



TRANSHUMANISM

GATEWAY TO A POST-HUMAN ERA

By Albert James Dager

ON TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 2013, Barack Obama unveiled the “BRAIN” Initiative, described by the White House press office as “a bold new research effort to revolutionize our understanding of the human mind and uncover new ways to treat, prevent, and cure brain disorders like Alzheimer’s schizophrenia, autism, epilepsy, and traumatic brain injury.” (BRAIN stands for Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies.) The initial investment by the federal government is \$100 million.

While Obama touts the medical benefits of such breakthroughs, there is a more sinister side to this research. These noble goals mask the potential for a great evil as scientists grasp with the concept of transhumanism—the blending of human and animal DNA and, eventually, the melding of the human mind with supercomputers to give the illusion of immortality.

The World Transhumanist Association states on its website’s homepage:

Over the past few years, a new paradigm for thinking about humankind’s future has begun to take shape among some leading computer scientists, neuroscientists, nanotechnologists and researchers at the forefront of technological development. The new paradigm rejects a crucial assumption that is implicit in both traditional futurology and practically all of today’s political thinking. This is the assumption that the “human condition” is at root a constant. Present-day processes can be fine-tuned; wealth can be increased and redistributed; tools can be developed and refined; culture can change, sometimes drastically; but human nature itself is not up for grabs.

This assumption no longer holds true. Arguably it has never been true. Such innovations as speech, writ-

ten language, printing, engines, modern medicine and computers have had a profound impact not just on how people live their lives, but on who and what they are. Compared to what might happen in the next few decades, these changes may have been slow and even relatively tame. But note that even a single additional innovation as important as any of the above would be enough to invalidate orthodox projections of the future of our world.

“Transhumanism” has gained currency as the name for a new way of thinking that challenges the premiss (*sic*) that the human condition is and will remain essentially unalterable. Clearing away that mental block allows one to see a dazzling landscape of radical possibilities, ranging from unlimited bliss to the extinction of intelligent life. In general, the future by present lights looks very weird—but perhaps very wonderful—indeed.

Some of the possibilities that you will no doubt hear discussed in the coming years are quite extreme and sound



like science-fiction.¹

Yes, it does sound like science fiction, but it is no longer science fiction; it is an advanced form of genetic research that exists today, and is growing by leaps and bounds.

By rethinking human nature, transhumanists reject the Word of God out of hand. Yet they admit that an unforeseen consequence of their research could be the extinction of all intelligent life:

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¹ “What is Transhumanism,” World Transhumanist Assoc., <http://www.transhumanism.org/resources/transhumanism.htm>.

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

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WHY MEDIA SPOTLIGHT?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



A Personal Note

Dear Friends,

With this issue, we are back on schedule after selling our home. As soon as it was put to bed we packed up and started getting things ready for the move to our new home in Sequim, Washington. We are temporarily renting a small one-bedroom duplex apartment until we find a permanent place, and will be using the living area for our office space for the time being.

Please note our new mailing address and phone number:
Media Spotlight, PO Box 640, Sequim, WA 98382-4310. (360) 477-4180
(That’s pronounced Skwim.)

We’ll try our best to keep *Media Spotlight* coming on schedule every quarter, and if the Lord allows, we hope to publish more often once we have a permanent home.

Things have been hectic, but are beginning to smooth out. It just got to the place where we couldn’t afford to stay in our home in Sammamish after living there for the past 26 years. We chose to work out of our home years ago in order to save on having to pay rent in a commercial building someplace, and we will continue to do so. We will need a house large enough to provide office space and good storage areas for books and publications. Your prayers for a not-too-long transition period are desired.

Things are really heating up for true believers in Jesus as we see even normally moral-minded people shifting their positions on the evils that threaten those who stand for the Lord’s righteousness. Legislative attempts to reign in the onslaught of evil against individuals’ right to act according to their conscience are being vetoed by executive powers and overturned by courts. As never before in America, good is being called evil, and evil is being called good. People are afraid now to even speak about their convictions for fear of being verbally castigated, physically beaten, and even thrown in prison and fined. The slur of “homophobic” is thrown at those who wish only to be left to honor their religious convictions by not engaging in sinful behavior.

As we address the recent Arizona state senate’s attempt to protect that right (page 4), and the pressure brought to bear against Arizona’s Governor Jan Brewer to veto the proposed legislation, we ask if new ghettos may one day be built to separate true believers in Jesus for a new Holocaust. Might this be the Lord’s drastic way to separate us from the world because we have been so reticent to separate ourselves on our own?

Yet in spite of the dire prospects for the future of America, we should be encouraged by God’s Word:

When these things begin to happen, then look up, and lift up your heads. Your redemption draws near.

Even so, come soon, Lord Jesus!

In Jesus’ love,

Al and Jean
Al and Jean



Transhumanism

(Continued from page 1)

The risks are as enormous as the potential benefits. In addition to dangers that are already recognized (though perhaps inadequately counteracted?), such as a major military, terrorist or accidental disaster involving nuclear, chemical, viral or bacteriological agents, the new technologies threaten dangers of a different order altogether. Nanotechnology, for example, could pose a terrible threat to our existence if obtained by some terrorist group before adequate defense systems have been developed. It is not even certain that adequate defense is possible. Perhaps in a nanotechnological world offense has a decisive intrinsic advantage over defense. Nor is it farfetched to assume that there are other risks that we haven't yet been able to imagine.²

One gets the impression that these hugely intelligent scientists are nothing more than children playing with matches. They hope to achieve something beautiful, but may end up burning down the house in the process.

Transhumanists are projecting that their goals will be largely achieved, not in 1,000 years, 100 years, or even 50 years, but within the next couple of decades. Some are not so optimistic, suggesting that they may be realized within 70 years at the outside.

Immortality

A goal of transhumanism is the uploading of human consciousness into a virtual reality.

If we could scan the synaptic matrix of a human brain and simulate it on a computer then it would be possible for us to migrate from our biological embodiments to a purely digital substrate (given certain philosophical assumptions about the nature of consciousness and personal identity). By making sure we always had back-up copies, we might then enjoy effectively unlimited lifespans. By directing the activation flow in the simulated neural networks, we could engineer totally new types of experience. Uploading, in this sense, would probably require mature nanotechnology. But there are less extreme ways of fusing the human mind with computers. Work is being done today on developing neuro/chip interfaces. The technology is still in its early stages; but it might one day enable us to build neuroprostheses whereby we could "plug in" to cyberspace. Even less speculative are various schemes for immersive virtual

reality—for instance using head-mounted displays—that communicate with the brain via our natural sense organs.³

What this means is that a person may have his consciousness uploaded into a computer through which he could virtually be immortal.

Magic

Brain-computer interfaces are already being produced by companies such as Emotiv Systems. Even though this is first-generation, the Emotiv's interface has been demonstrated to allow people to move objects with their minds connected to a computer merely by thinking of the object being moved. A practical demonstration of this can be seen in a video at www.emotive.com, where a man lifts a toy helicopter by thought while seated at his computer. Another application shows window blinds being closed by thinking of it. One may even affect objects on the computer itself through thought.

At this point, one must be sitting at a computer to accomplish this alteration of reality and seeming magic (a word used by the narrator, Tan Le). As the technology develops, will it be long before one can accomplish telekinesis without a physical computer, but with the brain being interfaced with a nanotechnology enhanced minicomputer embedded in the skull?

These wondrous elements of transhumanism research may seem beneficial to mankind, but they are based on a flawed perception of human nature—that man is intrinsically good, and therefore his science and technology will be used ultimately for good.

Godhood

There is a spirituality behind the transhumanism movement which seeks to bring humanity into the state of godhood. The Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict at Arizona State University (ASU) offers a series of Templeton Research Lectures under the heading, "Facing the Challenges of Transhumanism: Religion, Science, Technology. Among other transhumanist ideas, these lectures address the emergence theory relating to human development with the eventual prospect of immortality or, at the least, life extension to 1,000 years or more.

The Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict is part of the SOPHIA Project at ASU, which explores human spirituality and advances in consciousness and health. Spiritualist Resources, an organization that promotes communication with the spirit realm, including the dead, has on its website an appeal posted by The SOPHIA Project Entity Communications Study that is looking for participants who claim experiences in communications with spirit entities:

The first study in this project is the Entity Communications Study. The purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences of people who claim to channel or communicate with Deceased People, Spirit Guides, Angels, Other-Worldly Entities/Extraterrestrials, and/or a Universal Intelligence/God. The ultimate objective is to investigate if these communications can be validated under controlled conditions. This study will be conducted in two phases:

(Continued on page 23)

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.



Constitutional rights vetoed

ARIZONA GOV-ERNOR JAN Brewer, Re- publican, vetoed state Senate Bill 1062, that would have allowed business owners to re- fuse service to same- sex couples on the grounds of their reli- gious convictions. Brewer had been under intense pressure from business groups



and political leaders to veto the legislation out of fear that it would hamper the state’s economy and hinder Arizona’s reputation a year before it hosts the next Super Bowl. They were concerned that Arizona could suffer economic losses similar to those experienced when the state passed strong immigration legislation that was eventually overturned at the federal level.

Three GOP state senators who initially ratified the measure recanted, and asked Brewer to reject the bill. The three—Adam Driggs, Steve Pierce, and Bob Worsley—stated, “While our sincere intent in voting for this bill was to create a shield for all citizens’ religious liberties, the bill has instead been mischaracterized by its opponents as a sword for religious intolerance. These allegations are causing our state immeasurable harm. As Arizona leaders, we feel it is important to loudly proclaim that we strongly condemn discrimination in any form.”

Both U.S. senators from Arizona, Republicans John McCain and Jeff Flake, also urged Brewer to veto the measure, as did lately presidential hopeful Mitt Romney.

The bill, which would have allowed business owners the right to turn down service to anyone, not just same-sex couples, if it violates their strongly held religious beliefs, was prompted by a case in New Mexico where the state Supreme Court allowed a

same-sex couple to sue a wedding photographer who refused to take pictures of their commitment ceremony.

Earlier in February, Tennessee introduced a similar bill, which is still pending.

Supporters of the bill claimed the bill was not intended to discriminate against anyone, but to allow individuals to practice their religious convictions. “The religious beliefs of all Arizo- nans must be respected, and this bill does nothing more than affirm that,” Republican state Sen. Steve Yarbrough, who intro- duced the bill, told the *Los Angeles Times*.

Among other large businesses, American Airlines, Alaska Airlines, The Seattle Mariners, Major League Baseball, the National Football League, Apple and Marriott International prompted Brewer to overturn SB1062 because they feared that Arizona would feel a backlash from potential visitors who will be turned off by the law, said the Times.

In a letter to the governor, Marriott wrote, “It is exceedingly difficult for us to sell Arizona as a destination against a backdrop of negative attention suggesting certain travelers or conference attendees would not be welcome here—as a matter of law.”

The leftist think tank Center for American Progress pointed out that a previous boycott following passage of the immigration bill cost the state more than \$23 million in lost taxes and \$350 million in spending. The Greater Phoenix Economic Council has also called on Brewer to veto the bill, according to the Times.

COMMENTARY

Sorry to have to say so, but I am no longer a Seattle Mariners fan. Nor will I ever fly Alaska Airlines again. We have often flown Alaska Airlines, and there was a time not long ago when they placed Scripture tracts on their meal trays. Now the compa- ny has succumbed to the politically-correct LGBT agenda.

God’s Word speaks loudly to these people who would force individuals to act contrary to their consciences or face govern- ment sanctions including large financial penalties and even prison. Are they afraid of Boycotts? Why not boycott them? True believers in Jesus should not generally boycott businesses just because they are owned by unbelievers. But when compa- nies take a public stand for ungodliness, it’s time for us to draw the line. Some may disagree, but I choose not to support those businesses.

There is generally no reason for Christians to refuse to do business with homosexuals. However, when doing business means engaging in the activities involving homosexuality, then we must draw the line. The time is fast approaching, and is now here in some places, that conscientious Christians—particularly the true Body of Christ—will be unable to own or work in certain types of businesses, such as florists, bakeries, disc jock- eys, printers (invitations to same-sex weddings; promotions of homosexual events, etc.), publishers, rental companies, limou- sine services, to name just a few.

Are we not too far from the scenario where conscientious Christians will be herded into ghettos and made to wear patch in the shape of a cross to identify them as outcasts?

Do not think this cannot happen in “the Land of the Free.” When half the population has voiced approval of same-sex marriage, including half of those who identify themselves as

“evangelical Christians,” and even the Republican Party has caved to the demands of those who will vote Democrat no matter what, the future for the Body of Christ in America has become most bleak. There is no longer any political will to resist the sin that is destined to bring God’s judgment upon this nation, and persecution of those who stand for God’s truth and righteousness.



Is this our future?

Is it not incongruous that even Mitt Romney and Marriott International’s Executive Chairman and Chairman of the Board., John Willard Marriott, Jr., son of J. Willard and Alice Marriott, founders of the company, have joined with the Devil?

Both are devout Mormons, and are acting contrary to the position that their church has taken on homosexuality. The Mormon website, www.whatmormonsbelieve.org, states:

The Mormon Church is firm on its position condemning homosexuality as sinful behavior. One of the tenets of Mormon doctrine is the Law of Chastity. It permits sexual relations only between a husband and wife who are legally married.

Suppose a devout Mormon whose business caters weddings chooses not to serve at a same-sex couple’s wedding? Will Marriott stand by his brother in Smith?

Evidently not.

Mormons are good at talking the talk, but when it comes to making money, evidently the message changes. That’s why, although caffeinated drinks are forbidden for Mormons they sell millions of gallons of coffee and soft drinks at Marriott establishments.

Aside from the hypocrisy exhibited not only by Marriott, but by many others, including the Republican state and U.S. senators, the push to force people to act contrary to their conscience is unconstitutional. There should not have to be a law sanctioning their right to do so.

The biggest conflict has developed between Christians and the LGBT community, the latter claiming that Christians are denying them their constitutional rights. To support the position of Christians is to violate the First Amendment Separation Clause of the U.S. Constitution: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion...”

The remaining portion of the Separation Clause grants individuals the right to exercise their religious convictions: “...or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

If the federal government is going to interfere where the first portion of the Separation Clause is concerned, then it must also support the second portion and strike down any state law that forces individuals to act contrary to their conscience.

But that makes too much sense and smacks of righteousness for the ungodly who have managed to cow otherwise right-thinking people into acquiescing to their demands. And what is the linchpin of their stance? Money. Mammon. The idol of this world system. And one of the idols of Mormonism.

Perhaps Marriott should consider how closely related in sound are the words Mammon and Mormon. ❖

Unfortunate photo has all Israel “atwitter”



MARK ISRAEL SELLEM, a staff photographer for the *Jerusalem Post*, has captured what some are saying is an unfortunate frozen-in-time image of Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu casting a shadow on German Chancellor Angela Merkel’s lip. The Hitler-like mustache had all Israel talking after Sellem posted it on Facebook. The photo went “wildly viral” according to *Harretz* editor Chemi Shalev.

COMMENTARY

Humor aside, the German-Israeli talks are important to the security of the Jewish state. Gert Weisskirchen, writing an opinion for the *Jewish Journal* states:

Germany is Israel’s closest European ally and second most reliable ally in the world. For Chancellor Merkel the security of Israel is even part of the *raison d’être* of Germany. In her famous speech in the Knesset in March 2008 Merkel stated: “Only if Germany accepts its enduring responsibility for the moral disaster in its history will we be able to build a humane future (...). This historical responsibility is part of my country’s *raison d’être*.”

