



A REVIEW

By Albert James Dager

TO HEAR MANY well-known Christian leaders tell it, both the original Roma Downey/Mark Burnett television ten-part miniseries *The Bible* and the currently running series *A.D. The Bible Continues* are wonderful enactments of scriptural truth. Tyndale House Publishers even offers a companion book to *A.D.*, stating, “Roma Downey and Mark Burnett’s epic television event *A.D. The Bible Continues* captures all the political intrigue, religious persecution, and emotional turmoil of the founding of the early church in spectacular fashion.” The book contains notes and insights from Dr. David Jeremiah.

Dr. Ronnie Floyd, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, calls *A.D.* “powerful, engaging and intense,” claiming it “will capture generations.”

Andy Stanley, son of popular television personality Charles Stanley, calls it “magnificent and epic.”

Tony Evans says, “It is absolutely critical today that a series like *A.D.* and others like it be prime-time presentations because it establishes and re-establishes a Judeo-Christian value system that our culture desperately needs to be reminded of historically, and to be able to draw from in our contemporary society.”

Jim Daly, president of Focus on the Family states that “Thankfully, we can use the new *A.D.* series as an invitation to host a people who desire to understand the Bible, and answer the questions, ‘Who is Jesus Christ?’ and ‘What is the grace of Jesus Christ?’”

Christian Broadcasting Network founder and 700 Club host Pat Robertson calls *A.D. The Bible Continues* “a magnificent series.” Says Robertson, “You don’t want to miss this because it’s historically accurate and an absolutely wonderful television experience.”

Churches nationwide are hosting viewings of the series for their congregants and friends, and are actively engaged in promoting the series through helps supplied by the production company.

These are but a few of many examples of the wholesale acceptance and promotion of *A.D. The Bible Continues* by pastors and Christian leaders. In fact, there are no major voices offering anything near a critique of the series, that would contain any negative comments, even in the slightest.

On top of this, *A.D. The Bible Continues* is poised to meet or surpass the success of *The Bible* which garnered a huge viewer rating: Number One TV on DVD in a Series; Number one Cable TV Series with over 100 million viewers; Number One TV Miniseries of All Time Across Blu-ray.

But to paraphrase George and Ira Gershwin, “The things that you’re liable to see in *The Bible*, it ain’t necessarily so.”

The same may be said about *A.D. The Bible Continues*.

Although at this writing only the first three episodes have aired, it is abundantly clear that the series puts a Roman Catholic slant on the narrative. No surprise there; Roma Downey is a devout Catholic who, with her husband, a generic “Christian,” has appeared in Catholics Come Home ads

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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 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. ♦

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,

This spring 2015 issue is a bit late due to the publishing of our special report *Quantum Christianity*, which would have taken too much space as an article in the journal. We were also set back by having to care for our ailing boy kitty, Izzy, whose kidneys failed. We finally had to

have him put to sleep. We miss him greatly.

You will notice that much of this issue deals with media productions that have found favor with Christians, including most leaders within churches and Christian media. Our editorial on page 26 explains why we find it necessary to challenge these productions as unsuitable for instruction or even entertainment for believers in Jesus.

There is a plethora of "faith-based" movies and television productions coming at a furious pace of late. Some of them aren't so bad, but many of them are misleading and, at best, are innocuous.

But there is another reason for focusing on these productions this time, besides those delineated in our editorial. It is our hope that our readers will be able to answer those who tell them that these productions portray faith in God, and convince them to exercise more discernment. Give them copies of this issue so that they may have their eyes opened to the false beliefs that these things present. Perhaps they will come to a better understanding of why God's Word must be held inviolable by those who profess faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord. Perhaps, also, they will gain a modicum of discernment that may help them spot problems in future productions.

These things are insults to God, and, as such, should be insults to those who truly love Him. Or are most who profess faith in Him merely giving Him lip service?

That's a question you might ask of them.

The Body of Christ today is being made merchandise of (2 Peter 2:1-3) to the spiritual peril of its members. Christians spend millions of dollars in support of these productions, thinking they are pleasing the Lord and supporting His work. In truth, they are being set up for the great deception that would, if it were possible, deceive even the very elect. If they can't perceive the spiritual errors in their entertainment, how will they perceive that deception-of-all-deceptions when it comes upon them?

If we love our brethren in Christ we must risk their displeasure. That is one way to suffer for Christ. Suffering for Him doesn't only mean being tortured in the flesh; it means surrendering everything and everyone we love for the sake of His truth. Even our love of entertainment.

Thanks, as always, to those of you who stand with us in our desire to help our brethren come to a better understanding of God's truth. Although we do not claim infallibility, we do strive toward accuracy in conforming to His Word. Your love and prayers are appreciated greatly.

In Jesus' love,

Al and Jean
Al and Jean



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urging lapsed Roman Catholics to return to “Mother Church.” Naturally, Peter is considered the chief apostle, to eventually morph into the first pope of Rome. This, despite the fact that there is no empirical evidence that Peter was ever in Rome.

That’s not to say that everything in *A.D. The Bible Continues* is unscriptural. Roman Catholicism teaches that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, albeit not able to stand alone as the oracle of God’s truth; it must be subservient to the Roman Catholic Church’s Magisterium, or teaching authority, as well as to Roman Catholic tradition.

So as long as Roman Catholicism teaches the truths of Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection, then it is perfectly in line with Downey and Burnett to portray those truths in their productions. Yet the lack of reverence for God’s Word (which He has exalted above His very name [Psalm 138:2]) is evident in the many departures from Scripture found in this narrative as well as in the prequel *The Bible*. This, despite Downey’s and Burnett’s insistence that God told them to produce these series, and their verbal assurance that they remain true to Scripture. The real truth is that both *The Bible* and *A.D. The Bible Continues* are fraught with fiction, much of which is contrary to Scripture.

One glaring fiction is the portrayal of Pontius Pilate as vehemently determined to have the Lord crucified. Says Pilate: “Any man who claims to be king in a Roman province is committing treason, and must suffer the consequences.” He accuses Jesus of being “a danger to the status quo.”

Although it is true that Roman soldiers drove the nails into the Lord’s wrists (not into the palms of His hands as portrayed in *A.D.* in keeping with Roman Catholic iconography), it was the Jewish mob, incited by the religious leaders, who insisted that He be crucified.

Now at that feast the governor was used to release to the people a prisoner, whomever they would. And they had then a notable prisoner called Barabbas.

Therefore, when they were gathered together, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you wish that I release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?”

For he knew that out of envy they had delivered Him.

When he sat down on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, “You have nothing to do with

that just man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him.”

But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask for Barabbas, and kill Jesus.

The governor answered and said to them, “Which of the two do you wish that I release to you?”



VINCENT REGAN AS PONTIUS PILATE
OUT TO GET JESUS

They said, “Barabbas!”

Pilate said to them, “Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?”

They all said to him, “Let Him be crucified!”

And the governor said, “Why? What evil has He done?”

But they cried out the more, saying, “Let Him be crucified!”

When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a disturbance was made, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, “I am innocent of the blood of this just person. You see to it.”

Then all the people answered, and said, “His blood be on us, and on our children!”

Then he released Barabbas to them. And when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified. (Matthew 27:15-26)

So why does this fiction portray Pilate as the primary guilty person, and the Jews as relatively innocent?

The reasoning for casting the blame on Pilate and the Romans has historically been to placate Jews who do not want the guilt of their ancestors remembered.

In spite of God’s Word indicting “the multitude” of Jews, the only Jews portrayed as wanting the Lord crucified are merely a few of the priests, most notably Caiaphas, the high priest at the time. And even he is portrayed as finding it necessary in order to preserve the integrity of the Jewish faith.

In fact, Caiaphas seems a bit surprised when Pilate, upon his own volition, exclaims, “Take Him and crucify Him!”

Scripture (written by Jews) reveals the account of Peter accusing his kinsmen of killing the Lord:

“You men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved among you by God through

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Muslim pro-terrorists lobby Congress

SOME 280 DELEGATES from more than 20 states met on April 13 with U.S. senators and congressmen to lobby in support of issues related to the domestic priorities of the American Muslim community. Among the priorities was a call for Congress to “urge the U.S. Department of Justice to amend its racial profiling guidance for federal law enforcement by removing any existing loopholes that continue to permit profiling in the name of national security, domestic surveillance and policing the border. Many of these programs have disproportionately targeted Latinos, Muslims and other minorities, and raise serious due process concerns.”

The lobbying effort was held as part of the first-ever National Muslim Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., sponsored by the US Council of Muslim Organizations (USCMO). USCMO is a coalition of leading American Muslim organizations, including Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), American Muslims for Palestine (AMP), Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA), Muslim Alliance in North America (MANA), Muslim American Society (MAS), Muslim Legal Fund of America (MLFA), Muslim Ummah of North America (MUNA), The Mosque Cares (Ministry of Imam W. Deen Mohammed).

According to a report from PR Newswire:

“This historic united advocacy day marks the coming of age for the American Muslim community on the national political scene,” said Robert McCaw, chairman of the USCMO Advocacy Day Steering Committee. “The education, equality and social justice agenda promoted by National Muslim Advocacy Day delegates is of benefit to all Americans, regardless of background.”

McCaw said National Muslim Advocacy Day exceeded all expectations in terms of nationwide participation by first-time Muslim delegates and of interaction with elected officials and congressional staff.

According to USCMO, the overall effect of the lobbying effort has been positive.

COMMENTARY

It is disconcerting that the largest umbrella organization for mainline Muslim groups in the United States would find success in lobbying Congress for its causes. The organization’s assurances that it is working for the betterment of all ethnic groups, including Jews, might be met with some skepticism. But is that skepticism based on any credible reasoning? Is USCMO just blowing smoke to deceive Americans and obfuscate its true intentions?

To understand just what USCMO is about, we have to look at the various organizations that have joined in partnership with its goals:

Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR);
American Muslims for Palestine (AMP);
Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA);
Muslim Alliance in North America (MANA);
Muslim American Society (MAS);
Muslim Legal Fund of America (MLFA);
Muslim Ummah of North America (MUNA);
The Mosque Cares (Ministry of Imam W. Deen Mohammed).

Every one of these organizations has close ties, either directly or indirectly, to terrorist groups, and their leaders have openly expressed support for Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Muslim Brotherhood.

CAIR, the self-described “America’s largest Islamic civil liberties group” was labeled in 2007 by the U.S. government as an un-indicted co-conspirator in the trial of the Holy Land Foundation, financing Hamas. In 2014 the United Arab Emirates designated CAIR a terrorist organization. CAIR is named by the U.S. government to be among “individuals/entities who are/were members of the U.S. Muslim Brotherhood’s Palestine Committee and/or its organizations.” CAIR is an outgrowth of the Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP), founded by Mousa Abu Marzook, a senior Hamas official in Gaza. IAP is identified by the Muslim Brotherhood as one of its organizations. In a Muslim Brotherhood memorandum to its member organizations, titled “An Explanatory Memorandum On the General Strategic Goal for the Group in North America” (5/22/1991), we read:

The process of settlement is a “Civilization-Jihadist Process” **with all the word means**. The Ikhwan [Muslim Brotherhood] must understand that their work in America is a **kind of grand Jihad in eliminating and destroying the Western civilization from within and “sabotaging” its miserable house by their hands and the hands of the believers so that it is eliminated and God’s [Allah’s] religion is made victorious over all other religions**. Without this level of understanding, we are not up to this challenge and have not prepared ourselves for Jihad yet. It is a Muslim’s destiny to perform Jihad and work wherever he is and wherever he lands until the final hour comes, and there is no escape from that destiny except for those who chose to slack. (Emphases ours)

Don’t let Muslims mislead you into thinking that “jihad” merely means “struggle,” and not necessarily violent destruction of opposing cultures. When the Muslim brotherhood defines its “struggle” as jihad “with all the word means,” it includes violent insurrection.

There are hundreds of pro-terror Muslim advocacy groups in the United States, all of which are intertwined and/or associated directly or indirectly with these Islamic organizations lobbying Congress to lighten up on the government's anti-terrorist efforts. This would help their "grand Jihad in eliminating and destroying the Western civilization from within and 'sabotaging' its miserable house by their [own] hands and the hands of the believers [Muslims]."

Among the leaders for the lobbying event was Grover Norquist, GOP fundraiser and mover and shaker, board member of the National Rifle Association (NRA), and member of the Tea Party, who has advocated many conservative causes.

In addition to his roles within the conservative political groups named above, Norquist serves on the boards of directors of the American Conservative Union, the Hispanic Leadership Fund, the Indian-American Republican Caucus, and ParentalRights.org. He is on the advisory board of GOProud, a conservative political organization that represents the LGBTQ community, and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. He has also been involved with Christian Coalition.

One wonders how a conservative NRA and Tea Party member could align himself with organizations that hold anti-American, anti-Israel and anti-Semitic values. Norquist has not been specifically accused of holding those values himself. In fact, he appears for all intents and purposes to be a true American constitutional conservative.

