>
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<td>April 9, 1940</td>
<td>Nazis invade Denmark (Jewish pop. 8,000) and Norway (Jewish pop. 2,000).</td>
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<td>April 30, 1940</td>
<td>The Lodz Ghetto in occupied Poland is sealed off from the outside world with 230,000 Jews locked inside.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 6, 1941</td>
<td>Nazis invade Yugoslavia (Jewish pop. 75,000) and Greece (Jewish pop. 77,000) 3,500.</td>
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<td>May 1, 1940</td>
<td>Rudolf Höss is chosen to be kommandant of Auschwitz.</td>
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<td>May 10, 1940</td>
<td>Nazis invade France (Jewish pop. 350,000), Belgium (Jewish pop. 65,000), Holland (Jewish pop. 140,000), and Luxembourg (Jewish pop.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 14, 1941</td>
<td>3,600 Jews arrested in Paris.</td>
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<td>May 16, 1941</td>
<td>French Marshal Petain issues a radio broadcast approving collaboration with Hitler.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 17, 1934</td>
<td>Jews not allowed national health insurance.</td>
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<td>May 21, 1935</td>
<td>Nazis ban Jews from serving in the military.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 1939</td>
<td>The St. Louis, a ship crowded with 930 Jewish refugees, is turned away by Cuba, the United States and other countries and returns to Europe.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 30, 1934</td>
<td>The Night of Long Knives occurs as Hitler, Göring and Himmler conduct a purge of the SA (storm trooper) leadership.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 26, 1935</td>
<td>Nazis pass law allowing forced abortions on women to prevent them from passing on hereditary diseases.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 17, 1936</td>
<td>Heinrich Himmler is appointed chief of the German Police.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 14, 1938</td>
<td>Nazis order Jewish owned businesses to register.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 14, 1940</td>
<td>Paris is occupied by the Nazis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 22, 1940</td>
<td>France signs an armistice with Hitler.</td>
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**Voyage of the St. Louis**

The voyage of the SS St. Louis, a German ocean liner, dramatically highlights the difficulties faced by many people trying to escape Nazi terror. In May 1939, 937 passengers, most Jewish refugees, left Hamburg, Germany, en route to Cuba. Most of them planned eventually to emigrate to the United States and were on the waiting list for admission. All passengers held landing certificates permitting them entry to Cuba, but when the St. Louis reached the port of Havana, the President of Cuba refused to honor the documents.

After the ship left the Havana harbor, it sailed so close to the Florida coast that the passengers could see the lights of Miami. The captain appealed for help, but in vain. U.S. Coast Guard ships patrolled the waters to make sure that no one jumped to freedom and did not allow the ship to dock in the U.S. The St. Louis turned back to Europe. Belgium, the Netherlands, England, and France admitted the passengers. But within months, the Germans overran western Europe. Hundreds of passengers who disembarked in Belgium, the Netherlands, and France eventually fell victim to the Nazi “Final Solution.”

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**Refugees aboard the SS St. Louis**

Refugees aboard the SS St. Louis wait to hear whether Cuba will grant them entry. Off the coast of Havana, Cuba, June 3, 1939. (USHMN Photo)
"For from the creation of the world the invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being understood through the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse. For when they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God, nor were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and to birds and four footed beasts and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies among themselves. They changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.” (Romans 1: 20 – 25)

The latest News: Dave and Lyn have been away celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary. God provided them the means of going away together which has been good for Lyn to get a break. Both her and another lady in church called Sue Wells (who also is a mother to orphaned children) work tirelessly to a number of children that many couples of today would reel at the idea of having. This month has been a little different. Some challenges have gone and others come. We have still had car trouble this month and with Dave and Lyn being away certain errands may have had to take priority with our vehicle shortage. However, the good news is that the Ebyown vehicle that I have had the most use of, which has been in the drive way for over a month has been repaired today. Tomorrow morning I must take one of the other vehicles to have the accelerator cable fixed on it. Also with Dave and Morne (our other preacher) being away continually I have had to have taken up all the teaching, which in one way is good because it meant I could get through a huge chunk of the series on the book of Romans. I was just fixing a couple of cupboard doors and working through problems along the way and I realised the similarity to doing a message. No one really sees the work but they see the finished product. But however a message always demands some kind of response. Studying the Bible is to have an impact on ones life. I have also dug a trench to help with the flow of dirty water away from the living part of the compound, which is something I enjoyed doing. There has been some good experiences this month, which I have been grateful for. Also on an up note, I am looking forward to the arrival of Dave tomorrow and even more I will be looking forward to my visit to the UK in August. It will be so nice to see family and friends. My itinerary, as it stands, is attached at the end of this newsletter.