In spite of the fact that the Jews’ worst enemy 60 years ago is now their best friend in Europe, Germany will never be allowed

to forget its tragic roll in the destruction of not only Jews, but Christians, Jehovah's Witnesses and homosexuals (as well as many feeble-bodied and feeble-minded) under Hitler's pogrom to rid the world of what he deemed inferior and undesirable classes. Nor should they or we, forget. Yet apart from Germany and, until of late the United States, Israel as a haven for the world's Jews has come under increasing attack by the world's major powers. And even Germany opposes Israel's settlements.

It is understandable that there would be sympathy for the Palestinians in their plight for survival. But the Palestinians are fodder for the Muslim nations' cannons. They are the most significant propaganda tool for indoctrination of Muslim youth to hate the Jews and work for the destruction of the Jewish state. The settlements provide a larger buffer zone for the interior state against attacks by Muslim terrorist groups.

But although the German state may put forth its hand of friendship toward Israel, the German people are generally less concerned about Israel's security needs.

What no one outside knowledgeable believers in Jesus realizes is that Israel is there to stay at the behest of the God that the vast majority of Jews reject. Even in their unbelief, they are part of God's plan for redemption of His creation. And there will be a remnant from among them who will see their Messiah come in the clouds with glory to deliver them in their darkest hour yet to come.

This is not to say that Israel is always right, or that we should support every policy right or wrong. It is to say that unless we understand Israel's role in the very last days we will not understand biblical prophecy, and risk being deceived by an anti-Christ world system that is increasingly turning its back on that nation.

God's enemies will do all they can to destroy Israel and kill as many Jews as possible. Believers in Jesus may not wish to get involved, but we must not turn our sympathies against those God has chosen to inherit a kingdom that will one day be the center of His Kingdom on earth.

To those who don't believe there is a future Kingdom of Christ coming on the earth, or that the true Israelites will again be established in peace in their land during that time until it comes to a final close, please don't keep sending me preterist propaganda. God's Word is clear. Read it and believe it. ❖

New Shroud of Turin theory

THE DEBATE OVER the authenticity of the Shroud of Turin has raged for centuries, and all attempts to verify whether or not it was the actual burial cloth that covered the body of Jesus have proven fruitless. Even radiocarbon dating tests have come into question with claims by those who believe in the shroud's genuineness that portions of the shroud tested were from patches that were applied during the Middle Ages. Those tests were conducted at three different labs in the 1980s, and indicated that the cloth was less than 800 years old. Also, the first records of the shroud appeared sometime between AD 1260 and 1390.

There is now a new theory reported in *Live Science* that has scientists on both sides of the controversy rethinking the evidence. According to the *Live Science* article:

The new theory hinges on neutrons released by a devastating earthquake that hit Old Jerusalem around the same time that Jesus is believed to have died.

All living things have the same ratio of stable carbon to radioactive carbon-14, but after death, the radioactive carbon decays in a predictable pattern over time. That's why scientists can look at the carbon-14 concentration in organic archaeological materials like fabrics, bones and wood to estimate age. Carbon-14 is typically created when neutrons from cosmic rays collide with nitrogen atoms in the atmosphere (though it can be unleashed by manmade nuclear reactions, too).

The group of scientists, led by Alberto Carpinteri of the Politecnico di Torino in Italy, suspect high-frequency pressure waves generated in the Earth's crust during this earthquake could have produced significant neutron emissions. (They simulated this by crushing very brittle rock specimens under a press machine.)

These neutron emissions could have interacted directly with nitrogen atoms in the linen fibers, inducing chemical reactions that created the distinctive face image on the shroud, the scientists say. The reactions also could have led to "a wrong radiocarbon dating," which would explain the results of the 1989 experiments, Carpinteri said in a statement.

Giulio Fanti, a professor of mechanical engineering at Padua University, published a book last year "Il Mistero della Sindone," translated as "The Mystery of the Shroud," (Rizzoli, 2013), arguing that his own analysis proves the shroud dates to Jesus' lifetime. In an email, Fanti said he is not sure if a neutron emission is the only possible source responsible for creating the body image. (His own theories include a corona discharge.) However, he wrote that he is "confident" the 1980s radiocarbon dating "furnished wrong results probably due to a neutron emission."

Megan Gannon, the author of the *Live Science* article, "Shroud of Turin: Could Ancient Earthquake Explain Face of Jesus?" asks the legitimate question,

Even if it is theoretically possible for earthquake-generated neutrons to have caused this kind of reaction, the study doesn't address why this effect hasn't been seen elsewhere in the archaeological record, Gordon Cook, a professor of environmental geochemistry at the University of Glasgow, explained.

"It would have to be a really local effect not to be measurable elsewhere," Cook told *Live Science*. "People have been measuring materials of that age for decades now and nobody has ever encountered this."

The mystery of the Shroud continues to fascinate and confound skeptics and believers alike. And although there have been untold stories and scientific research, new and numerous theories continue to come forth. No doubt this latest will not be the last.

COMMENTARY

Although I recognize that the Roman Catholic Church has a history of idolizing relics, and many are suspect of the Shroud because of its history as a Roman Catholic relic, I reasoned that this alone does not negate the possibility of its genuineness. As they say, “Just because you’re paranoid doesn’t mean someone isn’t out to get you.”

Likewise, just because something is held by the Catholic Church doesn’t mean it’s not genuine. So I try to put aside my prejudices and look at these things objectively. In view of the fact that both Catholic and non-Catholic (and even agnostic and atheist) scientists cannot come up with a final determination of whether or not the image on the cloth is the result of the Lord’s resurrection power, I choose not to place too much emphasis on it. In fact, I’ve largely ignored it over the years.

This current information does hold some fascination, but we cannot put much stock in anything one way or the other.

On the pro side, why couldn’t the power of the Lord’s resurrection cause such an image? On the con side, why should it cause such an image?

The fact remains that, as Gannon suggests, this effect has never been seen anywhere else at any time in the recorded history of man. For the most part the skeptics are either atheists, agnostics or believers in Jesus, the last category often skeptical because of the Shroud’s history as a Roman Catholic relic. But the Roman Catholic Church was also at one time the sole proprietor of the manuscripts that form the basis for our Bibles. God used the Roman Catholic Church’s avariciousness and secular power to preserve those manuscripts so they could later be made available to the Body of Christ at large.

So if some Catholics and non-Catholic believers wish to believe in at least the possibility that the Shroud of Turin is genuine, who am I to criticize them?

And if some of the same wish to believe it is a hoax, they are certainly free to do so.

Personally, I lean toward the latter. But then, there are more things in Heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy. ❖

Does ancient tablet debunk Bible’s account of Noah?

AN ANCIENT BABYLONIAN tablet put on display at the British Museum in London, allegedly contains the specifications for an ark which would endure a great flood. Irving Finkel, curator in charge of cuneiform clay tablets at the museum spoke to the media on January 24, 2014, describing what he called “a heart-stopping moment” when he discovered that the boat described on the tablet was to be a round vessel.

In an article he wrote for the British Museum, Finkel states that he first came across the tablet when a member of the public brought it to him to have it identified. According to Finkel, the tablet reveals a story of when the gods decided to wipe our

mankind with a flood. The god Enki, who had a sense of humour, leaked the news to a man called Atra-hasis, the “Babylonian Noah” who was to build the Ark.

The new tablet also describes the materials and measurements to build it: quantities of palm-fibre rope, wooden ribs and bathfuls of hot bitumen to waterproof the finished vessel, says Finkel.

Finkel reveals that his deciphering of the tablet has led to a documentary film in which the Ark is being build according to the 3,700-year-old instructions (although not quite full size) and the commissioning of a book, *The Ark Before Noah: Decoding the Story of the Flood*.

He also states that his discovery does not provide evidence supporting the Biblical story of Noah’s Ark. He believes that was a tale was a Babylonian invention.

“I don’t think the ark existed,” he said. “but a lot of people do. It doesn’t really matter. The biblical version is a thing of itself and it has vitality forever.”

COMMENTARY

The conclusion drawn by Finkel is that the writer of Genesis took his story of the Flood from Babylon. But this is conjecture and proves nothing one way or the other. The question is whether or not there was a flood that covered the entire world at that time. Some say that the flood couldn’t have covered the entire world; it had to be the “known world,” or the world known to man. But the entire landmass at that time was a single continent known as Pangea. The continents divided sometime after the Flood during the days of Peleg, a descendant of Shem, one of Noah’s sons:

The children of Shem: Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram.

And the children of Aram: Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Mash.

And Arphaxad fathered Salah; and Salah fathered Eber.

And to Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg, because in his days the earth was divided; and his brother’s name was Joktan. (Genesis 10:22-25)

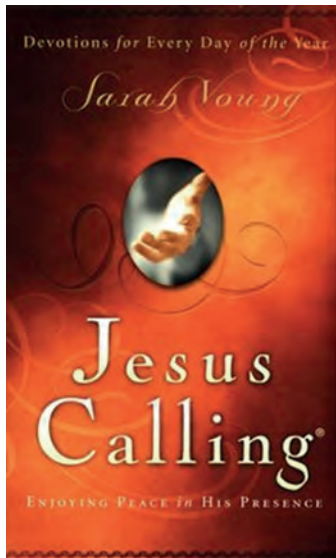
Genesis gives much more detail about the Flood than does this cuneiform tablet from Babylon. In fact, it’s most likely that the Babylonians learned of the Ark from the Hebrews during the Babylonian Captivity.

But it is the prophetic nature of Genesis that seals the deal. Prophecy is the signature of God upon His Word. It testifies to the reliability of the Scriptures.

Satan tries to use such things as ancient artifacts to cast doubt on the veracity of Scripture, and he often succeeds in turning away the weak in faith from the truth. Yet there has never been any empirical evidence unearthed that would discredit Scripture. Just the opposite; archaeology, paleontology, geology, all the earth sciences continue to verify the accounts of man’s history as recorded in the Bible.

Why then should a small fragment of stone carry any weight when it comes to deciding wherein lies the truth?

God’s evidence is grand in scale, stretching across the cosmos. Satan’s contrived “evidence” is always puny and unverifiable. Only fools trust it. ❖



Is Jesus Really Calling?

OR IS IT A YOUNGIAN THING?

A BOOK REVIEW

By Albert James Dager

THE BOOK HAS taken the Christian community by storm over the past 10 years, and continues to find new readers who affirm its positive influence in their spiritual lives. *Jesus Calling*, by Sarah Young, is a series of inspirational writings that the author compiled over many years after having had what she calls a conversion experience while at a Christian community in an Alpine village in Switzerland. The community is associated with L'Abri Fellowship, an international ministry founded by Francis and Edith Schaeffer in 1955 as a place for people to find "satisfying answers to their questions and practical demonstration of Christian care."

L'Abri is the French word for "shelter," to describe shelter from the pressures of modern life. Several branches of L'Abri have been established throughout the world, each having similar yet unique approaches to their work. Each branch is staffed by one or more L'Abri families and single people, called "workers," who look after the "students" who engage in the conferences, public speaking, book writing, and other pursuits.

Young says it was at L'Abri that she first experienced what she calls "the Presence of God":

One night I found myself leaving the warmth of our cozy chalet to walk alone in the snowy mountains. I went into a deeply wooded area, feeling vulnerable and awed by cold, moonlit beauty. The air was crisp and dry, piercing to inhale. Suddenly I felt as if a warm mist enveloped me. I became aware of a lovely Presence, and my involuntary response was to whisper, "Sweet Jesus." This utterance was totally uncharacteristic of me, and I was shocked to hear myself speaking so tenderly to Jesus. As I pondered this brief communication, I realized it was the response of a converted heart; at that moment I knew I belonged to Him.

Young doesn't set a date for her conversion, but she relates that the following year she again experienced "the Presence of peace and love" after reading Catherine Marshall's book, *Beyond Ourselves*, while alone in an Atlanta hotel room when on assignment to attend a conference as a technical writer.

Over the next sixteen years Young met and married her husband, Steve, worked with him in Japan doing church-planting work, and had two children. Although thankful for her husband and children, Young laments that not once during those sixteen years did she vividly experience the Presence of Jesus. Ready for

a new spiritual quest, she delved into a devotional book, *The Secret of the Abiding Presence*, by Andrew Murray.

I began seeking God's Presence in earnest. My days started alone with God, equipped with Bible, devotional book, prayer journal, pen, and coffee. As I waited in His Presence, God began to reveal Himself to me.

Moving to Australia with her husband, Young began her own ministry of counseling Australian women who she says came out of terrible abuse and spiritual bondage. In order to function against the intense spiritual warfare she sensed around her, she began to engage in visualization techniques, visualizing "God's protective Presence, which looked like golden light" encircling her family.

Her spiritual warfare included inner healing methods, walking together with her clients into the darkness of their memories.

A turning point in her work came when she began reading *God Calling*, a devotional book written by two anonymous "listeners"—women who, like Young, would wait for God to give them messages which they wrote in the first person, with "I" designating God.

Soon, she began to wonder if she, too, could receive messages directly from God, which she could put to paper. She states that she knew God communicated with her through the Bible, but, she says, "I yearned for more."

Increasingly, I wanted to hear what God had to say to me personally on a given day. I decided to listen to God with pen in hand, writing down whatever I believed He was saying.

The result over time is this book, *Jesus Calling*, her personal inspirational journal of daily readings which has been published in various forms including gift editions. It is among the best sellers in Christian book titles.

The author included Scripture references after each daily reading, and encourages readers to approach her words slowly, preferably in a quiet setting, and to keep a journal to record any thoughts or impressions they receive as they wait in God's Presence.

IS THIS GOD'S WORD?

Young says that these are Jesus' words given to her to share with others. This presents readers with a dilemma: either Jesus did speak directly to Sarah Young, or He didn't. There are no other alternatives to these two possibilities. It is up to the reader to judge whether or not Young is telling the truth, or what she thinks is the truth, or if she is lying. There are also no alternatives to these three scenarios.

Is Sarah Young lying?

There is no evidence that Young is a liar or purposeful deceiver. God alone knows the heart, and without empirical evidence to prove she is lying, we cannot and will not judge that she is. I do not think she is lying, but, again, only God knows the heart; He must be the judge. This leaves us with the only other possibilities: Jesus did speak to her directly, or she is self-deluded and/or deceived by another spirit to think that He spoke directly to her.

Did Jesus speak directly to her?

If it is true that Jesus spoke directly to Sarah Young, then her book is on a par with the Bible—it is God’s Word no less than the Bible. And if it is God’s Word, then it must be obeyed.

Some might say, “Oh, it’s not quite the same as the Bible.” To which I would ask, “In what way does it differ other than in content?” A Word from the Lord is a Word from the Lord. It is all truth, and nothing but truth. Don’t be fooled into thinking that He gives His Word carelessly or in a manner that does not require obedience. If Sarah Young was inspired by Jesus to write these words, then they are no less than Scripture. It is true prophecy, and Sarah Young is a true prophetess, whether or not she claims to be one. But how can we know?

It is generally believed among Christians that if a word spoken in the name of the Lord agrees with Scripture, then that word must be from the Lord. But that is not necessarily the case.

A person may speak truth in the name of the Lord Jesus and still be a deceiver:

And God worked special miracles by the hands of Paul so that handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, “We charge you by Jesus whom Paul proclaims.”

And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, who did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?”

And the man in whom the evil spirit was, leaped on them and overcame them, and prevailed against them so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. (Acts 19:11-16)

These seven sons of Sceva were only some among the Jewish exorcists that invoked the name of Jesus. They believed that the name of Jesus had power, which it does, but they were not of God. They spoke the correct words, but the devils knew they had no authority to invoke the name of Jesus. What happened to the sons of Sceva is recorded, and Luke doesn’t mention any similar fate befalling the other Jewish exorcists, so it may be reasonably assumed that for the most part they got away with their deception. But this is not the only example of someone not of God speaking truth:

And it happened that as we went to prayer, a certain girl possessed with a spirit of divination, who brought her masters much gain by fortune telling, met us. The same

followed Paul and us and cried out, saying, “These men are the servants of the most high God, who show the way of salvation to us.”

And she did this for many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.”

And he came out the same instant. (Acts 16:16-18)

This demonized girl spoke the truth—she proclaimed the Gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ. Some think the demon in her spoke sarcastically, and thus could be discerned as an evil spirit. But there is nothing to suggest this. Whether sarcastic or not, the devil was aligning the demonized girl with Paul and his company of believers, which might have caused listeners to reject Paul’s Gospel. In any case, someone unaware of the girl’s demonized condition might conclude that she, too, was speaking under the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Concerning Sarah Young, she demonstrates no evidence of being demonized, and I don’t believe she is. By all accounts she is at the least a nominal Christian, and at best a true believer in Jesus. Does that not qualify her as a true prophetess and her book as a book of prophecy, again, equal to the Bible?

Even the most sincere believer in Jesus may be susceptible to suggestion and even deception. Witness the condition of believers that are following after the many winds of doctrine that are emanating from the pulpits and the Christian media. Jesus even said that false christs and false prophets would arise showing such great signs and wonders that if it were possible even the very elect would be deceived. The only way the very elect might almost be deceived is if the deception came in the name of Jesus, agreed greatly with God’s Word, and demonstrated what appeared to be supernatural phenomena from God.

Certainly Sarah Young is not demonstrating signs and wonders.

Or is she?

If one believes that Jesus truly spoke to Sarah Young on a personal basis, one would have to admit that she engaged in miracles on a daily basis; what she describes as her personal experience is not in the ordinary course of life, and requires the Lord’s intervention.

None of this proves that Sarah Young did not hear directly from the Lord. There are only two ways to know for sure: 1) if anything she says came from the Lord is contrary to Scripture, even in the slightest, then it is not from the Lord; 2) if anything she says in relation to what she claims is of the Lord leads one into a false religious or philosophical belief, then it is not from the Lord.

Is anything contrary to Scripture?

If there arises among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, by which he spoke to you saying, “Let us go after other gods that you have not known, and let us serve them,” you shall not listen to the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, for YHWH your God tests you, to know whether you love YHWH your God with all your heart and with all your soul. (Deuteronomy 13:1-3)

Other gods are not always heathen idols; they may be gods of one's imagination that leads one away from God's truth.

Does anything not agree with Scripture?

Jesus Calling is essentially a positive affirmation of God's love and protection for His children. It is a one-note composition that allows nothing evil to enter into the lives of those who read it. There is no judgment, nor is the reader to judge himself, but is encouraged to trust in the "unconditional love" of God.

As early as the January 3 reading, we find: "I have conquered the world and deprived it of power to harm you. In Me you may have confident Peace" [Emphasis in original].

The world certainly can harm us. Witness the countless martyrs for Christ throughout the ages, including the apostles of the Lord. The Pollyannaish attitude that just because we have faith in Jesus no harm can come to us is contrary to Scripture.

But, it may be argued, Jesus is speaking spiritually; nothing can harm us spiritually.

If that is true, why are there so many warnings in Scripture against leaving ourselves open to spiritual deception?

James speaks to his brethren in Christ:

Blessed is the man who endures adversity, for when he is tested he shall receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

When he is tempted, let no one say, "I am tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, nor does He tempt any man. But every man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed. Then when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death.

Do not err, my beloved brethren. (James 1:12-16)

Paul's words are also to the brethren in Christ:

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the children of disobedience. Therefore, do not be partakers with them.

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth), proving what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather rebuke them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things that are done by them in secret. But all things that are rebuked are revealed by the light, for whatever reveals is light.

Therefore he says, "Awake, you who sleeps, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light." See then that you walk diligently, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil. (Eph. 5:6-16)

Such warnings are not to be found in *Jesus Calling*. Rather, "Jesus" takes all the burden upon Himself, as if the believer need not do anything on his own part to make his salvation sure:

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God who works in you to both will, and to do, of His good pleasure. (Philippians 2:12-13)

God works out His will in us by allowing us to be tested by the world, the flesh and the devil. Do not think that He will not allow you to fail. Although, if you do fail, you will not be utterly cast down (Psalm 37:24; 2 Cor. 4:9).

But is it enough not to be utterly cast down? Should we not be diligent to resist the deceptions that come upon us through those three means? Failure on our part hinders our work for the Kingdom of God. And that is what we must be about. Why allow the world or the devil to harm us through foolish thinking that we have automatic protection against them?

January 10 has this suggestion:

Every time you affirm your trust in Me, you put a coin into My treasury. Thus you build up equity in preparation for days of trouble. I keep safely in My heart all trust invested in Me, with interest compounded continuously. The more you trust Me, the more I empower you to do so.

Practice trusting Me during quiet days, when nothing much seems to be happening. Then when storms come, your trust balance will be sufficient to see you through. Store up for yourself treasure in heaven through placing your trust in Me. This practice will keep you in My Peace.

Young's "Jesus" uses an accounting term that is also used in psychological counseling. A "trust balance" in psychology is the amount of trust one person has toward another based on how they relate to one another. If a person proves trustworthy in the relationship he has a high trust balance; if he does or says something to hinder the trust, his trust balance suffers loss.

In this case, "Jesus" is saying that as we trust Him in small things, we will learn to trust Him in big things. That may be true, but it doesn't depend on any "trust balance" that He keeps for us. If that were true, certainly He would have said so in His Word.

Our trust in the Lord grows as we struggle through life, true. But there are no guarantees that we will not fail to trust Him in difficult circumstances just because we came to trust Him when things were going well. Trust is just that—assurance that He will make a way through whatever difficulty in which we find ourselves:

No adversity has overtaken you but such as is common to man. But God, who is faithful, will not allow you to be tried beyond your ability, but with the adversity will also make a way to go through it so that you may be able to bear it. Therefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. (1 Corinthians 10:13-14)

Some translations say that God will make a way of "escape," which implies that He will give us a way out of the test. But that is not what the Scripture is saying. It is telling us that God will help us to get through the testing, not escape it.

Sarah Young's "Jesus" may be a good pop psychologist, but his advice is sorely lacking in biblical precedent.

Not only that, his advice is often contrary to God's Word:

When you bring Me prayer requests, lay out your concerns before Me. Speak to Me candidly; pour out your heart. Then thank Me for the answers that I have set into motion long before you can discern results. When your requests come to mind again, continue to thank Me for the answers that are on the way. If you keep on stating your concerns to Me, you will live in a state of tension.

When you thank Me for how I am answering your prayers, your mind-set becomes much more positive. Thankful prayers keep your focus on My Presence and My promises. (January 11)

So it is a matter of positive thinking vs. the true Jesus' words:

And He spoke a parable to them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to despair, saying, "There was in a city a judge who did not fear God, nor did he regard man. And there was a widow in that city, and she came to him, saying, 'Avenge me of my adversary.'

"And he would not for awhile. But afterward, he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God, or regard man, yet because this widow bothers me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she wearies me.'"

And the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge says. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them?" (Luke 18:1-7)

The Lord wants us to exercise importunity with Him. After teaching His disciples to pray, Jesus said:

"Which of you will have a friend, and will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves because a friend of mine in his journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him'?

"And he shall answer from within and say, 'Do not trouble me. The door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot rise and give to you.'

"I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him just because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as much as he needs.

"And I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives, and he who seeks, finds, and to him who knocks, it shall be opened. (Luke 11:5-10)

Young's "Jesus" also says that His love is unconditional. What does Scripture say?

"As the Father has loved Me, I have loved you also. Abide in My love. If you keep My commandments you shall abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. (John 15:9-10)

In that day you shall ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father for you, because the Father Himself loves you because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God. (John 16:26-27)

These are the conditions to enter into God's love: love Jesus and keep His commandments.

But what about Romans 5:6-8?

For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous man (yet perhaps for a good man some would even dare to die) but God exhibits His love toward us in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

God set no conditions to sending His only-begotten Son into the world to die for man's sins. There were no conditions based on anyone's performance for that act. No angel pleaded the cause of mankind. Nor has God ever stopped loving mankind any more than He loves all of His creation. But He has set terms for individuals to enter into His love, and to remain in His love. A parent may love a child, but that is no comfort if the child knows his choices keep him from the benefits of that love. To suggest that God's love in "unconditional" is to mislead people into thinking that God will not judge them. The idea of "unconditional love" as expressed by Christian mystics is unbiblical.

March 5:

I can fit everything into a pattern for good, but only to the extent that you trust Me. [Emphasis in original]

The Lord is not limited by our trust in order to work all things for good. Otherwise, He would never be able to accomplish the full redemption of His creation. Certainly Jonah never trusted God when he was forced to go to Nineveh. Even after God spared Nineveh for its repentance Jonah sulked.

Peter did not trust the Lord when he denied Him three times; Thomas did not trust the Lord until he saw Him standing before him. Scripture is replete with examples of God working good in spite of the lack of trust on the part of believers.

March 9:

I am not subject to limitations of time or space. I am everywhere at every time, ceaselessly working on your behalf.

Jesus has limited Himself, at least for the present, to Heaven. He is in His resurrected body at the right hand of the Father. The Holy Spirit moves throughout creation to work the will of the Father among men, and indwells the believer. Young's "Jesus" makes the common error of ignorant Christians who equate Jesus with the Father and, or, the Holy Spirit.

February 28:

Stop Judging and evaluating yourself, for this is not your role.

But the apostle Paul tells us that we must examine and judge ourselves:

Therefore, whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup of the Lord irreverently, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he who eats and drinks irreverently, eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord so that we would not be condemned with the world. (1 Corinthians 11:27-32)

March 16:

Don't take yourself so seriously. Lighten up and laugh with Me. You have Me on your side, so what are you worried about?

Does Scripture tell us not to take ourselves so seriously?

But you, speak the things that become sound doctrine so that the aged men are sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience.

The aged women, likewise, that they be in behavior as becomes holiness, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things so that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, so that the word of God is not blasphemed.

Likewise, exhort young men to be sober minded, in all things showing yourself a pattern of good works. In doctrine showing soundness, honesty, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that he who is against may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say about you. (Titus 2:1-8)

It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart.

Sorrow is better than laughter, for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools. (Ecclesiastes 7:2-5)

I enjoy a good laugh as much as anyone else. But when it comes to matters of faith and our walk with the Lord, soberness and a sense of sorrow over the fallen condition of the world, and recognition of our own sinfulness should keep us humble.

Nowhere in Scripture can mirth be found except when describing fallen men in their feasting. Joy in worship, such as that expressed by David and other saints, is not the same as mirth or merrymaking. In the house of the Lord, joy is accepted, but laughter apart from joy has no place.

Yes, God will laugh at the calamity that comes upon His enemies (Proverbs 1:26), but it is not a laugh of merriment; it is a laugh of scorn.

Coupling the advice of Young's "Jesus" to not take ourselves seriously with the encouragement to laugh with him trivializes the joy we are to have in the true Jesus.

Young's "Jesus" adopts Bob Marley's Rastafarian philosophy immortalized in the song, "Don't Worry; Be Happy," and often speaks contrary to Scripture:

January 14:

...Remember that your relationship with Me is saturated in grace. *Therefore, nothing that you do or don't do can separate you from My Presence.* [Emphasis in original].

Young tells us that we must "practice the Presence of Jesus" through contemplative prayer, meditation and visualization. Only when she "feels the Presence" of Jesus is she assured that He is in her presence. So if it is not necessary to do anything to have His "Presence," why does she stress their importance? Are feelings the true key to spiritual growth? Considering these contradictory words from Young's "Jesus," it would seem so.

Does Jesus Calling lead to other gods or beliefs?

We have addressed only some of the instances where *Jesus Calling* contradicts Scripture, thus failing the test for true prophecy. The other test for prophecy (any word from God) is whether or not the hearer (or reader) is led to other gods or belief systems, even if the words are true.

One clue that Sarah Young is on shaky ground is her testimony of being inspired by the book, *God Calling*, which led her to journal what she believes is Jesus speaking to her, and the pattern of which she follows in presenting the allegedly inspired thoughts as a daily reader. Conveniently, in both these books "God" and "Jesus" gave exactly 366 inspired messages to the respective journalists, being careful to cover February 29 for leap years. Perhaps "God" and "Jesus" have no more than 366 thoughts left. At least not until some other mystic decides he hears the voice of deity and writes another journal.

God Calling

God Calling, written in the 1930s by two anonymous "listeners," is nothing more than a mishmash of biblical thought with New Age musings. In it, "God" calls himself the "Universal Spirit":

Do not be too ready to *do*, just *be*. I said, "Be ye therefore perfect" not "do" perfect things. Try and grasp this. Individual efforts avail nothing. It is only the work of the Universal Spirit—My Spirit—that counts.

The term "Universal Spirit" originated in Hinduism and refers to Brahman in its aspect as the sacred syllable Om, the eternal and spiritual principle that permeates the universe. It is also call the "Universal Soul," and is described in Sanskrit as Sat-cit-annanda (being-consciousness-bliss) as the highest reality. According to Advaita Vedanta, a school of thought within Hindu philosophy, an enlightened human being will self-realize Brahman as his own true self.

New Age Philosophy

There are certain beliefs and practices, as well as buzzwords, that originated in pagan philosophy and have been adopted by New Age practitioners of inner healing and the meditative and contemplative disciplines. These disciplines have entered the churches through false brethren who combine them with biblical truth to deceive others into believing they are of God. The concept of meditation, visualization and contemplative prayer originated in Hinduism and Buddhism, and first entered Christianity through Gnosticism and eventually Roman Catholicism. Roman Catholic mysticism has been expressed in the contemplative and meditative disciplines of Brother Lawrence, Catherine of Sienna, Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, Francis Assisi. Their influence came into non-Catholic churches through men such as Francis McNutt, a leading member of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal which began in 1967.

The contemplative and meditative philosophy of Roman Catholic mysticism was adopted by non-Catholics such as Agnes Sanford, John and Paula Sandford, Ruth Carter Stapleton, and others, who also melded New Age thought and practice into their works of inner healing. (See Media Spotlight's special reports *Inner Healing* and *Renovaré*.)

One of the evidences of Sarah Young's having been influenced by the New Age mysticism is her "Jesus" telling us to "Learn to live from your true Center in Me....I want you to live increasingly from your real Center, where My Love has an eternal grip on you (February 20). This term is used elsewhere in the book to signify the need for Centering prayer.

Among the pagan mystical practices adopted by the New Age Movement, and now Christian mysticism, is the idea of Centering oneself, or "finding one's Center." Centering prayer is synonymous for contemplative prayer or meditation. The earliest written example of centering prayer is found in the 4th-century writings of the monk John Cassian who learned it from a group of Catholic mystics called "the Desert Fathers." The Trappist monk Thomas Merton (1915-1968) popularized the concept in his writings that formed the foundation for modern Christian mysticism, often cited by the most influential personages mentioned above. Merton was decidedly influenced by Zen Buddhist meditation, and was closely associated with Buddhist meditation master and peace activist Thich Nhat Hanh. He also praised Chogyam Trungpa who funded Shambhala Buddhism in the United States. Merton's theology was a unification of existentialism with Roman Catholic faith.