This would seem puzzling, unless one remembers that during the Cold War the Soviet Union had schools to train people—especially young people—to be "American" in every respect outwardly, while secretly working for the Soviet agenda to overthrow the United States inwardly. Thus they were able to gain the confidence of true Americans and learn secrets and strategies to accomplish their goals. The Nazis did similar things during World War II. These are fifth columnists—clandestine operatives of foreign powers working within the government and other organizations with a political agenda contrary to those in the best interests of the United States.

The term "fifth column" originated during the Spanish Civil War (fomented by communist rebels). In 1936, the Nationalist (rebel) general Emilio Mola, had four columns of troops marching toward Madrid to overthrow the Second Spanish Republic. He told journalists that he had a fifth column inside the city that would undermine the government from within.

There is no indication that Norquist was trained as a fifth columnist by Muslim organizations or Islamic nations. Even so, might Grover Norquist be a self-dedicated fifth columnist for Islam within the GOP?

How could Norquist, a pro-Islamist, support the LGBTQ community? It has puzzled many, how Muslims would

support LGBTQ efforts considering that homosexuality is punishable by death under sharia. The answer: they know that immorality, including, and especially, homosexuality, weakens a culture and makes it vulnerable to their plans of conquest.

The same strategy is at work against Christians, Jews and members of other religions, where Muslims in the West claim to be working for common causes with them.

Once Islam attains conquest, Muslims will turn on the LGBTQ community and those lost souls' blood will flow along with that of Christians, Jews and most others who do not convert to Islam.

Norquist's American background and involvement in conservative causes would throw off suspicion by many. What is a more "American-sounding" name than Grover Norquist? The surname "Norquist" (or Nordquist) is of Swedish origin meaning "northern branch." The name Grover is of Old English origin, and means "grove of trees." It was made popular in the United States by President Grover Cleveland. Norquist describes himself as a "boring white bread Methodist." So how might he have been converted to the cause of Islam?

In 2004, Norquist married a Palestinian Muslim, Samah Alrayyes, a public relations specialist for the nation of Kuwait who was formerly a director of Norquist's Islamic Free Market Institute and specialist at the Bureau of Legislative and Public Affairs at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Prior to his marriage to Alrayyes, Norquist had been active in pro-Islamic groups for at least six years, having co-founded with Khaled Saffuri the Islamic Free Market Institute (IFMI) in 1998, funded largely by Middle Eastern sources. IFMI works to promote sharia financing in accordance with Islamic law.

Shortly after IFMI was founded, it received sizeable donations from Abdurahman Al-Amoudi, known to have ties to terrorist groups. Al-Amoudi founded the American Muslim Council (AMC) in 1990 with the help of the Muslim Brotherhood. AMC is allied with CAIR and other Muslim advocacy groups with known ties to terrorism. Although Al-Amoudi publicly expressed moderate pro-American sympathies, he was known to support Hamas and Hezbollah.

Saffuri, Norquist's partner in the founding of IFMI, was the director for government affairs for Al-Amoudi's AMC from September, 1995, to December, 1997.

In spite of these and other connections to terrorism, Norquist remains a strong influence within the Republican Party, working to advance various Islamic causes.

And our elected officials, from the top down, are selling us out.

Our only source of safety—our refuge in a time of trouble—is our Lord Jesus Christ. We may be put to the test of our faith sooner than we think. Let us pray that we not fail. ❖



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miracles and wonders and signs which God did by Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know, Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain, whom God has raised up, having loosed the pains of death because it was not possible that He should be held by it." (Acts 2:22-24)

Which are people to believe—the Word of God, or some hacked-up fiction produced by Hollywood celebrities and endorsed by NBC? Sorry to say it, but in today's ecumenical, entertainment-saturated Christian climate, Scripture must take a backseat to political correctness even among Christian leaders.

In *A.D.*, Jesus is portrayed as a social reformer, also in keeping with how most people today wish to view Him.

Another politically-correct aspect of *A.D.* has the women, including Jesus' mother, as the only ones who remembered or believed Jesus' words that He would rise again after three days and three nights (although they mention only three days). The apostles find it difficult to believe the women because evidently the women knew the Scriptures of which the apostles were unaware:

For as yet they did not know the Scripture that He must rise again from the dead. (John 20:9).

That Scripture is Psalm 16:10-11:

For you will not leave My soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will show Me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy. At Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

No one at the time, men or women, had put the Scriptures into the context of the Lord's resurrection. But it is politically correct within the churches today that women are to teach the men and to have authority over them, contrary to Paul's admonition that he would not allow women to do either (1 Timothy 2:12). This is in keeping with the political correctness of our modern culture that insists on women lording it over men under the guise of "gender equality."

After Jesus has risen (which is portrayed through a computer-generated angel rolling away the stone in the presence of terrified Roman soldiers), Caiaphas enlists one of his priests to find the corpse he believes was stolen by the

disciples. The priest finds in a tavern a man to whom he wishes to sub-let the task. Greeting him, the priest says, "Long time no see."

Really?

It is to laugh.

When the doubting Thomas sees Jesus, he breathes out, "My Lord." But where is "My God"?

Oh, right! That would offend way too many people, like Jews, Muslims, Jehovah's Witnesses, and just about every person on earth who is of a different belief than biblical.

And, of course, any adventure story worth its salt has to have a chase scene. When Peter and John are spotted by Roman soldiers, the chase begins. The apostles demonstrate terrific agility, leaping from rooftop to rooftop, up and down staircases, in and out of rooms, from building to building. And in sandals yet.

Had they commandeered chariots it would have been much more entertaining. Perhaps a few brodies and drifts a la *Fast and Furious*, not to mention chariot crashes to rival the car chases that are *de regueur* in today's adventure productions.

The apostles are aided by others who attack the soldiers along the way (the closest they could come to cop-car crashes under the circumstances; they must maintain some semblance of realism).

Ultimately, some zealots incite a riot and manage to get them outside the city gates to safety.

Funny, I don't recall any of that happening in the real Bible.

Pilate, furious that his soldiers couldn't fulfill their duty to guard the tomb, has them strangled. Except for the one who came to him and ratted out the others. For him was reserved a more dignified death at the hands of Pilate himself who stabs him in the back.

Whoa! Talk about intrigue!

I guess that's more important than the truth of Scripture.

At the risk of being labeled a "racist," I have to comment on another unscriptural anomaly in *A.D.*, which was also found in its prequel *The Bible*. And that is casting black people in the role of Jews. In *The Bible* it was Samson and David's first son by Bathsheba. In *A.D.* it is most notably the apostle John (Babou Ceesay) and his brother, James (Denver Isaac). Mary Magdalene is portrayed by Zimbabwean actress Chipo Chung, who is Afro-Asian.

Why this casting? According to Roma Downey, she and Burnett faced criticism about *The Bible* because most of the cast was white. "We decided then if we had an opportunity to do this again that we would remedy that," she said.

For that reason, they went to places like Africa to cast key roles.

Said Burnett: "I feel it's so important for all communities to see themselves on the screen, but in the end our goal was to find the best, and by casting that wider net we found the best actors."

Yeah, right. Like political correctness had nothing to do with it.

In all of Hollywood, known for its large Jewish influences, are there no Jewish actors who could have filled the bill? In fact, were there any Jewish actors at all?

Well, judging by his name, I'd say there was one token Jew in the thing: Adam Levy, who portrayed Peter.

In keeping with Hollywood tradition, most of the actors have British accents. Even the Argentinian "Jesus," Juan Pablo Di Pace, who said to "Peter," "Believe, Petah, and the power of the Holy Spirit will come to you....Do this for Me, Petah, and one day you will die for Me. Are you ready to do that?"

Betty Davis had nothing on this guy.

Of course, "Petah" answered, "I am."

Contrary to Scripture, which tells us that the real Jesus was not handsome, so that anyone would desire Him (Isaiah 53:2), both Juan Pablo Di Pace and Diogo Morgado ("Jesus" in *The Bible* and the movie *Son of God*), are pretty boys. It wouldn't do to have a homely, or even normal-looking man portray Jesus. Hollywood Christians know better than God how His Son should look to men and, especially, women. But then, Hollywood is all about looks, and little about substance.

So much for the "historically accurate" homily paid to A.D. by Pat Robertson.

As for Tony Evans's lauding of the "Judeo-Christian value system that our culture desperately needs to be reminded of historically, and to be able to draw from in our contemporary society," that value system won't save anyone.

We lament the spiritual condition of society, and we recognize that the biblical ethic upon which much of Western Civilization has been sustained for centuries has suffered critical decline. But the best that man can produce is a moral society populated by unregenerate sinners bound for judgment.

Jesus didn't die for cultural regeneration; He died to pay the price for our sins. He has opened the door to salvation of our souls through faith in His atoning work. His atonement cannot be separated from the absolute and uncompromised truth of His Word. To take liberties with His Word is to take liberties with His sacrifice, even if that sacrifice is portrayed accurately.

In *A.D. The Bible Continues*, the crucifixion and resurrection are portrayed as well as anyone has portrayed them in the media; better than most, in fact. But apart from that,



ADAM LEVY AS "PETAH"
WITH "MARY MAGDALENE" BEHIND.
A.D.'S TOKEN JEW?

there is nothing else of substantial importance portrayed accurately—and I mean nothing else.

How often we have to be reminded of Paul's words:

Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? And now you know what holds fast so that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity already works, only now holding fast until coming forth. And then shall be revealed that wicked one whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming—even him whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all the deception of unrighteousness in those who perish because they did not receive the love of the truth so that they might be saved.

And for this reason God shall send them strong delusion so that they should believe a lie, that they all who did not believe the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness, might be damned. (2 Thessalonians 2:5-12)

Christians today are naïve to think that just because something comes in the name of Jesus, through people who profess faith in Him, and who tell us He told them to give us that something, we are to accept it as His truth. A delusion that would almost fool the very elect has to look so much like the truth that it would take considerable discernment to resist it.

That strong delusion will champion many biblical truths, including the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, as well as other "essential" doctrines of the faith. And most of those propagating that delusion will think they are serving God.

If Christians and their leaders are so enamored by such a poor representation of truth as *A.D. The Bible Continues*, it portends ill for the vast majority when the really strong delusion appears.

So why do the sycophants among Christian leaders fall all over themselves to praise this farce?

Because they love success in the realm of religion, even if that success isn't predicated upon biblical truth. The way they see it, the great enemy of God and Christianity is secularism; they do not see that religion in any form is as much, if not more so, the enemy of God, and the most subtle.

The phenomenal success of *The Bible* has captured their imaginations and given them hope that the world is becoming a better place, just as they want it to be.

Besides this, they love entertainment more than they love the purity of God's Word. They think that just because a modicum of truth is portrayed, that justifies spreading errors that impugn the whole counsel of God. Especially if the production values are of top-notch quality, as they are for *A.D. The Bible Continues*.

If God has exalted His Word above His very name, then who is any man (or woman) to take liberties with it? And to say that God told them to do it, as well!

People get ideas in their heads and think it's the voice of God. That's a problem with Christianity today, particularly among Pentecostals and charismatics. It's also a problem among many Roman Catholics whose church encourages mysticism. Roma Downey has openly stated that she has sought help from psychics to get in touch with her dead mother. Strange?

Not to Roman Catholicism. After all, if one can pray to dead "saints," one can speak to any dead person. It doesn't matter that unbelieving psychics may be the channel.

That's not to indict all Roman Catholics; many would eschew such things. But those who do engage in necromancy are not qualified to tell us anything about biblical truth.

As well, Downey says her spiritual mentor was her *Touched by an Angel* co-star, the late New Ager Della Reese.

Roma Downey and Mark Burnett have also revealed their lack of spiritual qualifications by producing *The Dovekeepers*, which aired the week before *A.D. The Bible Continues*.



THE DOVEKEEPERS IS a fictional account of the Roman conquest of the Jewish fortress Masada as told to Jewish historian Flavius Josephus by two women who, with a brother and a child, are the only survivors. (Historically, there were two women and five children who survived by hiding inside a cistern.)

According to this fiction, dovekeepers are the women who tend doves in Masada in order to gather their droppings to be used as fertilizer for the crops. Two of the women, Shirah (portrayed by Cote de Pablo [NCIS]) and Yael (portrayed by Rachel Brosnahan [House of Cards]), are married, but carry on affairs with the husbands of other women. Shirah's lover is the (historical) Eleazar ben Ya'ir, commander of the Jewish rebels called Sicarii. Both women bear children to their lovers, and are unashamed. In fact, Shirah, known as the "witch of Moab" has an intimate relationship with the Hebrew God "Yahweh," who answers her prayers.

In one scene, as Shira is being accused of witchcraft by her lover's wife, resulting in an assault by a mob, she takes a large stick and scribes a circle to push back the mob. Because Masada is in a drought, she takes the opportunity to call upon "Yahweh" to send rain, which he immediately does, thus quelling the mob and gaining her safety.



PRODUCERS MARK BURNETT AND ROMA DOWNEY
ON THE SET OF *THE DOVEKEEPERS*

While relating this event to Josephus, she explains why Yahweh answers her prayers: it is because of love, specifically, her love for Eleazar ben Ya'ir. Her true love for him prompts "Yahweh" to answer her prayers.

The story that Shirah and Yael relate to Josephus isn't as much about Masada as it is about their personal lives and loves (read lust). All the principle characters are involved in fornication and/or adultery, and it is seen as a beautiful thing. The wives of the men committing adultery with these women are portrayed as vengeful and evil of heart, which gains sympathy for the adulteresses.

And then there are the nude love scenes enacted to romantic music.

Why would "Christian" producers induce actors to bare all for the sake of entertainment? Shouldn't there be a higher standard for those who claim to be called by God to use their talents to glorify Him? Granted, *The Dovekeepers* isn't a Christian film, and the nude scenes may be called by some, "discreet," but that doesn't excuse the glorification of adultery, fornication and nudity by "Christian" filmmakers.

For producing *The Bible*, *Son of God*, and *A.D. The Bible Continues*, Downey and Burnett are lauded by major Christian leaders for giving us convoluted fiction ostensibly about biblical accounts related to the Lord and His disciples.

I don't question motives. They, Downey and Burnett may be well-meaning, but are we to trust these leaders' spiritual insight, as well as that of Downey and Burnett?

This is a sorry indictment on these leaders' spiritual discernment. Is it any wonder that sin is rampant in the churches, and that the morals of Christians are no better overall than those of the world?

Today's Christians want feel-good righteousness, not the kind that results from dying on the cross. They want to go to the foot of Jesus' cross where they may find salvation and comfort, but they don't want to crucify their own sinful flesh upon the cross He has for them. ❖



Little Boy

ANOTHER
DOWNEY-
BURNETT
PRODUCTION

EVER SINCE ROMA Downey and her husband Mark Burnett decided to enter the faith-based entertainment scene with their television series *The Bible*, they have been prolific to say the least. Within less than a month (March 31 – April 24), they have released two television series, *A.D. The Bible Continues* and *The Dovekeepers*, as well as the movie *Little Boy*. Burnett and Downey are named as executive producers for *Little Boy* along with Ricardo Del Rio and Eduardo Verástegui. Leo Severino is the producer.

Little Boy is billed as an inspirational and motivational film that will inspire people to achieve the impossible.

Racism, war, the consequences of the Bomb, and other themes are packed into this story set in a small town in the 1940s. The “little boy” is Pepper Flynt Busbee (Jakob Salvati), a diminutive kid picked on by others his age who are much larger than he. Because of this, his father (Michael Rapaport) tries to inspire him to achieve great things, teaching him to have a strong imagination by role playing heroes in dangerous situations. Their imaginations take them into the Old West to engage in gun fights, on a clipper ship in tumultuous waters, and other scenarios. In each challenging situation, Pepper is asked by his dad, “Do you believe you can do this?” to which Pepper responds, “Yes! I believe I can do this!”

These role-playing visualizations are entered into much to the consternation of Pepper’s mother who feels that her husband is filling the boy with unattainable dreams.

When Pepper’s dad is drafted into the army and sent to Europe during World War II, Pepper agonizes over his absence and the fear that he may never return.

Pepper’s journey to self-realization that will lead to great feats of “faith” begins when he attends a magician’s show. During his act, the magician says to the audience, “I am searching for the chosen one.” Pointing to Pepper, he says, “You.”

The magician places a soft-drink bottle on a table and explains that he will demonstrate how it is possible to move an object through “inner power.” He asks Pepper, “Do you believe you can do this!?”

Pepper responds, “Yes! I believe I can move it!”

Taking the stance that he will henceforth use to alter his reality according to his desires, including moving a mountain, however slightly, Pepper extends one arm with fingers pointed toward the object, while the other is bent at the elbow, hand with palm down.

His confidence elicits laughs from the other children in the audience, who are soon left aghast when the bottle shoots across the table toward Pepper.

Even he is amazed at first, but it is explained to him by his Catholic priest, Father Oliver (Tom Wilkinson), “You wanted the bottle to move so much, it moved.”

Father Oliver then tells him, “Faith is powerful.”

Pepper asks, “If I have enough faith, nothing is impossible, right? Even bringing my dad home?”

“Your faith,” says Father Oliver, “won’t work if you have even the slightest bit of doubt.”

Thus, Pepper embarks on a quest to bring his dad home safe from the war, controlling events half a world away through acts of “faith.”

The question is, to which faith does this faith-based movie ascribe? The thing about the “faith-based” genre lauded by Christians is that it doesn’t necessarily apply to biblical faith. In truth, biblical faith is a small part of almost all “faith-based” movies and television productions. They tend to focus heavily on human potential with references to “God” and “Jesus” in some of them. In the case of *Little Boy*, the human potential message is that if you have faith, you can accomplish anything you desire.

That may sound close to what Jesus said about having faith as a grain of mustard seed, and nothing will be impossible to us (Matthew 17:20). But the idea of faith portrayed in *Little Boy* is really more mind power than the power of the Holy Spirit working faith into the person. It isn’t so much faith in God, as it is faith in faith to which Pepper is taught to ascribe his abilities. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that Pepper displays faith in the Force. One is reminded of Luke Skywalker under the tutelage of Yoda who demonstrates how to move material objects through will power.

We are given the impression that God will exhibit His power not for His eternal purposes as much as to put on a good show for the folks.

Interviewed by *The Catholic World Report*, Eduardo Verástegui, an executive producer of *Little Boy*, calls the movie “a fairy tale” for all people, regardless of belief:

Everyone has faith in something—in yourself, in God. Faith is very universal.

So there you have it. The “faith” portrayed in *Little Boy* is not biblical faith through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Never mind, though, because pastors are telling their flocks to go see this “inspirational” movie. *Movie Guide*’s Ted Baehr, to whom Christians look for information and advice on entertainment, says, “*Little Boy* is a beautiful, artistic, faith-filled piece of magical realism.” James Dobson states, “I think you will be touched by this movie. I certainly was.”

How far from God’s truth the Body of Christ has strayed to equate “inner will power” with faith, and fairy tales with reality. ❖



TITHING: Are We Under the Law?

THE QUESTION OF whether or not believers in Christ are obligated to tithe to their churches continues to plague the Body of Christ, even to the point of causing dissension among brethren who are admonished to love one another. There are compelling arguments on both sides of the question, and sometimes the arguments get heated. Pastors of many churches, especially, insist that their congregants tithe in order to keep their churches financially viable. Some churches, such as the Worldwide Church of God and The Church of Jesus Christ, Latter-Day Saints (Mormonism), have imposed three tithes upon their adherents.

Rick Warren, the so-called Pastors' Pastor, in February issued a strong teaching on the need to tithe in order to be in compliance with God's Word.

If we are to come to agreement with the Father's mind on the matter, we must consult His Word and seek His Spirit's instruction to give us understanding in light of the freedom in Christ that He has granted us.

No one can argue that tithing is a bad thing in itself. Those who diligently pay tithes are demonstrating a desire to honor the Lord according to how they understand the commands that He gave to Israel. And because the Lord Jesus made His New Covenant with Israel, and not with something new called "the Church," all believers have been grafted into the commonwealth of Israel under that New Covenant according to their faith in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:12).

This is a spiritual union; it has nothing to do with being citizens of the earthly nation of Israel which is comprised of both believing and non-believing descendants of Jacob.

God's commands are to God's people, and His Word is given to all, both Jew and Gentile, to guide us in our walk with Him:

All Scripture is given through inspiration by God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, so that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly equipped for all good works.

I charge you therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ who shall judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom. Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all patience and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine,

but from their own lusts, having itching ears, they shall heap to themselves teachers, and they shall turn their ears away from the truth, and shall be turned to fables. (2 Timothy 3:16-4:4)

The Scriptures to which Paul is referring are all the books of the Tenach—the "Old Testament" of our modern Bibles. At the time this was written to Timothy, the writings of the apostles had not yet been assimilated into what came to be known as the "New Testament."

So although there are those who insist that the "Old Testament" (the writings of the prophets of Israel) has absolutely no bearing on us today—at least not on Gentile believers—the truth is that Paul was encouraging Timothy, a Gentile, to consult them for all spiritual instruction in his life and in the lives of those to whom Timothy ministered.

Therefore, we must not completely dismiss all that the prophets wrote, or that Yahweh commanded. At the same time, however, we understand that certain laws that pertained to ancient Israel were not imposed upon those who came to Christ in faith. As also stated by Paul, "No flesh is justified in the sight of God by the works of the Law" (Romans 3:20). Let us look at this verse in its full context:

Now we know that whatever things the Law says, it says to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

Therefore, in His sight no flesh shall be justified by the deeds of the Law, for through the Law is the knowledge of sin.

But now the righteousness of God without the Law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets—even the righteousness of God which is through faith in Jesus Christ to all, and upon all those who believe, for there is no difference. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, in order to declare His righteousness for the remission of past sins through the forbearance of God.

To declare, I say, at this time, His righteousness so that He might be just, and the justifier of him who believes in Jesus.

Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the works of the Law.

Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, seeing that it is one God who shall justify the circumcision through faith and uncircumcision through faith.

Do we then make the Law void through faith? It cannot be! Yes, we establish the Law.

Then what shall we say that Abraham our father has found as pertaining to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast of, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.

Now to him who works, the reward is not counted according to grace, but to debt. But to him who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness, even as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness without works, saying, "Blessed are those whose wickedness is forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." (Romans 3:19-4:8)

Paul is telling us that grace imparted through faith was God's means of salvation long before the Law was given to Israel through Moses; Abraham was justified by his faith without knowledge of the Mosaic Law that would be given in detail to his descendants.

Yet for some, James seems to be contradicting Paul when he says that faith without works is dead:

What does it profit, my brethren, though a man says he has faith and has not works? Can faith save him?

If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace; be warmed and filled," notwithstanding you do not give them those things that are needful for the body, what does it profit?

Even so, faith, if it has no works, is dead, being alone.

Yes, a man may say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

You believe that there is one God; you do well. The devils also believe, and tremble.

But will you know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he had offered his son Isaac upon the altar?

Do you see how faith worked with his works, and faith was made perfect by works?

And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, and he was called 'the friend of God.'"

You see then how a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

Likewise also, was not Rahab the harlot justified by works when she had received the messengers and had sent them out another way?

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead. (James 2:14-26)

So what is the resolution to this seeming contradiction?

There is a distinction between the Mosaic Law given to Israel for a specific purpose and time, and the moral law given to all mankind, including Israel, for all time. The Mosaic Law (which in some places included the moral law which was never abrogated) was given in order to preserve Israel from the influences of the heathen nations around them which would corrupt them. It was necessary to keep Israel pure from the pollution of the world in order to maintain a pure bloodline until the coming of the Messiah. The symbolism contained within the Law pointed to the Messiah. Every aspect of the Law, especially those pertaining to sacrifices and atonement, spoke of the ministry of the Messiah. Also, because Israelites were not regenerate and did not have the Holy Spirit within to guide them, they had to come under the stern discipline of the Law in order to demonstrate their faithfulness to Yahweh.

The fact that Israel failed time and again did not negate those purposes; God always had faithful Israelites to maintain them. But without the Mosaic Law, which was the teacher even for the faithful of Israel, those faithful might not have been able to keep themselves from the corruption that engulfed the majority of their kinsmen.

The entire Law of Moses pointed to the sinless One who would come and fulfill the Law in order to die as the propitiation for the sins of the world, out of which would come those who would believe in Him.

With this background, we can better understand Paul's statement that those who believe they are justified by the Law have fallen from grace (Galatians 5:4). We can also more easily place the context of James's words where they belong; they pertain to the law of faith of which Paul spoke. We see this in the preceding verses:

My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there comes into your assembly a man with a gold ring, in fine clothing, and there comes in also a poor man in shabby clothing, and you have respect to him who wears the good clothing, and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor, "You stand there," or, "Sit here under my footstool," are you not then partial in yourselves and have become judges with evil thoughts?

Listen, my beloved brethren, has God not chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom that He has promised to those who love Him?

But you have despised the poor. Do rich men not oppress you and draw you before the judgment seats? Do they not blaspheme that worthy name by which you are called?

If you fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well. But if you have respect to persons, you commit sin and are convicted by the Law as transgressors.

For whoever keeps the whole Law and yet offends in one point, he is guilty of all. For He who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not kill.”

Now if you commit no adultery, yet if you kill, you have become a transgressor of the Law.

So speak, and so do, as those who shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he who has shown no mercy shall obtain judgment without mercy, and mercy rejoices against judgment. (James 2:1-13)

Both Paul and James consistently held the brethren to the law of love embodied in the law of faith. When Paul spoke against justification through keeping the Law, he was speaking of the Mosaic laws of ceremony, and ordinances that compelled the Israelites to be circumcised, to keep the various aspects of the Law that pointed to the coming Messiah, and all that was fulfilled by Jesus Christ. To try to keep those laws is to impugn the efficacy of the Lord’s sacrifice and all that He did. It’s saying that His sacrifice was insufficient:

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

I do not violate the grace of God, for if righteousness comes by the Law then Christ died in vain. (Galatians 2:20-21)

To try to keep the Mosaic Law is to impugn the grace of God.

Now, pertaining to tithing, there are those who have established reasonable arguments in its favor, and have stated reasons why believers in Jesus are not released from that law. Briefly, following are some of those reasons, with the Scriptures used to support them:

Because God commands it (Leviticus 27:30);

Because Jesus commands it (Matthew 23:23);

Because tithing shows that God has first place in your life (Deuteronomy 14:23);

Because it reminds you that everything you have was given to you by God (Deuteronomy 8:18);

Because tithing expresses your gratitude to God for helping you earn income (Psalm 116:12; Deuteronomy 16:17);

Because refusing to tithe is stealing from God (Malachi 3:8-19);

Because tithing gives God a chance to prove to you that He exists and wants to bless you (Malachi 3:10);

Because tithing shows you really love God (Matthew 6:21; 2 Corinthians 8:8; John 14:15);

Because tithing is an investment for eternity (Matthew 6:19-10);

To honor the Creator (Matthew 22:21);

To acknowledge one’s heritage (Galatians 3:29);

To fulfill the covenant (2 Corinthians 3:11);

To show my love (Song of Solomon 8:7);

To fulfill an obligation (Matthew 23:23);

To escape condemnation (Malachi 3:8);

To spread the Gospel (1 Corinthians 9:14);

To avoid a curse (Malachi 3:9);

To enjoy God’s blessing (Malachi 3:10; Luke 6:38);

To be consistent (1 Timothy 4:12).

These are but a few of many admonitions by modern teachers to tithe. But many of the cited Scriptures reference the Mosaic Law and/or are misapplied and taken out of context. They don’t really say what they are said to say. Yet who can argue against these reasons when it comes to giving to the Lord? But is giving to the Lord the same as tithing? Or does the law of faith require something different—perhaps even more—from us?

To Whom Was It Given?

The first mention of the tithe is found in Genesis 14:20, which relates the account of Abraham [then Abram] giving to Melchizedek, king of Salem, a tenth of all the goods Abram took from the kings he defeated at Shaveh in rescuing his nephew who had been taken captive by them:

And he [Abram] brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.

And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king’s dale.

And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine. And he was the priest of the Most High God. And he blessed him, and said, “Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of the heavens and earth, and blessed be the Most High God, who has delivered your enemies into your hand.”

And he gave him tithes of all.

And the king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself.”

And Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I have lifted up my hand to YHWH, the Most High God, the possessor of the heavens and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe latchet, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you would say, ‘I have made Abram rich,’ save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.” (Genesis 14:16-24)

This occurred long before the tithe was commanded of Israel. There is no command in this passage to anyone to tithe to God or to His servants; it merely states that this is what Abram did. But we also see that Abram gave the tithe from that which belonged to the king of Sodom; Abram did not keep anything for himself. In essence, Abram gave

everything away except for what his men had eaten and kept for themselves. Thus, Abram paid the tithe from what belonged to the king of Sodom.

To equate this account with the tithe commanded of Israel is not a reason to cite it as part of any command to God's people today. We must go to the first mention of tithes commanded to Israel to see if there is cause for it to be retained. This is found in Leviticus 27:30:

"And all the tithes of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is YHWH's; it is holy to YHWH.

"And if a man will at all redeem any of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part of it.

"And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock—whatever passes under the rod, the tenth shall be holy to YHWH.

"He shall not examine whether it is good or bad, nor shall he change it. And if he changes it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed."

These are the commandments that YHWH commanded Moses for the children of Israel in Mount Sinai. (Leviticus 27:30-34)

At that point it was revealed only that the law of tithing was given to Israel, and that the tithe belonged to Yahweh, but there were no details as to how the tithes were to be given.

In Numbers 18 we learn that a tithe was to be given directly to the Levites who, as the priests of Yahweh, had no inheritance:

"But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as a heave offering to YHWH, I have given to the Levites to inherit. Therefore I have said to them, 'They shall have no inheritance among the children of Israel.'"

And YHWH spoke to Moses, saying, "Thus speak to the Levites, and say to them, 'When you take from the children of Israel the tithes that I have given you from them for your inheritance, then you shall offer up a heave offering of it for YHWH, even a tenth part of the tithe. And this, your heave offering, shall be reckoned to you as though it were the corn of the threshing floor, and as the fullness of the winepress.

"Thus you shall also offer a heave offering to YHWH of all your tithes that you receive from the children of Israel, and you shall give thereof YHWH's heave offering to Aaron the priest.

"Out of all your gifts you shall offer every heave offering of YHWH, of all the best thereof, even the hallowed part thereof out of it.'

"Therefore you shall say to them, 'When you have heaved the best thereof from it, then it shall be counted to the Levites as the increase of the threshing

floor, and as the increase of the winepress. And you shall eat it in every place—you and your households—for it is your reward for your service in the tabernacle of the congregation.'" (Numbers 18:24-31)

We see, then, that a tithe was to be given to the Levitical priests for their inheritance because they had no inheritance of the land as did the other eleven tribes of Israel. There was also to be a heave offering of ten percent of the tithe. So if we are to keep the entire law of tithing, then we cannot neglect the heave offering which was to be given to Aaron.

Oh, wait. Aaron isn't with us anymore. So we can't keep that portion of the law.

But there was another tithe commanded of Israel:

"And you shall bring there your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks.

"And there you shall eat before YHWH your God, and you shall rejoice in all that you put your hand to, you and your households, wherein YHWH your God has blessed you.

"You shall not do after all the things that we do here today—every man whatever is right in his own eyes. For you have not yet come to the rest and to the inheritance that YHWH your God gives you.

"But when you go over Jordan, and dwell in the land that YHWH your God gives you to inherit, and when He gives you rest from all your enemies round about, so that you dwell in safety, then there shall be a place that YHWH your God will choose to cause His name to dwell. There you shall bring all that I command you—your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering from your hand, and all your choice vows that you vow to YHWH.

"And you shall rejoice before YHWH your God, you, and your sons, and your daughters, and your menservants, and your maidservants, and the Levite that is within your gates, inasmuch as he has no part or inheritance with you.

"Take heed to yourself that you do not offer your burnt offerings in every place that you see. But in the place that YHWH shall choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I command you.

"Notwithstanding you may kill and eat meat in all your gates, whatever your soul desires, according to the blessing of YHWH your God that He has given you—the unclean and the clean may eat of it, as of the beautiful stag.

"Only you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it upon the earth like water.

“You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your corn, or of your wine, or of your oil, or the firstlings of your herds or of your flock, nor any of your vows that you vow, nor your freewill offerings, or heave offering from your hand, but you must eat them before YHWH your God in the place that YHWH your God shall choose—you and your son, and your daughter, and your manservant, and your maidservant, and the Levite that is within your gates, and you shall rejoice before YHWH your God in all that you put your hands to.

“Take heed to yourself that you not forsake the Levite as long as you live upon the earth.

“When YHWH your God shall enlarge your border, as He has promised you, and you will say, ‘I will eat meat’ because your soul desires to eat meat, you may eat meat—whatever your soul desires.

“If the place that YHWH your God has chosen to put His name there is too far from you, then you shall kill from your herd and from your flock that YHWH has given you, as I have commanded you, and you eat in your gates whatever your soul desires, even as the beautiful stag is eaten, so you shall eat them—the unclean and the clean shall eat of them alike.

“Only be sure that you not eat the blood, for the blood is the life; and you may not eat the life with the flesh. You shall not eat it; you shall pour it upon the earth like water.

“You shall not eat it, so that it may go well with you and with your children after you when you shall do that which is right in the sight of YHWH.

“Only you shall take your holy things that you have, and your vows, and go to the place that YHWH shall choose, and you shall offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of YHWH your God, and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of YHWH your God, and you shall eat the meat.

“Observe and hear all these words that I command you so that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever, when you do that which is good and right in the sight of YHWH your God.” (Deuteronomy 12:6-28)

“You shall truly tithe all the increase of your seed that the field brings forth year by year, and you shall eat before YHWH your God in the place that He shall choose to place His name there—the tithe of your corn, of your wine, and of your oil, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks, so that you may learn to fear YHWH your God always.

“And if the way is too long for you so that you are not able to carry it, or if the place is too far from you, that YHWH your God shall choose to set His name

there when YHWH your God has blessed you, then you shall turn it into money, and bind up the money in your hand, and shall go to the place that YHWH your God shall choose, and you shall bestow that money for whatever your soul desires—for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatever your soul desires, and you shall eat there before YHWH your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your household.

“And you shall not forsake the Levite that is within your gates for he has no part nor inheritance with you.” (Deuteronomy 14:22-29)

The second tithe commanded of Israel was to be used in the keeping of the feasts commanded by Yahweh. This the people consumed upon their own desires, whether food, wine or strong drink, and they were to rejoice in doing so.

There was yet a third tithe to be paid every three years:

“At the end of three years you shall bring forth all the tithe of your increase the same year, and shall lay it up within your gates, and the Levite (because he has no part nor inheritance with you), and the alien, and the orphan, and the widow that are within your gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied so that YHWH your God may bless you in all the work of your hand that you do.” (Deuteronomy 14:28-29)

This tithe was to be shared by the Levites with the orphans, widows and aliens in the land who had no inheritance.

Besides these three tithes, God commanded that every seven years the Israelites were to release any debt owed to them:

“At the end of every seven years you shall make a release. And this is the manner of the release: every creditor who lends anything to his neighbor shall release it; he shall not take it from his neighbor, or of his brother, because it is called YHWH’s release.

“You may take it from a foreigner again, but that which is yours with your brother your hand shall release, except when there shall be no poor among you. For YHWH shall greatly bless you in the land that YHWH your God gives you for an inheritance to possess it if you only listen carefully to the voice of YHWH your God, to observe to do all these commandments that I command you this day.

“For YHWH your God blesses you as he promised you, and you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow, and you shall reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over you.

“If there is among you a poor man of one of your brethren within any of your gates in your land that YHWH your God gives you, you shall not harden your heart, nor shut your hand from your poor brother. But you shall open your hand wide to him,



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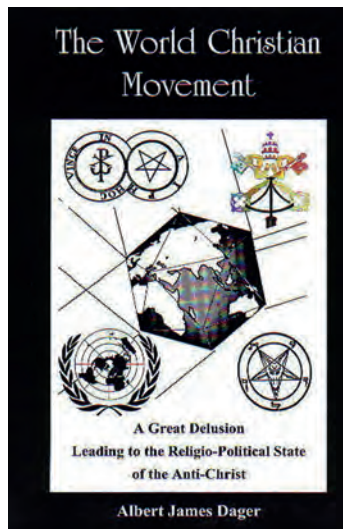
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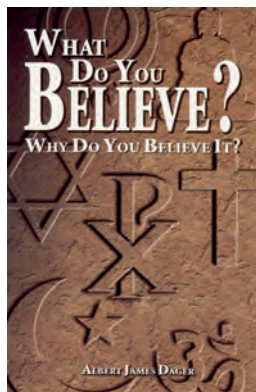
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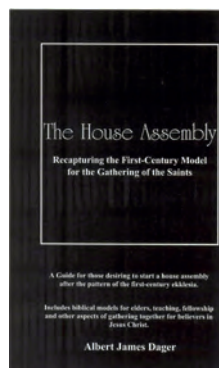
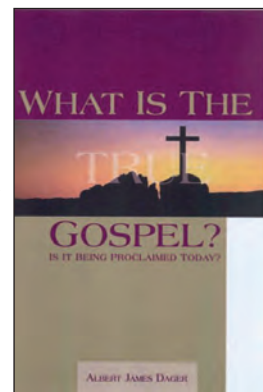
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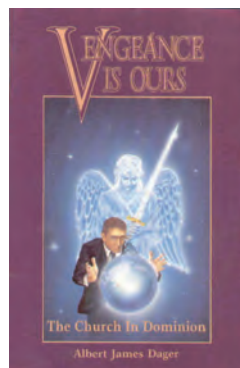
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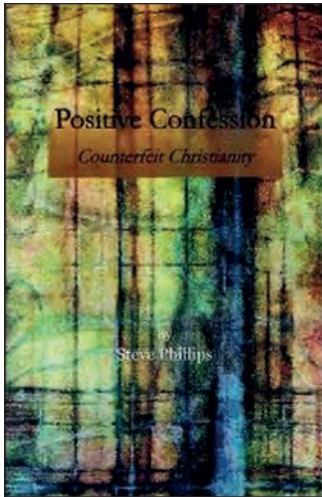
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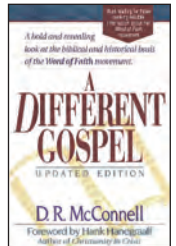


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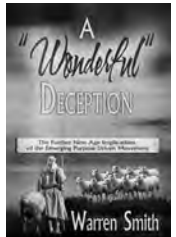


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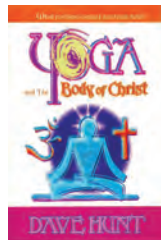
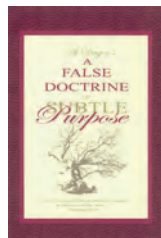
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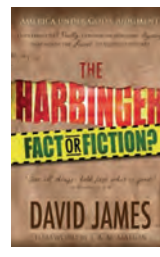


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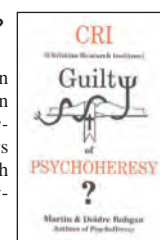


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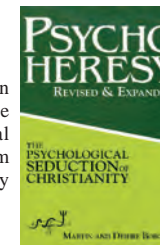


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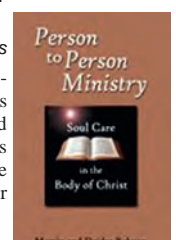


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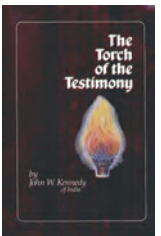


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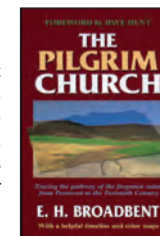


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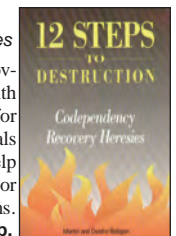


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and shall surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wants.

“Be careful that there not be a thought in your wicked heart, saying, ‘The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand,’ and your eye be evil against your poor brother, and you give him nothing, and he cry out to YHWH against you, and it be sin to you.

“You shall surely give to him, and your heart shall not be grieved when you give to him, because that for this thing YHWH your God shall bless you in all your works, and in all that you put your hand to. For the poor shall never cease out of the land.

“Therefore I command you, saying, you shall open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor, and to your needy in your land.

“And if your brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman, be sold to you, and serve you six years, then in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you. And when you send him out free from you, you shall not let him go away empty. You shall furnish him liberally out of your flock, and out of your threshing floor, and out of your winepress. Of that with which YHWH your God has blessed you, you shall give to him.

“And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and YHWH your God redeemed you. Therefore I command you this thing today.

“And it shall be, if he says to you, ‘I will not go away from you,’ because he loves you and your house, because he is well with you, then you shall take an awl and thrust it through his ear to the door, and he shall be your servant forever. And you shall do the same to your maidservant.

“It shall not seem hard to you when you send him away free from you, for he has been worth a double hired servant to you in serving you six years, and YHWH your God shall bless you in all that you do.” (Deuteronomy 15:1-18)

Do we dare ask—if the law of giving, of which the tithe was a part, included the year of release—why that portion of the law is never even spoken of, let alone insisted upon for Christians today?

The law of tithes for Israel was a lesson in generosity; it proved to Yahweh those who were of kind heart toward Him and others. But like all the Law of Moses, it was a school teacher, as Paul tells us:

How then does the Law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made, and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? It cannot be. For if there had been a law given

that could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the Law. But the Scripture has concluded all under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

But before faith came we were kept under the Law, kept from the faith that should afterwards be revealed. Therefore the Law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ so that we might be justified by faith. But after faith comes we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. (Galatians 3:19-27)

But why does the law of tithing not apply to believers in Christ today? After all, without the tithe how can His Word go forth? How can churches maintain their ministries? How can pastors and their staffs be paid? How can so-called parachurch ministries survive? Many of them also request (some even demand) tithes of those who listen to them.

I have often thought how incongruous it is that pastors and teachers today so vociferously claim, “We are not under the Law; we are under grace!” to justify unscriptural teachings and practices, often making merchandise of their followers. Yet the law of the tithe is the one law from which they will not allow their adherents to be free.

So how, then, is God’s work to be financed? Isn’t the tithe the minimum expected of His people? Should they not also add gifts and offerings to their tithes? Doesn’t Scripture tell us that those who feed us are worthy of double honor, meaning, double the wages?

Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the Word and doctrine. For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle the ox that treads out the corn,” and, “The laborer is worthy of his reward.” (1 Timothy 5:17-18)

Paul’s appeal is to Deuteronomy 25:4, which, incidentally, does not refer to men, but to oxen. Even so, it is a valid analogy that the elders should be rewarded for their service. Yet it is unseemly for them to ask for any reward, just as Paul would not do. It is for God’s servants to labor out of love for the brethren, not expecting a reward but being grateful for what the Lord provides according to His will. Thus, money does not become the end, and ministry the means, for wealth.

The Law of Moses was fulfilled in Christ Jesus; if we try to attain righteousness through the keeping of the Law of Moses we will be found self-righteous rather than resting in the righteousness of Christ through whom we were bought with a price.

The Old Covenant in Moses is done away. Christ has instituted with the house of Israel and the house of Judah a New Covenant by which we all, Jew and Gentile believers, are to live.

The Lord never instituted a priesthood called “clergy” which are the Nicolaitans whose deeds He hates (Revelation 2:6). All believers are priests and kings in the Kingdom of God (Revelation 1:6; 5:10). Those who put themselves above the congregation and demand money to pay for their “ministries” are robbing the people.

I realize that many of them do this in ignorance due to their theological training, but the truth remains that they are out of order at the least, and making merchandise of God’s people.

There is no longer a Levitical priesthood, no temple, no storehouse of Yahweh, no sacrifices which were made with the tithes. There is no need for us to keep the feasts with our tithes because they cannot be kept without the temple; *we* are the temple of God. It is good and proper to commemorate the feasts when their seasons come, but we cannot keep them without putting ourselves back under the sacrificial laws. There is a difference between keeping the feasts and commemorating them. To try to keep them is futile.

There are widows and orphans, as well as other needy among us, however, and that may well be where the Lord would have us give at least some provision from among our earnings. His instructions to those who would follow Him require that we give generously and cheerfully:

But this I say: he who plants sparingly shall also reap sparingly, and he who plants bountifully shall also reap bountifully. Every man according as he determines in his heart, so let him give—not grudgingly, nor of compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you so that, always having all sufficiency in all things, you may abound to every good work. (As it is written, “He has dispersed abroad; he has given to the poor; His righteousness remains forever.”) (2 Corinthians 9:6-9)

The tithe is compulsion; it, as all the Law of Moses, was suitable for Israel before Messiah came because without the Holy Spirit convicting and convincing them, Israel had to learn what God required of them in serving others and living by the two great commandments to love God with all their heart, mind, soul and strength, and to love their neighbors as themselves.

We now have the more sure Word of prophecy implanted in our hearts through the written Word, and attested by the Holy Spirit.

We are now sons of the Most High through adoption by faith in His only-begotten Son. We are all priests; no one is to be exalted above anyone else in the Body of Christ. Those who lead are servants to all the brethren; they are not overlords. Any who make demands of those in Christ in order to support their works are seeking to be overlords.

Churches that keep track of what their “members” give in order to place them in special categories are sinning.

What a believer in Christ gives should remain between the Lord and himself. It would be better for believers to not keep track of what they give:

“Be cautious about performing righteousness in front of men in order to be seen by them, otherwise you have no reward from your Father who is in Heaven. Therefore, when you perform your benevolence, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets so that they may have glory from men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward. But when you perform your benevolence, do not let your left hand know what your right hand does, so that your benevolence may be in secret, and your Father who sees in secret shall reward you openly Himself.” (Matthew 6:1-4)

If our left hand doesn’t know what our right hand is doing, we don’t know or care about how much we give. We give according to the leading of the Holy Spirit, and we do not hold back from what the Holy Spirit puts on our hearts.

The temptation for churches and ministries to show favoritism toward donors of large amounts is too much for most men to handle. Some even give lavish rewards for those who give much (provided they give enough to cover the lavish rewards, and then some). Some grant special audiences to generous donors, taking them on trips so they can be blessed by the great minister’s presence and have fun in the process. This, in turn, is a temptation for believers to give where they believe they will receive favoritism. This isn’t true of every person, but it is a factor in many cases.

But isn’t it recorded that Jesus said we ought to give our tithes in addition to other giving?

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the Law—judgment, mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, and not to leave the other undone. You blind guides who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel!” (Matthew 23:23-24)

Jesus was speaking to the religious leaders of Israel who were still under the Law of Moses. They would not enter into His grace through faith. The Lord’s lesson to them was not about tithing; it was about how they kept the law of tithing but neglected the law pertaining to faith, mercy and righteous judgment. To make a law out of tithing for believers in Jesus one must take His words out of context.

Don’t allow others to drag you into legalism with them. Exercise your freedom in Christ to give to those in need and wherever else the Lord puts upon your heart. And do so generously, expecting, but not desiring, a reward.

If someone wishes to place himself under the Law of Moses, he is impugning the sacrifice of Jesus. Should he persist, that will be between him and the Lord. ❖

EDITORIAL

WHY GET SO UPSET?

By Albert James Dager



HAVE YOU EVER had someone say to you, “Come on! Why get so upset about a little movie? So what if there’s stuff in it that you don’t like, or that doesn’t agree with Scripture? It’s just a story; relax and enjoy it. Just eat the watermelon and spit out the seeds”? I get that a lot, especially when dealing with “religious-themed” or “faith-based” movies or television productions.

Then there’s, “It may not be perfect, but God can use it. Besides, look at how many Christian leaders are endorsing it.”

These statements seem reasonable enough. Why should we get upset that media productions portraying some scriptural truth are fraught with fictional accounts of what really took place? Can’t man’s imagination have a place if it means that souls will be saved?

Well, in the first place, who says souls will be saved? That is an assumption based on conjecture that God will automatically use some polluted fiction to bring His truth to bear. I’m not saying it’s not possible; I’m just saying that we cannot assume anything of the sort.

But let’s say that God will use such productions. He’s not beyond doing so. He has used many ungodly things to accomplish His will—things born of man’s sin nature. He uses ungodly politicians and even despots to accomplish His purposes among the nations. He used Nebuchadnezzar to bring correction to Israel; He used Hitler and Zionism to create conditions for the nation of Israel to be born in order to set the stage for His end-times prophecies to be fulfilled; He is using Barack Obama to chastise a backslidden America. The list is endless. So certainly He can use media productions like those we address in *Media Spotlight*.

But do we laud ungodly things just because God can, and often will, use them to achieve His purposes? Do we applaud the slave trade that brought millions of Africans to America because, after all, many came to know the true God as a result of it? Do we applaud ISIS because God is using it to test our brethren in the Middle East?

Wait! Those are extreme issues. We can’t apply the same standard to television productions like *The Bible* and *A.D. The Bible Continues*, or even to *Killing Jesus*. These at least offer some biblical truth. And besides, those biblical truths are presented in a non-offensive manner; how can they be compared to such repulsive things as the Holocaust or ISIS? Get a grip, Al!

Okay, so they aren’t as horrific. But they are just as ungodly. Ungodliness doesn’t know degrees. To God, any opposition to His truth is repulsive. Do we have the mind of Christ in relation to these things, or is our thinking carnal?

There’s nothing we can do about ISIS other than point out how evil it is, and encourage others to help those affected by ISIS to whatever degree we can. But to directly combat ISIS is far beyond our calling. Yet we can help our brethren discern between good and evil according to the understanding granted us by the Spirit of God.

In view of the lack of discernment on the part of even many true believers, it’s vitally important that we help them perceive evil at every level. This is especially important because the vast majority of those who have imposed themselves as leaders of God’s flock are hirelings who no longer run when the wolves appear; now they invite the wolves into the sheepfold to devour the flock.

It is no different than when the Lord came the first time:

When He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them because they were harassed and were scattered about like sheep having no shepherd. (Matthew 9:36)

Jeremiah’s words to the spiritual leaders of His day echo through the centuries:

“Woe to the pastors who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!” says YHWH.

“Therefore, YHWH, God of Israel, says this against the pastors that feed My people: you have scattered my flock and driven them away, and have not visited them! Look! I will visit upon you the evil of your doings,” says YHWH. (Jeremiah 23:1-2)

But why is it so important to pick on Christian media productions just because they contain some fiction and/or error? Why can’t we just eat the watermelon and spit out the seeds as some suggest?

Because the palates of most Christians have become numb; they cannot discern the seeds. They swallow the entire watermelon—seeds, rind and all. They may occasionally find some seeds too large to swallow and thus spit them out, but they don’t realize that it is often the small seeds that can cause damage if enough of them are ingested.

(Continued on page 30)



THE 20TH CENTURY is by far the most complex period regarding the history of anti-Christ. The number of significant events are many times those of all the previous centuries combined. Thus, the best way to approach them would be to categorize only the major events according to each decade. Even then, some events have had far-reaching effects that span many decades. I'll attempt to put things in some semblance of order for easier reading. By no means can everything that happened be addressed, even in the cursory manner in which I have addressed previous centuries; that would take volumes.

In our previous installment I primarily addressed the arts and the tremendous increase in knowledge during the 20th century. From here on, I will focus on major events that have occurred in several areas, such as politics, warfare and, most notably, Christianity.

1900-1910

The 20th century didn't actually begin until January 1, 1901, but for our purposes we will consider some events of 1900 that had implications for the entire century.

SCIENCE

The Nobel Prize Instituted

Alfred Nobel (Oct. 21, 1833 – December 10, 1896) was the son of Immanuel Nobel, an architect, builder and inventor who opened a machine shop in St. Petersburg, Russia, to manufacture defense weapons for the Russian military. Alfred, a trained chemist, experimented with nitroglycerine, and created his first explosion in 1862. In 1863 he received a Swedish patent for his percussion detonator, the "Nobel lighter." He established a small factory at Helenborg, Sweden, to manufacture nitroglycerine, which proved a very dangerous substance to handle safely. His factory exploded, killing several people including his brother, Emil.

Undaunted, Alfred built new factories to manufacture nitroglycerine, but eventually invented a new and safer-to-handle explosive called "dynamite." Part of his reason (he evidently told himself) was his belief that the explosive power of dynamite would cause nations to abandon warfare and institute peaceful relations. He told Bertha von Suttner, an advocate for world peace, "My factories may make an end of war sooner than your congresses. The day when two army corps can annihilate each other in one second, all civilized nations, it is to be hoped, will recoil from war and discharge their troops."

History has proven otherwise.

Upon Nobel's death in 1896, everyone was shocked when his will was opened. He left 94 percent of his worth to the establishment of five prizes: physics, chemistry, physiology (medicine), literature, and peace. These were to be awarded to "those who, during the preceding year, shall have conferred the greatest benefit on mankind."



ALFRED NOBEL

On December 10, 1901, the fifth anniversary of Alfred Nobel's death, the first set of Nobel Prizes was awarded.

Although Nobel's dynamite has been used to great benefit in the areas of construction and other uses, far more has been employed by anti-Christ in the destruction of men in the 20th century through warfare. (Not to mention how much more is used in the pyrotechnics employed by the ungodly motion picture and television industries.)

New Theories of Physics

As stated in our special report, *Quantum Christianity*, the scientific field of quantum physics began with the development of Max Planck's quantum theory which he formulated in 1900. For the last several decades of the 19th century, physicists had been attempting to understand the results they were getting from studying how black holes functioned. From the time Isaac Newton expressed his understanding of gravity in his publication *Principia* (1687), astronomers puzzled over the mathematical findings that suggested the existence of mysterious bodies in the universe. In 1783, John Michell suggested that there might be an object or objects massive enough to have an escape velocity greater than the speed of light. Soon after, in 1796, Simon Pierre LaPlace predicted in *Le Système du Monde* the existence of black holes, stating that it "is therefore possible that the largest luminous bodies in the universe may, through this cause, be invisible."

The answer to the puzzle could not be found using the disciplines learned from classical physics. Planck's equation ($E=Nhf$, with E =energy, N =integer, h =constant, f =frequency) resulted in the constant (h), which came to be known as "Planck's constant." Planck discovered that energy, which appears to be emitted in wavelengths, is actually discharged in small packets (quanta). His new theory of energy revolutionized the field of physics and paved the way for Einstein's theory of relativity.

Einstein's theory of relativity, in turn, opened the door to the new scientific study of nuclear fission (the ability to release the energy of the atom to produce electricity) and many other inventions that have proven of benefit to man, including nuclear medicine.

Anti-Christ has directed nuclear physics into another area that has been used to destroy large numbers of humans with a single release of nuclear energy: the atom bomb and, later, the hydrogen bomb.

POLITICS

Radical Suffrage

In 1903, suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst brought a militant, violent means of imposing the suffragist movement upon Britain with the founding of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU). The activities engaged in by the WSPU involved disruptive demonstrations and destruction of property through the use of bombs and arson. Incongruously, the WSPU adopted for the sashes worn across their members' (all women) blouses the colors green, white and purple, symbolizing hope, purity and dignity.

In March, 1912, with utmost "dignity," Pankhurst led a window-smashing rampage throughout London's commercial districts. Some 400 hammer-wielding women simultaneously smashed windows at the designated hour. In its battle for women's right to vote, the WSPU women vandalized public

places such as golf courses, government offices and railroad cars, even setting buildings on fire and planting bombs in mailboxes.

Many, including Pankhurst, were arrested, and went on hunger strikes, prompting jail officials to force-feed them. Some died as a result.

When women were required to fill in at jobs vacated by men conscripted to fight in World War I, and many proved themselves capable workers, the attitude toward women voting softened.

One of the most successful means by which anti-Christ sows discord among mankind is the creation of factions: blacks vs. whites; labor vs. management; poor vs. rich; youth vs. age, to name just a few. At the heart of many such factions is rebellion against authority established by God, which rebellion manifests itself in revolutions and protests against established societal norms. Especially targeted is the order that God has designated. This is nowhere more easily fomented than in the desire of women to overthrow the headship of men as pronounced in God's Word.

It is natural to the human condition to rebel against established authority. But although it is natural, it isn't righteous. Always at the heart of rebellion is pride—the opposite of the humility that characterizes the nature of Christ to which His Word tells us to aspire.

The natural, unregenerate woman yearns in her heart to rebel against male authority. And although many men have been unworthy of the authority granted to them by God's order, God does not want women to take authority over men. This is not only true in the Body of Christ, but within His order for society. His Word reveals that it is only when men become weak that women rule over them, and children abuse them:

"As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, those who lead you cause you to err, and destroy the way of your paths. (Isaiah 3:12)

In the United States, the effect of suffrage, won in 1920, became immediately discerned with the passage in 1921 of the Sheppard-Towner Act which provided federal funding for prenatal care and education, including the creation of women and children's health clinics. Due to intense lobbying efforts by women, including threats of mass defection from candidates who did not support the bill, it passed Congress by a margin of 279-39 as the first federally-funded social welfare program. Today women's health clinics are cesspools of abortion.

The 1928 election of Herbert Hoover was greatly aided by women voters who favored him for his pro-prohibition stance criminalizing the sale and consumption of alcohol.

Women did not participate strongly enough in succeeding elections to significantly affect the outcomes until the new feminist movement of the 60s and 70s resulted in

women largely shifting from favoring Republicans to favoring Democrats. Since 1984, after the first term of Ronald Reagan, women have outnumbered men in voting. In recent voting, Bill Clinton garnered 11 percentage points more women than men. The only other president to get a higher vote count from women was Barack Obama with 56% in both the 2008 and 2012 elections.

Regardless how one views these facts, whether pro or con, the real issue goes beyond voter turnout (although elected officials tend to reflect the mindset of the nation, and Satan as the god of this world is instrumental in moving people to ignorantly and/or naively vote for his agenda). In the long run, however, we must recognize that it is God who ultimately decides what a nation deserves. And He determines the factors that will result in His will being done.

Even so, it is unfortunate that women who become embroiled in rebellion against male leadership often lose their femininity and become as crass as the men they so vociferously decry for exhibiting crassness.

Satan loves to cause women to act like men, and men to act like women, and he is adept at finding “good reasons” to bring them to such perversion. And there have been provided by many men, numerous such “good” reasons for women to rebel. Anti-Christ works in both men and women to accomplish these evils.

The WSPU was only one of many such perversions engaged in by women during the 20th century as they have sought to assert their equality.

WARFARE

The Boxer Rebellion

With initial stirrings in 1898, groups of peasants in northern China came together to form a secret society known as I-ho ch’uan (“Righteous and Harmonious Fists”). They came to be called “Boxers” in the western press due to the members engaging in boxing and ritualistic calisthenics that they believed would render them impervious to bullets.

The goal of the Boxers was to destroy the two-and-a-half-century-old Ch’ing dynasty and rid China of all foreign influence. The former goal was abandoned when the Empress Dowager backed the Boxers, so they focused on the latter goal. On June 18, 1900, the Empress Dowager ordered that all foreigners be put to death. This was anti-Christ’s means to purge the “western religion” of Christianity from China, using bands of Boxers to massacre Christian missionaries and Chinese Christians.

When the rebellion had reached Peking (now Beijing), an international armed force of Americans, British, Russian, French, Italian and Japanese were sent to protect their interests in China and to defend their countrymen. Although several foreign ministers and their families were killed before the force could protect them, the force took Peking on August 14, 1900, and subdued the rebellion.

In defeat, the Boxer rebellion inadvertently accomplished its original goal by weakening the Ch’ing dynasty. This brought about the Republican Revolution of 1911 that overthrew the boy emperor and created the Republic of China. The far-reaching result of anti-Christ’s designs would be realized decades later with the overthrow of the Republic by Mao’s communist forces after World War II.

The Second Boer War

Although the Boers’ (Dutch settlers in South Africa) had won autonomy from the British after the First Boer War (December 16, 1880 – March 23, 1881), relations remained strained. The two Boer republics in South Africa were on shaky ground financially and still relied on British help. With the finding of gold in South Africa, many Brits came with hordes from other countries to reap the wealth. This prompted the Boers to enact laws limiting the freedoms of the “Uitlanders” (Outlanders), thus causing even more tension with the British government.

Diamond magnate Cecil Rhodes, the Cape Colony’s prime minister, believed that Britain should annex the Boer territories and the gold fields. He exploited the Uitlanders’ discontent, and fomented a raid by 500 Rhodesian mounted police under his agent, Dr. Leander Jameson. The Jameson raid failed, resulting in Rhodes’s resignation as the Cape’s prime minister. The raid increased tension between the Boers and the British, and culminated in the start of the Second Boer War (October 11, 1899 – May 31, 1902). The Boers won most of the battles, but the British eventually prevailed under Lord Kitchener’s “scorched earth” policy in which he mercilessly destroyed the civilian infrastructure, and imprisoned in concentration camps women and children displaced by that policy.

Weary of the overwhelming strength of the British, the Boers surrendered, signing the Treaty of Vereeniging on May 31, 1902.

Eight years later, in 1910, South Africa was united under the British and became the Union of South Africa.

Again, anti-Christ successfully fomented war between Christian factions, causing death, destruction and ungodly actions against one another on both sides.

The 1905 Russian Revolution

Led by a Russian Orthodox priest, Father Gapon, in January, 1905, some 150,000 Russian citizens converged on the streets of St. Petersburg in protest of their meager lives. Their purpose was not to foment revolution, but to petition Tsar Nicholas II to grant to them opportunities for a better life. As the people marched toward the Winter Palace, they were faced by a small contingent of troops. The troops nervously faced the huge crowd, and for reasons unclear to historians, shots were fired. Several hundred protestors were killed in what came to be known as “Bloody Sunday.”

At the time, there were several revolutionary parties vying for preeminence in their desire to overthrow the tsar.

These were People's Freedom (a terrorist group), Marxists, Populists, Revisionists and Permanent Revolutionists. These all took the opportunity of Bloody Sunday to propagandize against the established order, first by inflating the number of casualties to thousands. The government downplayed the numbers to fewer than 100.

As news of the killings spread throughout Russia, workers began to strike, the Grand Duke Sergei, the tsar's uncle, was assassinated, transportation ground to a halt. Although the initial purpose of the protest was benign, by the summer it had consumed the nation and become rabidly political. In October, a general strike that began in Moscow quickly spread to other cities as students, teachers, factory workers, revolutionaries and even doctors took to the streets. The fervor of the people gave impetus to a new revolutionary party, The St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies. From Moscow, this fervor for working class unity spread throughout Russia's industrial cities.

Nicholas was faced with two equally unattractive choices: 1) he could use force to put down the revolt, but because he lost trust in his military he could not be sure of success; 2) he could make concessions to the demands of the people.

He chose the latter course by issuing the October Manifesto on October 30, in which he altered his opposition to a parliament (a Duma) demanded by the people. The Duma that was formed had little strength as it was relegated to an almost entirely advisory role to the tsar. It also provided means by which opponents of the tsar could be identified.

As members of the Duma tried to rally public support for their demands, the tsar's government would not allow the Duma to further foment rebellion by the people. After a short time, the Duma was dissolved.

With troops returning from the Russo-Japanese War, Nicholas used loyal troops to squelch the St. Petersburg Soviet and crush the strikers in Moscow.

Again, Christians were persuaded to rebel against authority and to engage in war against one another. Were the people justified in protesting to the tsar? Absolutely. Their initial petition was tendered in peace. But anti-Christ successfully stirred ungodly men to guide the Christian population toward ungodly actions. Yet not before stirring the tsar to use ungodly means to keep the people in subjection.

Satan can easily find good reasons to bring about evil consequences.

PSYCHOLOGY

Freud Publishes His Theory of Sexuality

As a doctor of medicine at the University of Vienna in 1881, Sigmund (Sigmund) Freud conducted research into diseases of the brain at the Vienna General Hospital. In the process of his medical practice, he created a new "science" called psychoanalysis—a clinical attempt to treat psychopathology by the use of dialogue between patients and psychoanalysts. Freud's techniques such as free association (which

includes past-memories regression) and transference (the redirection of feelings and desires and especially of those unconsciously retained from childhood toward a new object) led to his redefinition of sexuality to its infantile forms. This led, in turn, to his theory of seduction, whereby many patients allegedly experienced the emergence of "repressed memories" causing them to believe they had been sexually abused as children. At first he believed these stories, but later came to understand that they were by and large fantasies invoked through a treatment he called "pressure technique."

Although debunked, this technique is often used by psychologists and psychoanalysts today. It has been one way in which anti-Christ has been able to destroy families and drive wedges between baffled parents and their alienated children. Many homes have been broken up because women have believed their children's psychoanalysis results, blaming their husbands for unspeakable acts they never actually committed. That's not to say that parent-child sexual abuse and other forms of abuse don't occur, but most of what comes out of pressure technique psychoanalysis is bogus.

But that doesn't matter to "professionals" in the fields of psychology, social services, or law. All have vested monetary interests in convicting and incarcerating even the innocent.

Freud's later rejection of these results from using his pressure technique has not dissuaded many psychologists from consulting his book, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, in which he elaborated his theory of infantile sexuality. This is a basic "textbook" used to justify homosexuality as an expression of sexual identity formed in the early stages of infancy.

In spite of their ungodly origins, psychoanalysis and psychotherapy are not only widespread and used as the basis for judgment in courts of law around the world, and in treating societal misfits of every stripe, they are rampant in most Christian churches today. Pastoral candidates at virtually all Bible schools and seminaries are required to take courses in psychology. In turn, when they arrive at their pastorates they are expected to conduct "counseling" sessions or, at the least, refer their congregants to others deemed qualified to assess their psychological needs. They may or may not incorporate biblical principles, but they are careful not to call what they do "therapy" or "psychological counseling" for the simple reason that they would leave themselves open to lawsuits should their efforts prove damaging. Instead, they call what they do "ministry," thus placing their psychological therapy within the realm of religious practice, which is exempt from oversight by the secular system.

The infiltration of psychology into the churches is arguably the most ungodly and spiritually dangerous deception anti-Christ has used to invade Christianity, rivaled perhaps by nothing less than witchcraft and other occult methodologies that masquerade as "healing" ministries. These include inner healing which at its roots incorporates psychological techniques. (See our special report *Inner Healing*.)

RACE RELATIONS

NAACP Founded

In 1909, an organization was created with the mission “to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination.” Thus, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) began with altruistic intent, first by launching anti-lynching campaigns and creating a legal defense fund for black people in America. Concerned especially with the disenfranchisement of blacks in the southern states, the NAACP took up the cause of desegregation, and other means to promote their cause.

As originally founded, the NAACP’s cause was (and in many cases still is) justified. Without the NAACP and other leaders in the early years of the civil rights movement, many injustices toward blacks and other minorities would still be prevalent. In some cases they still are, but as far as government and many major societal and industrial organizations are concerned, the problems of the past have been largely done away.

Yet anti-Christ is ever vigilant to stir up any incident, no matter how meager, to sow seeds of discontent and distrust among people of different racial backgrounds. He works equally in blacks, whites and other people of color to foment race hatred and violence. He also works to compromise morality, as in the case of the NAACP’s recent endorsement of LGBTQ rights and same-sex “marriage” under the contrived comparison of discrimination suffered by blacks in the past.

Today the NAACP has been complicit in stirring up racial hatred and hatred against law enforcement agencies with the charge of racism in every case where a black person has been injured or killed by police or other citizens, regardless whether or not the charge is justified. It most likely is justified in some cases, but certainly not in all, or even most, judging from the findings in most of the more public cases.

But truth matters to anti-Christ only if truth can be used for his ends. And he is well practiced in the art of deception, leading people (Christians and non-Christians) to hate others with whom they find some aversion.

SOCIETY

Boy Scouts of America Founded

On June 21, 1910, 34 national representatives of boys’ work agencies met in a YMCA office in New York City to develop organizational plans for Boy Scouts of America (BSA). The incorporator was William D. Boyce. The National Council office opened January 2, 1911, at 200 Fifth Avenue, New York City, with seven employees. The first annual meeting was held at the White House and was addressed by President Taft.

The goal of the BSA has been to train boys to be responsible citizens and to develop character and self-reliance through a wide range of outdoor activities and educational

programs. Older scouts are placed into career-oriented programs that partner with businesses and community organizations.

The BSA holds a Congressional charter under Title 36 of the United States Code, placing it in a unique category shared today with a small number of other national organizations such as the American Legion, the Red Cross, the National Academy of Science, and Little League Baseball.

Throughout the 20th century the BSA maintained a rigorous stand for morality and outward righteousness, even as many members are either nominal Christians or members of other religions. As such, it became of late a target of anti-Christ to rend BSA’s moral fabric by pushing for inclusion of homosexuals as members, contrary to the BSA’s “Duty to God” principle.

Although the BSA has largely stood its ground on the Duty to God principle, men of influence within the organization have worked to dismantle the ban on homosexual members and adult leaders. On May 23, 2013, 61% of the 1,400 member BSA National Council voted to remove the ban on membership for youth based on sexual orientation. The council emphasized that no sexual conduct of any kind—heterosexual or homosexual—will be allowed. For now, at least, “open and avowed” homosexuals are still prohibited as members, as are homosexual adults as scout leaders.

RELIGION

Christianity

Other than the meeting of the World Missionary Conference in 1910, the first decade of Christianity saw few events of major significance other than on-going persecution of Christians in various parts of the world, for which we may blame the anti-Christ spirit.

The single most important event in 20th-century Christianity began with William J. Seymour, a black son of former slaves and student of the well-known Pentecostal preacher, Charles Parham. Seymour led cottage prayer meetings at the home of Richard and Ruth Asberry at 214 N. Bonnie Brae Street in Los Angeles, California. From those prayer meetings was formed the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) on April 14, 1906. The AFM headquartered itself at the former African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church at 312 Azusa Street in Los Angeles. The mission itself grew out of a particular meeting on April 9, 1906, during a Pentecostal revival meeting where there were exhibited ecstatic spiritual experiences. It was reported that some (unnamed) miracles took place among the interracial participants. Most prominent were exhibitions of glossolalia (“speaking in tongues”). Although the meeting was criticized by some Christian theologians as well as secular media, that meeting became the catalyst for the spread of Pentecostalism in the 20th century. The background to these events is documented in the *International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*:

...Several theological threads emerged in American religious life during the 19th century that eventually were woven into the tapestry of Azusa. Restorationism, for one, spawned several new religious movements that viewed the church as returning to its NT glory. In some cases it brought an expectation of a “latter rain” outpouring of the Holy Spirit with an accompanying revival. Appeal was also made to the “apostolic faith,” “once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3) to demonstrate the relationship between the contemporary faith and that of the first apostles. Frontier revivalism contributed anxious benches, brush-arbor and protracted meetings, tarrying sessions, and altar calls for personal salvation and holiness of life from evangelists such as Charles G. Finney. F.B. Meyer helped popularize the “overcoming life” doctrine taught at Keswick, which became very influential in many American churches. Personal holiness and sanctification as a “Pentecostal” experience of the “full gospel” were given a theological framework in Asa Mahan’s work *The Baptism of the Holy Ghost* (1870). The Holiness movement also brought an understanding of the atonement of Christ as providing a “double cure for a double curse” that ultimately led to an emphasis on divine healing. Finally, concern for the Second Coming and prophetic events, originating in Britain with J.N. Darby and the Plymouth Brethren, came to the American context through a host of Bible prophecy conferences and the widespread usage of the *Scofield Reference Bible*, which provided annotated notes on Darby’s scheme. By 1900 these threads were all present in the religious life of the Los Angeles area. (sv., Azusa Street Revival)

Prior to Azusa Street, Pentecostalism had no formal place within Christianity, being considered by mainstream churches as a fringe experience.

In 1904, and for a time after, reports of the “Welsh Revival” reached Los Angeles. People in that city began holding cottage prayer meetings, seeking God for a similar revival among the churches there.

After William Seymour arrived in Los Angeles on February 22, 1906, being summoned from his church in Hous-

ton, Texas, by W.F. Manley’s Household of God tent meeting at First and Bonnie Brae Streets, he broached the subject of speaking in tongues. This resulted in his being locked out, causing him to turn to holding meetings first at the home of Edward S. Lee, with whom he was staying, then at the home of the Asberrys on Bonnie Brae Street.

By the end of the year, in spite of the ecstatic demonstrations, no one seriously considered what happened at Azusa Street a revival. It was only after the *Los Angeles Times* sent a reporter to find out what was happening in view of reports that came to the publication’s editors, did the meetings receive the free publicity that would bring many from all over the world to the meetings.

The rest is history, too long for this small space. Our concern is what anti-Christ has been able to do to turn the tide of what seemed like a move of God into a mish-mash of godliness and ungodliness.

As we traverse the decades of the 20th century in subsequent issues, we will see how anti-Christ has been able to persuade well-meaning people into following one significant spiritual error after another through alleged “signs and wonders,” and the infiltration of New Thought into the Pentecostal and subsequent charismatic movements through revered teachers. Pentecostalism, more than any other manifestation of spiritual influence in Christianity, also provided platforms for a large number of women to teach and take authority over men, contrary to Scripture. (1 Timothy 2:12-14)

As much as Pentecostalism has stressed holiness and “overcoming” the evils of the world, the flesh and the devil, it has often relegated God’s Word to second place behind subjective “new revelations” reported by teachers motivated by a desire for wealth, health and power.

More individual scandals have come out of Pentecostalism and charismatism than any other movements in Christianity. They have also spawned bizarre practices such as snake handling cults, word-faith, latter-rain, Manifested Sons of God doctrines, and many other false belief systems. And for those who stress the need for the “Baptism in the Holy Spirit” as defined by Pentecostalism for holiness and, in some cases, even salvation, we have to ask where was the Holy Spirit in personal lives prior to Azusa Street, or even prior to the smattering of Pentecostal teachings of the 19th century?

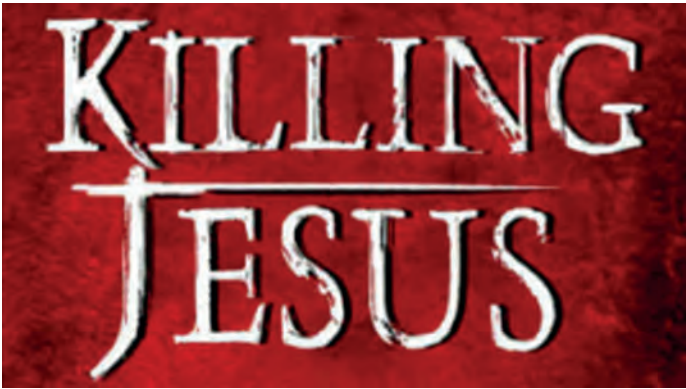
While we cannot judge individuals who may or may not have had some true touch of God, in view of all the craziness that has come out of Pentecostalism (including a huge push for ecumenical relations with the papacy), we have to question whether the movement itself was ever of God. Or is it just possible that anti-Christ has been able to dupe a vast number of people into believing that what appears to be so holy in word is (or has become) his work in deed. ❖

NEXT

THE DECADE 1911-1920



312 Azusa Street in Los Angeles, in 1906.



FOX NEWS CHANNEL'S Bill O'Reilly is known for his accurate accounts of historical events and personalities. His books, *Killing Lincoln*, *Killing Kennedy*, *Killing Patton* and, recently, *Killing Jesus*, have consistently found their way onto bestseller lists. His conservative political views are held by many, including Christian leaders. For these reasons his credibility is unimpeachable. Or so one would think.

When it comes to addressing historical personalities such as Lincoln, Kennedy and Patton, there are myriad sources available to historians. Although those sources don't always agree, at least a consensus of what is factual has a high probability of accuracy. When it comes to the Lord, however, there are few historical records to be found outside of some Roman sources, including His mention by the Jewish-Roman historian Flavius Josephus. The most prolific historical documents that give any semblance of detail of the Lord's life are the writings of the apostles contained within the Bible. And, of course, the prophetic writings found within the Tenach—the "Old Testament" of the Bible.

So to where did O'Reilly go for research into the life of Christ for *Killing Jesus*?

As a Roman Catholic, O'Reilly doesn't necessarily consider Scripture the last word on truth. That may or may not be due to his church's position that Scripture is only one of three sources for truth, the other two being the Catholic Church's Magisterium (teaching authority) and its Traditions. Yet it seems as if he departed even from the other two when it came to writing *Killing Jesus*.