We continue to have Erin, Becca and Sue from Starbeck mission in the UK with us, and Di Vincent is continuing to stay from New Zealand. Also for this month only we have seen the arrival of Su Lymn from Singapore who apparently has been here before I came back to South Africa.

Evangelism: I have continued to have difficulties keeping a complete consistency in my going out. Also there have been difficulties with evangelism at Tsakane because of timing. I have changed the time a Saturday morning because the evening avails little time. However in the morning John has been busy on a couple of occasions and, last week there was no vehicle I could use. In July my Hebrew teacher will be off to America for 5 months training as her husband and her have been accepted on the staff of Jews for Jesus. I have been asked to teach the class behind us while she is away and this will also mean that the time for studying Hebrew will change from a Saturday to a Friday. The great thing about this is that it will free up Saturday so that I may go to Tsakane at a more reasonable time and thus be quite aggressive in my activity there. At the beginning of the month, my friend’s wife had died and I was asked by him (his name being Zak) to give a short message at the funeral. It was a great privilege to share a short gospel message at this occasion where so many people are thinking about life and death and asking ‘what is the point of it all?’ Being at the grave yard was an amazing experience. There were about 7 other funerals happening at the same time and that wasn’t it for that day. Just the company that was doing the funeral I attended had over 5 other mounds of earth ready to be got through that day! Death is so rampant and is a fact of life. I also met a couple of great guys, one guy being from Ghana and I hope to meet up with him again at some point.

Despite our lack of consistency with the evangelism, Mike and I have seen good opportunities this month to share. Even in handing out Gospel literature we have been able to speak with a couple of people. On the same day I chatted to a Moslem from another African country and Mike chatted to a Mormon for an incredibly long time. I always find black Mormons intriguing because the Book of Mormon says that black skin was a curse placed on a supposed race of people called the Lamanites. (2 Nephi 5: 21). But this gentleman was honestly seeking for some real answers. Mike and I have seen a lady called Zandile make a decision to follow Jesus. We are trying to plan a bible study in the area she lives in KwaThema (a township near to Tsakane) but we have had difficulty because we are trying to include our friend Bafana who also lives there. However Bafana doesn’t own a mobile phone. Let us hope that we can start it up this month. I would be happy to do this until such a time as we find a sound church that I may recommend to them.

I have just received a box full of tracts from Australia sent, donated by Yorke Hinds of Living Waters which will prove really useful as well as a few from my good friends in the UK. Their son Joe spent a few weeks with me when I lived in KwaZulu Natal and has proved a faithful and loyal friend. Thanks to every one who has supported me and the mission here in prayer.

PRAYER REQUESTS

1. For the possibility of more witnessing opportunities and the sensitivity, guidance and courage to proclaim God’s gospel. Please pray for the individuals that we speak with, which ever names God lays on your heart.
2. For our own devotion to Jesus. For that reality to be apparent in our own lives as we attempt to practice what the scripture tells us in love and humility.
3. For guidance for direction now and future.
4. For the Royle family and kids at Ebyown as those various illnesses come up frequently.
5. For our relationship with Pastor John in Tsakane and the door and opportunity for more rigorous evangelism in Tsakane.
6. For a possible Bible Study to start in KwaThema.
Our Lord declared, “[W]hat I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.” Is our watch telling the right time? Or have some of us stopped watching altogether? Certain folks believe that Christians shouldn’t bother watching the world’s slide towards accepting the antichrist. They argue that such an activity is unhealthy because it can become obsessive. They also contend that it takes our eyes off the true Christ. Finally they claim it is pointless anyway and is therefore a waste of valuable time. These are serious charges which deserve proper consideration. Hopefully the following will be of use in this regard.

CAN BE OBSESSIVE

An investigation into the different tentacles of the New World Order can certainly lead some people to become obsessed with studying the topic. However, it doesn’t follow from this that we should all ignore the topic. Many other activities can become obsessive, but this does not mean all study of such things is intrinsically wrong. As Bayith Ministries recently pointed out in another context, “If we take the argument to its logical conclusion, we end up with a very peculiar situation. For example, since some people develop an obsession about keeping fit or eating healthily, does this mean it is wrong for us to encourage exercise or a sensible diet? Any truth can become an obsession with people, but that’s no excuse for concealing it.” In rightly seeking to avoid one extreme, let’s not end up at the other.

TAKES OUR EYES OFF CHRIST?

There seem to be four progressive levels of argument made here:

1. We may initially be told that, since we should always focus on Christ, any activity which doesn’t focus on Him must be wrong.

