FROM THE BEGINNING of Donald Trump’s foray into politics there have been alleged prophecies and speculation that he was hand-picked by God to be President of the United States. Some claim to have had a revelation from God years before that he would become president. As skeptical as I am about the announcement of “prophecies” after-the-fact, I’ll leave that between the “prophesiers and God.”

Additionally, because of his strong stand on behalf of the nation of Israel, more than one person has claimed that he is acting in the role of a latter-day Cyrus, paving the way for the construction of the third temple.

Whatever anyone thinks of him, there is no doubt that Donald Trump is a unique person—unlike anyone else who has held the highest office in the most powerful nation on earth. And for this time in history, his name “Trump” is significant, not only for how he has trumped his political foes, but for how God may use him. God’s Word confirms that He chose Donald Trump for this critical hour in the nation’s history:

Let every soul be subject to the higher authorities. For there is no authority but from God. The authorities that exist are appointed by God.

Therefore, whoever opposes the authorities, opposes God’s arrangement, and those who oppose shall receive judgment to themselves.

For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Will you then not be afraid of the authority? Do that which is good, and you will have praise from him, for he is the servant of God to you for good. But if you do that which is evil, be afraid; because he does not bear the sword in vain, for he is the servant of God, an avenger to execute wrath upon him that does evil. (Romans 13:1-4)

Yet if this is true, then Barack Obama’s power came from God as well. In truth, we’ll find that all authority on earth, whether good or evil in the sight of men, comes from God.

(Continued on page 10)
WHY MEDIA SPOTLIGHT?

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

God’s Word exhorts, “Buy the truth and do not sell it” (Prov. 23:23). Therefore we do not sell Media Spotlight.

Begun in 1977, Media Spotlight was the first ministry on a national scale to address the ungodly nature of the secular media—motion pictures, television, toys, games and other things that contribute to Christians living no differently than the rest of the world.

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

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

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

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

A PERSONAL NOTE

Dear Friends,

In our previous issue we informed you of Al’s health issues. Since then he has was admitted to the hospital in January suffering from congestive heart failure. After six days—four in the ICU—he was released with the crisis passing. Now he is following a strict low-sodium diet. In February he went to Swedish Medical Center in Seattle for an angiogram. The doctor found a blocked artery in one of the grafts Al had in 2004 when he had a quadruple bypass. The doctor administered angioplasty to open the artery. Now they are concerned for his aortic valve and want to do a CT angioplasty to find out how things are there. But they are also concerned for his kidneys that appear to be compromised.

Jean has been going to physical therapy sessions for her sciatica problems, and they seem to be working for the most part, but she still experiences bouts of pain while doing ordinary housework.

We tell you this because we continue to covet your prayers for the health of us both. In the meantime, we have no plans to discontinue publishing Media Spotlight as long as our Father allows.

As always, we thank those of you who bless us with your faithful support for the ministry. We pray that all of your needs be met, both physical and spiritual. We are truly blessed to be a part of the Body of Christ. Without Him, and without you, how tragically different our lives would be. While the time remains, we hope that all true believers in Jesus will work diligently for the Kingdom of God, expecting that in due time our Lord will return to bring the Kingdom to bear in this fallen world.

Our only real hope is in Him. And although we may have our opinions on how things in this world could be vastly improved from a pragmatic standpoint, we know that the creation will not be redeemed fully until our Father in Heaven purges it by fire and brings about His new heavens and new earth.

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

In Jesus’ love,

Al and Jean
EDITORIAL

THE HYPOCRISY OF ME TOO

Ever since the outing of Harvey Weinstein in October, 2017, as one of Hollywood’s most notorious sexual predators, a ground swell of similar accusations by alleged victims of sexual harassment and abuse has toppled other Hollywood celebrities, as well as politicians and business moguls. That ground swell has come to be called “Me Too” by women allied against sexual predators.

No one can argue against the idea that the time has come for sexual predators to face the consequences of their misdeeds. In view of the often overlooked or neglected cries of women who have legitimately experienced harm at the hands of powerful men, exposure to the public seems the only way they can redress their grievances.

Unfortunately, the movement is heavily influenced by feminist ideologues with an agenda to further emasculate men and bring them into subjection to women “empowered” to take their place as equals (read: superiors) in the world. Thus, a concerted effort to belittle men as inferior in many ways, making cowardly men shrink from expressing any feelings of attraction toward women for fear they may be accused of sexual harassment as well.

This also serves the agenda of sexual deviants to blur the distinction between men and women, and bring confusion.

Also unfortunately, many Christian women are buying into the feminist propaganda. Joining with the hyped protests that give the impression that “all men are pigs,” even Christian women (and some men) are championing the Me Too cause.

What the Me Too proponents seem to miss (or ignore) is that such behavior is nothing new to Hollywood, politics, or business. It’s especially ludicrous to see how “shocked” people were about Weinstein’s exposure. It’s as if they had no idea that the “casting couch” has been a staple in the entertainment world for over a hundred years, especially since the invention of motion pictures at the turn of the 20th century.

Even more ridiculous has been the “outrage” exhibited by prominent stars like Meryl Streep (and others) who wept with joy and gave a standing ovation when film director and producer Roman Polanski was announced as Best Director for his film The Pianist at the 2003 Academy Awards. Polanski has been in self-imposed exile in France since being convicted in 1978 of sexual assault and rape of a 13-year-old.

Now those Hollywood celebrities are “outraged” that sexual harassment exists? It may have been some 14 years ago, but why have none of them at least announced that they erred in lauding Polanski at the time?

The extent of Hollywood’s hypocrisy was recently exhibited at the 2018 Grammys that featured several acts and speeches lambasting sexual predators and lauding the Me Too Movement. Of note was an impassioned speech by Oprah Winfrey who was immediately tagged as a potential presidential candidate to run against Donald Trump in 2020.

With all their “outrage” permeating the atmosphere, they laughed and applauded a number of dance acts featuring women wearing almost nothing while bumping, gyrating, and simulating sex with male partners. Many of the women in the audience wore extremely revealing outfits on which the TV cameras were conspicuously focused. So it’s okay to look, but don’t touch—as if most men could leave it at that.

Then came the standing ovation for hip-hop rapper Jay-Z who was presented with the Salute to Industry Icons Award. Jay-Z is infamous for his misogynistic-themed “songs” that encourage violence and sexual abuse against women. Since he married actress-singer Beyoncé in 2008, Jay-Z reportedly regrets his past misogynistic lyrics. Yet he continues to receive royalties and has not attempted to have his past recordings discontinued in production. He may be under contract to continue them, but he should have at least made a show of regret by assigning all royalties to charity—or something.

All that aside, where were all the Me Too advocates during Jay-Z’s most prolific years as a flaming misogynist?

The vile nature of these people is glossed over. It isn’t as if they haven’t heard the truth; they have. But they have rejected the truth and choose to ridicule it.

God’s Word warns against them:

The vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practice hypocrisy, and to utter error against YHWH, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail. (Isaiah 32:6)

This world is corrupt; Hollywood is especially vile, with a long and prolific history of hedonism driving its engine. Most of what comes out of Hollywood is profane, the vast majority of movies feature obscene and anti-Christ language and activity. Gratuitous violence, illicit sex, sexual deviancy, lawlessness, and ridicule of anything holy permeate the big screen. Often these things are couched in humor to put off otherwise discerning people, including Christians.

The television industry isn’t much better, but cable television is running a close second. Yet entertainment celebrities (who would be court jesters in Medieval times) constantly moralize about issues they deem important—most of which tend toward leftist, anti-Christ causes.

Spare me the moralizing. I’ll get mine from God’s Word.
CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF CHRIST

By Albert James Dager

We know that all things work together for good to those who love God—to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, he also predetermined to be conformed to the image of His Son, so that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. (Romans 8:28-29)

Believers in Jesus often rest on the knowledge that all things work together for their good, especially during times of trial and tribulation—and rightly so. But what is often neglected in practice, if not in theory, is the following verse which tells us that our Father in Heaven has predetermined that we should be conformed to the image of His Son. That is the reason He works all things for our good. And it is up to us to surrender to His will in the matter.

There are those who say that man has no say in what transpires in his life. Everything he does is predestined by God. But the truth is that we do have a say in how we conduct ourselves in relation to our Father’s desires. Otherwise we would be accusing Him of causing us to sin. After all, if everything we do has been predestined by Him, then we are merely robots with no will of our own. But just as sin is a choice, so, too, is obedience. When we choose to sin we are exercising our own will; when we choose not to sin, or to obey His Word, we are also exercising our own will. Yet the overall predetermined will of the Father is that we become conformed to the image of His dear Son. How we progress along that predetermined path, however, is up to us. Will we bend our wills to His will sufficiently to come to that desired spiritual end?

Scripture gives instructions on how we are to exercise our will. The Apostle Paul tells us not to be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of our mind (Romans 12:2). That takes an act of one’s own will. Otherwise, why would He have instructed us to be transformed?

We may choose to live worldly, following the dictates of our desires, or we may choose to be transformed by the renewing of our minds—surrendering our thoughts and desires to the will of our Father. Only by making the latter choice may we eventually become conformed to the image of Christ.

I say “eventually” because this is a process that varies from person to person.

Like the Apostle Paul, I have to say that I have not yet attained, nor have I become perfect (Philippians 3:12). In truth, as long as we are in our mortal flesh we will never attain perfection. But like Paul, if we are truly born anew by God’s Spirit we will desire to know Jesus and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death, if by any means we might attain unto the resurrection of the dead (Philippians 2:10-11).

The only way we may achieve any state of perfection is to be conformed to the image of Christ. Physically, we were created in the image and likeness of Elohiym. But we were born in sin inherited from our first father, Adam. He lost the image of Elohiym in the spirit and was accounted dead. Likewise, from birth we are accounted dead to Elohiym. But we have been made alive with Christ (by grace we are saved) (Ephesians 2:5).

It is one thing to know this truth; it is another thing to live by it. And that is what we must do in order to be conformed to the image of Christ.

Even as I expound on this truth, I am cognizant of my own failings and shortcomings. All I can say is, although we cannot expect perfection in our flesh, we must strive for perfection in our spirit and in our mind:

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation and took upon Himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death—even the death of the cross. (Philippians 2:5-8)

Just as Jesus went to the cross in obedience to the Father, so we, too, must go to the cross in obedience to Christ:

“He who does not take up his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.” (Matthew 10:38)

“Whoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever will save his life shall lose it, but whoever shall lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man if he should gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Mark 8:34b-37)

We were initially nailed to the cross with Christ when we first trusted in His sacrifice as the perfect atonement for our sins, thus removing from us the burden of the Law under which we stood condemned:

And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all sins, blotting out
the handwriting of ordinances that was against us—which was contrary to us—and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross. (Colossians 2:13-14)

He bought us with a price that was incalculable in its worth: His very life. Now we are beholden to Him as slaves, even though the Father counts us as sons. He wishes to treat us as sons, yet we should be so grateful that we would willingly count ourselves His slaves, just as Paul, Peter, and Jude did (Romans 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1; Jude 1).

Some translations use the word “servant” in the cited verses, but the Greek *doulos* means “slave” either voluntary or involuntary. And if these champions of the faith considered themselves slaves to Jesus, how could we not also?

As slaves of Christ our desire is to be like Him—to exercise His will in our lives just as any obedient slave would do for an earthly master.

In our case we have a Master who loves us and would do nothing to harm us. But He will chastise us if we stray from the path we said we would follow when we received Him as our Savior. Yet His chastisement is designed to bless us by conforming us to His image.

So how may His image be revealed in us? To answer this question we have to understand what He was like when He came as a babe in a manger, grew in wisdom and knowledge, and attained the position of full sonship with the Father through His obedience to the Father’s will.

He was the Son of God from the start, but just as any heir to a kingdom must first grow from childhood to maturity in order to assume the full responsibility of the throne, He had to attain adulthood. His years of coming to maturity as a man included learning from the Scriptures what were His responsibilities and privileges. This because He put off the glory He had with the Father as the Word of God in order to become a man, subjecting Himself to the humility of dying on a cross at the hands of His creation, should cause us to look upon ourselves as unworthy of Him. Stripped of His clothing, scorned and scoffed at, He offered no words in His own defense as He stood before a pagan Roman tribune while hearing the cries of His enemies, “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!” He was nailed to a wooden cross, in excruciating pain, yet among His final words were, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.

Our normal human reaction would have been to defend ourselves, cry out for justice, explain how we do not deserve such cruel treatment. If possible we would want to take out as many of our enemies as possible in an attempt to save ourselves.

But Christ, knowing the will of the Father to redeem His creation, withstood what few men could. By His humility He fulfilled what was written of Him centuries before:

He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth. He was brought like a lamb to the slaughter, and just as a sheep before her shearers is mute, so He did not open His mouth.

He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare His generation? For He was cut off among His enemies, subjecting Himself to the humiliation of dying on a cross at the hands of His creation, should cause us to look upon ourselves as unworthy of Him. Stripped of His clothing, scorned and scoffed at, He offered no words in His own defense as He stood before a pagan Roman tribune while hearing the cries of His enemies, “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!” He was nailed to a wooden cross, in excruciating pain, yet among His final words were, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.

Yet it pleased YHWH to bruise Him. He has put Him to grief. When You shall make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of YHWH shall prosper in His hand. (Isaiah 53:7-10)

An important first step in being conformed to the image of Christ is for us to exercise humility toward our heavenly Father and toward our fellow man, just as Christ did. It’s easy to exercise humility toward Yahweh, provided we believe in Him in the first place. But it’s not so easy to exercise humility toward men—particularly toward our enemies. It’s difficult enough to exhibit humility with our spouses and others close to us, let alone with our enemies, or even our brethren in Christ who get on our nerves. Yet on what is His command to love our enemies based but humility?
Wisdom

Just as Christ, as the Word of God, possessed humility within His nature, so, too, He possessed the wisdom of divinity when He fashioned the creation:

By wisdom YHWH has founded the earth; by understanding He has established the heavens. (Proverbs 3:19)

When He became a man, the Word of God exhibited wisdom at the center of His interaction with men—particularly those who sought to trip Him with their human cunning:

Then the Pharisees went and took counsel how they might entangle Him in His talk. And they sent out to Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, “Master, we know that you are true, and teach the way of God in truth. Neither do you care for any man, for you do not regard men’s persons. Tell us, therefore, what you think. Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?”

But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, “Why do you test Me, you hypocrites? Show Me the tribute money.”

And they brought a denarius to Him.
And He said to them, “Whose is this image and superscription?”

They said to Him, “Caesar’s.”
Then He said to them, “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”

When they had heard these words, they marveled, and left Him, and went their way.

The same day, the Sadducees—who say that there is no resurrection—came to Him and asked Him, saying, “Master, Moses said that if a man dies having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up seed for his brother. Now there were with us seven brothers. And the first, when he had married a wife, died, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother. Likewise, the second also, and the third, to the seventh. And last of all, the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife shall she be of the seven, for they all had her?”

Jesus answered and said to them, “You err, not knowing the Scriptures or the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in Heaven.

“But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken to you by God, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.’”

And when the crowd heard this, they were astonished at His teaching.

But when the Pharisees heard that He had put the Sadducees to silence, they gathered together. Then one of them, who was a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, “Master, which is the great commandment in the law?”

Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, “What do you think of Christ? Whose Son is He?”

They said to Him, “The Son of David.”
He said to them, “How then does David in the Spirit call him ‘Lord,’ saying, ‘YHWH said to my Lord, “You sit on My right hand till I make your enemies your footstool’”? ”

“If David called him ‘Lord,’ how is He his son?”
And no man was able to answer Him a word. Neither dared any man from that day forth ask Him any more questions. (Matthew 22:15-46)

True wisdom from our heavenly Father stops the mouths of the naysayers and skeptics, both religious and irreligious. We must not rest in our own wisdom, but seek the wisdom of God in all things. Thus He tells us to pray for wisdom:

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God who gives to all men liberally and does not rebuke, and it shall be given to him.

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering, because he who wavers is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For do not let that man think that he shall receive anything from the Lord. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways. (James 1:5-8)

Double-mindedness is a human characteristic that plagues us all. Sometimes we can’t make up our minds even about trivial matters, let alone the weightier things of God’s Kingdom. Again, it takes an act of our will to ask our Father for wisdom in all we do. Without His wisdom we will be like a boat tossed on the sea of confusion and indecision.

Now, there is a degree of wisdom available to all men, and we often exercise that wisdom properly. But by-and-large, human wisdom cannot work to conform us to the image of Christ, and that is what we are desiring.

Who is a wise and intelligent man among you? Let him show his works out of a good conduct with the humility of wisdom.

But if you have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, do not boast, and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.
But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. (James 3:13-18)

Wisdom from above is equated with humility. It looks upon all things with pure motives, not seeking self-satisfaction, but the “good fruits” associated with the Spirit of God. If we can exercise that kind of wisdom, we will be a good distance on our way in conforming to the image of Christ.

Compassion

The Word of God often exhibited compassion on His people, even as they rebelled against Him time after time.

YHWH is gracious, full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy. YHWH is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works. (Psalm 145:8-9)

Jesus tells of His Father’s mercy toward all:

“You have heard that it has been said, ‘You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies; bless those who curse you; do good to those who hate you; and pray for those who slander you and persecute you, so that you may be the children of your Father who is in Heaven. For He causes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

“For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the publicans do the same?

“And if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the publicans do so?

“Therefore, be perfect even as your Father who is in Heaven is perfect. (Matthew 5:43-48)

When He ministered to His people while on earth, Jesus often exercised compassion. Every time He healed a person of physical, mental, and/or spiritual ailments He exhibited compassion.

He had compassion on the multitudes that followed Him when they were hungry (Matthew 8:2-9)

He had compassion on the people because they were like sheep without a shepherd. Thus He was prompted to teach them many things (Mark 6:34).

Compassion must be at the heart of all ministry for Christ. If we teach, we must do so because of compassion for our brethren many of whom are like sheep without a shepherd even to this day. Religious people are not true shepherds; they are hirelings who will surrender the flock to the wolves for any number of reasons. Religion is an enemy of God; it promotes human wisdom rather than the wisdom of God. True shepherds serve God’s people to the detriment of their own lives. Without compassion we cannot be conformed to the image of Christ.

Righteous Anger

The writings of the prophets is replete with examples of Yahweh’s anger being kindled against His enemies, and even against His people when they rebelled against Him. He spared those whose hearts were pure, but often destroyed or severely punished those who were willfully rebellious. As the man Jesus, the Word of God had compassion on the multitudes, recognizing that what they believed and acted upon was faulty because they were following hirelings within their religious tradition—rabbinic Judaism. But He had strong reactions against those who were oppressing them, taking advantage of them, and making merchandise of them:

The Jews’ Passover was approaching, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found sitting in the temple those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, and the moneychangers. And having made a whip out of cords He drove them all out of the temple—along with the sheep, and the oxen—and poured out the changers’ money, and overthrew the tables. And to those who sold doves He said, “Take these things away! Do not make My Father’s house a house of merchandise!”

His disciples remembered that it was written, “The zeal of Your house has consumed Me.” (John 2:13-17)

Jesus didn’t just happen upon this scene to discover that the temple was being used in an unholy manner. John tells us that before He entered the temple He took the time to weave a whip to use against these people (John 2:15). His actions were premeditated. No doubt, over the years that He visited the temple during Passover—and perhaps at other times—He witnessed this same thing. But He waited patiently until the time was right for Him to act.

Jesus was particularly angry with the religious leaders who resisted Him. He had little patience for them. After answering their attempts to trip Him, Jesus turned to the crowd and said:

“The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. Therefore, whatever they bid you observe, that observe and do. But do not follow their works, for they say, and do not do. For they bind heavy burdens, grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But they do all their works in order to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called by men, ‘Master; master.’ But do not be called ‘master,’ for one is your Master—even Christ—and all of you are brothers.

“And call no man upon this earth your father, for one is your Father, who is in Heaven.

“Neither be called masters, for one is your Master, even Christ.
“But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever will exalt himself shall be abased, and he who will humble himself shall be exalted.

“But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men. For you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayer. Therefore you shall receive the greater damnation.

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, you make him twofold more the child of Gehenna than yourselves.

“Woe to you, you blind guides who say, ‘Whoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor’!

“You fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold; or the temple that sanctifies the gold?

And, ‘Whoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.’

“Woe to you, you blind guides who say, ‘Whoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor’!

“Woe to you, you blind guides who say, ‘Whoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.’

“You fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifies the gift?

“Woe to you, you blind guides who say, ‘Whoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.’

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

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess!

“You blind Pharisee; cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter so that the outside of them may be clean also!

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitened sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but within are full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness!

“Even so, you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity!

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchers of the righteous, and say, ‘If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.’ Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves, that you are the children of those who killed the prophets. You fill up then, the measure of your fathers!

“You serpents; you generation of vipers! How can you escape the damnation of Gehenna?

“Therefore, look! I send to you prophets, and wise men, and scribes, and some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city, so that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth—from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom you slew between the temple and the altar.

“Truly, I say to you, all these things shall come upon this generation!

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem—you that kill the prophets, and stone those who are sent to you—how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not!

“Look! Your house is left to you desolate! For I say to you, you shall not see Me henceforth, till you shall say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.’” (Matthew 23:2-38)

Not such ‘loving’ words, were they?

There are times when it is necessary to confront evil head on. Too often, God’s people turn from the unpleasant task of standing up for righteousness and truth, fearing the opinions of their detractors, or worse, fearing the opinions of bystanders—even other brethren in Christ who lack understanding and discernment.

Jesus didn’t die on the cross to produce a following of milquetoasts who shrink at the slightest discomfort, willing to allow evil to triumph rather than confront it in the Spirit of God. This doesn’t mean we should be haphazard and reckless in our confrontation, but we must exercise wisdom, discernment, and many other qualities associated with the image of Christ before and while we confront evil.

We must first discern whether or not the person we confront is willfully ignorant and rebellious against God, or he, too, is a victim of others, possibly open to the truth. We must first determine which is the case, for this will influence how we respond.

We must also not allow ourselves to be swayed by the opinions of bystanders—even other brethren in Christ who lack understanding and discernment.

There are times when it is necessary to confront evil head on. Too often, God’s people turn from the unpleasant task of standing up for righteousness and truth, fearing the opinions of their detractors, or worse, fearing the opinions of bystanders—even other brethren in Christ who lack understanding and discernment.

Jesus didn’t die on the cross to produce a following of milquetoasts who shrink at the slightest discomfort, willing to allow evil to triumph rather than confront it in the Spirit of God. This doesn’t mean we should be haphazard and reckless in our confrontation, but we must exercise wisdom, discernment, and many other qualities associated with the image of Christ before and while we confront evil.

We must first discern whether or not the person we confront is willfully ignorant and rebellious against God, or he, too, is a victim of others, possibly open to the truth. Yet even anger must be tempered with righteousness:

Be angry, but do not sin. Do not allow the sun to go down upon your anger, not give place to the devil. (Ephesians 4:26-27)

How can we be angry and not sin? By being angry only with righteous anger—by judging righteously in the first place:

Do not judge according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment. (John 7:24)

If our anger is unjust, it gives place to the devil. If it is just, it conforms to the image of Christ.
CBS’s new comedy series Living Biblically is based on the A.J. Jacobs book, The Year of Living Biblically, in which the author chronicles his year-long attempt to live entirely by biblical precepts. In the TV series, Chip Curry (Jay R. Ferguson), a newspaper movie critic, finds himself at a crossroads in life after the death of his best friend, and his wife Leslie (Lindsey Kraft) tells him she’s pregnant. Coming across a Bible in a bookstore, Chip—a lapsed Catholic—feels that he should get his life in order. To do so, he decides to live the next nine months entirely by the Bible until the birth of their child. This presents a number of dilemmas for him, as he finds that to do so requires a lot of unconventional changes in thinking—changes that put him at odds with his wife and friends. His wife is a skeptic (she wonders if they’ll still have fun), but supportive of his plan; his friends are not so sure about what he’s trying to do.

In episode one, Chip goes to confession for the first time in years, and reveals his plan to his priest, Father Gene (Ian Gomez). Father Gene tells him that it’s impossible to live entirely by the Bible, and points out that Chip is wearing a shirt of blended fabrics, contrary to Leviticus 19:19. Father Gene is amused, but also concerned that Chip was embarking on a futile quest for perfection.

Running into Father Gene at a bar, Chip meets Gene’s friend, Rabbi Gil (David Krumholtz), and decides that the two of them together could be Chip’s spiritual mentors during his period of living biblically.

Chip is thereafter confronted with difficult choices in how to live biblically yet not break any laws. Upset that one of his coworkers is engaged in a longstanding affair although married, Chip struggles within himself. He picks up a stone from a planter and beans his friend with it. He then grabs his wife and they run out of the restaurant, Chip exclaiming, “And you thought there would be no fun in this”!

The next day at work, the bruised coworker thanks Chip for bringing home to him the error of his ways. He decided to tell his wife about the affair and they are going to be entering counseling together.

In fact, every move Chip makes in trying to live biblically results in a good outcome.

Big Bang Theory star Johnny Galecki is one of the executive producers, as is Patrick Walsh, a self-described lapsed Catholic. Galecki also has some Catholic background because his mother spent many years in a convent prior to meeting Galecki’s father.

Walsh’s stated desire was to make the program as entertaining and respectful as possible. “It’s tricky to do both,” he said, “but I hope we found a good balance for it, because we have a great deal of respect for religion and think it’s funny without having to step on anybody’s toes....

“It was important to me, with the show, to pick a side, which to me had to be the side that I knew the most about—Catholicism. It’s how I grew up. But to also have that other point of view, have the rabbi come in and give the Jewish take on things.”

From a comedic and technical standpoint, Living Biblically isn’t bad. There are some elements that are genuinely humorous. That aside, despite their claim to maintaining “clean language” and a family-friendly tone, there are some rude and suggestive elements to the show. His boss, Ms. Meadows (Camryn Manheim) is a lesbian, although it’s said that this won’t be a major element in the program.

Faith is called into question when Leslie asks Chip, “What if I don’t want to raise our kid religious? I work in medicine. Faith isn’t easy when you see the things I see all day.”

Chip responds, “Come on. You gotta have faith. What about sunsets or season four of The Wire?”

“Well, asks Leslie, “what about super gonorrhea? Didn’t God design that, too? And if so—why?”

How do you pit sunsets against diseases when talking faith?

The problem isn’t so much that Living Biblically attempts to offend Christianity or religion in general; there are plenty of problems with religion, including Christianity, to merit offense. But in the hands of non-believers, the Bible’s truths and meaning are going to be convoluted. Such people do not understand the reason for the Old Covenant laws and sanctions, or the New Covenant truths that apply today.

I’m sorry, but I can’t recommend a program that uses God’s Word as the basis for comedy.

The Bible in the hands of non-believers is like a gun in the hands of a child.

No good can come from it. ❖
And if ancient Israel is an example, we can deduce that, generally, nations receive the governments they deserve.

I say “generally” because superseding a nation’s merits or lack thereof, is God’s overall plan of redemption. This is why we have seen such a drastic difference between the Obama administration and the Trump administration. Many believers saw Obama’s presidency as a judgment on America for having largely turned our backs on Jesus Christ as meaningful in our lives—an increasing number actually despising Him—and for the acceptance of sexual deviancy, abortion, and other overt evils as normal and even to be celebrated.

The backslidden condition of so many of America’s churches is a further indictment against the nation. Their emphasis on feel-good religion in place of true holiness (not the professed “holiness” of some churches that employ that word in their names) mocks the holiness of God and how He desires that His people be conformed to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29). Their foray into New Age meditative, contemplative “prayer” that bespeaks a false piety leads the sheep into the clutches of wolves. Their desire to build large churches to parade the one-man shows whose sermons are more anecdotal and comedic posturing than Scripture-based make a sham of any semblance of ministry they may profess. Their merchandising of the Body of Christ in their quest for wealth to build their religious empires is an affront to our Holy Father in Heaven.

Yet there has remained a remnant of true believers coupled with right-thinking moral people who hate the evils that permeate our society. Our prayers may or may not have been the deciding factor in the election of Donald Trump over Hillary Clinton, but knowing the extremely ungodly, leftist ideology of the Democrat/Clinton political machine, we must thank our heavenly Father for sparing us her ascension to power.

But I believe there is something above all this that was the deciding factor in Trump’s election—something that has escaped the left-leaning Christians calling for his impeachment; something that has escaped even the Christian right. That something has been hinted at by President Trump’s proclamation that the United States now formally recognizes Jerusalem as the true capital of Israel.

Christians on the left have taken the side of the Palestinians, Syria, Iran, Turkey, and other nations opposed to Israel’s existence. Christians on the right are hoping for the third temple to be constructed.

Both are in error, but in different ways.

President Trump’s December 6 proclamation recognizing Jerusalem as Israel’s capital has a different prophetic significance from that of looking toward a third temple—a significance that has for the first time caused excitement in my own heart at the prospect of what this may herald.

I do not look forward to a temple being built; if something called a temple is built, it won’t be a place for legitimate sacrifices. That would denigrate the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. What I do look forward to is Israel itself not only claiming Jerusalem as its capital, but establishing it as such, followed by a large influx of Jews into the city. That points to the rise of anti-Christ followed by the Lord’s return. (More on this later.)

In that regard it is significant that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stated on December 21, 2016, “Jerusalem is our capital. We will continue to build in it and foreign embassies, led by the US embassy, will move to Jerusalem. It will happen.”

His remarks preceded a vote by the UN Security Council to censure the United States for its policy on Jerusalem.

President Trump’s proclamation ends 22 years of U.S. policy that ignored a 1995 act of Congress urging the federal government to recognize Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and relocate our embassy to Jerusalem. The Jerusalem Embassy Act passed with an overwhelming bipartisan majority in 1995, and was reaffirmed by unanimous vote of the Senate only six months prior to Trump’s proclamation. On June 5, 2017, the U.S. Senate unanimously voted 90-0 in passing a resolution commemorating the 50th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem, thus reaffirming the Jerusalem Embassy Act. It also called upon the President and all United States officials to abide by its provisions.

So in spite of the hoopla expressed against President Trump for finally implementing the Act (the audacity of this non-politician!), it has been a U.S. Policy for over two decades.

Yes, it was audacity on Trump’s part to finally exhibit the courage to do what prior presidents feared. But that’s why God chose him as president for this time. Who else would be so audacious?

Certainly no career politician. The Act contained a clause allowing the president to sign a waiver that would delay its implementation. Presidents Clinton, Bush, and Obama signed the waiver every six months, as did President Trump the first time he was presented with it. But in keeping with one of the promises he made to voters in 2016, he didn’t sign the waiver the second time.
Immediately after President Trump proclaimed that the U.S. would recognize Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, the sparks began flying.

As expected, the Islamic world expressed outrage. Violence toward Israel has increased as Hamas has stepped up its firing of rockets out of Gaza. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has declared that he no longer recognizes the U.S. as a mediator in Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

On December 18, the UN Security Council approved a measure that would reverse President Trump’s proclamation. All 14 countries on the council besides the United States supported the Egyptian sponsored resolution, including the United Kingdom. Using the United States’s veto power, Ambassador Nikki Haley vetoed the resolution.

In an emergency meeting of the UN General Assembly called to vote on a resolution by Turkey and Yemen condemning the U.S. action and demanding a reversal, the resolution passed by a vote of 128 to 9, with 35 nations abstaining, 21 not voting, and 9 absent. The resolution is strictly declarative or symbolic, and is not binding.

Turkey has led vocal opposition to Trump’s proclamation. According to some diplomats, Turkey is using the issue to “catapult itself to a leadership position in the Muslim world.”

I believe Turkey’s role in this, and particularly its desire to lead the Muslim world, is significant—reasons for which are stated later in this article.

In her address to the UN General Assembly, Haley stated:

The United States will remember this day in which it was singled out for attack in the General Assembly for the very act of exercising our right as a sovereign nation. We will remember it when we are called upon to once again make the world’s largest contribution to the United Nations. And we will remember it when so many countries come calling on us, as they so often do, to pay even more and to use our influence for their benefit.

America will put our embassy in Jerusalem. That is what the American people want us to do, and it is the right thing to do. No vote in the United Nations will make any difference on that.

But this vote will make a difference on how Americans look at the UN and on how we look at countries who disrespect us in the UN. And this vote will be remembered.

Following the vote by the UN General Assembly, Ambassador Haley posted to her Twitter account:

“At the UN we’re always asked to do more & give more. So, when we make a decision, at the will of the American ppl abt where to locate OUR embassy, we don’t expect those we’ve helped to target us. On Thurs there’ll be a vote criticizing our choice. The US will be taking names.”

President Trump responded to Haley’s UN address:

I like the message that Nikki sent yesterday at the United Nations for all of these nations that take our money, and then they vote against us at the Security Council, or they vote against us potentially at the assembly. They take hundreds of millions of dollars and even billions of dollars, and then they vote against us. Well, we’re watching those votes. Let them vote against us. We’ll save a lot. We don’t care.

This isn’t like it used to be where they could vote against you, and then you pay them hundreds of millions of dollars and nobody knows what they’re doing. So, Nikki, that was the right message that you and I agreed to be sent yesterday,” he said. “And I’ve had a lot of good comment on it, believe me. People are tired of the United States—the people that live here, our great citizens that love this country—they’re tired of this country being taken advantage of, and we’re not going to be taken advantage of anymore.

Liberal lawyer and author Alan Dershowitz responded to President Trump’s proclamation in positive terms, stating, “I hope President Trump follows through with consequences that include defunding the U.N.”

Writing on the Gatestone Institute website, Dershowitz said about the UN resolution:

The resolution fails to recognize that it was the December 2016 Security Council Resolution—the one engineered by lame duck President Barack Obama—that changed the status of Jerusalem and complicated the efforts to achieve a compromise peace. Before that benighted resolution, Jerusalem’s Western Wall, the Jewish Quarter and the access roads to Hebrew University and Hadassah Hospital were widely recognized as part of Israel—or at worst, as disputed territory.

Everyone knew that any peace agreement would inevitably recognize these historically Jewish areas as an indigenous part of Israel. They were certainly not illegally occupied by Israel, any more than Bethlehem was illegally occupied by the Palestinian Authority (PA). Both Jerusalem and Bethlehem had originally been deemed part of an international zone by the United Nations when it divided the British mandate into two states for two people—a decision accepted by Israel and rejected by all the Arab nations and the Palestinian Arabs in the area. Jordan then attacked Israel and illegally occupied the Western Wall and Jewish Quarter in Jerusalem....

Until Obama engineered the notorious December 2016 Security Council Resolution that declared the

1 Jerusalem Post, “PLO unamused by Trump Threat to cut aid to countries backing UN J’lem vote,” Herb Keinon, Reuters, December 20, 2017.
For the Law, having a shadow of good things to come and not the very image of those things, can never with those sacrifices that they offered year by year make those who come to it continually perfect. For would they then not have ceased to be offered because the worshippers, once purged, would have had no more conscience of sins?

But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year because it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. And every priest stands daily often ministering and offering the same sacrifices that can never take away sins. But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God, from now on expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are sanctified, of which the Holy Spirit is also a witness to us. For after He had said before, “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days,” says the Lord, “I will put My laws into their hearts and I will write them in their minds, and I will no longer remember their sins and iniquities.”

Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. (Hebrews 10:1-18)

If, then, there can no longer be any sacrifices made for sin, why would Christians want to see such sacrifices reinstated? And why would God Himself move to construct a temple for such sacrifices during this age?

Alleged Bible scholars point to Ezekiel’s prophecies of a third temple as proof that such a temple will be built. But they err by assigning it to this present age. The full context of Ezekiel’s temple prophecy is for the Millennial Kingdom under Messiah’s reign, not for this Time of the Gentiles. Jesus Himself will build the temple—no one else:

And speak to him [Joshua], saying, “Thus says YHWH of hosts, saying, ‘Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH [Yeshua (Jesus)], and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of YHWH. “He shall build the temple of YHWH, and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne, and He shall be a priest upon His throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. “And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of YHWH. “And they who are far off [in the distant future] shall come and build in the temple of YHWH, and you shall know that YHWH of hosts has sent me to you. And this shall come to pass if you will diligently obey the voice of YHWH your God.” (Zechariah 6:12-15)

Helem, Tobijah, and Jedaiah will be resurrected to serve in the Millennial Temple under Yeshua. So this prophecy is not for this age; it is for the Millennial Kingdom which will be ruled by the Son of God.

Currently, dominion over Jerusalem is claimed by Roman Catholicism and by Islam separately. Both consider each other interlopers, but have historically hated the Jews above all. They hold an uneasy peace between themselves in opposition to the Jews. Might this be the perfect setup for the anti-Christ (Islam’s last imam) and the false prophet (Catholicism’s last pope) to form a pact between themselves against the Jews? Certainly all Muslims are anti-Christ, and the pope is a false prophet.
At this point I confess to imperfect understanding, as these things are yet to be realized. But it’s an understanding that I’ve held for many decades.

As the last-days scenario develops, do not look forward to a “peace pact” between anti-Christ and the Jews, which is one of the central tenets of dispensational eschatology. The prophecy of the prince to come who would confirm the covenant (Daniel 9:27) was fulfilled in Vespasian when he first approached Jerusalem in February, AD 67. He offered the Jews full sovereignty and the right to worship without interference provided they paid tribute to Caesar. They rebelled against him, and exactly three-and-one-half years later, in August, AD 70, the Romans, led by Vespasian’s son Titus, prevailed and destroyed the temple, taking away the sacrifices in the middle of the “week.” Prophetically, the seventh “week” of Daniel’s prophecy regarding these things has been interrupted by the Time for the Gentiles. The prophecy will see its complete fulfillment with the Lord returning to the earth at the fulfillment of Jacob’s Trouble. (Space doesn’t allow for more detailed accounts of all that will take place. Read of it in my book, The Day of Yahweh.)

CONCLUSION

Let’s make no mistake: Israel is a godless nation; the Jews are largely anti-Christ; blindness in part has come upon them for rejecting their Messiah. Israel’s long history from the time of Moses has been one of forgetting her Maker (Hosea 8:14). Even so, Scripture is clear that Yahweh has not forgotten His chosen from among the nations:

For Adonay Yahweh says this: “I will deal with you as you have done, who have despised the oath in breaking the covenant.

“Nevertheless, I will remember My covenant made with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish with you an everlasting covenant. Then you shall remember your ways, and be ashamed, when you shall receive your sisters, your elder and your younger, and I will give them to you for daughters, but not by your covenant.

“And I will establish My covenant with you, and you shall know that I am YHWH, so that you may remember, and be confounded, and never open your mouth anymore because of your shame, when I am pacified toward you for all that you have done,” says Adonay YHWH. (Ezekiel 16:59-63)

This prophecy has yet to be fulfilled when Jesus returns to re-establish the Kingdom of Israel during the Millennium.

During this age, Israel will largely remain in unbelief. But when they see their Messiah appear to receive His saints, they will look on Him whom they pierced, and they will wail in fear and sorrow (Revelation 1:7).

Then a remnant of Israel will believe, but not by faith, but by sight. They will have to prove their faith by enduring to the end the trial that will come upon them for three-and-one-half years. Just as they are about to be destroyed, the Lord will return to deliver them from their enemies, and then all Israel shall be saved from destruction (Romans 11:26).

The present Zionist state of Israel is not the deliverance, but a prelude to it. And as long as Donald Trump remains President of the United States, the nations of the world will not be able to displace Israel. They won’t dare risk the wrath of the mighty United States and its arsenal of weapons. But Trump won’t be president forever. As the Lord wills, he may not fulfill his present term, or he may not be re-elected. At the most, he will have to leave office after a second term seven years from now. