



GAZA THE END OF ISRAEL?

By Albert James Dager

THE FIRESTORM THAT is Gaza continues to blaze out of control. In spite of the best efforts of politicians outside the conflict zone known as Palestine, peace is not a viable option for either side despite the cease fires. The mass media fan the flames with biased reporting that champions the cause of either Israel or the Palestinian people (far more often the Palestinians), while the average world citizen remains ignorant of the true spiritual cause of the warfare that will never abate until either Israel is driven into the Mediterranean Sea as promised by her Islamic enemies, or the Lord returns to deliver the nation as He has promised in His Word.

There are few objective observations to be found among the cacophonous cries for blood on both sides. Even Christians are becoming more and more divided in their stances. Whereas at one time evangelical Christianity stood solidly behind Israel, the tide is turning as only about one-third of those who identify as evangelical Christians today support Israel. Writing for *The Middle East Quarterly*, a publication of The Middle East Forum, David Brog addresses the decline in evangelical support for Israel:

...The days of taking evangelical support for Israel for granted are over. As they are increasingly confronted with an evangelical-friendly, anti-Israel narrative, more and more of these Christians are turning against the Jewish state....

There is nothing new about the efforts to drive a wedge between America's evangelicals and Israel. Many in the anti-Israel camp have been working for years to do exactly that. Anti-Israel Palestinian Christians such as Sami Awad and Naim Ateek have traveled the country telling American Christians how their "brothers and sisters in Christ" are being oppressed by Israel's Jews.

Left-leaning evangelicals such as Jim Wallis, Tony Campolo, and Serge Duss have echoed this narrative in their corner of the Christian world. Duss's sons, Brian and Matt, have worked diligently to mainstream their father's views within the fields of Christian philanthropy and Democratic Party policy-making, respectively.

Until the past couple of years, however, there was little reason to believe that these individuals were influencing Christians beyond their own narrow circles. Al-

most every significant evangelical leader who took a position on the issue came out squarely behind the Jewish state. A center-right evangelical world simply was not taking its political cues from these stalwarts of the left.

This situation is changing dramatically. With every passing month, more evidence is emerging that these anti-Israel Christians are succeeding in reaching beyond the evangeli-

cal left and are influencing the mainstream. In particular, they are penetrating the evangelical world at its soft underbelly: the millennial generation. These young believers (roughly ages 18 to 30) are rebelling against what they perceive as the excessive biblical literalism and political conservatism of their parents. As they strive with a renewed vigor to imitate Jesus' stand with the oppressed and downtrodden, they want to decide for themselves which party is being oppressed in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Whoever first defines the conflict for these young people will win lifelong allies.¹



(Continued on page 3)

¹ David Brog, "The End of Evangelical Support for Israel?" *The Middle East Quarterly*, Spring 2014.

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

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WHY MEDIA SPOTLIGHT?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



A Personal Note

Dear Friends,

The bulk of this issue concerns itself with the current escalation of Islamic terrorism. It wasn't our intention to focus so much in this area, but as Al prayed about it, asking the Lord what he should address, these became strong on his mind. As alarming as these things are, it isn't our intention to alarm, but to encourage believers to draw closer to the Lord and to diligently study His Word in order to prepare for the coming days that portend great evil. We are living in a perilous time, but a time also of great expectation for the Lord's return.

This month, September, 2014, marks the fiftieth year of Al's receiving the Lord Jesus as his personal Savior, and we wanted to mark it with his testimony of salvation and how it led to the salvation of his beloved mother, Louise. We hope you will be blessed by it.

How quickly the time has flown by!

We wish to apologize to the many brethren and friends who have social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and others, and who have those sites contact us to friend them. We just don't have time to respond to all of them, or to keep up with all the messages that go out on those sites. It's still just the two of us, and we want you to know that it is nothing personal if we can't take the time to respond to all the invitations. We hope you understand, and we thank you for thinking of us.

Some good news: The Lord has blessed us with a new home. We were able to find a smaller house in a smaller town named Sequim, to which we moved in March, renting a small apartment until we found a place that was suitable for the ministry. It's considerably smaller (about 1,000 square feet) than our house in Sammamish was, and it has a double garage as opposed to the three-car garage we enjoyed there. Because we no longer have the large storage shed that housed our publications at our former house, we are renting a storage unit in town here.

But it suits us just fine, and the Lord provided a nice home at a price considerably below that for which it normally would sell. As well, we were able to pay off all our debts, and get out from under a mortgage payment that was very burdensome. We want to thank those of you who kept this move in prayer these past few months.

We also wish to thank those of you who have continued to support the ministry with your prayers and financial gifts. We couldn't make it without you, and we trust the Lord will continue to keep us going until He determines that our time is up.

In His love,

Al and Jean



GAZA

(Continued from page 1)

The Middle East Forum is decidedly a Christian Zionist organization, and its stance on Israel is not totally biblical. But what Brog says about the decline in evangelical support for Israel is an important message.

Because of the godless Zionist influences in the West, many Christians have assumed that Zionism is de facto Satan's instrument to destroy mankind with the intention of leaving the Jews in total dominance over the nations. On the other side of the coin are those who believe that Islam is Satan's religion that will usher in the anti-Christ to rule the nations by Satan's power.

Admittedly, Zionism has an agenda to promote the expansion of the Jewish state to accommodate the world's Jewry. Although predominantly secular, Zionism's founding was largely based on biblical prophecies concerning the return of Israel to the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Among the Jews there are those, particularly among ultra-orthodox Jews, who oppose Zionist expansionism based on the contention that only the Messiah may legitimately restore the kingdom to Israel. In that regard, they see modern Israel's incursion into surrounding territories as contrary to Yahweh's design. And they are right in their assessment that only the Messiah will ultimately gather Israel into the land, even while being wrong in their understanding of who is their Messiah.

Yet modern Israel does have a viable concern that gives legitimacy to its expansionist efforts as a nation state: it is surrounded by hostile nations that have vowed to destroy her with no quarter given for a single Jew.

When Israel was birthed in 1948, the nation offered the Palestinian inhabitants the opportunity to remain and help them build the nation. But the vast majority of Palestinians fled into the Gaza Strip when they were told that the Arab nations were going to attack and destroy Israel. Some Palestinians that initially remained were expelled by Israel because of fears of insurrection. Many were allowed to remain, and their progeny are citizens of Israel today. As promised, the surrounding Arab states and Palestinian forces mobilized to destroy the fledgling nation of Israel. But they were repulsed, even as Israel stood alone with inferior weapons and scant manpower.

In 1967, Israel was again threatened with attack by Egypt, Jordan and Syria. But as Egypt mobilized its forces along the Israeli border, Israel pre-empted the attack with surprise raids against Egyptian air fields, destroying the Egyptian Air Force to begin what would become the Six-Day War. Israel then attacked the Jordanian-controlled West Bank and engaged Syrian air forces over Syrian territory. The Six-Day War ended with Israel taking control of the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip from

Egypt, the Golan Heights from Syria, and most important, the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan.

The acquisition of these territories has provided a significant buffer zone against attacks by Israel's neighboring enemies. But this has also given the anti-Israel factions reason to demand return of those territories to the nations that formerly held them. What they neglect to admit is that those territories were never originally part of the nations that occupied them. The history behind their acquisition of those territories is not germane to this writing, but suffice it to say that these largely wilderness areas have traded hands over the centuries. They became part of ancient Israel as the Israelites drove out the heathen nations in obedience to Yahweh's command. Now Israel has a viable concern to preserve those territories in order to maintain their safety against further attacks. But does that viable concern justify what Israel is doing in Gaza?

No one—not even Israel—will deny the reports of innocent victims killed or maimed by Israeli attacks in the Gaza territory. But pro-Palestinian propaganda no doubt has embellished the number of casualties as well as the degree of Israeli military force. At a pro-Palestinian rally in Austin, Texas, on August 2, Palestinian activist Rania Masri issued an impassioned plea to “end the siege of Gaza,” calling the Israeli response to Hamas attacks “barbarous.” In her speech she counted off some alarming but questionable numbers regarding Israel's “barbarous” attacks:

It seems President Obama and his administration consider the abduction of an invading soldier from an occupying army to be barbaric, but the massacre of more than one thousand, six hundred Palestinians in their neighborhoods, in their homes, in their schools, in their hospitals, in their playgrounds, on their beaches is not barbaric. We need to tell Mr. Obama what barbaric is.

Barbaric is the Israeli destruction of more than 70 families in Gaza; more than 70 Palestinian families have been lost! Barbaric is that more than 300,000 children in Gaza have lost either their home or a loved one; 300,000 children! Barbaric is that hospitals are targeted; six out of nine hospitals in Gaza are closed, and Israel is threatening to attack the rest! Barbaric is that entire neighborhoods have been destroyed, labeled, as one journalist has called, “apocalyptic!” Barbaric is to have 500,000 missiles dropped on an area smaller than 260 square kilometers! Barbaric is that it has been the Zionist policy to destroy the economy in Gaza! That is why they bombed the electrical power plant! That is why they are bombing the water infrastructure! That is why yesterday they destroyed an ice cream factory! Barbaric is the siege that has been imposed on Gaza since 2005, and the fencing off of Gaza since 1995! Barbaric is that the objective of this siege is deliberately to destroy the economy of Palestinians in Gaza—to cripple them; to break them! That, Mr. Obama, is barbarism!

Where Masri got the figure of 500,000 Israeli missiles fired into Gaza is not stated. And for good reason. Although Israel keeps tab on the number of Hamas rockets fired into Israel, there are no figures kept or at least released from the Palestinian

(Continued on page 8)

Israelis claim miracles help them in battle

IN AN OCTOBER 5, 1956, interview on CBS, Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion (1886-1973), said, "In Israel, in order to be a realist you must believe in miracles." His implication was that the forces at work to destroy Israel as a nation are so formidable that the nation cannot exist without the hand of God protecting her. There is currently a story making the rounds on the Internet that strongly suggests Ben-Gurion's belief in miracles was not misplaced.

According to an August 3, 2014 article in *Israel Today*, an unnamed battery commander for Israel's Iron Dome anti-missile defense system claims that God moved a missile he was unable to intercept. The commander's statement first appeared in an Israeli news site in Hebrew, and was translated to English by *Israel Today*:

A missile was fired from Gaza. Iron Dome precisely calculated [its trajectory]. We know where these missiles are going to land down to a radius of 200 meters. This particular missile was going to hit either the Azrieli Towers, the Kirya (Israel's equivalent of the Pentagon) or [a central Tel Aviv railway station]. Hundreds could have died.

We fired the first [interceptor]. It missed. Second [interceptor]. It missed. This is very rare. I was in shock. At this point we had just four seconds until the missile lands. We had already notified emergency services to converge on the target location and had warned of a mass-casualty incident.

Suddenly, Iron Dome (which calculates wind speeds, among other things) shows a major wind coming from the east, a strong wind that...sends the missile into the sea. We were all stunned. I stood up and shouted, "There is a God!"

I witnessed this miracle with my own eyes. It was not told or reported to me. I saw the hand of God sent that missile into the sea.

This is not the only incident in which Israeli military officers attribute their success to God's intervention. In late July, Israeli Defense Force (IDF) colonel Ofer Winter, commander of the Givati Infantry Brigade, attributed to God the protection of his soldiers while fighting in the Gaza Strip. Winter is an Orthodox Jew whose claims were made during an interview with the ultra-Orthodox weekly *Mishpacha*. His statements were met with criticism for interjecting religious messages in attempts to rally his troops.



DAVID BEN-GURION
"In Israel, in order to be a realist you must believe in miracles."
Image: Wikipedia

According to Winter, his troops prepared to embark on a predawn raid intending to use the dark for concealment. But the raid was delayed, forcing the soldiers to move out as the sun was about to rise, thus placing them in danger of discovery. "Suddenly a cloud protected us," said Winter. Referencing the cloud that protected the ancient Israelites during the daytime as they wandered in the wilderness, Winter added, "Clouds of glory."

The "cloud" was actually a dense fog that remained until the soldiers were in a secure position.

"It really was a fulfillment of the verse, 'For the Lord your God is the one who goes with you to give you victory,'" he said, quoting Deuteronomy 20:4: "For YHWH your God is He who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies—to save you."

Winter came under criticism for an official dispatch he sent to battalion and company commanders, which echoes a young David before he set out to slay Goliath:

History has chosen us to spearhead the fighting [against] the terrorist "Gazan" enemy which abuses, blasphemes and curses the God of Israel's forces.

In his communiqué, Winter also stated,

We have planned and prepared for this moment and we take the mission upon ourselves out of commitment, complete humility, and because we are prepared to endanger ourselves and lay down our lives in order to protect our families, our people and our homeland.



Israeli soldiers from the Givati brigade seen at the entrance to a Hamas terror tunnel.
(photo credit: IDF Spokesperson/FLASH90)

Winter then invoked the Shema—the traditional Jewish prayer of allegiance to the one true God—and called upon “the God of Israel” to “make our path successful as we go and stand to fight for the sake of your people of Israel against a foe which curses your name.”

Winter’s letter has been called “outrageous” by Mickey Gitzen, executive director of Israel Hofshit—an organization that promotes religious freedom. Said Gitzen:

It turns the conflict from a one against terror to a religious war on any resident of Gaza.... I would expect IDF commanders to remember that the IDF is the army of the people and not a religious militia.

Criticism of Winter did not come from only secular sources in Israel. Israeli Reform Rabbi Uri Regev remarked that Winter’s superiors should make it clear to him that there is a difference between raising the morale of the troops and invoking a religious war against Hamas, and that Winter should be reminded of “the required separation of religious faith and military duties.”

In his interview with *Mishpacha*, Winter defended his position, saying that in combat situations everyone finds God.

Anyone who attacked me for the letter apparently has only seen weapons in pictures, was never in combat, and doesn’t know what fighting spirit is.... When a person is in a life-threatening situation he connects with his deepest internal truths, and when that happens, even the biggest atheist meets God.

Winter also stated that his soldiers see so many miracles that “it is hard not to believe.”

Before heading into the Gaza combat zone, Winter met with yeshiva leaders and Kabbalists, asking them to pray for success of the mission.

COMMENTARY

This is a mixed bag of “Yea!” and “Nay!” Stories such as these that seem to reveal the hand of God in protecting Israel against her enemies invoke disparate responses, even within a single individual, let alone across political, military and religious spectra. Many heathen trust their god(s) for protection during battles. Wise King Solomon wrote, “I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill, but time and chance happens to them all.” (Ecclesiastes 9:11)

It is natural for atheists and agnostics to be skeptical of such accounts. Would an almighty God really move in such a way to protect certain chosen men in their conflict with others? Of course not, they would say; it’s all coincidence.

More religious yet skeptical men might ask, “Does God really favor the Jews over their enemies? Is He not the creator of them all? Why would He take sides in this conflict?”

Even evangelical Christians might ask, “Would the true God protect the Jews who have rejected His only-begotten Son?” They might liken the unbelieving Jews to the Samaritans of Jesus’ day, to whom He said, “You worship you know not what” (John 4:22).

In other words, there are skeptics of all stripes when it comes to whether or not God would intervene to protect Zionist Israel—particularly in a case where the commanding officer invokes the prayers of Talmudists and Kabbalists for success.

Evangelical Christians would rightly estimate that, after all, blindness in part has come upon the Jews until the Time of the Gentiles has been completed. So why would God honor their prayers uttered in darkness of spirit and mind?