It is absolutely true that our focus should always be on Christ. But many other activities are compatible with that. Does learning to play the guitar necessarily take our eyes off Christ? Does changing a baby’s nappy take our eyes off Christ? Or feeding one’s family? Or applying one’s self in a secular job? Clearly we should be wary of sweeping statements on this matter.

2. The next stage is to argue that the New World Order is, by definition, worldly. On this basis we are told we would inevitably be taking our eyes off Christ since He is separate from sinners (Heb. 7:26).

Again, it is undeniable that the world is at enmity with God and that God calls us to be holy and to be distinct from the world (2 Cor. 6:14-17). But again we need to be balanced. Many non-evangelistic activities involve us associating with the world. Every time we shop in a store owned by a non-Christian we are interacting with the world. Every time we obtain any service from an unbeliever (e.g. a plumber, a waiter, or an air stewardess) we need to connect with the world. None of this is automatically improper, so neither is it automatically improper to watch the political machinations going on in the world.

Again, the Lord Jesus should be our focus, but that doesn’t mean we should be “ignorant of [Satan’s] devices” (2 Cor. 2:11). The Bible contains whole chapters about the enemy and/or his false church (e.g. Rev. 13 & 17), yet the Bible obviously never stops focusing on Christ. At its core, the New World Order is a spiritual issue. The proper study of any spiritual issue will point us to Christ.

3. The third stage is to argue that the Apostle Paul never concerned himself with the affairs of the world and therefore neither should we.

On the face of it, this seems conclusive. But in fact there are several major problems with this line of reasoning. Firstly, Paul isn’t our only example in Scripture. In the book of Revelation, the Apostle John wrote extensively about the world and about Satan’s efforts to control its citizens. Secondly, Paul did indeed concern himself with the world, else he never would have penned 2 Thess. 2:3-12. (Christopher Wordsworth’s superb book, entitled Is The Papacy Predicted by St. Paul?, goes into this point much more fully.)

Thirdly, the institution at the heart of the New World Order claims to be Christian, and Paul was more than happy to warn of people who falsely claimed to be Christian.1 Next, the whole point about the antichrist is that he will set himself ‘in the place of Christ’ and pretend to be Christ. Again, anyone familiar with Paul’s writings will know that, had he been alive to witness it, he would have had no qualms about exposing this man and his activities.

Finally, Paul commanded us to pray for good governance, yet people seemingly then try to tell us we shouldn’t take any notice of the governance we receive!

4. The last stage is to argue that some limited study may be acceptable, but it should certainly not take up a serious amount of time.

There is a truth in this of course. Every Christian needs to concentrate on becoming more Christlike. Everything else will flow from this, including true (i.e. Spirit-led) evangelism. If God is not calling a person to undertake a particular activity, they should not try to perform it in their own strength. But does this really mean that no Christian should ever do serious study into the New World Order? The Body of Christ is meant to act like a body, where everyone performs their God-given function to complement the whole. If no-one ever did any serious study, where would that leave the rest of the Body?

God gives each Christian a specific ministry (i.e. a burden on their heart to serve the Kingdom of God in one way or another) in order to encourage each of us to abide in Christ more and more – for otherwise we will merely generate wood, hay and stubble instead of producing lasting fruit and fulfilling the burden He has given us. Just as pursuing a course in computer studies or foreign languages for a season can be entirely compatible with pursuing Christ, so can investigating the organizations behind the New World Order for a season (especially if one has been given a discernment ministry).

WATCHING IS POINTLESS?

The suggestion that there is no value in watching, or being aware of, the New World Order and its developments is very mistaken. Here are just some of the responses one can make to such a charge. (Note that several of these benefits are of direct help in evangelism.)

• As the Lord plainly stated in Mat
threw 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21, such study helps us to recognize the times we are in and how close we are to the end.

- Such study also gives us valuable guidance about things that have the sanction of New World Order groups. For instance, it helps us to avoid contributing to, or otherwise entangling ourselves in, certain organizations or activities promoted by those groups.
- It helps us to understand political and other developments around us, and therefore enables us to pray more intelligently. We should be prepared to be informed about the broad brush things going on in the world so that we can pray knowledgeably rather than waste time praying for things that are actually tools of the enemy that are beyond hope.
- It means we can better make sense of the world, which helps us to have an inner peace rather than confusion. If we are asked about some political development, or the meaning of some event, it is better to be able to explain the spiritual dimension behind the issue than just to look blankly at the other person.
- Such study also helps confirm Rome’s true nature. The better we understand the false church the better we can help those in it, deter those who are thinking of joining it, and keep ourselves safe from it.