Another New Age buzzword adopted by Young's "Jesus" is "paradigm shift," originally coined by Thomas Kuhn to describe a change in basic assumptions or paradigms within the ruling theory of science. It was subsequently adopted to characterize a coming New Age consciousness that would lead humanity from the old paradigm of faith in God to faith in the evolutionary process of man coming into perfect cosmic consciousness.

The term has been adopted by other Christians to describe their particular philosophy of change within Christianity from the old norm to a new norm into which they want to lead believers in Jesus. John Wimber, C. Peter Wagner and others, particularly in the World Christian Movement, have used the term extensively. (See my book, *The World Christian Movement*, Sword Publishers, 2001.)

Knowledgeable Christians will refrain from using such New Age buzzwords to influence others lest they confuse those with whom they are communicating.

Jesus Calling is leading Christians into the same contemplative and meditative ecstasy that characterizes New Age occultism.

Thus, it fails the second test for true prophecy. This would be bad enough had Sarah Young written it as her own words of wisdom and encouragement. But to present the deception as a direct word from Jesus is blasphemy.

Harsh words, true. But what else can it be called?

Jesus is Lord?

But what about the test of the true Spirit of God vs. the anti-Christ spirit?

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

This is how you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God—and this is that

spirit of anti-Christ, of which you have heard that it should come, and even now already it is in the world. (1 John 1:-3)

Sarah Young says that Jesus is Lord. Does that not prove that her words are from Jesus as she claims?

When John wrote this the faith was clearly delineated from all other philosophies. There was a palpable enmity between the world, particularly the unbelieving Jews, and the Lord's disciples. No one other than His true disciples would proclaim that Jesus is Lord. Over the centuries many deceptions have crept into the Body of Christ, melding truth with error that has come in the name of Jesus.

Many false teachers today say the words, "Jesus is Lord," when, in truth, Jesus is not the Lord of their so-called ministries.

Clearly, today we cannot trust someone just on their acclamation that "Jesus is Lord."

Of course, not everything in *Jesus Calling* is untrue. In fact, most of what Young writes can be supported by Scripture. But the greatest deceptions are those that contain the most truth. And a little leaven leavens the whole lump.

I am certain that many who have read, or are reading, *Jesus Calling* will take offense at the audacity they believe I have displayed by critiquing such a pleasantly worded book. It's so filled with what seems the love of Jesus that no one could possibly be offended by it.

But is it not more audacious to think that one can summon Jesus into his presence by conjuring feelings of euphoria via New Age meditative and contemplative techniques? Jesus is at the right hand of the Father in Heaven. Should He choose to enter into the presence of any of His people on the earth, such as He did with Saul on the road to Damascus, it is certainly His prerogative to do so. But we are at His beck and call; He is not at ours.

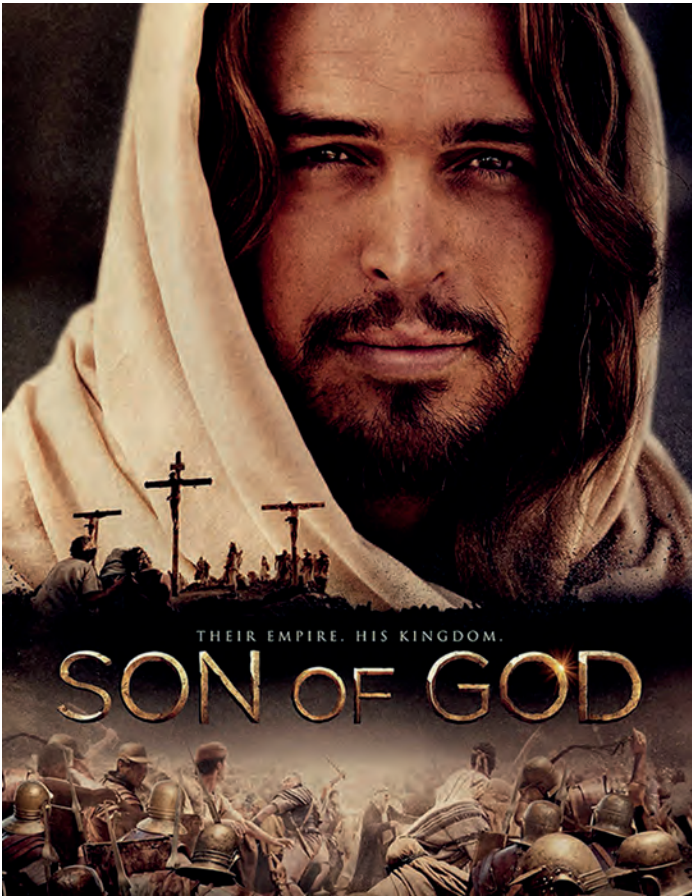
Those who need to conjure feelings of euphoria in order to recognize the Lord's presence are immature in their faith. They may know a good amount of truth; they may even be able to teach truth, at least to some degree. But mature faith operates apart from feelings. It rests on the assurance that the Lord is present with us at all times through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Granted, we cannot expect all true believers to have matured to the same degree. But we can expect that immature believers not be given such wide platforms for their infantile expressions.

Feelings are fine if they come to us without effort to achieve them, but those who need to experience feelings of God's presence because God's Word is insufficient, as does Sarah Young, are babes in Christ. They have no business teaching their baby ways to the Body of Christ, especially when their baby ways include unbiblical and even pagan methodologies.

Let us consider again that Sarah Young says these pleasant words were given to her directly by Jesus Himself. Yet her book fails both tests for true prophecy. (The word "prophecy" does not apply only to foretelling future events; it applies to every word spoken by God directly, or indirectly through men or angels.) This alone makes *Jesus Calling* a serious deception.

And for those who may think me audacious, I would ask, which is the greater audacity—to say "thus saith the Lord," when the Lord has not spoken, as does Sarah Young, or to say that her particular "thus saith the Lord" was not spoken by the Lord? ❖



Some give-and-take on *The Bible*

THE MOVIE *SON OF GOD* from producers Roma Downey and Mark Burnett opened its big-screen debut on Friday, February 28, by grossing over \$9.5 million, slightly behind the leader, *Non-Stop* (\$10 million), and totaled \$26 million for the weekend.

It didn't hurt that many churches had a large hand in getting their congregations to attend. Paul Lauer of Motive Entertainment, put out an appeal for Christians to "Push for #1!"

HELP US HONOR GOD on the Sabbath Day (Sunday)¹ by asking everyone you know to see SON OF GOD. After church this weekend, let's take our families to see SON OF GOD instead of going home to watch the Oscars.

Opening day grosses for Christian-themed movies don't tell us much. It's the long-haul that determines the true strength of any motion picture, secular or Christian.

Secular reviews describe the movie as "bland," "simplistic," and "lame," but "earnest" and "sincere."

Some may chalk that up to the ungodly hating the godly, but these sentiments are not far from my own.

¹ "Sun-day" is not the Sabbath. God's Sabbath has never changed. Constantine designated "Sun-day" as the day for Christians in the Roman Empire to worship in honor of "the venerable day of the Sun." The Sabbath has always been, and will always be, the seventh day of the week, and it has been memorialized unchanged by the Jews since ancient times. See our special report, *Facts and Fallacies of the Resurrection*.

There has been a lot of publicity for *Son of God*, with Downey and Burnett appearing on a number of news interviews and talk shows, both Christian and secular.

No doubt *Son of God* in DVD format will be used as an evangelization tool much as the very flawed *Jesus* movie has been for the past few decades.

Son of God is basically comprised of outtakes from the television series *The Bible*, which Downey and Burnett produced as well. When taping *The Bible* they produced a number of scenes that did not appear in the TV series, with the intent of producing the *Son of God* movie at a later date. The movie omits some scenes from *The Bible*, most notably those that portrayed Satan mingling in the background when influencing men to do evil against "Jesus." The reason is that "Satan" looked incredibly like a septuagenarian Barack Obama, which caused many objections from the left.

Downey and Burnett had no intention of dissing Obama when they cast Mohamen Mehdi Ouazanni as the Devil, and were disappointed in the reaction. They felt that Satan was stealing Jesus' thunder, so to speak. So they decided to cut those scenes. By Downey's and Burnett's accounts, it appears as if it had nothing to do with placating Obama and his adoring psychopants. (Yes, that's how I spell it in some cases.)

We don't fault Downey and Burnett for their sincerity and technical expertise in producing *Son of God*, but as I stated in my review of *The Bible*:

Although the producers insist that they strove for accuracy and authenticity with the help of a team of theologians and scholars, there are a lot of departures from both accuracy and authenticity.

One particularly erroneous scene has "Jesus" responding "Change the world" to Thomas's question, "What will we do?"

Jesus did not come to change the world. He came to save the lost, first those from among Israel (Matthew 15:24).

We cannot expect much more from Downey, a Roman Catholic who dabbles in the occult. (Read our review of *The Bible* in *Media Spotlight*, Vol. 36 - No. 1.)

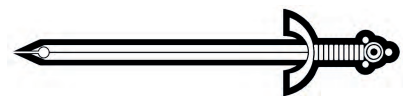
I am often accused of "nitpicking" by Christians who want to enjoy their entertainment. But if we apply a legitimate biblical analysis to *The Bible* and *Son of God*, which is what this ministry is about, then we have to overcome our natural penchant to accept anything that comes close to truth and expose it for what it is—a deception, whether intentional or not.

It isn't that Downey and Burnett are purposely trying to deceive people. I believe they honestly think their productions honor God. They state unequivocally that they wanted *Son of God* to portray Jesus as God incarnate. Who can argue with that?

The problem is that they have no Holy Spirit inspired understanding of God's Word to be able to handle it properly.

Even so, I acknowledge that the Lord can certainly use *Son of God* for His own purposes, just as He has used *Jesus* to that end.

But that still doesn't justify twisting Scripture, nor should it enamor believers in Jesus to see His life portrayed in such a flawed manner. ❖

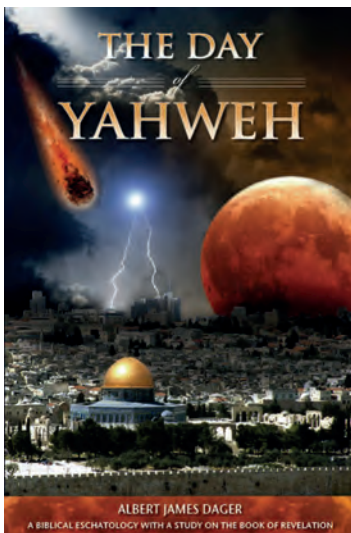


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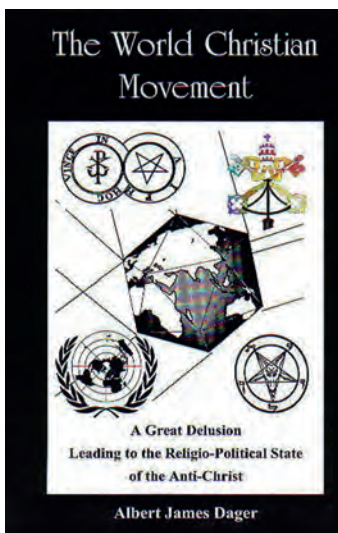
Albert James Dager - 360 pages

The result of 25 years of research into biblical prophecy and human history. Readers will be startled and perhaps even dismayed to find that their eschatology, based on the teachings of trusted "experts" in the field of last-days teachings, has been largely misguided.

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The answers to many questions are often contrary to what you may have learned.

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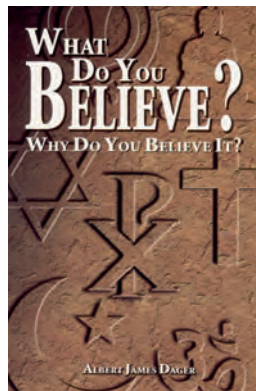
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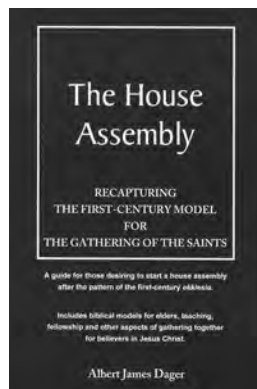
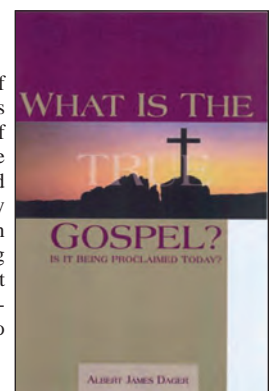


WHAT IS THE TRUE GOSPEL?

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Jesus proclaimed what He called "the Gospel of the Kingdom." He then commissioned His disciples to go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom to all the nations. But even from the beginning there have been false gospels proclaimed by those claiming to be messengers of God. Today we are witnessing a great apostasy based largely on institutional traditions. Many false gospels emanating from pulpits, radio, and television—even many that seem to glorify Jesus—differ from the Gospel proclaimed by Jesus. This book points the reader back to Scripture to discover the original Gospel.

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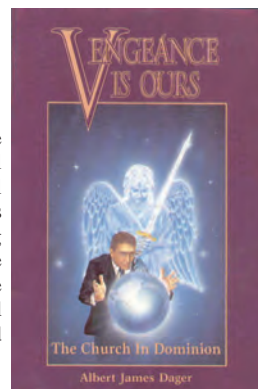


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Albert James Dager - 221 pages

Many Christians are experiencing the inevitable results of religious institutionalism: denominational traditions; abusive pastors; false teachings; anecdotal sermons; favoritism and other unscriptural teachings and practices. This book is a guide for those desiring to start a house assembly after the pattern of the first-century *ekklesia*. Includes examples of the author's experiences in the house assembly, as well as biblical models for elders, teaching, fellowship and other aspects of gathering in love.

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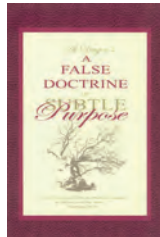
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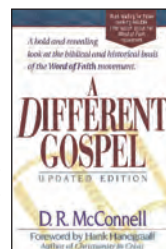


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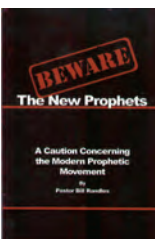


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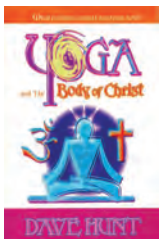


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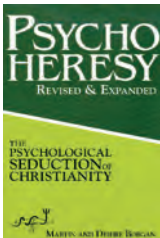


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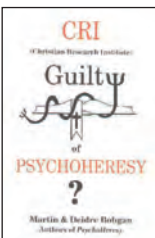


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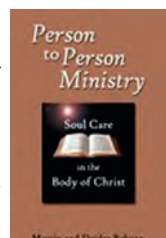


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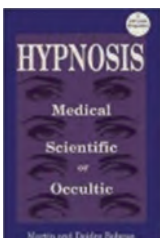


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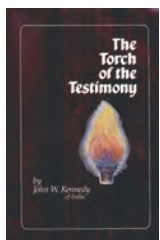


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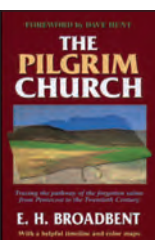


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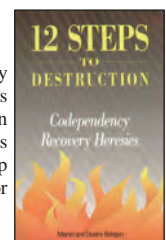


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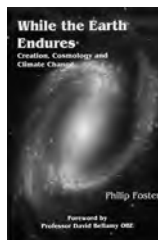


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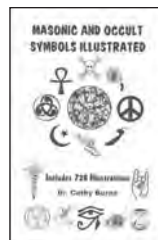
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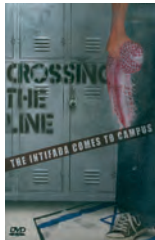


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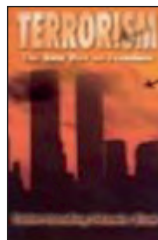
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THE DARK SIDE OF SUPER SUNDAY

By Samantha Railsback

Editor's Note: On Sunday, February 2, Americans, and many in other countries around the world—over 100 million people—watched Super Bowl XLVIII. Next to soccer's World Cup, the Super Bowl is the most-watched sports event of the year. For two weeks prior, the excitement and anticipation built to fever pitch as the two number one seeds of their respective NFL conferences prepared to go against each other. The thrill of victory was felt by the Seattle Seahawks, and the agony of defeat by the Denver Broncos. But prior to the final whistle there was joy and optimism abounding on both sidelines and in the hearts and minds of the faithful fans for both the Seahawks and Broncos.

But there is another side to the Super Bowl, and to virtually all major sports events, that is seldom seen and hardly ever considered. That other side is the attraction these events have to the sex trade industry, and of particular concern, the human trafficking of minors that is a large part of that industry.

A dear sister in our house assembly has been especially concerned about this evil, and for good reason. After hearing her testimony, I felt it would be of value to share with our readers. Be sure to read the Epilog to this story on page 23. *AJD*

GOD HAS PUT it on my heart to ask my brothers and sisters in Christ to prayerfully remember the victims of sex trafficking who have suffered the weekend of the Super Bowl, and who will suffer every day of their lives until they are somehow released from that bondage.

While the majority of the population celebrated a great American pastime, a very large number of women and children faced horrors we cannot imagine. Living in such a country as ours, it is too easy to close our eyes to the everyday horrors around us. It is more pleasant to concentrate on who will win the Super Bowl and ignore the evils the Super Bowl brings with it. So I wanted to offer this article to highlight a very large problem in our country—a problem that needs to be exposed to the light. I do believe that prayer will make all the difference in the world for these people, knowing that this billion dollar American industry cannot be taken down by flesh alone, but by the power of Christ through us. Scripture says that money is the root of all manner of evil, and here I can see the heart-wrenching truth of it.

Many in our country think sex trafficking is an offshore issue, and that prostitution consists mainly of women who like doing what they do. There is no true understanding about what really goes on in the lives of these people.

Look at the Green River killer; no one cared about the death of prostitutes at his hand because somehow in their minds most people rank them lower as human beings. My stepfather who was very high up in the police force at the time Gary Ridgway was killing so many such women can attest to this truth. He was actually part of the investigation.

The attitude towards prostitutes is horrific, and many police officers are no better than the pimps who keep those women enslaved. A great change needs to be made, and I see many people working to make that happen. But first it needs to be brought to light.

Jesus asked, "Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel or under a bed, and not to be set on a candlestick?" (Mark 4:21).

What good is the light if what is in the darkness is not exposed to it?

Unfortunately, up to now the politicians have been a large part of the problem, as they do very little to rectify this evil in society, or to bring true judgment to pass.

But now there are a growing number of politicians attempting to bring light to this issue, using the Super Bowl as a gateway for their work.

The point of using the Super Bowl is because of the masses it can reach. Instead of being a venue for evil, we as believers in Jesus can reach so many people with what goes on around them, and bring forth workers to help with the Lord's harvest. The Bible rightly says, "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Roman's 10:14).

I'm not saying that the Super Bowl is special or different, but that we should not be ignorant of the evil for which Satan uses such an event. We cannot deny the evil, but we should reprove it (Ephesians 5:11).

I don't believe the teams or the fans are to blame, but I do think we will all be accountable for the knowledge we are given. How can anyone know sin except by God? We should not ignore the opportunity to reach them. They don't know what is going on; the world is ignorant.

I was ignorant.

I believed homosexuality was normal because no one told me otherwise. I was so entrenched in the ways of the world that the amount of depravity in me was unbelievable. I was that person at the homosexual parade that the preacher believed to be lost. I passed so many Christians along my way, and they all wrote me off as being of the world. It is generally thought, "You can't reach those people."

And I will agree that many won't allow themselves to be reached.

Not a single Christian sought me out. But I was one person among those many who wanted to receive God, and no one would share Him with me.

I can tell you I have never felt so unloved as the moment I realized that so few Christians cared for the state of my soul, that none would even try. This is why this subject of human trafficking is so heavy on my heart. Perhaps it is because I have daughters, or maybe God gave me daughters for this purpose, but I cannot for a moment ignore this and not have my life affected. I came very near a similar experience.

I was abducted from a night club, and, although I didn't know Him as yet, He helped me out of the situation. But the most prominent moment for me was coming out of such a fearful experience in awe of God. I was not yet saved, but I knew God had taken me out of there. He had set me aside and cared for my well-being, and I glorified Him and ran after Him.

So when God brought me to my knees by His power I was so pained for all those who need Him, for those lost among the lost that we write off.

If my life can reach even just one, then I wouldn't count that one out because evil grows in number. I will rejoice as Heaven does for the one saved sinner over many righteous.

I don't expect anything of the world, but I do expect to find Christ working among His believers, with soul saving being the priority. Moral goodness in the world is neither here nor there, but those people trapped by the Devil who wants them dead, are who I strive for. I know from my experience that God has the power to work miracles for even just one.

Jesus told us to remember Lot's wife. Why? Because she looked back at the world, and she perished. The days grow evil, and as Christians we are in more danger of looking back at the world, longing for something from which God is trying to take us away. The world is evil and will continue to be so, but God still sends His workers forth into the harvest.

Yes, it would take a miracle, but ours is a God of miracles. It was not that long ago that the slave trade was prominent in England. A single man used by God fought for its abolition. William Wilberforce put forth his entire life to set those men and women free, and by the power of God he did it. He was sickly and feeble but God used him against this impossible force. One month after his death on July 29, 1833, the House of Lords passed the Slavery Abolition Act, ending slavery throughout the British Empire.

When I look at the Bible I see this is God's way. Where man wanted 10,000 to defeat the armies of Israel's enemy, God chose 300. All He needs is a willing heart. To this day I find William Wilberforce a great encouragement to my life, as he devoted so much time to serving Christ. I believe a quote from him very well sums up the feelings I have for those involved in the sex trade, both abused, and those abusing.

"If to be feelingly alive to the sufferings of my fellow-creatures is to be a fanatic, I am one of the most incurable fanatics ever permitted to be at large."

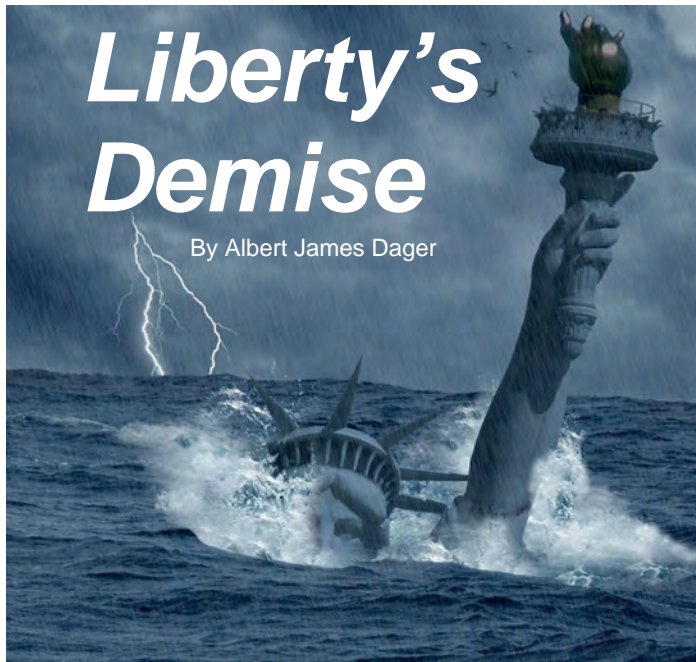
We all have a purpose in Christ, and I do believe God let me suffer so much in my life to help me have compassion on others who are suffering. He was so adamant that we should love each other. He even goes so far as to say that there is no greater love than to lay down our life for a friend.

I don't pray for evil to be destroyed from the earth; that will not happen until the Lord completes the redemption of His creation. But I do pray for God's justice—that He would be there for the weak, as He was there for me. That He would send His people to those who need Him. Let those who ignore God ignore Him, but let us not be guilty of ignoring those who would hear Him.

I don't mean to sound as though I believe watching the Super Bowl made someone less spiritual, but rather I want the brethren to be aware of the darkness that also surrounds it, and to be useful to the Lord. I do not believe watching a football game will darken anyone's walk, but I do believe the Bible when it says "I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day. The night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4). Not as though to take away the Super Bowl, or any wholesome recreation, but to also use our time fruitfully for those who need it.

This is in God's hands, but I also believe that, as the Body of Christ, we are to bring everything before God in prayer and supplication. And that is all I want. To have this issue heard among God's people so we could pray for those who would hear. ❖

(See the Epilog to this story on page 22)



Liberty's Demise

By Albert James Dager

This article was originally published in December, 1986. In the twenty-eight years that have passed, the dream that inspired it is still vivid in my memory. In view of current events surrounding the breakdown of law in our nation's Capitol, I felt it would be good to reprint it for those many new readers who missed it the first time around.

SHE STOOD SILENT, seemingly indifferent to the gaudy display of ardor offered on her behalf. America's love affair with the Lady in the Harbor has never been so pronounced as it was during Liberty Weekend, commemorating her 100th anniversary on July 4, 1986.

Like many elderly ladies, Miss Liberty had been taken for granted in her later years, especially by those blessed to have been born in this great country. Then, with the election of Ronald Reagan to the presidency in 1980, a new surge of patriotism began to sweep our land. Putting the anti-American "peace" movement of the sixties and the sorrow of Vietnam in the seventies behind them, Liberty's children have once again—suddenly it seems—become proud to be called "Americans."

Yet Liberty's face, always serious despite the merriment of millions who had come from across the nation and around the world to celebrate her birthday, seemed to be pondering the deeper considerations of what it means to be free. No doubt many recent immigrants who have passed under her torch shared a common soberness about the subject of freedom. They know what it means to live under oppression without the opportunity to better one's lot in life. We native-born Americans, not having experienced the hardships prevalent in other countries, do not always appreciate what God has given us.

Yet even as I write, I can reflect upon the steady erosion of our freedoms encroached upon by mindless bureaucrats and power-hungry politicians.

The framers of our Declaration of Independence proclaimed that "all men are created equal." That sounds nice, but

reality tells us otherwise. Men are not equal to one another in any respect beyond being born sinners in a sinful world.

Whether or not men are born equal is a moot point, however. Equality should never be the basis for human compassion and protection from oppression. Whether one has an I.Q. equal to that of a chimpanzee or of Albert Einstein should make no difference in the consideration for equal treatment from those who serve in government.

God makes room for the wealthy and powerful while providing for the poor and weak. And no matter how things fare on earth, eventually each of us, rich or poor, strong or weak, will stand before Him to give an account of our life.

When Miss Liberty's children stand before God, what will they plead? Will some say, "I'm an American! I have my rights!?" Will anyone recognize that we have no rights but those allowed by God to be granted by political powers, and beg for God's mercy?

Yes, we have "rights" granted under laws—volumes and volumes of laws—ostensibly based upon the higher law of the U.S. Constitution. Yes, our government officials are bound by oath to that higher law, and yes, the Supreme Court must render judgments in compliance with that higher law. But reality makes a mockery of men's trust in laws and those who govern under them. Are we so naïve to think that American politicians base their decisions upon the laws of the U.S. Constitution any more than many religious leaders base their actions on the Word of God? Only when it suits their purpose will they sacrifice their personal biases in the interest of truth, justice and mercy.

I'm not being cynical when I say this. I'm just looking at humanity in the same light as does the Word of God. No man is righteous on his own merit. We are all selfish. And though there is a modicum of conscience involved in our actions, we keep many laws more out of fear and personal interest than out of true conviction. We may do what's right, but our motives are wrong.

Only when we submit to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and allow the Holy Spirit to determine our course in life will we truly obey not only God's laws, but our government's laws as well. Only then will we have the interest of others in mind and be motivated by true, sacrificial love.

We may celebrate our relative freedom and light Roman candles to America's goddess Liberty, but as long as Jesus Christ is not considered when acknowledging our blessings we are tempting God and risking His judgment upon the land. During Liberty Weekend, while America bowed before her idol to freedom, Jesus was ignored. At best there was the mention of "God" in the singing of a few older, obligatory songs of patriotism. There was a far larger, totally irrelevant tribute to Hollywood than to anything or anyone else.

Personally, I, as did many other Christians, gave thanks to our heavenly Father for the freedoms we do enjoy. And who would not be stirred by the patriotism on display?

But is patriotism enough? Because we love America, does that prove we love God? Do we equate Americanism with Christianity and assume that because churches in this country have for two centuries sent missionaries to spread the Gospel,

God will continue to wink at the vast majority of its citizens that live for self, oblivious of His presence?

I'm sorry to say that, while most Americans saw the Liberty Weekend celebration as a tribute to freedom, I saw it as idolatry. Idolatry not only for the bowing down and worshipping of a statue, but for worshipping the very concept of liberty itself.

Liberty is not liberty without Jesus Christ. It's a delusion of grandeur. To worship before Liberty's shrine while ignoring the love of God offered in the person of Jesus Christ cannot but result in the loss of both liberty and the manifold blessings of God for eternity.

A SORROWFUL DREAM

As I watched portions of the Liberty Celebration I was influenced in my perceptions by a dream I'd had about two weeks earlier. Whether it was from God, or merely the result of my own heart's cry for America, I cannot say; I will let the reader judge. But it was by far the most vivid dream I have ever had that I can recall.

I was in a home unfamiliar to me. Everything seemed normal, and the details of my encounters with others are vague. But I suddenly became aware of a terrible storm raging outside. Great flashes of lightning lit up the broad window of the living room as thunder pealed all around.

Going to the window, I beheld a sky in great tumult. Vivid green and black clouds roiled across the sky as streaks of lightning lit up the panorama before me. Though the scene was frightening I was surprisingly calm.

Suddenly my gaze shifted. I could see that the window fronted a broad, sandy beach. The water, like the sky, was roiling. Great whitecaps rose and fell as I beheld many large ships being tossed about like toy boats. Destruction was coming upon them swiftly, and the people aboard were in terrible fear.

Again my gaze shifted, this time to the left. I saw the Statue of Liberty, her copper shell green from age. Above her, great bolts of lightning streaked, as if discharged at the behest of an angry God.

A bolt struck Liberty and a piece of her shell fell into the raging ocean. (I weep as I write this.)

Another, then another—soon many bolts of lightning—struck her. She began to come apart in great shards.

I found myself no longer at the window, but standing on the beach. A great multitude of people cried out in fear, awed by the destruction they were witnessing. Lightning struck among the people as it continued to explode upon Liberty.

I felt myself filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to call upon the people to repent of their sins and turn to Jesus as their Savior. But none would listen. Their fear turned to mocking, and then to anger directed against my warning.

Liberty continued to break apart as I pleaded all the more for the people to turn to Jesus. Then a great bolt of lightning—greater than any other—struck her in the legs and she broke in two. The portion from the knees upward fell into the ocean with a great roar.

The people's mocking turned to mourning. Their wondrous idol had been utterly destroyed. But they still refused to repent.

As the storm continued to rage, the lightning bolts flashing across the boiling green sky, I saw many people in the water around the Lady's upper torso. Her torch had gone dark. All that remained standing was her great pedestal and the uneven shards of her broken legs.

Then I awoke.

I prayed for America, asking the Father for the opportunity to minister to my brothers and sisters in this land who are caught up in the same idolatry as unbelievers without even knowing it.

We Christians love the freedom America offers. But the torch of liberty is even now flickering. Life as we know it today may be gone in a few short years.

Yet if we will repent and return to our first love in humility and sorrow for our sins, God will receive us. Though our personal liberties may be taken away, we will realize the power in our lives that could never be there while we were taken with the pleasures of the world.

Liberty? Freedom? Whatever name we give this precious, abstract commodity, do we really know what it means?

God's Word has told us:

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed." ❖

THE DARK SIDE OF SUPER SUNDAY EPILOG



On Super Bowl Sunday our fellowship prayed specifically for the Lord to rescue the minors and other victims of the slave

trade who might be transported to the Super Bowl venue that day. On Monday morning, *USA Today* reported:

High school students, teens as young as 13 and other children reported missing by their families were among 16 juveniles rescued from forced prostitution during Super Bowl festivities in and around New Jersey, the FBI said Tuesday.

Authorities arrested more than 45 pimps and their helpers, some of whom said they traveled to the New York region to traffic the women and juveniles at the NFL championship at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J.

The teens, ages 13 to 17, were found in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania. More than 50 women coerced into sex for money were also saved, the agency said. Some of the victims had been involved in international sex trafficking.

Six children were rescued in both New Jersey and New York, and four others in Pennsylvania and Connecticut, the FBI said.

We praise and thank the Lord for His intervention. Now we pray for those saved there, to be saved eternally. ❖



Transhumanism

(Continued from page 3)

- Phase I: Experiential Review / Personality Baseline
- Phase II: Verification

According to transhumanist Rachael Haywire (yes, that's her name), "Technology is the new LSD" which will lead to altered states of consciousness. She believes that melding the collective consciousness of mankind will create God. Says Haywire, "With the development of technology we can create gods ourselves, and have something to believe in....We are creating idols through avatars—new identities on-line."⁴

The idea of bringing into one vast computerized system the knowledge and experiences of every human being to create a super intelligence is not new. But it was never possible before today. It is obvious that those proposing such a thing have no relationship with the true God of creation. They wish to exalt humanity to the status of godhood in rebellion against the true God.

And it is necessary that governments fund these projects because they will require enormous sums of financial support that could not be borne by individuals or even corporations. That is why the BRAIN Initiative under Obama's administration is committing so much money to these projects.

An Underlying Motive

Yet as benign as the government's designs through the BRAIN Initiative sound, what is really driving the research into transhumanism is the arms race. A major aspect of Obama's BRAIN Initiative is the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), which was established in 1958 to "prevent strategic surprise from negatively impacting U.S. national security and create strategic surprise for U.S. adversaries by maintaining the technological superiority of the U.S. military."⁵ DARPA uses diverse applications to apply multi-disciplinary approaches to the defense effort "in the fields of biology, medicine, computer science, chemistry, physics, engineering, mathematics, material sciences, social science, neurosciences and more."

In the field of neuroscience, DARPA's Defense Sciences Office works to create a new form of "warfighter,"—soldiers whose mental and physical capabilities approach superhuman status. To achieve this it will be necessary to reprogram the "warfighter's" DNA to avoid stress and eliminate human emotions that would interfere with his ability to carry out his missions. As DARPA puts it:

⁴ *Transhumanism, Recreating Humanity*, Jeremiah Films.

⁵ DARPA, "Creating & Preventing Strategic Surprise," www.darpa.mil/our_work/

By harnessing the capabilities of neuroscience and fusing them with cutting edge electronics and the social sciences, DSO is bringing a new level of efficiency and situational awareness to provide warfighters with reliable information, training and tools to execute their missions.⁶

By integrating robotics with the human body, the hope is to create a truly bionic man that will have superhuman strength and a superior mental capacity geared strictly toward killing.

Although it's true that many of the technological marvels we enjoy today came directly out of military research, what is planned for the future is a soulless killing machine that will be able to subdue all life on earth to the dictates of its superiors. Imagine a man that can run 60 miles per hour while possessing the strength of a bull and the predatory instincts of a lion.

That is the objective of transhumanism through the blending of animal DNA with human DNA. This is already being done with human DNA being transplanted into animals. Once a sufficient amount of human DNA and animal DNA is exchanged, the ultimate objective is to produce hybrid creatures whose physiological makeup will contain the best of both species. They would be animals that could think and even speak like humans or, conversely, humans that could exhibit the superior physical qualities of certain animals.

The research into transhumanism would make Adolph Hitler blush at its audacity. If Hitler had at his disposal the scientific and technological achievements of today, he would have easily conquered the world. And that is the scary part for humanity. What if these scientific achievements were to fall into the hands of one whose evil surpassed even that of Hitler?

The Future of Mankind

What does this portend for the future of mankind, indeed for the entire creation?

Dr. Thomas Horn, writing for NewsWithViews.com, quotes former chairman of the President's Council on Bioethics, Leon Kass, in the introduction to his book, *Life Liberty and the Defense of Dignity: The Challenges of Bioethics*:

Human nature itself lies on the operating table, ready for alteration, for eugenic and psychic 'enhancement,' for wholesale redesign. In leading laboratories, academic and industrial, new creators are confidently amassing their powers and quietly honing their skills, while on the street their evangelists are zealously prophesying a posthuman future. For anyone who cares about preserving our humanity, the time has come for paying attention.

God's Word tells us of a coming ruler who is identified as anti-Christ. Hitler, Stalin and all other despots will pale in comparison to him for one simple reason: he will have genuine supernatural power behind him. If transhumanism is allowed by God to come to fruition, at anti-Christ's disposal will most certainly be an army of cyborgs, possibly soulless individuals who will be killing machines programmed to carry out a terrible destruction upon God's people while enslaving all living in the territories he rules.

⁶ DARPA, [www.darpa.mil/Our Work/DSO/Focus Areas/Neuroscience.aspx](http://www.darpa.mil/Our_Work/DSO/Focus_Areas/Neuroscience.aspx).

Scripture tells us of a religious figure who will arise and perform great wonders to cause mankind to worship the anti-Christ:

And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke like a dragon. And he exercises all the power of the first beast before him, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he does great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from the heavens onto the earth in the sight of men, and deceives those who dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles that he had power to do in the sight of the beast, saying to them that dwell on the earth that they should make an image to the beast that had the wound by a sword, and lived.

And he had power to give life to the image of the beast so that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

And he causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads, and that no man might buy or sell, except he who had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

Here is wisdom: let him who has understanding count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. And his number is six hundred, sixty-six. (Revelation 13:11-18)

Like most of man's technology, transhumanism will not be used for the benefit of the majority of mankind as much as for the benefit of rulers, in this case the ultimate despot. Some medical benefits will be realized, which will justify the continued research into transhumanism, but the final disposition of its accomplishments will be used to delude mankind into believing that the great wonders performed by the false prophet on behalf of the anti-Christ are proof of divine intervention, regardless to which god one may adhere. A superhuman hybrid commanding an army of superhuman hybrids will have no match on earth.

Something to consider: we are told that anti-Christ will muster all the armies of the world to battle against the Lord Jesus when He returns to establish His Kingdom on the earth. One might wonder how members of the military, particularly the military of the United States, would think they could successfully defeat the Lord. But if the military under anti-Christ is composed of cyborg hybrids that lack human souls, would it not be suited for such a battle?

Admittedly, at this stage we can offer only conjecture on how all this will play out. Would God even allow such things to happen? Does man even have the capability of making it happen?

When mankind was in the process of building the Tower of Babel, God looked down on their handiwork and said, "Look! The people are one, and they all have one language, and this they begin to do. And now nothing that they have imagined to do will be restrained from them" (Genesis 11:6-8).

With the advance in communications technology over the past century, man has come together as one again. From the time of Adam's fall men have sought to be like God. And that is what many of the transhumanism proponents are looking forward to.

Jesus told His disciples that the last days before the He return would be as it was in the days of Noah (Luke 17:26). Genesis 6:1-5 relates the following:

And it happened, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were fair, and they took themselves wives of all that they chose.

And YHWH said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh, yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years."

There were giants in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. The same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

And YHWH saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Only Noah found favor in God's eyes, and for two reasons: 1) he was righteous; 2) he was perfect in his generations.

Mankind had become corrupted not only spiritually, but physically through the hybridization of angels committing fornication with women. That is why every last man, woman and child, as well as all the air-breathing animals, had to be destroyed. Why the animals? We are not told, but knowing the secret knowledge that fallen angels conveyed to man through the mystery religions, it's possible that even the animal kingdom had become corrupted sufficiently to require a new beginning.

Many deny that the giants who lived at the time of Noah and afterward were the offspring of angels co-habiting with human women, but there are other evidences to demonstrate otherwise:

And the angels that did not keep their principality, but left their own habitation, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day, even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in the same way, giving themselves over to fornication and going after alien flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. (Jude 6-7)

Jude puts the sin of these fallen angels in the class of fornication and going after alien flesh. Scripture reveals that these offspring were of huge size. Goliath was some 11 feet tall. Og, the king of Bashan had an iron bed that was at least 13 feet long and seven feet wide.

Because they had again corrupted mankind up to a point, particularly in the realm of the land given to Israel, God commanded Israel to kill every man, woman and child, and, again, all the livestock.

Those angels are kept in chains until the final judgment, so they will not be producing any hybrid entities as before. But man is trying to create hybrids that will be able to breed natural-

ly with animals. Is that not similar to the condition of mankind at the time of Noah—that hybridization of the human race?

Our Part

I realize that this is shocking news to most believers, simply because the churches are ignoring the evil that is coming upon this generation. They are too taken with feel-good religion. But the day is coming when the Body of Christ will be faced with the most terrible persecution the world has ever seen. If we are not prepared spiritually for what is coming we will be victims of the great delusion that, if it were possible, would deceive even the very elect (Matthew 24:24).

It is imperative that we get our houses in order and that we warn our brethren of the dangers on the horizon. Unspeakable evil is about to be unleashed upon the world.

Yet we must not allow fear to overtake us. Whatever the future, even if we are destined for the sword, our trust is in our eternal salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

Death is not so terrible when the alternative is worse. Would we want to live in a world that is being planned for mankind by science and technology under the auspices of Satan?

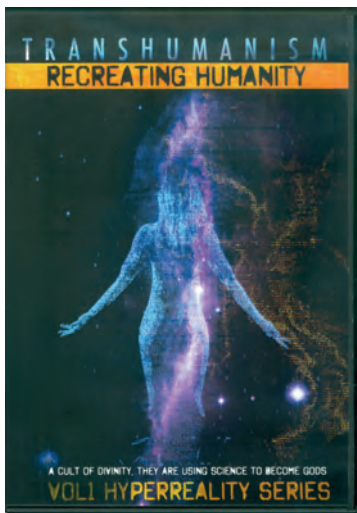
Let us go into the night with the light of God's Word illuminating our path to righteousness and calm assurance of our blessed hope in the resurrection to eternal life as planned by God, and not man. ❖

NEW FROM JEREMIAH FILMS

If our article on the subject of Transhumanism interests you we suggest you obtain a copy of Jeremiah Films' new release on the subject titled *Transhumanism: Recreating Humanity*.

The information found therein will be impressed upon you through its graphic audio/visual content.

Although it may seem as if Rachel Haywire may be a far-out representative of the transhumanist movement, be assured that what she says on its behalf is echoed in the sentiments of well-established scientists and government personnel working on transhumanist projects.



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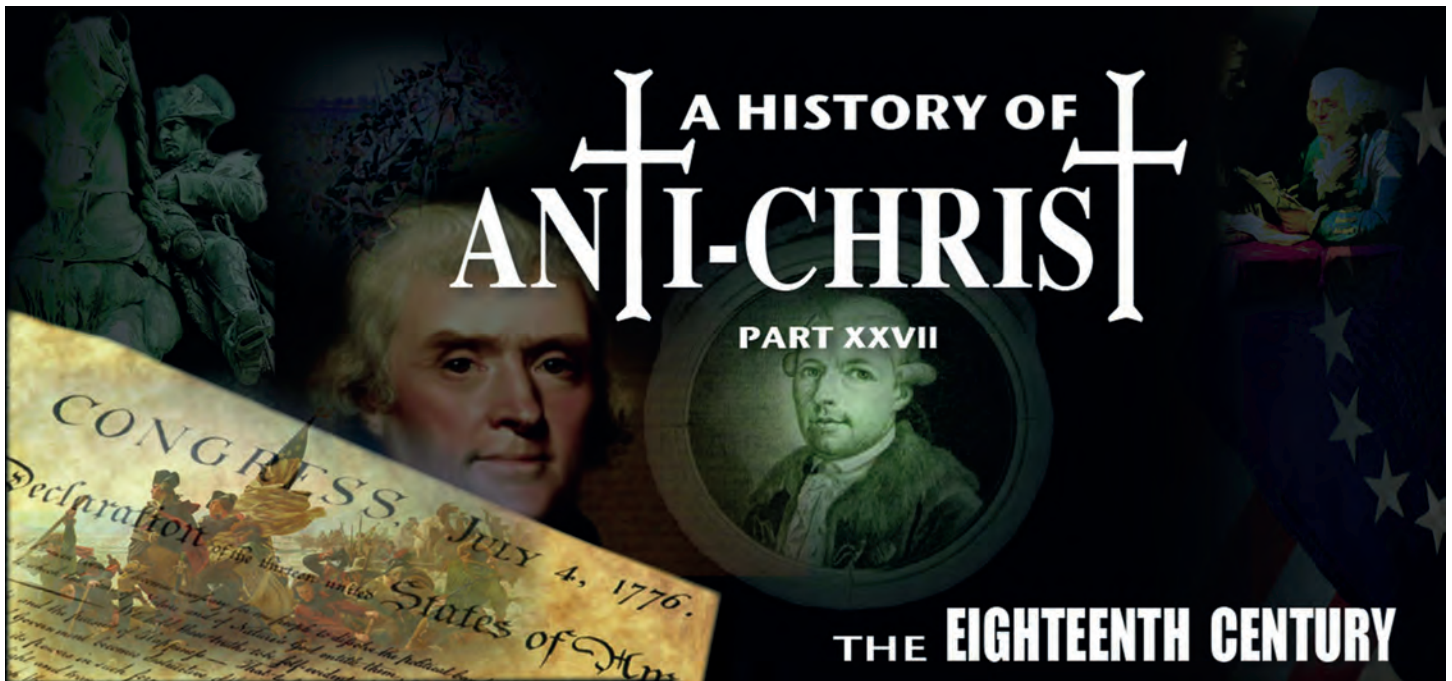
New Marriages May Sharply Decline in Coming Transhumanist Era

No matter how powerful or psychologically ingrained an institution like matrimony is in society, it is unlikely to outlive a paradigm shift for the human species. Gathering strength on the horizon in the guise of technology—transhumanist technology—a paradigm shift is about to sweep over the human race. The word *transhuman* literally means beyond human. Broadly explained, it's the idea of using science and technology to fundamentally improve and advance the species. Many prominent technologists and futurists believe the creation of artificial intelligence thousands of times smarter than humans, uploading one's mind into a computer, and the replacement of many human body parts with synthetic ones are only 25 to 35 years away. This begs the obvious question: Will marriage still be practiced in a world of advanced machine intelligences, computer-generated virtual lives, and indefinite cyborg lifespans?...

The reason new marriages will likely sharply decline in the coming transhumanist era is simple: The practice of matrimony is a very human endeavor, tied to mammalian emotions and long established social rituals. However, in only a matter of decades, transhumanist technology will lead us to become very different beings with very different rituals, regardless of past heritage or cultural influence. Consider human mortality, for example. Many experts, such as futurist and inventor Ray Kurzweil, expect science to achieve the ability to provide an ongoing sentience for the human mind and body by around 2045. Human death, disease and old age will likely begin disappearing in significant portions of the human population soon after. If you are able to be downloaded into a computer, or if you have your body parts all replaced until you are a bionic cyborg, will you still desire to have children? Will you really legally commit for an eternity to someone when life, your perception, and the human species are changing so rapidly?...

While many in the world may not realize this, civilization is on verge of the greatest change it has ever known. Entire social systems and institutions may soon become obsolete, nonfunctional, and even unsafe. Take birthing for instance, considered one of natural mainstays of many new marriages: In less than 25 years, some experts believe it will be considered dangerous to have a normal child birth. Ectogenesis, as it applies to persons, is the growing of a human being in an artificial uterus—where every heartbeat, kick and moment of a fetus's life is carefully monitored—will be far safer and more reliable. Mothers will no longer have to bear the responsibility of growing a child inside them or of enduring a grueling birthing process that is wrought with medical perils. As with all new technology, old-fashioned biological and social customs will ultimately give way to newer practices steeped in safety, efficiency, and practicality....

EDITOR'S NOTE: Oh, joy! Am I glad I grew up in the 1950s. Compared to what lies ahead, those truly were the "Happy Days." ❖



A HISTORY OF ANTI-CHRIST

PART XXVII

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

MOST PEOPLE DON'T think of it, but the 18th century in many ways spelled the beginning of the very last days. Humanism and the exaltation of the human spirit took great strides as “The Age of Reason,” or “The Enlightenment” continued into the middle of the century, affecting human philosophy to the present day. During the hundred years from 1650 to 1750, philosophers such as Voltaire, Rousseau, Thomas Paine and Montesquieu argued for reason and individualism to replace tradition and, particularly, faith in God, placing the emphasis on science as the answer to man’s problems.

This gave rise to man’s advancement in technology and science which began to take quantum leaps with the start of the industrial revolution around 1760. Hand production started giving way to mechanical production, water power became more efficient, and coal took the place of wood for heating and generating an increase in steam power. Man began to throw off the shackles of drudgery and for those who had the means to take the initiative there was great wealth to be had.

One of the benefactors as well as beneficiaries of the emerging prosperity was Freemasonry. Although organized lodges of Freemasonry were formed during the Middle Ages, the most important transition from that time to the present occurred with the formation of the first Grand Lodge in London in 1717. Although the foundation of Freemasonry is based on integrity and good will toward men, as well as recognition of a divine origin for creation, its philosophical underpinnings are humanistic. To be a Freemason one must believe in some god, but not necessarily the God of the Bible. Thus there are Jewish, Muslim and other non-Christian Masonic lodges which display the “holy books” of the particular religions to which they are dedicated. Most, however, would be considered “Christian.”

Anti-Christ has used Freemasonry to oppose the truth of Scripture, albeit without understanding by most Freemasons. Roman Catholicism took a strong stance against Freemasonry after the London Grand Lodge was instituted. In his papal bull,

In eminenti apostolates specula, issued on April 28, 1738, Pope Clement XII banned Catholics from becoming Freemasons. Clement warned that Freemasonry was open to men of any religion or sect, and that they were sworn to secrecy. The Bull voiced concern of the danger that Freemasons “do not hold by either civil or canonical sanctions.” Regarding the secrecy of Freemasonry, it stated, “if they were not doing evil they would not have so great a hatred of the light.”

Secrecy outside the Vatican’s purview was held in great suspicion at the time, and still is. As late as 1983, then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (present pope emeritus Benedict XVI) confirmed in his office of Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, that Catholics are still prohibited from joining Masonic organizations:

Therefore the Church’s negative judgment in regard to Masonic association(s) remains unchanged since their principles have always been considered irreconcilable with the doctrine of the Church and therefore membership in them remains forbidden. The faithful who enroll in Masonic associations are in a state of grave sin and may not receive Holy Communion. It is not within the competence of local ecclesiastical authorities to give a judgment on the nature of Masonic associations which would imply a derogation from what has been decided above...”

Some may wonder how Roman Catholicism can oppose Freemasonry when Roman Catholicism itself operates in many unscriptural ways. But it is not unusual for ungodly institutions to oppose one another. Satan’s kingdom is woefully fractured with a plethora of ungodly institutions that oppose one another.

Some historians speculate (for good reason) that the real reason for the papacy’s opposition to Freemasonry was more political. According to one Roman Catholic Freemason, Alec Mellor of the Grande Lodge Nationale Francaise:

As you know, the Old Pretender [James III of England] had finally found a refuge in Rome. He was under the protection of the Pope, and he represented the last card for the re-establishment of Catholicism in England. There was a war of double-agents between certain lodges composed of Jacobites and others of Hanoverian membership. The Old Pretender decided to put an end to this by closing the Jacobite lodge in Rome and, finally, to enter into the first condemnation. This leads us to understand why the motive was hidden. If the Holy See had discovered the hidden motive it would have been a terrible political blunder. The real reason was the politics of the day and the cause of the Stuarts.¹

The truth most probably lies between the two: 1) Roman Catholicism's suspicion of anything non-Catholic and secret; 2) the papacy's desire to strengthen Catholic influence in England and elsewhere that Protestantism posed a threat.

For those who single out Roman Catholicism as an ungodly institution, it may be said that at least that religious establishment does publicly oppose many anti-Christ movements such as Freemasonry, while many Protestant and other non-Catholic institutions welcome Freemasons and even anti-Christ religionists into their folds. This merely demonstrates that the Lord did not institute an institution; He called out from among the world (including the institutions) an elect group of people whose faith rests entirely on His person and not on any particular religious establishment.

And in spite of the Catholic Church's ban on Freemasonry, and although there have been periods of intense antagonism between Freemasonry and Roman Catholicism, there have also been Freemasons working within Roman Catholicism, many within the hierarchy of the church.

Space does not allow for a full treatise on Freemasonry or a list of Catholic Freemasons. A little research on the part of the reader will yield that information. But it is proper to say that in spite of its high moral values which both originated in biblical ethics and influenced the founders of the United States of America, Freemasonry's universalist philosophy is contrary to God's Word. Its influence in world affairs continues to advance its anti-Christ enterprises through the exaltation of the human spirit, which resonates today as never before.

There developed two distinct yet closely related factions within Freemasonry—the rationalist Enlightenment-inspired members and those members who leaned toward mysticism and the occult.

Freemasonry was greatly influenced by the Enlightenment in all its disciplines. Even the music of the Freemason Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, considered revolutionary in its day, was inspired by the rationalist elements of the Enlightenment.

On February 6, 1748 was born one Johann Adam Weishaupt who, at the age of seven began his formal education at a Jesuit school. After his father's death, young Weishaupt came under the influence of his uncle, Johann Adam Freiherr

¹ Mellor, "The Roman Catholic Freemason Past, Present and Future," *The Royal Arch Mason* - Spring 1972.

von Ickstatt, a law professor at the University of Ingolstadt, and an adherent of the Enlightenment. Weishaupt came to be familiarly called by his middle name Adam. At the age of 20 he graduated from the University of Ingolstadt with a doctorate of law, later becoming a professor of law and, in 1772 a professor of canon law. Prior to Weishaupt, professorship of canon law was exclusive to the Jesuit order. But in 1773, Pope Clement XIV began his suppression of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) due to that order's meddling in the political affairs of several European states.²

On May 1, 1776, Adam Weishaupt founded a network of spies and counter-spies for the purpose of influencing the political affairs of Europe. That network began with an initial membership of five men, freethinkers whose philosophy was that nothing should be accepted as truth without recourse to knowledge and reason.

Weishaupt's Order of the Illuminati was formed to oppose what he considered superstition, prejudice and religious influence over public life, as well as abuses of state power. One platform for the Illuminati was gender equality and support for women's education.

The Order attained branches in most European countries and within ten years is said to have reached a membership of 2,000. But in March, 1785, Duke of Bavaria Karl Theodor, a proponent of Enlightened Absolutism (a form of democratic monarchy influenced by the Enlightenment) banned all secret societies including the Illuminati. By then the Illuminati had already been contending with internal conflict over succession to leadership. Weishaupt fled Bavaria, and the Illuminati's documents and internal correspondences were seized and made public by the government in 1787.

Today there exist a number of organizations that claim to be descended from Weishaupt's original Order of the Illuminati, and use the word "Illuminati" in their titles. But there is no empirical evidence that Weishaupt's Order of the Illuminati survived after Weishaupt, or even for the remainder of his life. But that doesn't stop some conspiracy theorists like Texe Marrs, Mark Dice, David Icke and others from insisting that Weishaupt's Illuminati continue to work behind the scenes to manipulate today's governments with nefarious plans for world domination and the enslavement of all mankind.

That isn't to say that there is no satanic element of behind-the-scenes conspirators working for a one-world government and the ultimate branding of humanity as their servants. All the evidence suggests that such a conspiracy does exist; there are too many "coincidences" to say otherwise. And it cannot be denied that today's "Illuminati" hold to and promote globalization. But there is no evidence of a direct link to Weishaupt. Rather, the

² In his papal brief, *Dominus ac Redemptor*, Clement expressed concern that the Jesuits were acting contrary to the nature of Jesus Christ as "Prince of Peace," and encouraged institutions to remove those who impede peace, specifically the Society of Jesus. The pope's sanctions against the Jesuits was received primarily in the Roman Catholic countries of France, Spain, Portugal, Poland and the Philippines. Some non-Catholic countries did not acquiesce to the sanctions, at least not immediately. In Russia the Jesuits were supported by Empress Catherine, so the order was not dissolved until 1820 when the Russian Orthodox Church persuaded Tsar Alexander I to exile the Jesuits.

ideals of the Enlightenment are what drive organizations today to work for globalization. And not all intentions are evil; no doubt there are many within those organizations that believe they are working for the betterment of mankind's state of being.

Originating in 17th-century Europe, the Enlightenment traveled the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas, and early in the 18th century became entrenched in the minds of many of the founders of the United States, most notably Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson. The Enlightenment played a significant role in the American Revolution through its political ideals, and had great influence on the American Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights.

Although the Enlightenment glorified man and rejected what it considered the superstition of religion, it could not divorce itself from the influences of Christianity which had become an apostate form of true faith in Christ. The philosophers of the Enlightenment could not entirely escape the biblical ethic which guided the high ideals of charity and good will among those who attempted to form a more just society. God's Word had by that time so permeated the thinking of Western Europeans through the Reformation, that humanistic philosophy melded with God's influences. Thus we find many appeals to "Providence," "God," "Divinity," "the Almighty," and other terms for the God of the Bible in the founding documents of this nation. When those men (a number of whom were deists, Masons and nominal Christians) spoke of "God" they did not have in mind any other god than the God of the Bible. They were not thinking of Allah, Krishna, or some nebulous figure.

And despite the shortcomings of its founders, and the greater shortcomings of its citizens over time, God has continued to bless the United States of America above all other nations until recently. Even so, it cannot be denied that the anti-Christ spirit has worked ceaselessly and incessantly to eradicate all vestiges of that biblical ethic from public discourse.

The greatest events of the 18th century over which the anti-Christ spirit exerted great influence were the conflicts between nations and the continuing dissolution of man's separation from man that persisted due to the sovereign nation states' self-interest.

A timeline of significant events in which the anti-Christ spirit had great influence follows:

1701-1713: The war of Spanish Succession results when many important European nations go to war to decide who would succeed to the throne after King Charles II of Spain dies. The first war of the 18th century that would pit Christians against Christians.

1715 & 1745: In the Jacobite Rebellions Scots rebel against the rule of George I of England, and support the exiled descendants of James II, James Stuart and his son, Charles Edward ("Bonnie Prince Charlie"). The Scots are defeated by British troops, and many are executed for treason. Another cause for Christians to shed the blood of other Christians over worldly conflicts.

1716: Christianity was banned in China by Emperor Ch'ien Lung;

1739: The Persian Conquests continue when Sunni Moslem Nadir Shah conquers western India and the Punjab, and captures Delhi, bringing Islam to bear.

1755: The Seven Years' War begins when Britain joins Prussia to battle France and Austria over control of North American and Indian colonies. The Peace of Paris gives Britain control of Canada and many Caribbean Islands. Yet another war among Christians.

1767: The Boston Massacre takes place when British soldiers kill five American protestors among a large group of Americans unhappy over high taxes without representation. More Christians killing Christians.

1770s: The slave trade reaches its pinnacle as hundreds of thousands of Black Africans per year are brought to the Americas.

1775: Americans declare war against Britain in a bid for independence. The war would last until 1783 as Christians rebel against God-ordained authority and kill one another for political reasons. Yet it cannot be denied that God used this rebellion for His own purposes in establishing a new nation that would become the greatest exporter of the Gospel in history. But it was birthed with the blood of Christians shed by other Christians.

1789: The French Revolution begins when angry citizens of Paris revolt against high taxes and the extravagant lifestyle of Louis XVI. Louis tries to escape, but he and his queen, Marie Antoinette are tried and executed by beheading. The Revolution gives rise to one of the greatest European conquerors, Napoleon Bonaparte, a brilliant young French general who leads the French army to conquer much of Italy in 1796, and Egypt in 1798. Still more Christians killing Christians.

1798: Irish patriot Wolfe Tone rebels against English rule with the aid of France. The rebellion is thwarted, and Wolfe commits suicide while in prison awaiting execution. Yet another occasion for Christians to war against Christians.

It will be argued that these wars were fought between those who were Christians in name only. But that would be too simplistic a reason for these great conflicts. More likely the conflicts involved many nominal Christians who persuaded many true believers in Christ to follow their fleshly instincts. They forgot (as many Christians today forget) that our warfare is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world; against spiritual wickedness in high places (Ephesians 6:12).

This does not mean we war against human rulers in high places; otherwise we would not be told that we do not war against flesh and blood, which such rulers are. Our warfare is spiritual through prayer, godly living, adherence to the Word of God for our personal lives, and earnestly contending for the faith. We do not have a mandate to fight wars or engage in conflict against men regardless how ungodly they may be. We must resist the influence of the world, and even misguided brethren in Christ who wish to enlist our aid to "Change the world for Christ."

Anti-Christ is the winner in any scenario in which Christians bear arms against others, except possibly in the case of self-defense or defense of the innocent. And even then, we must be careful not to be overtaken by hatred or a sense of justified vengeance. Some true believers would even say that under no circumstance may a believer in Jesus use force, even to protect himself or another innocent. Let each be persuaded in his own heart; I will not judge in such circumstances. ❖

Testimonies
of
God's Grace
By Albert James Dager

IT WAS SOMETIME in the mid-70s, while I was single and visiting my sister's house in Torrance, California, that a call came for me from one of my best friends. He had tried calling at my home, but not reaching me there he thought to try my sister Mary's home. Nestor was a very successful attorney in Los Angeles even then, and much more so now. He had to fly to New York the next day in order to take a deposition from a man who was in a hospital there. He had an extra ticket, as I recall, because a colleague of his couldn't go with him as had been planned. So he thought to ask if I'd like to accompany him at his firm's expense.

My sister, brother-in-law and mother (who was also there at the time) all said that I should go. After all, I'd never been to New York and it would be a nice adventure. I, on the other hand, felt reticent. Why would I jump on an airplane and fly to New York for one day? What purpose would there be in it for me other than to kill some time with a good friend? For most people that would be a good enough reason to go, and I suppose it should have been the same for me. Yet I felt I should consult the Lord about it. It seemed too unusual a circumstance for me to just jump at.

I begged some time to think about it, and I told Nestor I'd let him know in a short while. He agreed, and urged me to say yes.

After some prayer time alone, I felt I should go—that the Lord had a purpose in it. So I called Nestor to tell him it was a go.

As we boarded the plane, the foremost thought in my mind was that perhaps I was to meet someone onboard to whom I could minister for some reason. But as we flew almost three thousand miles nothing presented itself, and I decided to enjoy the trip while keeping alert to any possibilities for ministry. I didn't say anything to Nestor because I wasn't sure what was going on beyond a day trip across the country.

When we landed in New York and headed to the hospital I thought that perhaps the man he was to see would be the one the Lord wanted me to minister to. But again, as we visited him there was no leading in my spirit to say anything to him.

We took in some sights while killing time before we had to head to the airport. The overcast was so low, however, that we couldn't see the tops of the buildings. So we didn't go to the Empire State Building to view the city. All we would have seen

was fog or, perhaps below us, the clouds. We had a hot dog on the street and headed to the United Nations building because I wanted to see the den of global iniquity for myself. Nothing of importance occurred there.

When we got to the airport we were told that the employees for the airline on which we were booked had just gone on strike and our flight had been canceled. We had to make last-minute reservations on another airline at the law firm's expense.

Because of the crush of displaced airline passengers it was difficult to find available seats. We managed to get two of the last three available on one particular flight to Los Angeles. But we couldn't sit together, so Nestor and I had to split up.

I found myself between a young woman to my left on the aisle, and an elderly gentleman to my right who had the window seat. Great. I hate the middle seat; my preference is for the window seat. But beggars can't be choosers.

By this time I was asking the Lord what this had been all about. Although I have always greatly enjoyed Nestor's company, it concerned me that I had not been able to put this impromptu trip to use for the Lord.

We were on our way for a while when the elderly gentleman began to speak about his son who was in the military. He was obviously proud of him, and regaled me with stories of his son's life. The young lady on my left caught my eye briefly and smiled at my patience in listening. I continued to listen politely, thinking perhaps he is the one the Lord wanted me to meet, and waiting for an opening to share God's truth with him. I could barely get a word in other than to tell him that I, too, had been in the army not long before.

He began to fade and leaned against the window to fall asleep.

By this time we were halfway home and nothing had happened. I asked the Lord why, but had no impression in my spirit.

After the quiet took effect, the young lady said, "You were in the army?"

I said "Yes," to which she asked, "What do you think of UFO's?"

Doinnnng!

I told her that she might think what I had to say strange, but I proceeded to explain about spirit beings and fallen angels, as well as God's angels, etc.

She listened with interest and then told me that she needed to get her life right. I asked why, and she said quite bluntly, "I'm an adulteress."

Now, we were speaking in normal tones, not whispering, as she laid out her life to me, telling me that she was living with another man while still married. Trying not to look shocked, but surprised by her frank admission, before I knew it we were engaged in an intense conversation about her need for repentance and salvation through Jesus Christ. As I ministered the Gospel to her (and anyone else listening) she concurred with everything I had to say.

I can still see the man in front of us turning his head to see who was talking about these things.

Time flew faster than that airplane and we were about to land at LAX. I learned that her name is Chrissy, the same as one of my nieces. Chrissy received the Gospel in prayer and told me

she was going to leave her lover, return to her husband, and find a church to attend.

We parted with a genuine love for each other. We had boarded that airplane as strangers, and disembarked as brother and sister in Christ. I never saw her again, but when I think about that encounter I am confident that the Lord will accomplish what He began in her life. Otherwise, why would He have sent me so far to meet her?

So if there are times when you wonder if God really exists, or if He does exist, does He really care about us puny little creatures that are lost amidst the great expanse of the Cosmos, think about Chrissy.

It sometimes seems inconceivable that the great Creator of this vast universe would take any notice of mankind, let alone intervene in our affairs. Surely He has much better things to do than concern Himself with our insignificant trials and tribulations.

As long as things are going well, we tend to forget what He has done for us in rescuing us from our sinful ways. When we do think of His love manifested in our rescue, we wonder at just how much He really does care, even to the point of moving us across the nation for a single day to be used for the sake of someone else's rescue. ❖

Pope reaches out to charismatics

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC REGISTER reports that Pope Francis I sent a video message to a gathering of U.S. Pentecostal leaders in February, expressing his "yearning" that the separation between Catholics and other Christians may end. "Let's give each other a spiritual embrace and let God complete the work that He has begun," said Francis, adding "the miracle of unity has begun."

"It's sin that has separated us, all our sins, the misunderstandings throughout history. It has been a long road of sins that we all shared in. Who is to blame? We all share the blame. We have all sinned. There is only one blameless: the Lord."

"Brothers and sisters," said the pope, "Luther's protest is over. Is yours?"

The pope promised to pray for the Pentecostals, and asked them to pray for him. At the end of his message, the audience gave a standing ovation. Word of Faith preacher Kenneth Copeland was ecstatic, and encouraged them to pray for the pope:

"Come on, the man asked us to pray for him," Copeland said with enthusiasm.

"Oh Father ... we answer his request," Copeland prayed. "And since we know not how to pray for him as we ought, other than to agree with him in his quest and his heart for the unity of the body of Christ ... we come together in the unity of our faith. Halleluiah!"

He said the congregation prayed for the Pope "in the Spirit" and received "words that are not our own."

Copeland and the congregation then began to speak in "tongues."

COMMENTARY

How to pray for the pope? That the Lord will open his eyes and cause him to repent of his false religious system even if it costs him his job.

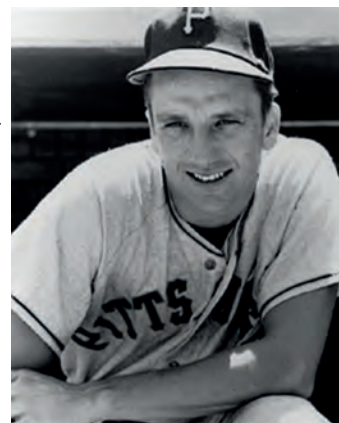
It is not sin that has separated Roman Catholicism from true believers in Jesus. It is Roman Catholic doctrine and practice contrary to God's Word. That may be a sin laid on Roman Catholicism, but I won't share in it. It has been a long time since Christianity in general, including much of Pentecostalism and charismatism, has found fault with Roman Catholicism outside of the sex scandals. The road to unity has been under construction for decades.

And considering the pope's appeal to Islam for unity, can we be far off from the one-world religion that will cause men everywhere to worship the anti-Christ? ❖

IN MEMORIAM

Ralph Kiner

THE SPORTS WORLD lost one of its most beloved stars with the passing of baseball great Ralph Kiner at the age of 91. The former Pittsburgh Pirates slugger and, of late, baseball broadcaster for the New York Mets, left us on February 6, 2014. Ralph and his wife Diane have been among *Media Spotlight's* readers for many years, and we trust he is now in the loving hands of his Savior.



As a youth, I counted Ralph Kiner among my favorite baseball players. Because his career was cut short at the age of 32 due to a back injury, Kiner's stats are not so well-known or recognized for just how great they were. Considering the shortness of his career, when it comes to home run production, he ranked all-time just below Babe Ruth.

Bear with me as I indulge in some non-biblical patter that I've always wanted to share, but have had little opportunity for.

While sportswriters point to Hank Aaron's surpassing of Babe Ruth's all-time home run record (Ruth: 714; Aaron 755), and accept the steroid-enhanced record of Barry Bonds (762) which currently stands as number one, they neglect to inform that Aaron's career at-bats stood at 12,364, while Ruth's stood at 8,399. (I don't consider Bonds' record valid.)

So for every 16.38 times Aaron came to bat he hit a home run, but every 11.77 times Ruth came to bat he hit a home run.

The next closest home run-to-at-bat performance belongs to Jim Thome at every 13.77 times, followed by Ralph Kiner with a home run every 14.11 times at bat.

So in view of the skewed manner in which the media look at even sports, I just wanted to give Ralph Kiner the recognition he deserves as the third greatest home run hitter of all time. ❖

FEEDBACK . . .



Hi Al,

In reading the *Media Spotlight* for Winter, 2013, I wanted to inform you about something on page 5, regarding the “devil’s horn.” [Right, Ed.]

Please notice the position of the thumb on the hand in the drawing labeled “The Devil’s Horn” Now look closely at the people in the photo and where their thumbs are. These people are making the accepted Ameslan (American Sign Language) sign for “I Love You.” It is a combination of the signed letters I, L and Y. The letter I is signed by a closed fist with the pinky sticking up. L is signed by a closed fist with the index finger sticking up and the thumb extended to form an L. Y is formed by a closed fist with the thumb extended away from the fist, and the pinky up and extended away from the fist, forming a Y. As a combined single sign, they create what the people in the photo are signing.



Ameslan consists of many such signs which are letter abbreviations for longer words. And signed English (with which I'm most familiar, not being deaf) uses such combinations to create more distinct parts of speech. This “I Love You” sign, when used in a twisting motion of the wrist, creates the adverb form of the word it followed.

The fact that the drawing below the photo of the people shows Satan with his thumbs extended, in no way reflects on the American deaf people’s use of this combination of letters to say, briefly, “I love you!”

I just thought you should know, lest you think those in the photo and all deaf people in the U.S. are copying anything that has to do with Satan. They have been using this sign for many years and shouldn't be attacked as taking on Satan's symbol when all they're doing is what deaf people before them have done, i.e., using letter combinations to abbreviate words, and then passing on their language to succeeding generations.

R.S. Smyrna, SC

Hi R.S.,

Thanks for the info. I'm woefully ignorant of sign language for deaf people.

In Jesus' love,
Al

Al;

I have not read your new book *The Day of Yahweh*, but I know you have done years of study in biblical prophecy. I have enjoyed following your articles on “The History of the Anti-Christ” in the journal.

I am wondering what you think of the effect of Jesuit eschatology on America. Paul wrote in his epistle to the Thessalonians, “the mystery of iniquity is already at work.” Most Christian colleges and seminaries teach that the terrible Man of Sin, the last great world dictator, will arise at the end of the age. They never tell us that this view was first set forth by the Jesuit, Francisco Ribera in 1590.

Taking the Preterist approach to the book of Revelation, they dismiss the anti-Christ as a man who existed in the first century of the church and then disappeared in AD 70. This view was first set forth by the Jesuit Luis Alcasar, in 1604. So the two Jesuit views of the anti-Christ have had a very great impact upon the eschatology of the church in America over the past generation.

The Westminster Confession, the Reformers, the Puritans etc., always identified the pope as the anti-Christ.

While multiplied millions of Bible-believers read the prophetic, based upon a Jesuit teaching, and while many others dismiss the Man of Sin entirely from their theology now; the Roman Catholic church-state has moved into the vacuum created by these two Jesuit views, and filled it with the errors and deceptions of sacerdotalism and sacramentalism. The Roman Catholic Church-state now completely dominates conservative politics in the United States. It pushes its cultural struggle to set up a “Christian Social order” in America today, which really means a Jesuit social order, not a Protestant Christian social order. In fact, the Roman Catholic Church, spearheaded by the Jesuits, has been working for more than a hundred years to dismantle the historic Bible Protestant culture of America that arose out of its Puritan beginnings.

Do you agree with this??

J.L.,

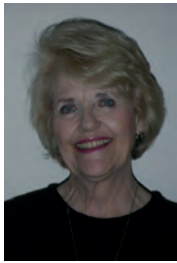
Hello, J.L.

Yes, I agree with all you say. I do mention Luis De Alcasar in *The Day of Yahweh*, as having written the first systematic exposition of biblical prophecy from the preterist position.

Preterism is essentially a Roman Catholic eschatology based on the belief that the Roman Catholic Church is the Kingdom of God on earth, mandated to rule the nations with a rod of iron. I see the pope more as a candidate for false prophet rather than the anti-Christ himself. The pope, of course, as Vicar of Christ (in place of Christ) is Christ on earth, ruling over the nations. The RCC has never given up on that position, and that forms the foundation for the Jesuits' Counter-Reformation efforts.

All this said, a Protestant Christian social order would be just as ungodly and oppressive as a Roman Catholic social order.

In Jesus' love,
Al



Jean's Turn

A Moving Experience

By Jean Dager

REJOICE! Our home sold! The Lord has graciously answered our prayers as well as those of our brethren who diligently prayed with us. A young family from China on a relocation program through the husband's company purchased it. They have one young daughter, and twin boys are expected to be born in March.

I specifically prayed for the new owners to be a family that would love our home as much as we have. The wife confirmed this when she whispered that she just "loved" our home. It's a happy thought for me to imagine the sounds of a lively young family living within these walls.

We are downsizing and moving to a small community of approximately 6,500 people in Sequim, Washington, located on the Olympic Peninsula. Just before entering the town, there's a sign posted that says "Elk Crossing." So far, I've spotted one elk.

Our new address will be P.O. Box 640, Sequim, WA 98382. Mail sent to the former post office box will be forwarded for an extended time.

The brethren in our house assembly have always expressed their love to us in many ways. As an expression of their love and concern for us, they've volunteered to tackle the monumental task of clearing out the garage and shed where books, publications and miscellaneous things are stored, then pack the rental truck and drive it to the new location which includes crossing over Puget Sound by ferry. Surely they're perfect examples of brotherly love as described in 2 Peter 1, 5:8:

"For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness,

knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness, and to godliness, brotherly kindness, love."

Since our new location is only three hours away, we'll be blessed to stay in contact with these brethren and visit from time-to-time. We've found some house assemblies located in the Sequim area and are looking forward to enjoying fellowship with them.

Your prayers for us personally as well as the ministry are very much welcomed. We are trusting the Lord to smooth the way so that we may gracefully adjust to all these new changes in this period of our lives. ❖

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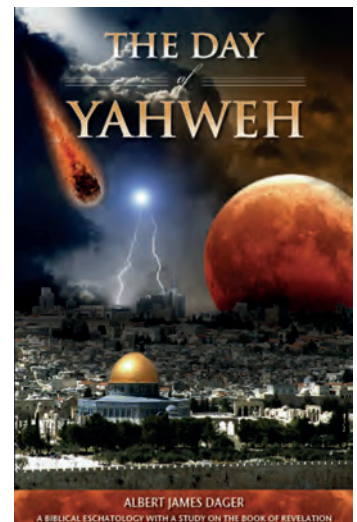
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