I’d like to offer some thoughts on these things.

First, God looks upon the heart more than upon the mind and the unregenerate spirit. Before we knew Him, He knew us. He knew our hearts even while we were living in rebellion against Him, albeit in ignorance. I do not know the heart of the battery commander who saw the Hamas rocket turned off course, or of Colonel Ofer Winter, or of any Israeli soldier or civilian. That is our heavenly Father’s territory.

I can look back on my early years as a Roman Catholic, and see how God’s hand directed my life even then. I remember how He spared my life in my street-racing days as a youth; how He developed within me a love for Him and His Son even in my imperfect understanding; how He led me to the place in which I stand today as His child, friend and servant.

Second, what is happening in the Middle East, and particularly in Israel, goes far deeper than our personal biases. Our heavenly Father is working out His plan of redemption for His entire creation. He is fulfilling promises made to His ancient people through His prophets—promises of which we read in His Holy Scriptures.

I am not at all skeptical that His hand of protection is on the modern state of Israel, because it is necessary for the Jews to occupy Jerusalem when anti-Christ appears to oppose God and His chosen people.

For those who think the Israelites are no longer His chosen people—that the “Church” is—I remind them that Jesus made His New Covenant with the house of Judah and the house of Israel (Jeremiah 31:31; Hebrews 8:8); He did not make it with something called the “Church.” To think otherwise is to de facto accept the heresy of replacement theology which originated in Roman Catholicism and was adopted by the Reformation churches.

We Gentiles do not believe in any other god than the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—the God of Judah and Israel.

We must be patient in allowing Him to accomplish His purposes. We must not be like the irreligious and even skeptical religious Jews in Israel who criticize Colonel Winter or other religious Jews for their admittedly imperfect dependence upon Israel’s God.

Those who oppose Israel are opposing Israel’s God. He may wink at their ignorance, but it does not please Him to see His people rail against those among whom He has chosen to place His Name. ❖



ISIS threat to U.S.

By Albert James Dager

THE NEWS OF late has been saturated with accounts of the Islamic jihadist terror group ISIS and its atrocities committed in Syria and Iraq. The beheadings of American journalists Steven Joel Sotloff and James Foley have been receiving the most media coverage, but the truth is that to date thousands of Christians have been being slaughtered—many by beheading—by ISIS terrorists. This has received little notice in America's mainstream media, with the outcry primarily against the beheadings of Sotloff and Foley.

It's understandable, I suppose, that the government and the nation as a whole would be more concerned for Americans than for Iraqi and Syrian Christians, even though the two pale in comparison to the thousands. But whether one or a million, these atrocious acts demonstrate the barbarism that Islam engenders.

With the ouster and execution of Iraq's president Saddam Hussein, Iraq has become increasingly unstable, resulting in radical Islamic elements gaining control throughout the country. Admittedly, Hussein was a harsh dictator, and he took brutal action against those he perceived as enemies of him and his government. Yet he viewed Christians as good citizens, knowing that they were not disposed toward rebellion. As a result, he fostered Christian schools and other institutions with government support, and even had Christians in his cabinet. And although he was against the state of Israel, he was not brutal against Jews in Iraq. His greatest threats were other Muslim factions, especially the Kurds.

The truth is that Middle Eastern Muslims cannot handle a true democracy. Generally they are unruly people who need an iron fist to keep them under control. Saddam Hussein provided that iron fist in Iraq, and now that he has been deposed and executed, that country is an unstable powder keg.

The downfall of Hussein also set the stage for the Arab Spring, supported by the U.S. under Barack Obama's watch,

which has resulted in the destabilization of other Middle Eastern nations including Egypt and Libya.

Out of the destabilization of Iraq emerged the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). ISIS is the successor to al-Qaeda in Iraq. And although the media focus on the acronym ISIS, it is really ISIL that best describes the Islamic State's efforts to establish a caliphate all Eastern Mediterranean (Levant) states in addition to Iraq and Syria, including Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Cyprus and Turkey, as well as, most decidedly, the Jewish state of Israel.

While the mainstream media focus on ISIS (ISIL), they largely ignore the fact that ISIS has changed its name to merely the Islamic State (IS), which designates its broader worldwide campaign.

ISIS is but a portion of the Islamic State's efforts. The Islamic State's ultimate goal is to establish a worldwide caliphate under which Islam will dominate the world. To that end, it is covertly operating in non-Islamic nations, biding its time until it can begin to effectively implement widespread terrorism. Presently, IS poses a far greater threat than al-Qaeda. In fact, although closely associated at first, al-Qaeda severed its ties with ISIS because of ISIS's brutality (believe it or not). Now al-Qaeda and IS are in competition for new recruits to their particular jihads. ISIS is using videos of their beheadings as recruiting tools.

It is no secret that the United States is the biggest target for all Islamic jihadist groups, and IS is no exception. Yet in spite of the threat IS poses to the U.S., most in this nation have little or no understanding of IS. Nor has the direct threat to the United States been addressed to any great degree. But that threat is real, and at the heart of it is Islam's hatred of Christians and Jews above all others.

Although you have not as yet heard it from the mainstream media, several independent Internet news sources reported that IS and al-Qaeda were planning to breach our porous southern border to launch attacks in the U.S. They speculated the attacks could occur sometime in September, most probably around September 11 to commemorate the 9/11 attacks.

Texas Governor Rick Perry and U.S. Rep. Ted Poe (R-Texas), believe that ISIS has already likely entered the U.S. with help from Mexican drug cartels. Yahoo News quotes Perry when he was asked about that possibility:

"There's the obvious great concern that because of the condition of the border from the standpoint of it not being secure and us not knowing who is penetrating across, that individuals from ISIS or other terrorist states could be [crossing the border]—and I think there is a very real possibility that they may have already used that."

Although there is no hard evidence to support Perry's concerns, the fact that many illegal aliens pour through the border presents good reason to expect that IS would take advantage of that weak spot in our nation's security. The Obama administration's lax immigration policy certainly presents an open-arms invitation to terrorist groups.

Rep. Poe has stated similar concerns regarding IS and the Mexican drug cartels.

"The drug cartels use the same operational plan as terrorist groups do," Poe, a member of the House Judiciary Committee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security, said in an interview with Newsmax TV on August 20. "They kill their opponents, they behead their opponents, they brag about it, and they have operational control of many portions of the southern border of the United States."

It has also been reported in the *El Paso Times* that Fort Bliss, the U.S. Army base situated across the border from Juárez, Mexico, went on alert during the Labor Day weekend out of concern for the safety of its military personnel. Although no specific threats were cited for the closure of its two gates normally open to civilian traffic, the *El Paso Times* article cited reports by the conservative watchdog organization Judicial Watch that ISIS terrorists are present in Juárez and are planning attacks on U.S. soil.

Yet the Obama administration and U.S. Senate Majority Leader, Harry Reid (D-Nevada), insist that the U.S.-Mexican border is "secure." This in spite of the news of thousands of illegal alien children pouring across the border in order to take advantage of free education, housing and other benefits to the tune of over one billion dollars this year alone.

And while U.S. citizens are groped and pushed around by federal security personnel such as the Transportation Safety Administration, the government has scant security in place for terrorists, gang members, and other illegal aliens who flood across our borders with impunity, kill our citizens, and not be prosecuted.

So why should we, as believers in the Lord Jesus, be concerned about this? Isn't this just another sensationalist story meant to spread alarm?

No, it isn't. There is a spiritual lesson to be learned by what is happening in the United States relative to terrorist threats.

I have often stated that God's judgment is upon America for her sins, not the least of which is the lip service given to the Lord by the majority of its citizens who call themselves "Christians." While we as His people live deliciously, feasting on the delights of worldly pleasures, giving meager time and effort to serving the Lord, the world is fast turning against us.

Consider the evils that have attained preferred status of late in this "Christian" country. To name a few: homosexuality, including same-sex marriage; abortion, which remains unabated; divorce; drug abuse and drunkenness; pride; self-centeredness; blasphemy against the Lord and His Word that riddles the mainstream media, motion pictures, television and general conversation in public. In short, all the works of the flesh, and little of the fruit of the Spirit.

For instance, could the movie industry survive without the billions of dollars that Christians spend going to movies that blaspheme the name of Jesus—where "Jesus Christ" is an epithet spewed forth from perverse lips of degenerate "artists"? Such things have become so commonplace in the movies that television producers are now emboldened to employ them; now they enter our homes on a regular basis while Christians watch, dull of mind and spirit, laughing or otherwise getting caught up in the fantasies portrayed on their (not-so-small-anymore) screens.

Most of the churches today are Laodicean in nature:

"Because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth.

"Because you say, 'I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing,' and do not know that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, I counsel you to buy from Me gold tried in the fire so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may be clothed and that the shame of your nakedness does not show. And anoint your eyes with eye salve so that you may see.

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent." (Revelation 3:16-19)

Today, every wind of doctrine that tickles the itching ears of biblically illiterate Christians gurgitates from pulpits and "Christian" TV and radio programming. As long as the messages are soothing and promise God's "unconditional love," Christians are pleased to listen. Give them upbeat, God-loves-you-just-the-way-you-are music and messages, and everybody's happy, happy, happy.

Yes, the evils of the world are sometimes addressed. And it's fair game to rail against "those sinners" out there who cause all our discomfort. But don't tell us how blind and poor and naked we are, lest we gnash our teeth and rush out of the building looking for a better place to sit our behinds in comfort.

Many will agree that God's judgment is coming upon America, but forget His Word that warns:

For the time has come that judgment must begin at the house of God. And if it first begins with us, what will the end be of those that do not obey the Gospel of God? (1 Peter 4:17)

Do not look to the government to protect us; the government is against those who worship God in truth. Do not expect that, just because we are "King's Kids," we are not subject to the harshest of discipline when we stray too far from Him. Do not expect that the United States of America is invincible. On the contrary, we are in exactly the place Rome stood as the barbarians stormed its borders and brought down the empire.

Our refuge is found only in our holy relationship with our heavenly Father through genuine faith in His only-begotten Son. There is good reason we are told to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12). We cannot live so deliciously in this world that we fail to shine as lights in the world.

Just as blindness in part has come upon the Jews during this Time of the Gentiles, blindness in part has come upon Christians, and for the same reason—rejection of God's truth in favor of fables and idolatrous pursuits.

As this age winds down, the Lord is separating those who would live wholeheartedly for Him from those who use His name unworthily.

Unfortunately, just as the righteous of Israel suffered with the wicked when that nation was judged, so the righteous within the Body of Christ will suffer with the faithless, even unto death.

It is my prayer that all who read these words will be found worthy, whether or not such suffering is in our future. ❖



GAZA

(Continued from page 3)

Authority on how many Israeli rockets have been fired into Gaza. But half-a-million sounds like a good number for propaganda purposes. And keep in mind that Muslims are allowed to lie to “infidels” in the cause of Islam.

Masri accuses Israel of genocide against the Palestinian people, but the truth is that Palestinians in Israel (and many from Gaza) are well taken care of in Israeli hospitals. We hear from one of our Jewish Christian readers in Israel that the Beer Sheva Hospital receives the Palestinians from Gaza, and Israel is setting up a field hospital near the border as well. Israel’s Palestinians are represented in the Knesset, Israel’s parliament, and they enjoy all the rights of any Israeli citizen. Palestinians in Israel have better opportunities for employment than do those in Gaza.

Whereas Israel’s targeting of Hamas militants causes harm to Gaza citizens, the citizens are not Israel’s target. Before launching any attacks against Hamas in Gaza, Israel’s military drops leaflets warning citizens to vacate targeted areas, revealing the time and place of attack. What other nation would expose its military plans in such a way that would expose its own soldiers to harm for the sake of non-combatants within its enemy’s territory?

Are Palestinian civilians victims of Israel’s military retaliation against Hamas? Absolutely. But their victimization is at the hands of the Palestinian authorities and Hamas far more so than at the hands of Israeli soldiers. Hamas fighters purposely place themselves in sensitive areas such as hospitals, schools and businesses in order to be able to accuse Israel of genocide against the Palestinian people. Thus, the blood of those people is on the hands of Hamas.

Palestinians are also victims of the Arab and other Muslim countries that have vowed to destroy Israel, and that purposely keep the Palestinians in wretched conditions in order to use them as fodder for propaganda.

Palestinians in Gaza are propagandized not only against the state of Israel and Zionism, but against the Jews as people. Palestinians like Masri, who accuse the Israelis of committing genocide, are hypocrites, ignoring the truth that the Palestinians have always promoted genocide of the Jews, and that, in fact, is the goal of Hamas.

While the Palestinians demand an end to Israel’s existence, Israel has repeatedly stated its support for a Palestinian state, provided that state recognizes Israel’s right to exist as well. But the Palestinian leaders and Hamas do not want a Palestinian state alongside an Israeli state. They want Israel annihilated, period. And as long as there is no official Palestinian state, they can in theory blame Israel for oppressing them.

WHEREIN DOES EVIL LIE?

Satan’s religion foments hatred against Christians and Jews, the two most persecuted people throughout history. And that hatred has resulted in Hamas’s Palestinian terrorists using innocent citizens as shields.

On the other hand there are the Zionist, anti-Christ factions within Israel and America that promote hatred of Palestinians. Not everything Masri stated in her diatribe was irrational or untrue. In pointing out that the late Prime Minister of Israel, Menachem Begin (1913-1992), called the Palestinians “beasts that walk on two legs,” she exposed a side of Zionism that Christian Zionists would like to ignore in their support for “Israel right or wrong.” That attitude destroys any opportunity to express to Muslims and those who sympathize with them the love of God through the sacrifice of His only-begotten Son.

We understand that the world, both in ignorance and by purposeful choice, does not make a distinction between the true Body of Christ and nominal Christians. Thus it blames *all* Christians for the bloodshed meted out by the Roman Catholic Church and other misguided and ungodly Christian religious institutions throughout history. But it is the character of Jesus Christ that prevails in the hearts of true believers—the character that commands us to love everyone, including our enemies.

And that is a lesson that must be learned by Christians on both sides of the Gaza conflict. Pro-Israeli Christians often look at the Palestinians as sub-human, despicable people; pro-Palestinian Christians look at the Jews as sub-human, despicable people. There is no love for either, or from either.

An objective believer will see the evil on both sides of the conflict, as well as the suffering on both sides. Although the pro-Palestinian elements vociferously point out how many Palestinians have died at the hands of the Israeli military, it doesn’t matter if the body count is higher for one side than for the other. The life of an Israeli soldier is just as precious as the life of a Palestinian civilian. Both are victims of hatred fomented by ungodly forces. It is the hatred that those forces have instilled in the hearts of the combatants that is the real problem. And that hatred will not be abated no matter how many “peace talks” the world’s governments insist upon.

There will be no peace in the Middle East during this age. To think it will happen, even to pray for it, is naïve and contrary to God’s Word that prophesies the ever increasing warfare to come. The best we can hope for is that the Lord’s will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

WHOSE SIDE IS GOD ON?

Even as we must love all men, we must not ignore the truth of God’s Word that reveals His plan of redemption, which includes the restoration of the kingdom to Israel during the millennial reign of Christ on earth:

“The burden of the Word of YHWH for Israel,” says YHWH, who stretches out the heavens, and lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him.

“Look! I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling to all the people around when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day I

will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people. All who burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, although all the people of the earth are gathered together against it.