CONCLUSION

Far from wasting our time and taking us away from Christ, godly study of this whole matter will actually lead us into the arms of God more than ever. “[T]he end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer” (1 Pet. 4:7).

**Quotes of the Quarter!**

A house divided against itself cannot stand.

- Abraham Lincoln -

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**Through A Dimly Lit Corridor**

5/1/1997

By Marshall Beeber

Through a dimly lit corridor, I peer through space and time. Not too far from here and now, As time and space can be defined. I see the earth at peace, And all the works of evil ceased. Swords are beaten back to plowshares, God’s holy government increased. Jerusalem redeemed eternal, Both Jew and Gentile reconciled. Young and old alike rejoice, Free at last from sin’s defile. Messiah Jesus on His throne, To judge the nations just and true. Is this your hope as it is mine? If it is not, God welcomes you!

**Will It Matter**

July 27, 1998

By Marshall Beeber

When Messiah sits upon his throne, to judge the nations true. And every people, race and tongue, profess their faith anew. When Israel shall be blessed, extolled by every heart. Their curse erased by boundless grace, that never will depart. Will it matter if the faithful, are known as something new? Would it mean that much to anyone, if a Christian were a Jew.
Update from Russia, 3.  May 19, 2007

5/13/07, Sunday: Had a great visit with Svetya and her son, Vova; they were both held hostage in the school for the three days during the terrorist attack – Svetya’s husband (and Vova’s dad), Sergei, was killed there. Their story is yet another very sad one here. Their family had lived in a different part of Bsln, and had bought an apartment close to School No. 1 (the school the terrorists took over). They finished remodeling the apartment, and moved in, and the first day they were ever in School No. 1 was that first day of September (2004). As the terrorists quickly took many of the healthy and strong men away and shot them execution style, I’m guessing that’s what happened to Sergei. I don’t know if Vova always was, but he seems very grown up and quite serious for his age; Svetya said they’re already like friends and not simply mother and son… that Vova has a say in things, since he’s the man in the house. Vova wanted to give me an icon picture, but I said I was a Christian and couldn’t accept it. Svetya, not out of insult, simply asked why not, and The Lord blessed me with a good time to share with them. I shared how Jesus died to give us the opportunity to pray straight to God, Jesus Is The Bridge between man and God, and no one else is necessary. Icons, candles, and so forth… they’re not necessary. God has the most power, and so why not pray straight to Him? I shared how offended Svetya would be if Vova needed something, but wouldn’t ask her, instead just going to a neighbor’s. Svetya understood.

5/14/07, Monday: Began teaching guitar and English lessons here at Nahzee’s house, where I live. As our reading text for the English, we’ll be reading through The Gospel of John for a few verses each session. Afterwards, had the first Russian Bible reading session – this is a group I really hope The Lord grows… it’s just an informal gathering of any who want to come & read His Word together (in Russian).

5/15/07, Tuesday: Went to Madina’s apartment; her dad had previously asked me to make them an “American dinner”, something Americans eat. So I helped Madina and we made a pasta dish, a salad, and garlic bread – to God’s glory, they really seemed to like it, especially her parents (Alan and Zalina). Praise The Lord for the opportunity to do something practical like help make a dinner for a family who lost their 10 year old son, Marat, in the school massacre. For this family, life has essentially stopped.

5/16/07, Wednesday: AM fellowship. Later visited with Rusik, and had good visit with him and his mom. (Rusik survived the attack, but was shot in his right arm, and still has a golf-ball-sized protrusion by his elbow.) He still cannot fully straighten his arm, nor make a fist with his right hand. Coming up on three years since the injury, the doctors, keep saying for him to wait until he’s 18 next year for the surgery? Rusik’s mom asked if I’d help translate 2 medical papers and help them post the info on the internet so they might try and find a sponsor to cover his surgery. They’ve seen lots of doctors, but it seems like they’re getting the run-around. God willing, they’d really like to have his arm operated on in the US or another country outside of Russia. Also visited Byella and parents; Byella is a teenage girl who survived the attack. The Lord opened up opportunities to share with them about The Bible and Jesus. I asked Byella’s mom (Rita) how Zina was (Rita’s friend, whose house is close by.) I also knew Zina from seeing and talking with her many times at the Mother’s Committee and other places; Zina lost her son in the attack. To my horror, I found out that Zina was killed in a car crash right before Christmas. Zina’s daughter’s birthday fell just a few days later. This young girl, Vika, survived the attack herself, but lost her older brother and only sibling there. And then, a little over two years later, she loses her mom in a car crash right before her own birthday. The people of Bsln have some of the most tragic lives that I’ve ever heard of. . . . Came home later, and received news that made me so incredibly angry inside – so angry that I can’t even explain. Apparently the Russian version of our FBI called Nahzee (the grandma I live with here) and her daughter, and we’re supposed to go to Vldikavkz (the nearby big city) tomorrow. I guess they want to make sure I’m really living where I said I am or whatever – but it just makes me so angry, unless God does an amazing miracle, there goes the whole morning, and perhaps early afternoon, and I need to be back here in Bsln for classes at 3. Arrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrghhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh! Nahzee and I prayed together, and I also called my dad and asked him to call my pastor (Kevin), asking them to pray about it. O God, You know how angry and frustrated I am, and I’m just so tired of all this. Please grant me favor and kindness, in Jesus, Name – please give me the opportunity to share Jesus Christ, Your Son.

5/17/07, Thursday: All glory and praise to Yah – thanks be to God, the meeting in Vladikvkz went well. YHHH greatly heard our prayers, and He answered in His mercy; and thanks, gratitude, glory, honor, and praise be to Him. Thank You, Abba! Got back in time to eat lunch and get some stuff done before the lessons today. Thank you everyone who prayed!

5/18/07, Friday: Saw and talked a good bit with Valerya, Taimara, and Alla – three believers from Taimuraz’s fellowship in Vladikavkz. Every Friday, they visit people in Bsln who lost loved ones in the terrorist attack. Praise God – people who share the same vision as me! It was a really nice time, and I really felt a connection with them. Taimara is also involved with a Bible translating committee, and said we could talk more about that in the future; as many of you, Lord willing, I’d really like to be involved in Bible translation in the future. Valerya invited me to go with him any Thursday to the prison to meet the brothers there. He also said to pass on a sincere thank you to my church for sending me to them. So to all who are helping and have helped, both from Calvary Chapel Pittsburgh as well as from other fellowships, thanks so much! In the courtyard in front of Mairbek’s building, I sat and talked with Svetya. (Svetya is a mother who survived the attack, but lost her only daughter/child in it.) Pray for her: she is still so distraught and filled with grief in her soul… she lives, but said that honestly speaking, she doesn’t want to live… Visited with Mairbek and his family; Monday is his 11th birthday, and I said I’d drop by their apartment after my lessons. (Mairbek miraculously survived the school massacre, but lost his
Letters to the Editor

when he fell off his board and suffered severe damage to his head. Please pray for his mom and dad, and his younger sister. Please also pray for the student who was driving the Jeep, as he now has to live the rest of his life with this on his conscience. This is especially tragic for the Nollette family. My 18-year-old cousin, John, lost his own father not too long ago.

Thank you for all of your prayers, love, and support in this ministry.

In Jesus our Hope and Peace,

jason, jalalzone7@yahoo.com

Trust in YHWH with all your heart.

Proverbs 3:5

MISSIONAR Y TEACHER

Dear Friends,

Ebyown Children's Home is situated in South Africa 65 km outside Johannesburg, currently we have 9 children but this will increase shortly to 15 children shortly.

All the children have special needs and range in age from 1-10, while Lyn is experienced with pre-school she is in need of someone to help with the older children.

The curriculum used:

Konas
Lalti
Mathsusee

Footprints over Africa

We are looking for an energetic person who is zealous for the Lord, has teaching experience and willing to give at least 2 years to the children.

The missionary must be sponsored although we can provide accommodation, food and a friendly family working environment.

If anyone is interested please apply to Dave Royle at thelion@mweb.co.za

Baghdad, Iraq

-I have been working in Iraq for 3 1/2 years. A friend asks, “Any hope in Iraq; is it any different”?

Shia killing Sunni and vice versa; just more pronounced. Where there is Islam, there are problems. Consider most of the wars & conflicts in the world have Islam directly or indirectly related to them. The most blessed countries are God honoring countries. The Middle East had to have Western knowledge and technology to remove & refine oil products and bring them from the Stone Age to the jet age. Islam, though peaceful in the US will not continue to be peaceful. Eventually, they will grow in number and start to influence legislation and take over government activities. Islam will try to enslave Americans & Europeans into its deceptive, oppressive rules and interpretations. They will attempt to take freedom from every country they inhabit. Islam’s end goal is world domination and conversion of this world’s inhabitants. Muhammad started Islam with the sword and Islam will end with the sword at the “Battle of Armageddon”.

After reading 2/3 of the Koran, it became clear it is a book full of war and commands and examples to kill, expel or oppress non-Muslims. They have taken the Testament of the Jews (Christians call the Old Testament) and incorporated there interpretation to accommodate their beliefs in the Koran; “There is a way that seems right to a man but the end is the way of destruction; eternal loss (Proverbs 14:12).

They have peaceful verses that keep the ignorant and unlearned off balance, therefore, unaware of its true intents. Muslims say the Koran is a holy book that must be kept in the original language for the true meaning. The only book that is holy is the Word of God who “became a man and dwelt among us” (John 1:10-14), “Who died once, for all” (1 Peter 3:18) and “Without the shedding of His Blood, there is no remission (forgiveness) of sins” (Hebrews 9:22). Without Jesus, this world is “Lost and without hope” (Ephesians 2:12) and that includes Muslims, Europeans and Americans claiming Christianity with-out asking Jesus to come into their lives (Romans 10:9-10). In the book of Revelation, the saints/Christians are be-headed for their faith (Revelation 20:4). The Middle East still practices this form of the death penalty and they will continue it during the time of the Tribulation.

Is this offensive to the Muslim community? This applies to anyone, anywhere in the world. How many times did Jesus & John call the “Religious” leaders, scribes...etc, snakes, vipers, graves full of dead men’s bones, hiding the truth from those who are seeking it, Jesus saying they are children of the devil, who was a liar from the beginning and a murder (John 8:44). Every person, not matter what their beliefs are, that has lived throughout eternity past, present and future will have one event in common. “Every knee shall bow & every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord” (Romans 14:11). For the saved, they will bow to Christ as their savior, the lost will bow to Christ as their Judge at the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-14). God gave all a free will. Judas was not predestined to betray Christ and be lost; he became a trader, he made his choice (Luke 6:16. NKJ version). The only “Predestination” taught in the Bible is “Whoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Those who call on Jesus are predestined for eternal life. The decision for Christ is an INDIVIDUAL choice.

The USA had its battle for independence & and more than 500,000 died in the Civil War that eventually made the USA “One Nation under GOD”. The price was high but out of that destruction came the greatest nation to ever exist. The US is the most powerful and advanced country that contributes more than any nation to make this world a better place. If Iraq has a Civil War that results in freedom, then their children will enjoy the freedoms their parents fought and sacrificed their lives for.

International Zone, Baghdad, Iraq

Thank you for all your prayers, love, and support in this ministry.

In Jesus our Hope and Peace,

jason, jalalzone7@yahoo.com

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Dear Marg,

Thank you for putting together the intercessors’ prayer list. There certainly is enough to say grace over, as Father Tim says in the Mitford series. There are lots of hurting people out there.

What I’ve done - perhaps it may help your other readers - is put half the pages of the prayer list in the New Testament which I read in the morning, and the other half in the Old Testament which I read at night. So that helps me to remember to be faithful praying in depth for one person on each list every day. I also have written out a quote from Ephesians 3:20-21 on a bookmark kept there too, to remind me when daunted that it’s not my prayers but the One to whom I’m praying that’s effective, and that He is not limited in any way.

One can become discouraged when prayers don’t get the quick answers we want. I remember my pastor from America saying that time is part of God’s answered prayers, something difficult for us in this day of quick fixes (Jacob preached about that in South Africa in 1994 or ‘95; that we Christians have adopted the world’s mindset with the expectation that everything has to be done pronto). But I’m not in any particular hurry to pray for patience, because I know from experience how the Lord answers that one! :)

But just to provide encouragement to others: about five years ago the American pastor above - he was a church planter - left South Africa to go back to his country, and he’d decided it was just too expensive to ship out his furniture once again. He asked us to pray for him and his wife; that the Lord provide whatever they needed to replace what they were going to give away in South Africa. Well, later from America he said to me: ‘I think you can stop praying now; all the furniture we could ever need, and more, has been provided; it just came in from everywhere!’.

I have lots of answered prayers like that in a notebook; reflecting on God’s past faithfulness strengthens my belief in present and future help; though one has to resist the worldly mercantile notion that one can exhaust one’s credit with God. I write ‘Ebenezer’ on the cover of each, after Samuel, as well as this poem by John Newton:

“TRUST IN THE LORD WITH ALL THY HEART; AND PUT THY TRUST ALSO IN HIS HEAVENLY FATHER. HE PROVIDES ALL THINGS FOR THINE USE, AND NOT FOR THINE ABUSE. HE PROVIDES FOR THY NEED, AND NOT FOR THY WANT. HE PROVIDES FOR THE MIND, AND NOT FOR THE EYE. HE PROVIDES FOR LIFE, AND NOT FOR DEATH. HE PROSPERS THE MAN, AND NOT THE PLAN." - John Newton

By John Newton

Begone, unbelief, My Savior is near, And for my relief Will surely appear;

By prayer let me wrestle, And He will perform;

With Christ in the vessel, I smile at the storm.

Though dark be my way, Since He is my Guide, ’Tis mine to obey, ’Tis His to provide;

Though cisterns be broken, And creatures all fail, The word He hath spoken Shall surely prevail.

His love, in time past, Forbids me to think He’ll leave me at last In trouble to sink:

Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review Confirms His good pleasure To help me quite through.

Determined to save, He watched o’er my path, When Satan’s blind slave, I sported with death;

To trust in his name, He told me no less. To put me to shame? And thus far have brought me, And shall I repine?

Why should I complain Of want or distress, Temptation or pain? He told me no less. The heirs of salvation, I know from His Word, Through much tribulation Must follow their Lord.

How bitter that cup No heart can conceive, Which He drank quite up, That sinners might live! His way was much rougher And darker than mine;

Did Christ, my Lord, suffer, And shall I repine?

Since all that I meet Shall work for my good, The bitter is sweet, The medicine, food; Though painful at present, ‘Twill cease before long, And then, oh, how pleasant The conqueror’s song!

Isn’t that hymn just so strengthening to one’s spirit and so full of good theology? A vast improvement on the advertising jingles passing themselves off as worship nowadays.

May God bless you and Moriel and all the Moriel supporters too, and may all our problems last as long as our New Year’s resolutions!

In Christ
Denise of New South Wales Australia

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**PURPOSE DRIVEN CHURCH**

**CONSIDER THESE TWO FACTS:**

1. The Purpose Driven Church by Rick Warren has sold over 1 million copies in 20 languages and is a standard textbook in hundreds of Bible Colleges.

2. Over 400,000 pastors from 162 countries have been trained under Rick Warren’s church growth seminar material. Is it any wonder that Warren calls his philosophy a “stealth movement flying beneath the radar that’s changing literally thousands of churches around the world”? Yet despite the incredible popularity of Rick Warren and others like him, there are numerous serious problems with the church growth movement. For a new critique of Warren’s dangerous book see www.webtruth.org
Jacob’s USA Itinerary

SO, WHERE’S JACOB TODAY?

Jacob has several conferences this summer and we look forward to seeing you all there. Here is the most current information on his Summer 07 speaking engagements. But, please check the website for the most up to date information.

This will be the last time Jacob is in the US till next year. We do covet your prayers for Jacob. Please pray for his safety as he travels, his family, and the numerous airline connections as well as his health concerns that are aggravated by long flights, as well as the meetings themselves.

July

Thursday – Saturday 19 - 21, 2007
Calvary Chapel East
1510 Tramway Blvd. NE, Suite E
(Skyview Center - Indian School & Tramway)
Albuquerque, NM 87112-6100
Contact: (505) 243-2025

Thursday – Saturday, July 26 - 28, 2007
Yavapai College Performance Hall
1100 E. Sheldon St., Prescott, Az 86301
Speakers: Jacob Prasch, David Hocking & Wallid Shoebat
Contact: (928)642-8228 or (928)713-3926

Sunday – July 29, 10:00 AM
Calvary Chapel Mountain Vista
Surprise
17825 W. Sierra Montana Loop
Surprise, AZ 85379
Contact: (623) 876-9464

August

Friday - Sunday, Aug 3 & 4, 2007
The Day The Lord Is Near
Calvary Chapel Chino Hills
4201 Eucalyptus Ave
Chino, CA 91710 USA
909-393-7100

Come see Jacob everyday @ moriel.org

Saturday - August 4 & 5, 2007
Sat. August 4 @ 6:00 PM
Sunday - August 5 @ 8:30 & 10:30 AM
Maranatha Chapel
10752 Coastwood Road
San Diego, CA 92127 USA
Contact: 858-613-7800

Sunday, Aug 5th, 2007
Sunday – 8:30 & 10:30 AM
Maranatha Chapel
10752 Coastwood Road
San Diego, CA 92127 USA
Contact: 858-613-7800

Wednesday Aug 8th
Bible Study “Time is Short”
Cultural Arts Center at Victoria Gardens
12505 Cultural Center Drive
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91739
Cultural Center Administrative Offices:
909-477-2775
CONTACT: Marco Quintana 909-484-8740

Thursday Aug 9th
Bible Study
Crossroads Center
1931 N Campus Ave (210 Fwy and Campus)
Upland, CA 91784
CONTACT: Marco Quintana 909-484-8740

Friday, Saturday Aug 10th & 11th
Simcha Yeshua
590 Santa Lucia Dr
Hemet, CA 92543
(951) 652-8599

Sunday, Aug 12, 2007
Calvary Chapel San Jacinto
1450 W. 7th Street
San Jacinto, CA 92582
951-654-1401
8:00 AM, 9:45 AM & 11.30 AM

Sunday, August 15 - 17, 2007
Sunday @ 7:00 PM
Beth Hebron
Moriel Pittsburgh Fellowship
Pittsburgh, PA
Contact: 412-321-6154

Sunday, August 19, 2007
Sunday @ 10:30 AM
Beth Hebron
Moriel Pittsburgh Fellowship
Pittsburgh, PA
Contact: 412-321-6154
Welcome to Moriel Ministries’ Be Alert page! The links that you will receive in your emails are past news alerts.

“Be Alert!” is sent out regularly and contain various items of interest, encouragement, and a warning to the body of Christ to keep you looking up for our soon and coming King, Jesus Christ.

The Be Alerts are produced in a PDF format.

If your looking for an article you have read in the past, use the Google search engine.

1) WARNING Apostate Bible Released: Contains 67th Book Entitled “God’s New Law”
2) Want Middle East Stability? Move UN to Iraq
3) The prince of the kingdom of Persia
4) Answering ‘the Bible Answer Man’
5) Church wants to ‘understand gays’
6) Answering ‘the Bible Answer Man’
7) Hank Hanegraaff’s Conference on Preterism and Replacement Theology
8) On Tap -Have Suds With Your Buds!
9) Saddleback Church Defends Rick Warren Against ‘Inappropriate’ Charges
10) US: Pastor’s mission to bring ‘values voters’ into Dems’ flock

......and many other informative articles!
1) WARNING Apostate Bible Released: Contains 67th Book Entitled “God’s New Law”

Author Tim Fleming Offers a Free Download of a New Version of the Bible for the Gay Community

The free Bible download contains all the text of the King James Version, as well as a new book entitled God’s New Law, which describes a prophecy from the year 2000 that forgives homosexuality and fornication. This new book is meant to inaugurate the rebirth of mankind and the acceptance of gay marriage in God’s kingdom.

PRESS RELEASE NEWswire - February 14, 2007

San Diego, CA -- This is a new version of the Holy Bible that includes the New Testament, along with a new book entitled God’s New Law, which was introduced in the year 2000. This book contains prophecy fulfilled, prophecy to be, and the decommisioning of traditional religion so that God may dwell with all those who believe. God’s New Law is meant to be the last book of the Bible and to herald the birth of God’s religion without doctrine....... For more details about this article go to, http://morielbealertblog.blogspot.com

2) Want Middle East Stability? Move UN to Iraq

NEWSWEEK / POSTGLOBAL - by Prof. Cynthia E. Ayers and COL (R) David W. Cammons - April 9, 2007

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Army, the Dept. of Defense, or any organization within the U.S. government.


3) The prince of the kingdom of Persia

Ahmadinijad’s bluster boosted by secret deal for North Korean Taep’o-dong-2 ballistic missiles

DEBKAFILE - June 5, 2007

Iran and North Korea are in advanced negotiations for Tehran’s purchase of Taep’o-dong-2 ballistic missiles, whose estimate range is 3,500-4,000 km., DEBKAfile’s exclusive intelligence sources report. North Korea’s deputy foreign minister Kim Hyong brought the proposition to its final stages when he visited Tehran in the first week of May. Delivery was promised for late July or early August. US Vice President Richard Cheney informed Saudi King Abdullah of this development during his May visit to Riyadh, as DEBKA-Net-Weekly 300 first revealed on May 11.

Israeli military sources say that Iranian president Mahoud Ahmadinejad’s declarations are made more outrageous than ever by knowledge of the deal. Sunday he declared the countdown has begun for the demise of the Zionist state....... For more details about this article go to, http://morielbealertblog.blogspot.com

4) Answering ‘the Bible Answer Man’

WORLDNETDAILY - By Joseph Farah - May 23, 2007

Hank Hanegraaff, also known as “the Bible Answer Man,” may know more about theology than me. He may have memorized more Scripture than me. He may have a deeper understanding of some Bible passages than me. But he sure doesn’t know much about the Middle East. Therefore, today, I am going to address some issues being raised by “the Bible Answer Man” - especially insofar as they apply to the suicidal policies he is advocating with regard to this explosive area of the world. In a new novel he has written with fiction writer Sigmund Brouwer, “Fuse of Armageddon,” he makes the amazingly false case that America’s support of Israel causes, at least in part, terrorism directed against Americans. It is fitting that such a preposterous and wholly unsupportable thesis could only be marketed to the American people as a work of fiction - because that’s what it is. ....... For more details about this article go to, http://morielbealertblog.blogspot.com