Although we did not review that book in our Fall, 2013, issue, but merely cited O'Reilly's own words regarding it, the fact is that he admitted that *Killing Jesus* is not a religious book, but is "all about history." And that is why, he says, Jesus is never called the Son of God or Messiah in *Killing Jesus*. Rather, he took from many secular and religious sources to paint a portrait of Jesus as a "regular guy" who was killed because He challenged the money sources among His people. He also admits that some of his "facts" directly contradict the Bible, and he stands by them. Said O'Reilly:

All of the ideas come to me in the middle of the night. And one night, I just woke up and it went,

"Killing Jesus." And I believe, because I'm a Catholic, that comes from the Holy Spirit. My inspiration comes from that. And so I wrote *Killing Jesus* because I think I was directed to write that."

The problem is that, as I stated above, there are no extensive historical sources from which O'Reilly could have gained any credible information. There are many speculative writings about the Lord, most written centuries after His sojourn on earth, including many Gnostic writings from the early centuries A.D. So we can see why some of his "facts" directly contradict the Bible.

He also stated that he doesn't believe Jesus said some of the things attributed to Him by His apostles in the Scriptures. Thus, O'Reilly impugns the honesty of these godly men, and casts the whole of Scripture in doubt for those who look to him for truth (which is misplaced in any person).

O'Reilly's departure from scriptural truth is now graphically presented in the television movie based on his book, which aired, as is traditional for most biblically-inspired stories, during "Easter Week."

There is a noticeable lack of miracles in *Killing Jesus*. The closest thing to a miracle is a scene where a mother tells Jesus that her son is possessed by a demon. Jesus holds the boy, cradling him in His arms for a few minutes to calm him down. The boy falls asleep, then wakes up "healed." Or is he? The mother had stated that the boy is often in his right mind. Was he again merely in his right mind for a time, only to fall victim to his demon later? We're not told. But there are no other portrayals of miracles.

When he encounters some lepers who come to the city well to drink, and everyone shrinks from them, Jesus takes them aside and washes their wounds. But He doesn't heal them.

But why should there be any miracles? Is Jesus anything more than a mere man who had a special calling? When He approaches John to be baptized he looks confused. Hearing John's words about Him, Jesus asks, "Is God speaking of Me?" He then tells John, "I'm a carpenter—nothing more."

After John persuades Him that He might be more than a carpenter, He says, "Baptize Me, and I will go into the desert and listen for the voice of God."

While in the desert there is no testing by Satan. He just gets an expression on His face that indicates He has come to an understanding that He has a mission in life after all.

He still doesn't know He is the Son of God until Peter answers His question about who people say He is. He then decides to act out Zechariah's prophecy about Israel's Savior coming to them riding on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9).

But what is His mission?

It's to stir up the people to action against their oppressors, following after John the Baptist who chastises Herod for oppressing the righteous and taking his brother's wife.

When Jesus hears of John's arrest, He becomes angry and shouts to the people, "The day of judgment is here! Rise up, people!"

As Jesus sees the injustice around Him, He asks, "How do I now speak of love and forgiveness—how?" He then says, "Now I feel I'm not to bring peace, but a sword."

Thus, he goes to the temple where He incites the people to call for John's release. His famous words, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again," are spoken in a manner that seems to call for the people to destroy the temple, while leaving room for some doubt:

"I say, destroy this temple!

"And in three days I will raise it up again.

"Destroy this marketplace that shames our Lord!"

When Jesus cleanses the temple, He pauses afterward to smile, then tosses coins to the people.

Seeing this, Judas cries out, "Behold the King of the Jews!"

Can't seem to find any of this in Scripture. Nor are any of the following scenes.

It is not Herodias's plea, or Salome's enticement to kill John that convinces Herod to do so, but Pilate who sends word to him to have John killed in order to maintain order.

At the Last Supper, while Jesus is washing the feet of the apostles, He tells them, "I wash your feet to show that no master is greater than his servant. And no servant is greater than the one who sends him."

Let's see, I believe that's just the opposite of what Jesus told His disciples, and it wasn't at the Last Supper:

So after He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and reclined again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me 'Master' and 'Lord,' and you say well—because so I am. If then I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you an example so that you should do as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, the servant is not greater than his lord, nor is a messenger greater than he who sent him. (John 13:12-16)

Where in this or any Scripture did Jesus say that the master is not greater than the servant?

O'Reilly makes the Lord no greater than His disciples.

At the Lord's trial before Pilate, it isn't the Jews who call for Him to be crucified, but in keeping with the acceptable politically-correct narrative that the Romans killed Him in order to prevent an insurrection, Pilate nods to a Roman soldier who then steps forward and yells, "Crucify Him!"

Roman Catholic iconography is given a nod when the sign on the cross above His head has written on it the acronym, "INRI" (IESVS NAZARENVS REX IVDÆORVM: Latin for "Jesus the Nazarene King of the Jews).

Scripture tells us that the words written in Greek, Latin and Hebrew were: "THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS."

Upon His death, there is no earthquake, no darkening of the sky, no veil torn in the temple. And there is no Roman guard posted at the tomb. Rather, Pilate declines the request of the high priest with the words, "I believe that guarding that tomb is a waste of Roman soldiers' efforts."

Sorry to say, but *Killing Jesus* is even a greater departure from scriptural truth than the Roma Downey-Mark Burnett television series *A.D. The Bible Continues*. At least in the latter, the resurrection of Jesus is portrayed somewhat accurately (although not entirely so). In *Killing Jesus* there is no resurrection of the Lord. Rather, several of His disciples,

including His mother Mary, come to the tomb a few days after His death to find it empty. At first she seems puzzled, then a small smile appears.

Next, we see Peter fishing alone in his boat without success. He then closes his eyes, lifts his head and prays. All of a sudden, fish begin to fill his net. He looks up and says, "Yes, I am Simon, called by You 'Peter'—the Rock of Your faith. And I will be Your fisher

of men." (This suggests Peter was the first "pope.")

Peter then shouts to a few other disciples on the shore, "He has come! Come back to us!"

That's the extent of any "resurrection," obviously suggesting that the Lord did not rise bodily as His apostles witnessed to us in His word. It's more in keeping with the idea of a "spiritual" resurrection *a la* the Jehovah's Witnesses.

True to his Roman Catholic upbringing, O'Reilly implies that Peter was the first pope. As the movie comes to a close, the narrator says:

According to early Christian tradition, Simon took the mission of Jesus to Rome where he formalized the latent Christian Church.

The final nail in the coffin of truth is driven in with these words:

Scholars debate authorship of the Gospel of John, held by some to be an eyewitness account of the life of Jesus.

Now we know why O'Reilly chose to disregard much biblical truth, and instead fabricate his "historical documentary" *Killing Jesus*. ♦



DID JESUS STAGE FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY?

EDITORIAL

(Continued from page 21)

Listen, brethren: if we are so careless today in discerning the small deceptions, how will we discern the coming deception that will be so great that, if it were possible, even the very elect would be deceived (Matthew 24:24)?

Physical exercise must begin with small steps. So, too, must spiritual exercise.

For now, when you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again what are the first principles of the oracles of God, and have become such as have need of milk, and not of solid food.

For everyone who uses milk is unskillful in the Word of Righteousness because he is a baby. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age—those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this we will do if God permits.

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God again, and put Him to an open shame. (Hebrews 5:12-6:6)

The writer of Hebrews is warning us that if we do not go beyond the rudiments of the faith, but ignore the weightier issues of His truth, we are in danger of apostatizing.

The media productions we address may offer the milk of the Word, but their unbiblical and extra-biblical elements pander to the ignorance and lack of discernment that the enemy of our souls can easily use to destroy us.

If Christian leaders have such little regard for God's Word that they not only enjoy those things that are contrary to it, but lead others to enjoy it as well, then they are not God's true shepherds; they are wolves in sheep's clothing. They might not even think so themselves; they may honestly believe they have the people's best interests at heart. But they are so deceived that they cannot discern their own spiritual poverty. Thus they lead others into spiritual poverty.

Do not take God's Word so lightly. Cling to it today as never before. It will be health to your navel, and marrow to your bones (Proverbs 3:8). ❖



MUSING OVER THE condition of Christianity with some brethren recently, an example was given of one church where a man who was married but living with a woman other than his wife, was leading the worship team along with the other woman. This was openly known to the congregation, but the pastor merely responded to concerns with the words, "We're working with him." To our brother's knowledge, they are still "working with him" as the unrepentant and open sin continues.

Many of us can attest to similar situations that persist because pastors don't want to be "unloving" toward those in sin by holding them accountable to the Word of God.

We speak of how God is lifting His hand of protection from America because of its openly sinful condition. But why should we not be more concerned about His judgment upon we who go by His name?

Before God judges a nation, He will judge His people (1 Peter 4:17). Israel would not listen to their prophets who warned of God's judgment. While the warnings came, God allowed Israel to continue in prosperity and self-delusion. Eventually, Israel went into captivity, first the northern tribes into Assyria, never to be seen again, then Judah into Babylonia, able to return only because the Messiah had yet to come. In A.D. 70, judgment came with the Jews being scattered from their homeland. Again, they have been allowed to return only because Messiah is about to come again.

A parallel between ancient Israel and today's Christianity is evident. The churches are going into captivity—captivity to doctrines of demons, homosexuality, adultery, fornication, avarice and greed. Pastors and media teachers cover up their sins and the sins of those they favor, all the while thinking they are in God's favor because the money keeps coming in, allowing for all the comforts that institutional religion seeks.

And the people who flock to these Christian leaders turn a blind eye to the evil in their midst.

Our greatest enemies are not Islam or secularism; our greatest enemies are those who call themselves "Christians" while living contrary to God's Word. These are they who give place to the enemies of the Gospel in the first place.

Jesus told the Pharisees that if they were blind they would have no sin, but because they say they see, their sin remains (John 9:41). Christians today say they see, but their blindness is evident by how they tolerate the false teachers and the sin within their congregations. Because the light that is in them is darkness, how great is that darkness (Matthew 6:23)! ❖



Jean's Turn *The "Ho-hum" Life*

By Jean Dager

LET'S FACE IT. Most of us don't live a daily life experiencing spiritual highs such as witnessing great miracles of healing, supernatural visions or partaking in the thrill of the moment when the Holy Spirit does a work in the life of a new believer. Today there is a great movement among the charismatic churches particularly, to simulate miracles of the supernatural. I recoiled while watching a YouTube video of a church in Redding, California, showing "heavenly" gold dust falling upon the congregation. Supposedly this manifestation is physical evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Of course, this obviously is a ploy of the leadership to float "gold" dust from the ceiling upon the naïve and undiscerning congregation. Truly a shameful exhibition of deceit.

As one of the brothers in our house assembly once said, most of us live a daily life of simple practicalities. We go to work each day and come home at night to our families. But we need to be careful because this "ho-hum" life can be a test of our faith. For instance, do people see more of Christ in us rather than more of "self" during these times? Do we maintain a good testimony of Christ

to our family, co-workers, friends and acquaintances? To the local shopkeeper and people we have even the least amount of contact with?

T. Austin-Sparks expressed in one of his devotions that we should "not live too much in the upper stories of the house of God. The house of God is one, and it has a basement and it has a kitchen. We do not want to always live up on the top floor, so heavenly, so spiritual, so abstract, so high up in truth that the practical things of the kitchen are left unattended to....there is the kitchen aspect of the spiritual life: all those practical, everyday humdrum things where the beauty of the Lord must be seen, just as much as up there in the heavenlies in Christ. Do not let us live exclusively up there. We must live down here...preciousness must be found down here." Matthew 6:10 *"...Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."*

Sparks's message reminds me of the old expression, "Don't be so heavenly minded that you are of no earthly good." This saying may appear to contradict Colossians 3:2 which says *"Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth."* However, this verse cautions us not to love the things of the world or put our trust in them, but rather to look up and put our hope and trust in the things of the Lord.

It's a wake-up call when we come to the realization that even though we're routinely in an uneventful daily walk, there's always some sort of opportunity to be a witness for our Lord. All we have to do is simply take up this challenge and make a conscious effort to let God's light shine through us. May He receive the glory!❖

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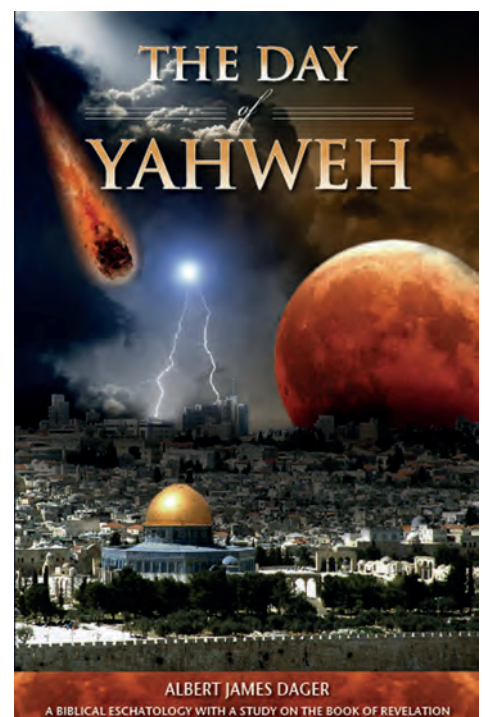
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