“In that day,” says YHWH, “I will strike every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness, and I will open My eyes upon the house of Judah, and will strike every horse of the people with blindness.

“And the governors of Judah shall say in their hearts, ‘The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in YHWH of Hosts,’ their God.

“In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf, and they shall devour all the people around them, on the right hand and on the left. And Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem.

“YHWH shall also save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah.

“In that day YHWH shall defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and he who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God—like the angel of YHWH before them.

“And it shall happen in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications, and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him like one mourns for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, like one who is in bitterness for his firstborn.

“In that day there will be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.” (Zechariah 12:1-14)

Zechariah points out that the Jews of the world will mourn when they see the Messiah whom they have rejected come to their defense.

The Book of Ezekiel contains some of the most comprehensive prophecies of the restored kingdom of Israel. Unfortunately most teachers have misinterpreted them to apply to the present age. But there we find that the Israelites who have been scattered throughout the world will one day return when the Lord Himself calls for them.

Ezekiel was carried by the Spirit of God and set down in the middle of a valley full of dried bones. He was commanded by God to prophesy over the bones that they should come together and He would put flesh on them and cause them to live:

Then He said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. ‘Look,’ they say, ‘Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts.’

“Therefore prophesy, and say to them, ‘YHWH says this: “Look, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am YHWH when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I shall place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, YHWH, have said it, and performed it,” says YHWH.’” (Ezekiel 37:11-14)

God opening the graves and bringing the people into the land speaks of the saints of Israel coming into the Promised Land after being resurrected. This indicates that the resurrected saints from among Israel will rule over the Promised Land with the Lord. They will rule over the mortal people of Israel who will be gathered from all the nations:

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people that shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. (Isaiah 11:11-12)

This promise to Israel has not yet been fulfilled; it must be future. And if it is to come to pass, then Israel must exist as a nation at the time of the Lord’s return.

These verses are further proof that the Lord’s return will not be in secret, but all mankind will see Him coming in the clouds. The Jews will look on Him whom they pierced, and they will mourn; they will return to keeping the commandments of God, and will add to that their testimony of Jesus as their Messiah. Israel’s deliverance from this trial is also proof that this is yet future. Every previous siege against Jerusalem has resulted in that city’s destruction, not in the destruction of those who came against her. In this final siege for this age, Israel in particular will mourn for having rejected her Messiah for all the years since He first came to the earth as Jesus of Nazareth. But at the end of the three-and-one-half years they will also defend themselves at the last with the Lord’s help.

It appears as if the Lord will return to deliver Israel at a time when Jerusalem is attacked by all the nations of the earth. But before He does, there will be Jacob’s Trouble, the three-and-one-half years when Israel will suffer greatly. All the promises of Israel’s deliverance speak of a time afterward in which Israel will dwell in the land safely after having been gathered from the nations.

(For a comprehensive treatise on these subjects, see my book, *The Day of Yahweh*, Sword Publishers, 2013).

As I have stated many times before, modern Israel is not the prophesied gathering of Israel to the Land of Promise; it is but a prelude to that gathering. But it is essential to the prophecies

that Jerusalem will be inhabited and governed by the Jews when the Lord returns to deliver the nation.

Knowing this, it behooves believers in Jesus to agree with God's establishment of the modern state of Israel and its right to exist. While we lament the deplorable conditions in which the Palestinians live, and we mourn the loss of innocent lives on both sides in this conflict, we must recognize God's hand in bringing about His promises to Israel as His chosen nation.

But, say some, Israel is no longer in God's plan; it has been replaced by "the Church." Israel's promises have been transferred to the largely Gentile "Church," that is now God's chosen or elect people. This is called "Replacement Theology," originally devised by Roman Catholicism and passed down through the Reformation to mainline Christian denominations.

Yes, all in Christ are His elect—chosen to inherit the eternal Kingdom of God. But the writings of Israel's prophets reveal the temporal salvation of the Israelite people when they enter into the Land of Promise when Christ returns to the earth. The Apostle Paul speaks to this:

I say then, has God cast away His people? It cannot be. For I also am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin.

God has not cast away His people which He foreknew. Do you not know what the Scripture says about Elijah, how he makes intercession to God against Israel, saying, "Lord, they have killed Your prophets and thrown down Your altars, and I am left alone, and they seek my life."

But what does the answer of God say to him? "I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal."

Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no longer by works, otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is by works, then it is no longer grace, otherwise work is no longer work.

What then? Israel has not obtained that for which he seeks, but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded to this day (according to how it is written, "God has given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear").

And David says, "Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a retaliation to them. Let their eyes be darkened so that they may not see, and always bow down their backs."

I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? It cannot be. But rather, through their fall salvation has come to the Gentiles in order to provoke them to jealousy.

Now if their fall is riches for the world, and the diminishing of them riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness?

For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles. I magnify my office if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh, and might save some of them.

For if their casting away is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead? For if the first fruit is holy, the lump is also holy. And if the root is holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches are broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches. But if you boast, you do not bear the root, but the root you.

You will say then, "The branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in."

Well, they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be proud, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, beware lest He also not spare you.

Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity, but toward you, goodness if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also shall be cut off. And they also, if they do not still live in unbelief, shall be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, how much more shall these, which are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

For I do not want, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery lest you should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, for this is My covenant with them, when I shall take away their sins."

As concerning the Gospel, they are enemies for your sakes, but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable (Romans 11:1-29).

The highlights of these verses confirm the following truths:

- God has not cast away His people Israel;
- He has reserved a remnant of Israel for Himself;
- The failure of Israel is for the benefit of the Gentiles who would believe;
- The believing Gentiles would be grafted into Israel of faith through the New Covenant that the Lord made with Judah and Israel (Jeremiah 31:31; Hebrews 8:8);
- Blindness in part has come upon Israel until the Time of the Gentiles has come to an end;
- When the Deliverer Yeshua Ha'Mashiach comes He will restore the nation of Israel;
- The calling of God upon Israel is irrevocable.

Where Paul says that "all Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:26), he isn't speaking of eternal salvation for every person born an Israelite; he is speaking of Israel's Messiah saving the nation from destruction by its enemies in the last days, and then bringing the people into the Promised Land.

This will take place after the Time for the Gentiles has expired, and after Jerusalem has suffered under the siege of the anti-Christ's armies for three-and-one-half years—the second half of the period known as “Jacob’s Trouble.” This three-and-one-half-year period will close out Daniel’s prophecy of seventy “sevens,” or seven-year periods, which began with the decree to rebuild Jerusalem (Daniel 9:24-27).

SACRIFICING THE CHILDREN

In a successful campaign to turn the whole world against Israel, Palestinian sympathizers show pictures of children who have been injured or killed by Israeli missile strikes. But they do not show the world pictures of how those children are being trained as assassins whose sole purpose in life is to kill Jews.

It is no secret that Islamic militants use children as human bombs. As soon as they can crawl, children are propagandized to hate the Jews, and are inducted into militant Islamic training courses for terrorist organizations. This is almost always with the approval of their parents who want to see their children martyred for Allah.

Understanding this, we can objectively assess the evil that seeks to destroy the Jewish people and to drive them out of the land of Israel. Behind that evil is Satan, who vainly seeks to prevent the Lord’s return. For if Israel is not in Jerusalem, then the prophecies of the Lord’s return cannot be fulfilled—at the

PICTURES THE MEDIA SHOW US



PICTURES THE MEDIA DON'T SHOW US



least, the Lord's prophecies would fail, and He would be found unfaithful to His promises.

The blind hatred of the surrounding nations is not merely of human origin; it is of satanic origin, and the people who so vehemently seek the destruction of Israel are serving the dark master. It is such satanic influence that causes the Muslims, in their war against Israel, to put even their own people at risk. It is that satanic influence that is causing Israel's enemies to raise their children with such hatred and militant designs against Israel that will not only fail, but will result in their own destruction.

What is truly sad is that true believers in Jesus have bought the pro-Palestinian propaganda, and are siding with Satan's army of darkness, bent on destroying Israel with the hope of preventing the Lord's return.

Of course, Satan will not succeed in his attempts to destroy Israel, but the people who side with him will be judged for their hatred of God's chosen nation.

This is not to minimize the ungodly, anti-Christ elements within the modern state of Israel; it is to bring a biblical perspective to the conflict so that believers in Jesus will not be found opposing Him.

By all means, let us lament the deplorable conditions under which the Palestinians live; let us lament the deaths and injuries sustained by these people as a consequence of their deceived spiritual condition; let us lament, also, their sustained hatred that causes them to raise little children to bear arms against the enemy of their own making.

It is truly heart-wrenching to see how so many people have been duped by Satan and his human puppets to the point of sacrificing their lives and the lives of their children to the Moloch of Islamic extremism. Any believer who does not feel sorrow for these misguided, wretched people lacks God's love.

ANTI-SEMITIC CHRISTIANS

It is mind-boggling to see believers in Jesus siding with God's enemies in their support for the Palestinians' agenda to destroy Israel, knowing that agenda means killing every last Jew on earth. Although they protest that they are not against Jews, but against the Zionist state of Israel, we find that their diatribes against Israel often includes diatribes against "the Jews." Truth be told, God established the nation of Israel, even though He used non-believing Jews to do so. To be against Israel is to be against God's purpose to redeem the world.

It is no surprise that those on the political left oppose Israel; why should believers in Jesus side with them? Have those on the left not consistently demonstrated their ungodliness through support of abortion, homosexuality, communism, socialism, feminism, anti-Christ philosophies, ridicule and hatred of our Savior and His Father? Why would Christians be so willing to listen to them on this or any other issue?

Consider the high profile Hollywood celebrities who openly profess their hatred for Israel, some of them blind Jews themselves. Their call for implementation of the Palestinians' Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) against Israel continues to garner worldwide support for the Palestinian cause. To name just a few: Dustin Hoffman; Emma Thompson; Stevie Wonder; Danny Glover; Penelope Cruz.

THE LEFTIST CAUSE OF BDS

According to the BDS Movement's Web site:

The campaign for boycotts, divestment and sanctions (BDS) is shaped by a rights-based approach and highlights the three broad sections of the Palestinian people: the refugees, those under military occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and Palestinians in Israel. The call urges various forms of boycott against Israel until it meets its obligations under international law by:

Ending its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands occupied in June 1967 and dismantling the Wall;

Recognizing the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and

Respecting, protecting and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN Resolution 194.

The BDS call was endorsed by over 170 Palestinian political parties, organizations, trade unions and movements. The signatories represent the refugees, Palestinians in the OPT [Occupied Palestinian Territories], and Palestinian citizens of Israel.

Boycotts target products and companies (Israeli and international) that profit from the violation of Palestinian rights, as well as Israeli sporting, cultural and academic institutions. Anyone can boycott Israeli goods, simply by making sure that they don't buy produce made in Israel or by Israeli companies. Campaigners and groups call on consumers not to buy Israeli goods and on businesses not to buy or sell them.

Israeli cultural and academic institutions directly contribute to maintaining, defending or whitewashing the oppression of Palestinians, as Israel deliberately tries to boost its image internationally through academic and cultural collaborations. As part of the boycott, academics, artists and consumers are campaigning against such collaboration and 'rebranding'. A growing number of artists have refused to exhibit or play in Israel.

Divestment means targeting corporations complicit in the violation of Palestinian rights and ensuring that the likes of university investment portfolios and pension funds are not used to finance such companies. These efforts raise awareness about the reality of Israel's policies and encourage companies to use their economic influence to pressure Israel to end its systematic denial of Palestinian rights.

Sanctions are an essential part of demonstrating disapproval for a country's actions. Israel's membership of various diplomatic and economic forums provides both an unmerited veneer of respectability and material support for its crimes. By calling for sanctions against Israel, campaigners educate society about violations of international law and seek to end the complicity of other nations in these violations.

The BDS National Committee

The efforts to coordinate the BDS campaign, that began to grow rapidly as soon as/once (sic) the 2005 Call

was made public, culminated in the first Palestinian BDS Conference held in Ramallah in November 2007. Out of this conference emerged the BDS National Committee (BNC) as the Palestinian coordinating body for the BDS campaign worldwide.

U.S. DUPLICITY

Inaugurated in 2005, the BDS Movement is finding increasing support among many nations, including the United States. Dr. Michael Widlanski, former strategic affairs advisor to Israel's Ministry of Public Security, and author of *Battle for Our Minds: Western Elites and the Terror Threat* (Threshold/Simon and Schuster), states that in a private phone conversation on August 3, Obama and Netanyahu engaged in a heated discussion concerning the Israeli-Gaza conflict. Citing a transcript of that conversation as reported on Israel State TV, Widlanski stated:

President Obama, according to the report, demanded Israel immediately implement a unilateral ceasefire unconditionally, especially stopping air attacks on Hamas, and turn the mediation efforts over to Qatar and Turkey, two Islamist states that support Hamas.

"I demand that Israel agree to a unilateral ceasefire and cease all offensive operations, particularly from the air," declared Obama to a stunned Netanyahu.

"And what about Hamas?," Netanyahu asked, to which Obama replied: "I believe that Hamas will stop its attacks."

Obama also demanded that Israel agree immediately to lift all quarantines on goods flowing into Gaza—a demand that Israel is not likely to accept.

Beyond the ceasefire itself, President Obama's demands basically ask Israel to:

Stop destroying all of Hamas's sophisticated cement-lined terror tunnels;

Stop demanding the demilitarization of Gaza and the disarming of Hamas, leaving the matter for post-truce talks;

Accept the long-term legitimacy of Hamas as the government of Gaza, and the role of Islamist regimes of Turkey and Qatar (which have aided Hamas) in mediating "the dispute" with Hamas.

Israel TV said it was shown a transcript of the Obama-Netanyahu call by a U.S. source, but it did not give details.

When Netanyahu insisted that Hamas had already violated five different ceasefires and was a terror group bent on Israel's destruction, President Obama said, unimpressed, "The ball is in Israel's court."

The revelation by Israel TV confirmed a deepening crisis between the Obama Administration and Israel. It came only a few hours after Secretary of State Kerry insisted that Netanyahu had asked him to get a ceasefire.

However, Israeli officials and army officers had been saying that they needed more time to finish cleaning out Hamas terror tunnels built from Gaza into Israeli territory, and some Israeli officials wanted to do more damage to Hamas's command structure, which is hiding underground.

The Obama Administration thought a quick ceasefire was in Israel's interest, but most Israelis believe Obama is in effect holding a gun to Israel's head to make it stop Israeli gun-control of Hamas terrorists, who have built up large stores of rockets, mortars and explosives—in violation of Israel-Palestinian agreements.

"The pictures of destruction are turning the world against Israel," said President Obama to Netanyahu, according to the Israel TV account, and he repeated his insistence that Israel immediately cease fire, leaving details of Israeli demands for demilitarizing Gaza to arrangements to be made by Qatar and Turkey.

"It is impossible to rely on Qatar and Turkey as honest brokers," Netanyahu responded, adding that it was impossible to trust Hamas's good behavior and the good offices of Qatar and Turkey. Qatar runs the pro-Al-Qaeda satellite channel, Al-Jazeera TV, and it also bankrolls Hamas.

Since the Obama-Netanyahu conversation Sunday [July 27], the Obama Administration pulled back a bit in public from some of the elements demanded by Obama, but Israelis are very distrustful of the U.S. administration, and Israeli leaders feel the crisis of confidence comes at a bad time for Israel.

Israel has hurt the Hamas terror group that controls Gaza, killing as many as 700 or more of its fighters. The Palestinians are reporting as many as 1750 dead in the current war, but it may turn out that half of them are gun-holding terrorists.

In the previous round of fighting in 2012, Israeli intelligence confirmed that 60 percent of about 1,100 Palestinians killed were active terrorists.

Obama's tough statements and demands come at a delicate moment for Israel. More than 65 Israelis have been killed, and many people in Israel's border towns, farms and villages left their homes during a month of constant rocket strikes and tunnel raids.

Many Israelis are still afraid to return home, because Israel's American-assisted anti-rocket defense system—Iron Dome—does not work against lower-flying mortar rounds, which have about a ten-mile range.

There is also significant economic pressure on Israel's southern towns and kibbutzim, and there is a strong and lingering doubt about the Obama Administration's intentions, despite Obama's famous remark "I have Israel's back."

Polls in Israel consistently show that President Obama is not popular with Israelis, and the president and Secretary Kerry are not highly esteemed professionally. Many prominent academics and politicians call both men naïve, or incompetent.

Even on the Israeli Left, Israelis do not like Obama's policy, publicly scolding what they see as Obama Administration policy clumsiness, pointing both to the president as well as Secretary of State Kerry.

"The secretary of state of the United States is a UFO," wrote Barak Ravid, the political correspondent of the normally very dovish Ha'aretz newspaper.

“The U.S. has one great achievement: it has united Israel, Egypt and the Palestinians in the belief that the Obama Administration is incompetent,” observed one Israeli TV commentator, adding that it was now apparent that Obama believes in building a new Mid-East on Hamas and other Islamist forces like the Muslim Brotherhood.²

As an insider with the Israeli government, Widlanski holds credibility in understanding the dynamics between the Obama administration and Israel. But he also stated that “the offices of Obama and Netanyahu subsequently denied the report, but most knowledgeable Israeli officials say the report is both reliable and troubling.”

Giving further credence to this report is another in which Secretary of State John Kerry is said to have promised Hamas billions of dollars in support while demanding that Israel halt its attacks on the terrorist network of tunnels that Hamas uses to infiltrate Israel. Reporter Lee Smith, writing for *Tablet* magazine online stated:

You know there’s something going on when Haaretz, the flagship of the Israeli left, reads like it’s being edited by Dick Cheney. Last Friday Secretary of State John Kerry presented the Israeli cabinet with a draft of a ceasefire agreement that, in the words of Haaretz columnist Barak Ravid, “could have been penned by [Hamas leader] Khaled Meshal. It was everything Hamas could have hoped for.” The draft, Ravid explained, “recognized Hamas’ position in the Gaza Strip, promised the organization billions in donation funds and demanded no dismantling of rockets, tunnels or other heavy weaponry at Hamas’ disposal.” Accordingly, wrote another Haaretz columnist, Ari Shavit: “The Obama Administration proved once again that it is the best friend of its enemies, and the biggest enemy of its friends.”³

It’s easy to understand why Obama would deny the report, but if one wonders why Netanyahu would deny it, he knows he must placate Obama because, in spite of Obama’s pro-Islam sentiments, Obama is bound to the long-running pro-Israel policy of the U.S. That policy has rested largely on the support of Christians who still make up the majority of the population, even if they are merely nominally Christian. Obama’s oft-stated endearment toward Islam, and his regard for pro-Hamas Qatar as an ally, portend ill for Israel in the long term.

So to where is all this leading? Will pro-Palestinian propaganda regarding Gaza embolden Obama (or a future president) to turn his back on Israel once and for all?

The winds of American politics rest on the United States’ historically Christian heritage which has been the foundation of support for Israel. But an August 5 Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll revealed that 53% believed the U.S. should treat Israel and the Palestinians evenly, while only 34% said the U.S. should favor the Israelis and 4% said the U.S. should favor the

² Dr. Michael Widlanski, “With Friends Like Obama, Who Needs Enemies?” *The Algemeiner*, August 5, 2014, <http://www.algemeiner.com/2014/08/05/opinion-with-friends-like-obama-who-needs-enemies/>

³ Lee Smith, “John Kerry Has Hamas’ Back: So, Who Has Israel’s?” *Tablet*, July 30, 2014, www.tabletmag.com/jewish-news-and-politics/180793/john-kerry-hamas-ceasefire

Palestinians. So a majority of Americans no longer support Israel as strongly as they used to. The political winds are changing, even among evangelical Christians. The pro-Palestinian propaganda is having its desired effect, which could result in Israel losing what tenuous support it has in the U.S. And without U.S. support, Israel would have no substantial ally. Israel would be virtually alone, surrounded by historically antagonistic nations whose military and economic power—not to mention vastly larger populations—would spell Israel’s doom were the Lord not to intervene.

WHAT MUST WE DO?

In view of the ungodly elements on both sides of this conflict, yet aware that God is working out His plan of redemption, which includes the restoration of Israel during the Millennium, what must true believers in Jesus do? Not much temporally, but where possible, help those on both sides of the conflict see their sinful condition, and present to them the Good News of Jesus Christ. Only in Him can natural enemies become not only friends, but spiritual brothers. And this is where Christian Zionists fail miserably. Not only do they hate the enemies of the modern state of Israel, they refuse to minister the Gospel to the Jews, choosing not to “offend” them. They mistakenly think that just because the Lord will fulfill His promise of deliverance, somehow the Jews don’t need faith in Jesus to be saved. This is because they misinterpret Romans 11: 26 to mean that all Israelites will be eternally spiritually saved, rather than understanding that these verses address the salvation of the nation from her enemies in the last days.

We should help others understand the spiritual conflict behind the earthly conflict. And while we may point out the evils of both sides, we must not be found fighting against our heavenly Father who has not abandoned the commonwealth of Israel to which we have been joined by faith in its Messiah.

Remember, therefore, that you, being in past times Gentiles in the flesh who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands—that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus, you who were once far off are made near by the blood of Christ. For He who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us, is our peace, having abolished in His flesh the enmity—the law of commandments contained in ordinances—in order to make from two, one new man in Himself, so making peace, and that He might reconcile both to God in one body by the cross, having by it destroyed the enmity, and came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off, and to them who were near. For through Him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. (Ephesians 2:11-18)

This doesn’t mean we are joined to unbelieving Israelites in an earthly nation, but to believing Israelites under the New Covenant in Israel’s Messiah. It also means that the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant for the restoration of the kingdom of Israel under the coming Messiah are also sacred, and something we must honor lest we be found fighting against God. ♦



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The products in this catalog have been carefully selected to provide knowledgeable and accurate information on subjects that are of vital importance to the Body of Christ. Some are not available in bookstore and/or are produced by little-known publishers. We cannot vouch for every thought presented. We urge you to test all things. Do not substitute any of these for Bible study.

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Books From Sword Publishers



THE DAY OF YAHWEH: A Biblical Eschatology with a Study on the Book of Revelation

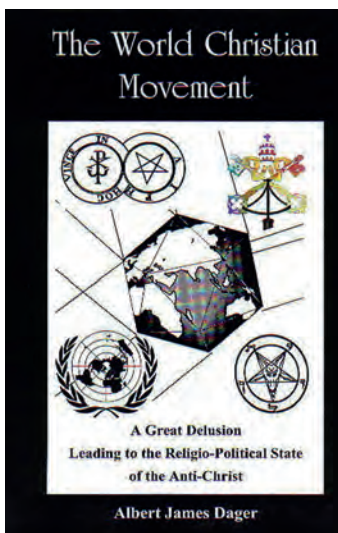
Albert James Dager - 360 pages

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

Subjects of debate among Christians of varying persuasions are finally able to be settled.

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

B-1109 paperback \$18 - 2 lbs.



THE WORLD CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT: A Great Delusion Leading to the Religio-Political State of the Anti-Christ

Albert James Dager - 233 pages

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is being compromised as we learn that it is no longer proper to proclaim Jesus Christ as Savior unless done so within the context of the world's pagan religions. We are told that God speaks through Buddha, Mohamed, Confucius and other "holy men."

Major Christian voices are sounding this siren song of compromise and denial of Christ. Will you recognize the deception in your church? This book offers the only information available on the World Christian Movement—an important subject.

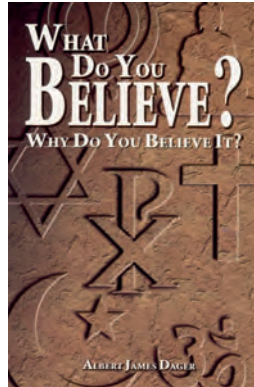
B-1055 Paperback \$14 - 1 lb.

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE? Why Do You Believe It?

Albert James Dager - 102 pages

What we believe, whether a religious or secular philosophy, impacts our lives. What you believe is important not only to you, but to those whom you influence in life. Yet most people cannot offer empirical evidence for their beliefs, resting rather on emotion and their upbringing. Can you give a reasoned explanation for why you believe what you believe? Can you say for a certainty that your beliefs are superior to all others? You may accept or reject what the author says, but at least you will be able to assess your own beliefs as true or false.

B-1075 Paperback \$10 - 1 lb.

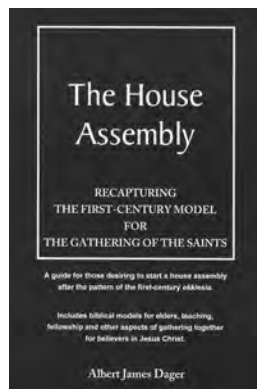
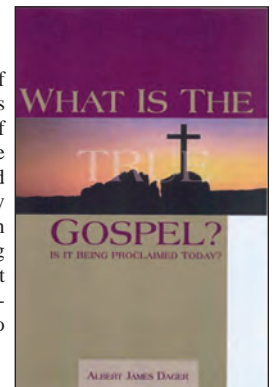


WHAT IS THE TRUE GOSPEL?

Albert James Dager - 110 pages

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

B-1081 Paperback \$8 - 1 lb.

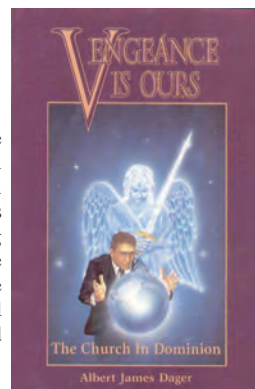


THE HOUSE ASSEMBLY: Recapturing the First-Century Model For The Gathering of the Saints

Albert James Dager - 221 pages

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

B-1074 Paperback \$12 - 1 lb.



VENGEANCE IS OURS: The Church in Dominion

Albert James Dager - 283 pages

A militancy is stirring in the breasts of some Christians desirous to "take dominion over the earth." A call for vengeance on God's enemies and a restructuring of society under God's Law is being heard.

But is it the Christian's responsibility to take control of society and reconstruct it in accordance with God's Law?

Vengeance Is Ours is the only book that analyzes the various forms of dominion theology, from Manifested Sons of God to Christian Reconstruction.

B-1001 Paperback \$10 - 1 lb

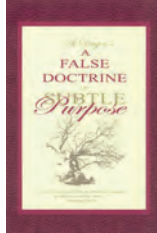
Books From Other Publishers

A FALSE DOCTRINE OF SUBTLE PURPOSE

Albert James Dager - 106 pages

Thousands of churches and tens of thousands of pastors are being strongly influenced by the writings of Rick Warren. But are Warren's teachings truly biblical? This book reveals many of Warren's unscriptural teachings.

B-1080 Paperback \$10 - 1 lb.



POSITIVE CONFESSION

Steve Phillips 120 pages

Reveals the psychological and occult origins of Positive Confession teachings while contrasting God's Word on Faith, Prayer, Godhood, Prosperity, Dominion, Healing and the true faith.

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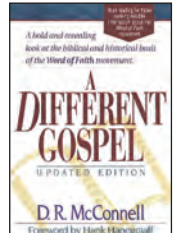


A DIFFERENT GOSPEL

D.R. McConnell 225 pages

An exposé of the word-faith movement from a theology instructor at Oral Roberts University. Traces the origins of word-faith from E.W. Kenyon's science-of-mind connections to the plagiarism of Kenneth Hagin and beyond.

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WEIGHED AND FOUND WANTING

Bill Randles 209 pages

A Pentecostal pastor looks at the Toronto Blessing. Read why the author believes that this current "Renewal" is actually a judgment from God, and possibly the great delusion spoken of in 2 Thessalonians 2!

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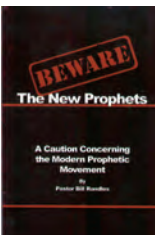


BEWARE THE NEW PROPHETS

Bill Randles 132 pages

Randles has touched on a subject of great importance: the re-emergence of the Latter Rain Movement with its aberrant theology and careless eschatology. Will help the uninformed as well as those already aware of this deception to understand its threat.

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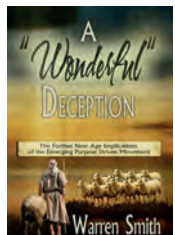


A WONDERFUL DECEPTION: The Further New Age Implications of the Emerging Purpose Driven Movement

Warren Smith 229 pages

A former New Ager reveals how Christian leaders, whether wittingly or unwittingly, are guiding followers into spiritual deceptions.

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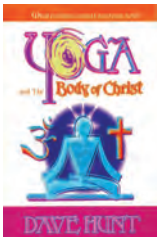


YOGA & THE BODY OF CHRIST

Dave Hunt 170 pages

Yoga is revolutionizing the fitness movement and extending its reach directly in the churches and lifestyles of Christians. Every Christian should be informed about the true origins and effects of yoga and its ungodly roots in Kundalini "serpent power."

B-1096 Paperback \$9 - 1 lb.



NEW: WHY I QUESTION THE ROMAN CATHOLIC FAITH

Charles G.B. Evans 226 pages

Is Roman Catholicism the same as mainstream Christianity? Are the differences important? Was Peter the first pope; was Mary sinless? These questions and more are answered with tact and compassion for Catholics.

B-1111 Paperback \$15 - 1 lb.



MORMONISM

Kurt Van Gorden 94 pages

With its emphasis on family values and conservative ethics, Mormonism is being given by Christian leaders much credibility as a valid expression of biblical faith. Peel back the facade and you will find a heretical cult with roots in immorality, racism and violence.

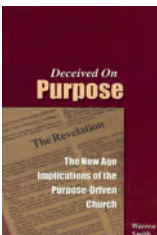
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DECEIVED ON PURPOSE: The New Age Implications of the Purpose-Driven Church

A former New Age leader dissects Rick Warren's Purpose-Driven agenda, exposing his penchant to quote New Agers and to use Bible versions that promote New Age thought.

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NEW: THE HARBINGER: Fact or Fiction?

David James 224 pages

Is it possible that the *N.Y. Times* bestseller, *The Harbinger* is leading Christians astray? That the alleged "ancient mystery" that holds the secret to America's future is not biblical? This important book offers the truth.

B-1110 Paperback \$15 - 1 lb.



EARTH'S EARLIEST AGES

G.H. Pember 332 pages

This is a 19th-century classic that addresses the pre-Adamic theory and the early history of Satan, and offers a biblical account of the Fall of Man and the Flood eras, and modern distortions of the texts and contexts of both. It is considered controversial by some.

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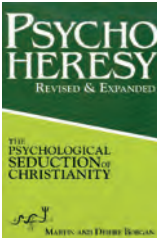


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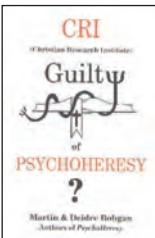


CRI GUILTY OF PSYCHOHERESY?

Martin & Deidre Bobgan 144 pages

A response to Bob and Gretchen Passantino's series on psychology in Christian Research Institute's *Christian Research Journal*. The authors charge the Passantinos and CRI with psychoheresy—the integration of psychological theory with Scripture.

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Martin & Deidre Bobgan 250 pages

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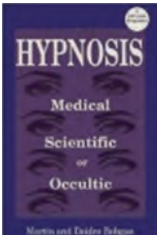


HYPNOSIS: Medical, Scientific, or Occultic?

Martin & Deidre Bobgan 142 pages

Hypnosis induces an altered state of consciousness no different from shamanic states of consciousness. Although passed off as scientific, and even medical, hypnosis is at its core occultic and potentially lethal.

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CHRIST-CENTERED MINISTRY vs. PROBLEM-CENTERED COUNSELING: A Radical Proposal

Martin & Deidre Bobgan 134 pages

A call to overthrow intimidation from the psychological and biblical counseling movements, and to free believers to minister to fellow believers in a biblical manner.

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STOP COUNSELING! START MINISTERING!

Martin & Deidre Bobgan 325 pages

Why Christians should be opposed to all forms of counseling. Reveals how counseling, which is problem-centered, involves sinful conversations. Offers ways to equip those in need to live a biblical life.

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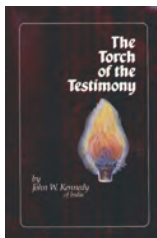


THE TORCH OF THE TESTIMONY

John W. Kennedy 251 pages

A 2,000-year history of the Christians and churches that have stood outside the Catholic-Protestant tradition. Originally published in India in 1964; little known in the West. We don't recommend some of this publisher's other items, but this is a gem.

B-1022 Paperback \$14 - 1 lb.

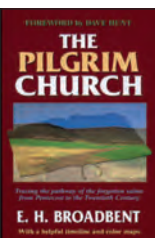


THE PILGRIM CHURCH

E. H. Broadbent 448 pages

The real story of the faith is not the one recorded in secular or religious history, which has largely been tainted by Roman Catholic influences. This classic will thrill you with stories of unknown heroes of the faith who have stood firm for God's truth. Wonderful.

B-1053 Hardback \$23 - 2 lbs.

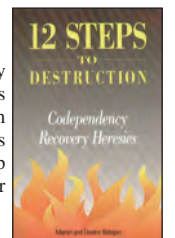


12 STEPS TO DESTRUCTION

Martin & Deidre Bobgan 247 pages

Exposes the codependency/recovery heresies that have affected the churches through "Christian" psychology. Written for those who are suffering from the trials of life and for those who want to help them. Also for both those currently or formerly in 12-step recovery programs.

B-1014 Paperback \$12 - 1 lb.



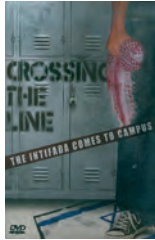
DVDs

CROSSING THE LINE: The Intifada Comes to Campus

Imagination Productions 40 Minutes

Shows how the Mideast conflict is evoking deep anti-Jewish sentiments among college professors and students. Reveals financial ties between Middle East Studies programs and Arab states' proliferation of anti-Semitism.

DVD-2030 \$20 - 1 lb.



THE THIRD JIHAD: Radical Islam's Vision for America

The Clarion Fund 72 Minutes

Banned by the NYPD under pressure from "moderate" Islamic organizations in America. Indicts the media and government for keeping us in the dark. Well documented, and most important.

DVD-2032 \$15 - 1 lb.



OBSSESSION: Radical Islam's War Against the West

The Clarion Fund 60 Minutes

Does Western Civilization have much time left? Unique footage from Arab television reveals a plan to destroy the West and entrench Islam over the entire world. A warfare we are not allowed to know about.

DVD-2031 \$15 - 1 lb.



HOMEGROWN JIHAD: Terrorist Camps Around the U.S.

PRB Films 105 Minutes

The explosive documentary with never-before-seen footage of terrorist compounds in the U.S. under the leadership of radical Pakistani cleric Sheikh MuBarack Gilani. "Soldiers of Allah" are being trained to wage war in the U.S.

DVD-2029 \$15 - 1 lb.

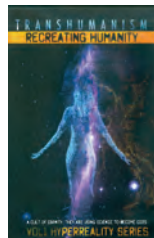


NEW: TRANSHUMANISM: Recreating Humanity

Jeremiah Films 55 Minutes

Science fiction is becoming reality as scientists alter the fabric of humanity through manipulation of genetics, robotics, nanotech, and artificial intelligence. Frightening, but shouldn't be to the believer.

DVD-2033 \$20 - 1 lb.



TERRORISM: The New War on Freedom

Jeremiah Films 50 Minutes

Tells the truth about the violent nature of Islam. Hatred of everything non-Islamic is fundamental to that religion, not just to the "radical" elements. This video offers strong documentation of the anti-Christ, anti-Jewish agenda of Islam.

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FEEDBACK

Dear Media Spotlight,

Thank you so much for all the hard work and research that goes into your newsletters. It is very helpful for us inmates that have a hard time finding respectable, informational distributors. I must apologize for not being able to contribute to your cause as of the moment. Unfortunately I have gotten myself into a pickle.

Thankfully, though, I have God's Word and individuals such as yourselves to inspire me to do the same. Your newsletter has been a big help to open my eyes to the dangers and compromises that have crept into the churches. May God continue to bless you with knowledge and wisdom.

J. P., Florence, AZ



Dear to whom it may concern:

I have been in prison for almost 19 years. I've got maybe 12 more years left unless, God willing, I will be released sooner than that.

I notice you have a newsletter, and your name, Media Spotlight, caught my eye. I'm into the news a lot, and more about Israel because of my background. I found out from my mother before she died that I am Jewish. I need to do more research when I get out of prison to see if that is true or not. She could have been Jewish, but was converted to Catholicism. I was raised Catholic, but I'm not Catholic. I consider myself a Messianic Jew who believes in Yeshua. Also filled with the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues.

Could you please send me your newsletter and your ministry beliefs, and any other information about your ministry?

Please keep me in prayer to stay right with the Lord. I've been confused with my lifestyle for 42 years of my life. I know the Bible says not to be homosexual, but my flesh has the desires.

I would like to thank you very much for your ministry, and I can't wait to hear back from you.

God bless!! I pray that your ministry will be blessed.

R.S., Sturtevant, WI

Dear R.S.,

Please forgive this late reply to your letter. We have been in the process of moving, and it has taken awhile for us to get settled in our new home. I trust that you have already received the publications we sent to you.

In response to your request to know our beliefs I'm enclosing two books, *What Do You Believe; Why Do You Believe It?* and *What Is The True Gospel?* These will better explain what we believe than any statement I could send to you. We have also added you to our mailing list to receive Media Spotlight. It is my prayer that these will help you in your desire to know God's truth, and to overcome sin in your life.

All men have particular sins that beset them (Hebrews 12:1), but it is up to each of us to resist the temptations that come our way. Yours is common to some men, but your love for the Lord should cause you to strive to live according to His Word.

In Jesus' love,

Al



Dear. Mr. and Mrs. Dager,

Greetings in the name of the Most High! I pray this finds y'all in the best of health and spirits. Thank y'all so much for all the wisdom and discernment in the literature y'all send. I am saving my \$ for The Day of Yahweh book, as \$18 a month doesn't spend well. Lord willing, I will have it soon.

On another subject, the Israel-Hamas conflict is disturbing. So many civilians being killed. The ISIS-Iraq news. We are air-striking and "droning," and it looks like we are headed back in. Then we have Ukraine and this mess we are (in my opinion) directing and instigating. And finally the temple and altar being rebuilt in Israel. So many places in disorder.

We are seeking first, Yahweh and His Kingdom and righteousness, and rejoicing in the hope we have in Yeshua!

I am requesting some Media Spotlight special reports and journals.

Thank you in advance for y'all's time and support. By the way, what denomination do you consider yourself Mr. Dager? WE assemble here in a Messianic Sabbatarian group. I am interested in the concept of Anglo/British Israel. Are you familiar with it?

Sincerely and respectfully,

J.T., Beaumont, TX

Dear J. T.,

Please forgive this late reply to your letter. We have moved recently, and are still getting settled in our new home.

I trust you have received the publications you asked for, as well as the copy of *The Day of Yahweh*. May they be a blessing to you.

Your comments on ISIS and the Israel-Gaza conflict are timely, and I am addressing those two subjects in our next issue which you should receive sometime this month.

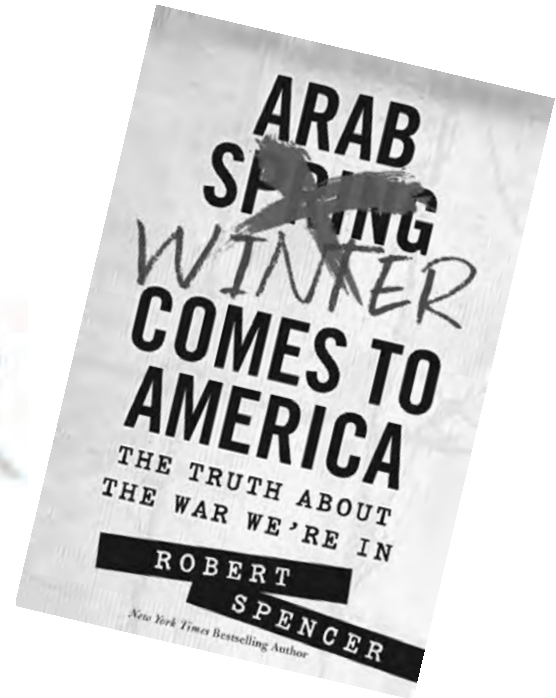
To answer your questions, we are of no denomination. We meet with brethren in a house assembly that is not affiliated with any church. We believe in autonomy, but not isolation or exclusion. At times we visit or gather with other house assemblies in western Washington. Although we recognize that there are true believers in the Lord within the churches, the institutional, pastoral system is not our desire.

As for British Israelism (aka Anglo-Israelism), I believe it is a deception. I have studied it in the past, and came to the conclusion that many of its teachings are based on conjecture rather than verifiable historical truth. My advice is to steer clear of it.

I hope this is of help to you.

In Jesus' love,

Al



Arab Winter Comes to America

Robert Spencer, Author

A REVIEW

By Albert James Dager

IS THE U.S. government actively engaged in supporting Islamic organizations with ties to terrorist groups? Is Barack Obama placing Muslims with ties to those organizations in strategic positions related to the security of the United States? Are the media fostering a climate of antagonism toward those who warn of Islam's stated goal of establishing sharia (Islamic law) throughout the world? Will the West's slow but inexorable surrender to the demands of Muslims eventually result in the substitution of a caliphate in place of parliamentary and constitutional government?

Yes, says Robert Spencer, internationally recognized expert on Islam. Spencer has led seminars on Islam and jihad for the FBI, the U.S. Central Command, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and the Army's Asymmetric Warfare Group, the Joint Terrorism Task Force, and the U.S. intelligence community.

The facts presented in *Arab Winter Comes to America* are not only startling, they are disgusting. Yet it is imperative that American believers in Jesus, especially, know of these facts, simply because Islam is not merely a political/religious movement; it is the anti-Christ's religion that continues to wreak havoc upon Christians and Jews wherever it gains sufficient power.

Spencer rightly perceives what he calls "a new terror war at home," which is spilling over from the Arab Spring fomented with the financial and military aid of the United States under the past two administrations. What George W. Bush started in perceived ignorance, Barack Hussein Obama seems to be carrying out with a vengeance: the destruction of stable governments in the Middle East that have been giving way to radical Islamic

elements. The Arab Spring has turned into the Arab Winter, and its climate is steadily drifting our way.

In this important book you will learn:

- Why the Obama administration has opted to appease rather than confront Islamic extremists in the United States;
- The folly of U.S. immigration laws that could allow terrorists to slip into the country unnoticed;
- How a secret document seized from the Muslim Brotherhood in the United States—a group the Obama administration has zealously befriended—reveals the organization's radical Islamic goals, including the imposition of sharia in America;
- How the Obama administration scrubbed vital, accurate information about Islamic jihad from its counter-terrorism materials in order to appease Muslim pressure groups;
- How Muslim "civil rights organizations" are pressuring potential witnesses to terror crimes not to cooperate with the authorities;
- How the Obama administration unilaterally reduced the prison sentence of a convicted fundraiser for Hamas who had been secreting millions of dollars in cash to that terrorist organization;
- How Muslim Brotherhood-linked individuals have wormed their way into leading positions within major conservative groups in the U.S., including the American Conservative Union, and even the Republican Party;
- How the Muslim Brotherhood is finding success in achieving the goal of getting their people into not only operational positions in the U.S. government, but in policy positions—"deeper, long-term bureaucratic positions."

These are but a few of the vital truths revealed in *Arab Winter Comes to America*. Spencer accuses the Obama administration of

an “all pervasive” official unwillingness to face the full reality of Islamic jihad—an unwillingness that is affecting both foreign and domestic policy. What’s more, that unwillingness is echoed in the mainstream media which “has contributed to an atmosphere in which, during Barack Obama’s second term, Americans are arguably less safe and less informed about the threat they face than ever before.”

The shamefulness of Obama’s policy coupled with that of the mainstream media has resulted in intimidation of those with knowledge of the threat to keep silent lest they suffer the politically correct backlash of anger and false accusations of being “Islamophobic.” Any honest critique of Islam is forbidden, no matter how accurate.

Spencer relates that “in 2007, Doudou Diene, the UN special rapporteur on contemporary forms of ‘racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance,’ suggested that even quoting the Qur’an accurately but critically was an act of bigotry that needed to be proscribed.” This is a reflection on the fact that, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Muslim nations make up the largest voting bloc in the United Nations!

At the same time, the leftist dominated media virtually pine for white, right-wing terrorists, often speculating in advance that threats and actual acts of terror might be the work of “right-wing extremists.” They are not only chagrined, but disappointed to find out that, with the possible exception of Timothy McVeigh, virtually all terror threats in the United States come from the left, and most from Islamists. And no wonder. Four separate, independent studies have found that 80 percent of mosques in the United States promote jihad. Yet today, mosques are considered sanctuaries, off limits to investigation or infiltration.

The most important question of all posited in *Arab Winter* is, “Will America ever succumb to Islamic attempts to impose sharia upon its citizens?”

Spencer documents events that have already transpired in the past few decades that indicate the strong possibility that this could happen, as he presents in his last chapter—a hypothetical road to sharia under Obama’s watch. As he lays out his hypothesis, Spencer often points to notes that demonstrate how certain aspects have already been implemented.

For those who cannot believe that such a conspiracy to undermine the Constitution of the United States and substitute sharia could exist, consider that the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) cofounder and longtime board chairman Omar Ahmad said in 1998, “Islam isn’t in America to be equal to any other faith, but to become dominant. The Koran should be the highest authority in America, and Islam the only accepted religion on earth.”

The United States long ago surrendered its sovereignty; it is merely implementing its “interdependence” in gradual steps, indoctrinating each generation further into globalist allegiance. What might happen if the United Nations, which is decidedly anti-American and anti-Christ, puts sufficient pressure on Obama and/or a future president to fully surrender to the burgeoning Islamic power that is overtaking the rest of the world, including Western Europe?

I ask this question in view of what I have learned over the years about Islam and the degree of success it has found in achieving its goal of world conquest.

Spencer adds an important piece of information that demonstrates the current power of Islam in the world:

In 1990 the 56 member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), which makes up the largest voting bloc in the United Nations, met in Egypt and adopted the “Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam.” The Cairo Declaration states that “all human beings form one family whose members are united by their subordination to Allah.”

I believe it is too late to stem the tide, not because the United States doesn’t have the power to do so, but because it does not have the will to do so. And if it did, it would eventually stand alone in the world, with only Israel as its ally. As it is, the United States is fast approaching the day when it will abandon Israel and side with Israel’s enemies or, at best, adopt a position of “neutrality.”

America is under judgment from the holy God who has been scorned by the citizens of this once great nation. Most of those who call themselves Christians are His children in name only. And while the few who possess the discernment to see the impending judgment try to sound the alarm, Christians are flocking to megachurches to sit comfortably in their padded pews and listen to men and women tell them how much God wants to bless them if they will only change their thinking from defeat to victory in Jesus. Their itching ears are tickled by false teachers who, themselves living in luxury, give them what they claim are formulas for success in life. They glean proof texts from the writings of Israel’s prophets and the Lord’s apostles meant for specific people at specific times, and apply them to their audiences as promises that they can be prosperous, healthy and successful in whatever endeavor they choose.

The apostle Paul warns of those who teach contrary to the pure doctrine of Christ, supposing that godliness is evidenced by material blessings:

...These things teach and exhort. If any man teaches otherwise, and does not consent to wholesome words—even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ—and to the doctrine that is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strife of words, from which comes envy, strife, railings, evil surmising, perverse disputing of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness. Withdraw yourself from such.

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, let us be content with that. (1 Timothy 6:2b-8)

All the while gullible Christians are filling their heads with these false teachings, the Sword of Damocles is hanging over their heads, poised for the moment when God says, “Enough!”

But this isn’t all bad news. In truth, it is good news. Because it means we are coming ever closer to seeing our blessed Lord!❖

FIFTY YEARS OUT OF THE CHURCH OF ROME



By Albert James Dager

This month, September, 2014, marks my fiftieth year since the Lord led me out of the darkness of Roman Catholicism and into the light of His glorious grace. It is my hope that our readers will indulge my reminiscing about how the Lord confronted a devout Roman Catholic and, in one evening, transformed me into a new creation in Him. If I digress on occasion into areas that do not directly have to do with my testimony of faith, please indulge me. Some things I find of interest, you may find of interest also. And it's fun to reminisce.

MY CATHOLIC EDUCATION began at St. Vincent School in Los Angeles in September, 1944. I was not quite six years of age, so from that time forward I was always among the youngest in my classes.

My first day of school was eventful because it almost didn't happen. In the months leading up to that first day, I was somewhat eagerly looking forward to it. My sister Mary, who is two years older than I, was a seasoned pro. She loved school and helped me prepare by tutoring me in the basics of A-B-C and 1-2-3. So I was ready. I thought. But when the day arrived, I got cold feet. I was on death row, and not looking forward to the hangman's noose.

I began to protest that I couldn't go to school because I didn't know anything. My sage sister explained to me that that's exactly why I was going to school. So I could learn things.

It didn't convince me.

But there I was, in the back seat of my father's big old Packard, dreading what I knew would be the death of me.

When we pulled up to the curb in front of the school, I saw a nun standing on the steps with a little girl next to her, watching as my sister bounded out of the car.

Panic seized me. And I seized the rope that traversed the back of the front seat from end-to-end. (Cars used to have those so people could pull themselves up from the cavernous back seats to make their exits.)

Now, my father was a pretty good-sized man, almost six feet tall and close to 200 pounds, as I recall. He told me to get out of the car.

"No."

"Get out."

"No."

"I said, 'Get out.'"

"No!"

At that, he got out. And I was in for it.

He opened the back door on the street side of the car where I sat, and grabbed me.

I hung on for dear life.

"Let go!"

"No!"

Then my mother got into the act. She opened the curb-side door and started to pull my fingers off the rope.

As she managed to get one hand loose, I gripped all the tighter with the other as my father continued to pull on me. She got the other hand loose, but the first hand had managed its death grip again.

After some time of struggling, my father said, "Alright then! You're not going to school!"

He swatted me on the behind and threw me back onto the seat. I was still holding on.

Victory! I wouldn't have to go to school.

My grandmother, who was living with us at the time, was surprised to see me come back home with my parents. After they went off to work (my father owned a small print shop, and my mother was a seamstress), my grandmother encouraged me to go back to the school with the promise that she would sit in the classroom with me.

I agreed, and she walked me the couple of miles back.

I sat there, not really listening to the nun, but turning often to see if "Gramma" was still in the back of the room. After a while she came up to me and said she had to go to the bathroom, but she would be back. I reluctantly said okay.

My grandmother lied to me; my own grandmother! She never came back!

There I was, stuck.

Mary and I found each other after school and we waited together for our parents to pick us up.

They were astounded to see me standing there with her, calmed down after my first day that found me alive after all. From then on, I became a good little Catholic boy, doing well in my courses and making friends.

In September, 1952, I entered Our Lady of Mount Carmel High School on Hoover Street in Los Angeles. I did well there, and continued my education in Roman Catholicism along with the academic courses. We were taught by priests and brothers (non-ordained religious) of the Carmelite Order, along with some lay teachers.

Space doesn't allow for all the things I'd like to share about my time in Catholic high school except to say that those days were wonderful, in which I made lifelong friends. Two, in

particular, Al Matta and Leo Martinez, are still among my best friends even though we are able to see each other only rarely on visits from state-to-state. Al Matta was a track star who came in second in the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) finals in both the 100 and 200 yard dashes. His best time in the 100 was 9.4 seconds.

But as fast as he was on the track, Al was the slowest person in all other respects. After track meets, the showers couldn't close because, although everyone else had left, Al was still getting dressed in his impeccably clean white denims and white buck shoes.

September, 1956, saw me enter Los Angeles City College (LACC) where I took some pre-architecture classes. I did really well my first semester, and was hoping to transfer to USC someday. Then my buddy Leo encouraged me to join the Newman Club—a Catholic off-campus social club named in honor of John Henry Cardinal Newman, an Anglican priest and scholar who converted to Catholicism. Next thing I knew, I was totally engrossed in the club, and my grades started to slip. But I was having a great time. Eventually I became president of the club, holding that office for two terms.

The moderator of the Newman Club, a Catholic priest by the name of James O'Callaghan, was a good friend to me, often offering sage advice.

In truth, I can honestly say that among all the priests and nuns with whom I had contact during my years of education, they were all generally nice people. Contrary to the sad experiences of many other Catholics, which have come to light of late, my experiences were for the most part very positive.

With the exception of Sister Teresina at St. Vincent. She was a nun who taught piano lessons via raps on the knuckles with the blade end of a ruler. Prior to her, I was taught by Sister Teresita, who was nothing but kind. But by the end of seventh grade I had had it with the ruler. Besides, I wanted to be outside playing football, softball and basketball, not cringing under the stern discipline of a mad nun.

Even so, I was doing well in my piano lessons, and played in the school recitals. But when I reached the eighth grade my parents gave me the option to continue with piano lessons or give them up.

What do you think?

Now I wish I had continued, but that's water under the bridge.

With all the ups and downs of my Catholic life (mostly ups), I was totally devoted to the church, and to the Virgin Mary. In high school I was introduced to the Scapular—a devotional icon typically consisting of two rectangular pieces of cloth, wool or other fabric connected by bands. One rectangle rests on the chest, while the other rests on the back, with the bands running over the shoulders.

Scapulars can be devoted to different saints; mine was devoted to Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and consisted of an image of Mary on one piece, and on the other, the words, "Whosoever dies clothed in this Scapular shall not suffer eternal fire." Following under these words was the statement, "The Scapular Promise from Our Lady of Mt. Carmel."



TOP:
A cloth Scapular

RIGHT:
A medal Scapular



We were told that Mary would take us from Purgatory to Heaven on the Friday after our death. Naturally we all hoped to die on a Thursday night, as close to midnight as possible.

I would not be caught dead without my Scapular (pun intended). I wouldn't even take it off to shower. Over the years, I had to constantly make knots in the bands as they started rotting away. I don't think it ever occurred to me to buy a new one.

While attending LACC, I dated for a while a girl I met at the Newman Club. Maggie gave me a medal Scapular to replace the deteriorating original. That medal Scapular was worn with the same devotion that I had for my cloth one. I told myself I would never take it off.

While at LACC, Father O'Callaghan introduced me to Frank Ranuzzi, a State Farm Insurance agent who also had a bookstore behind his offices. Poor Richard's Book Store, named after Benjamin Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac*, specialized in literature that addressed politics, economics, social trends, and other topics from a conservative perspective. Although Poor Richard's also carried some books from the other side so people could study what they were saying.

With Father O'Callaghan's recommendation, Frank Ranuzzi hired me to work part-time in the bookstore where I eventually became the full-time manager. Working at Poor Richard's Bookstore was a great experience. It was there that I learned of conspiracies (some real; some imagined) that threatened the American way of life. I became engrossed in the subjects offered, reading many of the books, if not entirely, sufficiently enough to learn some important facts.

I came to know a lot of the customers as we sat at the round table in the middle of the store and discussed the issues of the day.

One day Poor Richard's got a call from the BBC asking for an interview with Mr. Ranuzzi. He was out of town, so it fell to me to answer the BBC reporter's questions. All went well as he asked about our beliefs and expectations, until he dropped an out-of-the-blue query as to why we carried a book titled *Blaster's Handbook*, which dealt with how to handle explosives.

I burst out laughing at the seemingly impromptu question, and we had to do a retake. I don't recall my answer, but overall, I believe I held my own pretty well.

Because of the understanding I gleaned from reading the materials offered through Poor Richard's, I became well-versed on communism's subversive philosophy and tactics. This led to my confronting one LACC professor in particular who was as red as fresh blood. Every time he said something to promote his communist beliefs, lauding the Soviet Union, denigrating the United States, ridiculing religion—particularly Christianity—I challenged him with truth and facts. I recall one girl who sat in front of me, turning and saying, "You're pretty radical, aren't you?"

Well, my protests eventually emboldened others to bring up facts that contradicted the professor. It was obvious from the grades I received in the subjective Social Studies class, that he didn't appreciate me. I knew the subject too well, it turns out. So I dropped out before the grade of F could be applied to my record. But not before one incident in which, after I challenged one of his pro-communist statements, he changed the subject so quickly that the entire class laughed.

Troublemaker.

Although most of the subjects with which I had become acquainted were mundane, I realized that behind the communist conspiracy, as well as the secret societies and subversive groups, was a spiritual force whose presence escaped most men. I saw that force as satanic. As a Catholic, I had been taught the basic truths of the Gospel as well as an understanding of Satan's existence, but I perceived the Roman Catholic Church as the answer to these evils. It was not the world vs. communism, socialism, Nazism, and every other ism; it was the Catholic Church vs. all those isms.

In my natural state I was very logical, but my understanding of spiritual things was limited at best, and clouded by my Catholic biases. Even so, I could argue with detractors who, whether on the left or the right, denied the existence of God.

One day some regular customers—a man and his wife—came into the store. As usual, we discussed many things. They were Ayn Rand fans—conservative humanists (rationalists) who don't believe in the supernatural. The topic turned to truth, which they insisted was subjective: everyone has their own truth.

To this I responded that there is objective truth found in God that cannot be rationalized. As we bantered back-and-forth, I finally said, "So you're saying that you can't be sure of anything?" To which the man replied, "That's right."

My next question angered him: "Are you sure?"

His wife, at least, pondered the question and tried to calm him down. He left in a huff, and I don't recall ever seeing them again.

In 1962, I was drafted into the Army, and had to take a leave of absence from work. After basic training at Fort Ord, California, I was sent to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where I spent a month awaiting assignment to the 11th Air Assault Division at Fort Benning, Georgia, where I remained for the duration of my two years in the military. During my stint in the Army I served on occasion as the Catholic chaplain's assistant, carrying over my dedication to the church from my previous years of Catholic education. I was honorably discharged in June, 1964, several months before the 11th Air Assault Division was melded with the First Air Cavalry and sent to Vietnam.

Fifty years ago, September, 1964, I was just a few months out of the U.S. Army, again working as the manager at Poor Richard's Bookstore.

I have reminisced on these things to arrive at the fateful moment that changed my life forever.

One of our regular customers was an intelligent, friendly man by the name of Bob Thompson. We would often sit around the table discussing current issues, and he would bring religion into the discussion. He began to challenge me on my Roman Catholicism.

I didn't really want to hear about it, but I liked Bob and wanted to be polite, so I never got angry with him or resisted too strongly. One day, he brought a friend into the store, Jack Thomas, whose countenance bore the marks of a former ungodly life lived in the Orient. He was a believer in the Lord who was not afraid to confront people living in error. He, too, challenged me on my Catholicism, even poking his finger on my chest as he spoke. I took offense, but didn't show it, wanting to keep the peace with Bob.

One day, as I was preparing to close the store, I found myself alone with Bob who purposely (unknown to me at the time) hung around until closing. As I was making my end-of-the-day rounds, he asked if he could share some Scriptures with me. I agreed, and we went into my office where he opened his Bible and began to show me verses that challenged what I believed as a Catholic.

As a Catholic, I was taught that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, and I believed that. But I had also been taught that equal to the Bible is the church's magisterium, or teaching authority, and its traditions. Also, as a Catholic, I was never urged to study the Scriptures; it was sufficient to trust the church for my spiritual understanding. Although I had years before bought my mother a Papal Edition Bible for her coffee table, the only reason to open it was to look at the pictures.

I was stunned to learn that the Bible and the Catholic Church are at odds in many areas. So I found myself in a quandary. Do I believe the Bible? Or do I believe what I have been taught by the church that is contrary to the Bible? Did Jesus die once for all, requiring no more sacrifices for sin? Or is the Catholic Mass, where Jesus is sacrificed over and over again by the priest, necessary? These and other questions plagued me, but the Holy Spirit began to prompt my logic into action.

I reasoned that, if I was to be a good Catholic, then I must believe what the Bible says. But if I believe what the Bible says, I can't be a good Catholic. Either way, I had to believe what the Bible says.

That may seem simplistic to some, but that was what went through my mind. By the end of the evening, I came to the conclusion that I must believe the Bible. I removed my Scapular medal and, as much as it pained me, having been a gift from someone I had at one time cared very much for, I threw it away. My life was now totally the Lord's, and the Roman Catholic Church was in my past—at least as far as my formal association with it.

Bob introduced me to a group of believers who met on Thursday evenings at a home in the San Fernando Valley. They were very loving, and I began to learn and understand much through them.

The problem was that I became very angry with the church. I felt I had been defrauded for my entire life to that point, and I spoke harshly about it to my family and friends. It didn't occur to me at the time, that the Catholic Church had given me the basis to believe that the Bible was the inspired Word of God. And in spite of the Catholic Church's evils and avarice, it was that avarice that caused it to horde the Scriptures and to copy them for posterity. The Lord used the might of Rome to preserve His Word. Nothing else would have worked so well. In any case, my initial anger caused problems with my family, and especially my mother.

She believed "those people" I was meeting with in the Valley were subverting my faith, and was very angry about it.

We would often get into heated arguments as I tried to tell her how wrong the Catholic Church is about so much. She complained, "We spent all that money to send you to Catholic school, and you do this to us?"

My father had passed away while I was still in college, so I don't know what his reaction would have been except to defend his wife. Although he was a Catholic, he recognized a lot of problems with the church, and wasn't all that keen on it. He felt that Catholic schools offered the best education, and He believed in Jesus. So he didn't make waves about the church.

My sister was distressed over my parting from the church, and her husband, Tony, although not a strong Catholic, was angry with me for hurting her.

The conflict continued for some time, and every time my mother and I were together, we argued. Until one day, as I was in prayer for her, I heard very strongly in my spirit that I should just be quiet and love her.

Well, actually, the words I heard were, "Just shut up, and love her."

The Lord can come across as pretty plebian at times. Whatever it takes to get our attention.

At any rate, I determined to do just that. I stopped arguing, and just tried to be kind to her and to the rest of the family.

After some time, I found myself alone with my mother at my sister's house. For some reason, the family was out, and she and I were just watching some television together. Suddenly, she asked, "Are you still meeting with those people in the Valley?"

The thought came to me, "Oh, no. Here we go again."

I tentatively replied, "Yeah."

She asked, "Can I go with you next time?"

"Sure."

I didn't know what to think, but I did take her with me to the next meeting where she was shown so much love. They had been praying for her and for my family from the time I started meeting with them, and they were happy to finally meet her.

When we left, she asked if she could come back the next week. Of course, I said yes.

The next Thursday, the leader of the fellowship asked if she would like to receive the Lord as her personal savior. She responded yes, and I was on Cloud Nine.

From that point on, she wanted to know more truth about God and His Word. She would often phone me at all hours to ask questions and to complain about her Catholic friends to whom she tried to witness. They just wouldn't listen to her. I had to remind her how she wouldn't listen to me at first, and she would say, "Yeah, I know, but it's so frustrating."

I think she became more against the Catholic Church than I was.

One day, I asked why she wanted to go to that meeting with me. She told me that she had been watching me over time, and saw how I was changing. She wanted to know what was causing that change.

It really went back to one evening, though, as she said she was making a novena to the Blessed Virgin Mary. For those who don't know, a novena is a series of nine sessions during which prayers for a particular petition are made to a Catholic "saint." Most are made to the Virgin Mary, and they carry the promise that at the conclusion of the novena, the petition would be granted. My mother's petition was that I would return to the Catholic Church.

She had completed eight weeks, and was in her room readying herself for the final session. She had a statue of Mary on a table before which she knelt. She lit a candle in front of the statue, opened her novena booklet, and started to say the prayers. But she was stopped short when she heard a voice say, "He might be right."

"What?" she said.

"He might be right," she heard again.

Stunned, she closed the novena booklet, blew out the candle, and said a simple prayer; "God, if he's right, I want to know it. But if he's wrong, I want him back in the church."

Not long after that Thursday night in which she gave her life to the Lord, I had the greatest honor of my life to baptize my mother.

She went to be with the Lord in 1983. I look forward to seeing her again.

Now, fifty years after my initial commitment to Christ, I can testify that He is faithful in all things even though we may fail Him often. My encouragement to you is to continue in faithfulness to Him, looking forward to the promise of redemption, to wit, the resurrection of our bodies and eternity with the Lord and the faithful who have gone before.

May He bless you richly in all ways as you seek to serve Him in truth.❖



AS TIME WINDS down, we see an increase in anti-Christ's attempts to destroy the Gospel and to bring mankind into greater subjection to pain and suffering, as well as the substitution of false religions and philosophies that promise, but cannot deliver, relief from that pain and suffering. Yet in the midst of anti-Christ's onslaught against humanity and God's Word, some glimmers of truth have managed to peek through the darkness. This isn't as bleak as it may seem. We must remember that God is working His plan of redemption in the midst of that darkness, even as this world remains for the time being under Satan's dominion. As we look at various aspects of humanity's sojourn on this planet, we will understand how anti-Christ's hand has been a guiding factor.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

The 19th century brought into vivid focus biblical prophecy concerning the end of this age according to Daniel's vision:

But you, O Daniel, close up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. (Daniel 12:4)

Man's international and intercontinental travel to and fro increased in earnest during the 19th century with the invention of steam locomotion on both land and sea. His knowledge was greatly increased as evidenced by the virtual explosion of advances in science and technology which would lead to even more incredible advances during the 20th century. Many of these advances have been beneficial, but not all have been pure science.

The most ungodly product of "science falsely called" appeared with the publication in 1859 of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* which became the foundation for the theory of the evolution of man from lower life forms. Today, evolution is presented matter-of-factly by virtually all institutions of learning, from pre-school to university, as well as in the mass media, despite the fact that it is an unproven theory. It has been one of anti-Christ's greatest weapons against the truth of God's Word.

WARFARE

We saw in previous installments how warfare in particular has been used by anti-Christ to bring men into subjection to the dark forces under his command. Christian nations (or more properly, nations whose populations have largely declared themselves Christians) have engaged in bloody conflicts contrary to the commands of our Lord. Even the United States of America was born out of rebellion, although we give God the glory for the wonderful, most benevolent society ever developed by mankind, primarily because of the biblical ethic upon which the founding fathers based their concept of government.

The 19th century also brought into vivid focus the Lord's prophecy concerning the time prior to His coming again:

And as He sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of this age?"

And Jesus answered and said to them, "Be careful that no man deceives you, for many will come in My name, saying that I am Christ, and shall deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for all these things must come to pass.

"But the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in diverse places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. (Matthew 24:3-8)

The 19th century not only saw many wars and rumors of wars, but much of what took place during that century set the stage for even greater wars to come in the 20th century.

In our previous installment we saw how the War of Secession (misnamed "the Civil War") was fought between Christians over human issues, resulting in the greatest number of casualties among American military forces than in all the nation's wars combined. The 19th century was the bloodiest in the

history of mankind up to its time. Perhaps the greatest battles were those that resulted in the diminishing of the Ottoman Empire, which would also set the stage for future wars to come.

In 1853, Tsar Nicholas I of Russia went to war against the Ottoman Turks in defense of Orthodox Christians in Turkey and in Jerusalem (which was occupied by the Ottoman Empire at that time). But this gave rise to fears in Britain and France, which saw the Tsar's campaign as part of a greater Russian expansion of power which threatened those and other Western European nations' economic interests worldwide. When, using exploding artillery shells for the first time, the Russian navy destroyed a Turkish fleet at a Turkish port on the Black Sea, the British reacted with a declaration of war in 1854. Queen Victoria wrote of "the great sinfulness" of Russia in bringing about what would become the Crimean War (1854-1856), fought between major European powers for control of territories held by the declining Ottoman Empire.

The Crimean War ended in 1856 with the Paris Peace Treaty which obligated the Ottoman Empire to grant to Christians equal rights with Muslims. The Edict of Gülhane, issued by the Ottoman Empire, gave a semblance of equality to Christians, abolishing the *jizya* (tax levied against certain non-Muslim males), and allowing them to serve in the Ottoman army. But in many areas, particularly having to do with legal matters, Muslims enjoyed immunity for offenses against Christians, and Christians could not testify against Muslims in court. Christians were generally subjugated in other ways as well.

But the Tsar's conflict with the Ottomans had already been active since 1839 when the Russians sought influence in Afghanistan, hoping for a "trustworthy ally" on India's western border. Fearing Russian expansion into India via Afghanistan, the British sent a force of 12,000 British and Indian troops, with a contingent that included families, prostitutes, and sellers of opium, rum and tobacco for the troops.

If this seems shocking, it's only because of sanitized historical accounts in the West that have championed the "Christian" virtues of Europe. We must not be so naïve to think that anti-Christ has not largely had his way with "Christian" nations. Corruption of those nations' military is easily realized, as anyone who has been in the military would attest.

1877-1878 saw the Russo-Turkish War between the Ottoman Empire and the Eastern Orthodox coalition led by the Russian Empire. Russia was victorious in seizing a number of provinces in the Caucasus, giving Romania, Serbia, Bulgaria and Montenegro formal independence from the Ottomans.

In 1878, European powers of the United Kingdom, Austria-Hungary, France, Germany and Italy gathered in Berlin with Russia and the Ottomans to settle the outcome of the Russo-Turkish War. The Habsburg monarchy in Vienna was given Bosnia and Herzegovina. Vienna's army, carrying symbols of Roman Catholicism crushed Orthodox Serb resistance.

In 1889, a baby was born in the small town of Braunau am Inn, Austria-Hungary. This infant, Adolph Hitler, would grow to become one of the greatest anti-Christ in history.

More warfare between "Christian" nations would erupt in 1895 when Jose Marti and some fellow exiles to Cuba started

another war for independence from Spain. Although Marti is killed and his guerrilla fighters are outnumbered five to one by Spain's forces, they prevail, attaining limited autonomy. During the war, the battleship U.S.S. Maine embarked on a visit to Havana to protect U.S. interests in Cuba. On February 15, 1898, she exploded without warning, with the loss of one-third of her crew. Although the cause has never been determined, popular opinion at the time was that Spain was responsible, thus leading to the Spanish American War one year later. And again, "Christian" nations went to war.

RELIGION

Much also happened on the religious front, which was also guided by anti-Christ. Elements of the Spanish Inquisition did not die easily, even after the 1820 Revolution that saw King Ferdinand VII deposed for a time. With his return in 1826, the Inquisition was revived to some degree. Anti-Christ's hatred of Jews and Christians was again inflamed with the burning at the stake of a Jew, as well as a Quaker schoolmaster who replaced the Catholic "Hail Mary" with another prayer, "Praise be to God," in his classroom. That is said to have been the last of the executions under the Inquisition.

In 1830, Joseph Smith, Jr., of New York, organized the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which came to be called Mormonism. It isn't necessary to go into all the ungodly doctrines of this institution. Suffice it to say that history has proven it one of the most deceptive opponents of the true Gospel, giving anti-Christ considerable leverage for the minds of people everywhere.

Anti-Christ doesn't always manifest an opposition to Christianity; he also uses Christianity to discredit itself with hare-brained schemes that on the surface seem to be for the "good" of people. In 1844, in Australia, the "Protection of Children Act" allowed Christian missionaries to kidnap aboriginal children in order to "civilize" them—a policy that lasted for almost 80 years, until the 1960s.

Anti-Christ also knows how to corrupt what begins as a faithful service to God. In 1844, George Williams, a merchant in cloth founded the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in London. His purpose was to provide a better option to taverns and brothels for "the improving of the spiritual condition of young men engaged in the drapery, embroidery, and other trades," who were flocking to the major cities in response to labor demands that increased with the Industrial Revolution. Within the short span of seven years, YMCAs had sprung up in the United Kingdom, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United States. 1855 saw the beginning of the World Alliance of YMCAs, whose motto, taken from the Bible, was, "That they may be one."

Merely ten years later, the Fourth World Conference of YMCAs, held in Germany, stressed the developing of the whole individual in body, mind and spirit. This concept came to be known as "muscular Christianity"—a Victorian era movement that stressed an energetic Christian evangelism combined with vigorous masculinity. English author Thomas Hughes used the term "muscular Christianity" in his novel, *Tom Brown at Oxford*,

with the statement that it is “a good thing to have strong and well-exercised bodies.”

Wrote Hughes, “The least of the muscular Christians has hold of the old chivalrous and Christian belief, that a man’s body is given him to be trained and brought into subjection, and then used for the protection of the weak, the advancement of all righteous causes, and the subduing of the earth which God has given to the children of men.”

As noble an ideal as it was that resulted in the founding of the YMCA, history again has shown that man’s attempts to institutionalize faith in Christ inevitably succumb to the onslaught of anti-Christ. As such institutions grow they find the need for administrative talent increases. Their leaders then tend to look outside the faith, or at least outside the pure expression of the faith, toward more carnally-minded, administratively talented people to run the organization. Today the YMCA is Christian in name only. In fact, it isn’t even that; it has dropped the formal name and has adopted merely “The Y” as its preferred name. Sadly, it even succumbed to the reputation of being a haven of homosexuality through the popular song, Y.M.C.A., by the Village People in 1978.

The YMCA initially threatened to sue the band over trademark infringement, as well as concerns over the homosexual-themed lyrics. But when the organization experienced a surge in membership as a result of the popularity of the song, it dropped the lawsuit. Again, anti-Christ had won the battle (but not the war, eventually), because a “Christian” organization valued monetary success over the purity of the faith.

In 1850, a Chinese Christian in China came to believe he was the son of God commanded to save the world. Starting a socialist movement for sharing wealth and land distribution, as well as the Ten Commandments, he stressed chaste living, an end to foot-binding for women, and opposition to opium. He fomented what would become known as the Taiping Rebellion, which intended to divest the country of “Manchu demons” and other belief systems. This is another way in which anti-Christ uses good intentions and “religious” works to deceive.

In 1854 Pope Pius IX, with a huge majority of Catholic bishops, issued the papal bull *Ineffabilis Deus* (Latin for “Ineffable God”), in which he defined *ex cathedra* (from “Peter’s throne”) the dogma of Mary’s Immaculate Conception, which states:

We declare, pronounce and define that the doctrine which holds that the Blessed Virgin Mary, at the first instant of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace of the Omnipotent God, in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of mankind, was preserved immaculate from all stain of original sin, has been revealed by God, and therefore should firmly and constantly be believed by all the faithful.

A dogma declared *ex cathedra* is imposed upon Catholics as essential to their faith, and can never be repealed, ostensibly having come directly through inspiration by the Holy Spirit. This dogma of Mary’s Immaculate Conception would be one of anti-Christ’s greatest deceptions, leading millions of Roman Catholics to transfer their primary veneration of Yahweh God

and His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to a human agency. Thus, the practice of Mariology became further entrenched among unbiblical Roman Catholic beliefs and practices.

In 1872, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Charles Taze Russell started the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, which would become better known as the Jehovah’s Witnesses. Just as with Mormonism, history has proven this institution one of the most deceptive opponents of the true Gospel, giving anti-Christ even more leverage for the minds of people everywhere.

Anti-Christ’s peculiar hatred of the Jews was again inflamed when, in 1882, Russian Tsar Alexander III, proclaiming that the Jews killed Christ, instituted pogroms against Jews that spread across the Russian Empire, expelling them from Moscow, and causing many Jews to flee from Russia altogether.

In 1899 China, a group of terrorists known as Boxers took up the nationalistic chant, “Protect the country and destroy the foreigner.” Their Buddhist religious zeal coupled with fear of Christians and support from the government resulted in attacks and the killing of Christian missionaries and Chinese converts to Christianity. In 1900, the U.S., Japan, and European nations acted to put down what the West called the Boxer Rebellion. But in the process, they indiscriminately attacked innocent Chinese as well.

On December 23, 1873, having suffered under her first husband’s drunkenness until he passed away, Carrie Amelia Nation organized the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union in Hillsboro, Ohio. Within two years the WCTU became an international organization. The objective of the WCTU was a “sober and pure world” through the promotion of abstinence, purity and evangelical Christianity. The WCTU expanded its agenda to include prostitution, labor, public health, sanitation and international peace, as well as women’s suffrage. The WCTU’s original method was to gather outside saloons to pray and harass the customers. By 1900, Nation decided that violence was the better means of dealing with “demon liquor.” Believing she had a divine leading to promote temperance by destroying bars and taverns, she began a campaign of violence, smashing the liquor inventories. At first she used rocks, but graduated to a hatchet after her second husband jokingly suggested that she do so.

Carrie Nation presents an example of how anti-Christ can motivate Christians to engage in political action, including violence, for “good” causes. Nation failed to realize that liquor itself is not the problem; the problem is the sin nature that causes people to abuse liquor, much as they abuse anything that can be used for good. The Lord has not called His people to destroy the property of those we find repulsive. The only thing that can truly deliver a person from drunkenness is surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ. Human efforts such as Alcoholics Anonymous offer some relief for unbelievers, but without Christ, they merely produce “clean” sinners.

Satan’s greatest victories come through the efforts of Christians (deluded or merely nominal) who believe they are superior to other members of the human race. This has been the case wherever a particular ethnicity has dominated. In the “Christian” West, and particularly in the United States of America, the ugly monster of race war has been conducted by whites against non-whites. After the abolition of slavery in America,

conflict between white settlers migrating westward and the American Indians resulted in great injustices.

On May 28, 1830, the American Congress passed, and President Andrew Jackson signed, the Indian Removal Act, which forced eastern tribes from their homes and lands, and banished them to areas west of the Mississippi River. The five tribes most affected were considered the most civilized by European settlers during the colonial period. These were the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek and Seminole tribes. Yet Jackson's motivation was not evil; he honestly believed that relocation was the best means to ensure the survival of these tribes in view of the growing immigration of European settlers that threatened their existence. Already many tribes, particularly in the north, had been driven to extinction, and the Indian Removal Act was intended to prevent that for the tribes in the south. Still, the results were at times inhumane. American Indians that chose to stay and assimilate into American culture were made citizens of the United States. The rest were forced off their farms and out of their homes to relocate to Indian territories. The first tribe to be removed was the Choctaw in 1831. The Seminole fought two wars to remain, but were ultimately removed, with the exception of a small number that withdrew to the Florida Everglades, never to be defeated. The arduous trek of the Choctaw in particular resulted in what became known as the "Trail of Tears" during which an unclear number (from 2,500 to 6,000) perished.

The Sioux Wars that raged from 1851 to 1890 resulted in another great American Indian tribe's eventual subjugation. The Sioux Wars began not long after the signing of the Ft. Laramie Treaty of 1851, which was to ensure safe passage of white settlers along the Oregon Trail. The first conflict began over a misunderstanding involving a cow that escaped from a Mormon party in 1854. The cow wandered into a Sioux camp, and was seen there by a Mormon search party that assumed it had been stolen. Rather than approach the Sioux whom they feared, they reported the "theft" to the army at Ft. Laramie. When an army contingent tried to arrest a suspected Sioux who claimed innocence, the man resisted. Cannons were fired on the Indian camp, killing the Sioux's Chief Conquering Bear, the spokesman for his tribe. The Sioux launched a counter-attack that wiped out the entire detachment of army troops. This resulted in retaliation by General William S. Harney whose 600 troops attacked a Sioux village at Blue Water, killing 85, and taking 70 women and children captive.

Other disputes arose between Sioux tribes and white settlers, resulting in bloodshed. The U.S. army was constantly called upon to protect the settlers, regardless of which side was primarily in the wrong of any particular dispute.

When, in 1875, prospectors discovered gold in the Black Hills of South Dakota, major fighting broke out between the Sioux, led by Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse, and federal troops led by General William T. Sherman. The Sioux gained major victories, but were ultimately subdued. During these wars, one of the most famous (or infamous) military campaigns resulted in disaster for a small troop of 200 men under the command of Col. George A. Custer at a site called the Little Big Horn.

As a result of Custer's defeat, outraged Americans demanded retribution, which caused the U.S. to redraw Indian reservation boundaries.

The Sioux Wars ended in 1890 with the disastrous end of what was to be a peaceful meeting between Colonel James Forsyth and Chief Big Foot. An accidental discharge of a rifle resulted in the army firing artillery into the Sioux camp, killing men, women and children trying to flee. One hundred-fifty people, including Big Foot, were killed. The Sioux would not survive as a viable tribe, losing their land and their way of life.

Many treaties were broken by the U.S. government, resulting in the Crow and Blackfoot Indians being ejected from their reservations, the Ute Indians in Colorado having their properties confiscated and opened to settlement, and whites invading Nez Perce territory that had been promised to the peaceful Nez Perce Indians. The U.S. Army defeated the Nez Perce to give their lands to the settlers.

Is it any wonder that the "white man's God" has been largely rejected by American Indians? At best, anti-Christ has seen to it that American Indian spirituality blends native religious practices into its "Christianity."

COMMUNISM

Satan's most audacious anti-Christ movement would be birthed in the 19th century. On June 2, 1847, in London, dozens of working class rebels, mostly from Germany, held a meeting at which they changed the name of their organization from "The League of the Just" to "The Communist League." They also changed their motto from "All Men Are Brothers" to "Working Men of All Countries, Unite!"

Following recent economic downturns in Europe, on February 21, 1848, Karl Marx collaborated with Friedrich Engels to write a theory of political development that promotes the idea of class struggle. Siding with the "proletariat" against the "capitalists," Marx theorized that capitalism will eventually decline and be overthrown. His little book was titled, *The Communist Manifesto*.

After Marx's death in 1883, Engels continued to promote Marxism, writing an introduction to Marx's *The Class Struggles in France*. Marx's writings would set the course for Bolshevism in Russia and International Communism's advance in the 20th century.

ZIONISM

The first wave of Zionist immigration into Palestine began in 1881. In 1897, Theodor Herzl, a Jewish journalist from Hungary disturbed by the anti-Semitism connected with the Dreyfus Affair, wanted to start a program to resettle Jews in Palestine. That year, Herzl convened the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, which inaugurated the Zionist Organization (ZO). The ZO would become the World Zionist Organization (WZO) in 1900. The goal of promoting Jewish immigration to Palestine would experience little progress until the Holocaust under the Third Reich of Adolph Hitler's Nazi Germany would create worldwide sympathy for the millions of displaced Jews.

Closing out the 19th century for this series, in 1900 the world's population was roughly 1.7 billion, up from about 1 billion in 1800.

NEXT

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

DERELICTS



By Albert James Dager



WE HAVE ALL seen them, either in real life, in newscasts, or at the least in television or motion picture dramatizations. Indigent people whose existence seems to have no meaning—whose lives are squandered as they sit on sidewalks, addled by booze, drugs, or just mindless pursuits of some sort. There are myriad reasons why people end up like this: traumas real or imagined, physical and/or mental; loss of a viable means of support; rebellion in their hearts that prompts them to eschew industriousness. Only they and God know what has caused them to come to such a profligate end.

These thoughts came to me as I waited for Jean to come out of a Safeway store in Seattle on our way to see one of my doctors. While there, I observed a man perhaps in his forties sitting on the sidewalk next to an older woman. They seemed to be whiling away the day, greeting people who appeared to know them as fixtures in their neighborhood. They were pleasant to those folks and to each other, and to a stray dog that happened to attach itself to the woman.

My first thoughts were, what a shame these two lives, and so many more, were being wasted. The few precious years the Lord gives us should not be taken for granted.

Then another thought came: what is the difference between these two unfortunate people and those many others who occupy the high-rise office buildings that form the canyons in which such people squat? Are the lives of the affluent any less squandered as they spend a vast amount of their energy seeking material gain?

Jesus asked the question, “What does it profit a man if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Mark 8:36).

I realized that a dissipated life may be one of degree rather than of fixed value. It is obvious even to the unsaved that derelicts on the street are dissipated. It is not so obvious that derelicts who may be even more dissipated occupy penthouse offices and homes hundreds of feet above the less fortunate.

In truth, some on the streets may be less dissipated than those above them.

This isn’t to judge any of these people; we don’t know the circumstances in their lives that have led them to such dissolution. Whether rich or poor, God is the judge of every person.

But I bring these things up as it helps my own understanding that God’s values are not the same as man’s. His thoughts are not our thoughts, nor are our ways His ways, for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so His ways are higher than our ways, and His thoughts than our thoughts (Isaiah 55:8-9).

So how do we know the thoughts and ways of God? By diligently studying His written Word. Without His Word we are left wandering disoriented through an insane world. With His Word as our guide, we can learn to judge properly the things we encounter in the world.

Unfortunately, we have a tendency to judge by outer appearance. And our natural instinct is to want to join with those we deem successful while keeping our distance from those whose appearance does not conform to our standards of acceptability. Let’s face it: the wealthy and better groomed are more appealing than the poor and unwashed. Every sensory aspect of our being, particularly those of sight and smell, draw us toward the one, and repulse us from the other.

But our heavenly Father wants more from us; He wants us to love and care for the unlovely of this world no less than for those whose appearance and station in life is more appealing.

That’s not to say we should avoid the latter and attach ourselves exclusively, or even almost exclusively to the former. There is no more virtue in poverty than there is in wealth; everything depends on the condition of the heart. And there are those in all classes of every society who want nothing to do with the Lord or His truth.

Keeping things in proper perspective, the Lord would have us treat all men equally:

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. (James 2:1-9)

Yet the converse is true also. If we treat the wealthy with disdain and consider the poor the only ones worthy of God's (read, "our") grace, then we have just as well become respecters of persons as those who cater to the wealthy.

These days, thanks to the "egalitarian" mindset of socialism which is fast taking hold in the United States, there is just as much snobbery among the poor as among the rich. Those who proudly hold up signs saying, "We are the 99%" are just as guilty of snobbery as the alleged 1% they hate and ridicule as "fat cats." The "99%" protestors consider themselves morally superior to those on whom they depend for their jobs and all the material things they enjoy. They hate the "fat cats" who produce the world's goods, while they themselves clamor for those same goods, sometimes through rioting and looting. Is there really any greater hypocrisy than that?

And believers in the Lord who take the side of the poor, right or wrong, are guilty of respecting persons. God made it clear in His Word that His people are to treat the rich and the poor in the same manner—with liberty and justice for all:

The rich and poor meet together. YHWH is the maker of them all. (Proverbs 22:2)

You shall not practice unrighteousness in judgment; you shall not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the great, but you shall judge your neighbor in righteousness. (Leviticus 19:15)

It's a shame that on one hand the wealthy are given greater preference within modern systems of jurisprudence simply because they can afford better legal representation. But it's also a shame that the poor are often given preference out of sympathy for their condition. Either way, justice is not served. And if justice is not served, then God is not served.

He has shown you, O man, what is good. And what does YHWH require of you but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8)

The Lord would not have His people judge in the same manner the world judges. Yet there are those who call themselves "Christians," and even present themselves as "Reverend,"

who judge matters without hearing the facts thoroughly. They take sides in conflicts between black and white, male and female, rich and poor, with no regard to the truth. They take up worldly causes in the name of Jesus, insisting that the Lord is on their side. But truth suffers as Christians are pitted against Christians on the basis of temporal preferences.

There is no place for such irrational, ungodly, at times even violent reactions because of biases one way or the other.

Let us not forget how God distinguishes godliness from ungodliness:

For, brethren, you have been called to liberty—only not liberty for the flesh's opportunity, but serve one another in love. For all the Law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

But if you bite and devour one another, take heed that you do not be consumed by one another.

This I say then: walk in the Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary to one another, so that you cannot do the things that you would.

But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.

Now the works of the flesh are revealed, which are these: adultery, fornication, impurity, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, contention, jealousy, wrath, strife, divisions, heresies, envy, murder, drunkenness, reveling, and such like, of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, humility, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts.

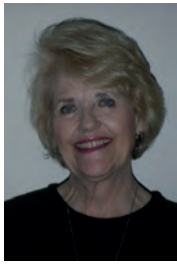
If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be self-conceited, irritating one another, envying one another. (Galatians 5:13-26)

If we as believers in Jesus—true believers, and not in name only—find ourselves so impassioned by our penchant to choose sides on the basis of temporal preferences that we act contrary to the fruit of the Spirit, we will be found serving Satan and not the Lord we claim to serve. In all things, and in all manner of conduct, we must examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith:

Examine yourselves, whether you are in the faith; prove your own selves. (2 Corinthians 13:50a).

The scriptural admonition to examine ourselves to determine if we are in the faith goes far beyond a one-time (or even often) assessment to determine if we believe correct doctrine. It is to be a consistent, moment-by-moment act on our part relative to everything we think, say and do. Is it of the faith, or is it of the flesh?

Honesty toward God begins with honesty toward ourselves. If we are not honest within ourselves, we cannot be honest toward God. ♦



Jean's Turn *A Testimony for Christ*

By Jean Dager

Birthdays! They come much more quickly than they used to. As my years on this earth flash by, I find myself pondering what kind of testimony my life is for Christ. Does God's light shine through me? There are times when I identify with Jesus' admonition to Peter that the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. When we're born again, we are confident that the Holy Spirit lives within us. But it's possible to deflect that light if we're not careful in our outward actions toward others. I had a rude awakening of this truth recently when I reacted in such an angry and negative way to a person who was highly critical of a wrong move I made while playing a simple board game. Not good sportsmanship (or love) on either of our parts. Afterwards we both apologized. But nevertheless, I was disappointed in my own behavior at that moment which surely was not Christ-like.

It's spiritually refreshing when we come across people in whom we are aware the Lord lives. Every time we're with them, we sense the glory and presence of God. I remember meeting a man simply known as "Dad Jespersen" in whom I could see the Spirit of the Lord reflected. He recently went on to personally encounter the glory of the Lord at an advanced age. His daughter wrote a memorial about his life and said he was an example of how to live and how to grow old. She recalled that his thankfulness and joy characterized his last years as a result of his life choice of walking with God. As he advanced in age, so did his limitations. She said he became sweeter and sweeter—never complaining, but accepting his lot with joy. People always left his presence blessed; I was one of them.

David Wilkerson wrote an inspiring devotional titled, "Our Lives Are Letters." In it he stated, "Spending time in the presence of the Lord produces a manifestation of Christ

to a lost world....How exactly do we become God's letters to the world? It happens only by the work of the Holy Spirit. At the moment we are saved, the Holy Spirit imprints in us the very image of Jesus and He continues shaping His image in us at all times. The Spirit's mission is to form in us an image of Christ that is so truthful and accurate, it will actually pierce people's consciences."

I'm inspired when I read about testimonies of saints whose lives reflect the absolute love of Jesus to others. One example is the life of Eric Liddell, who is mainly remembered by the world because he refused to run on a Sunday (which he considered the Sabbath) in the 1924 Olympics. The award-winning movie *Chariots of Fire* was about his early life competing in the Olympic Games. However, the biography of his life reveals he was much more than an Olympic Gold Medalist. He went on to become a missionary to China and was later interned in a Japanese prison camp during World War II. There, he was found to be an exemplary witness of his faith in Christ to all who knew him.

During his short lifetime he humbly and selflessly served others, encouraging them in their faith. He died at age 43. A man who knew him most of his life summed up his friend's life in a memorial as follows: "He was literally God-controlled, in his thoughts, judgments, actions, and words to an extent I have never seen surpassed, and rarely seen equaled. Every morning he rose early to pray and read the Bible in silence, talking and listening to God, pondering the day ahead and often smiling as if at a private joke."

Eric Liddell's life was a wonderful example of the light of Christ shining through a man.

As I abide in Christ each day, may He enable me to be a testimony of my faith to others, taking to heart 2 Peter 1:5-8:

"...make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

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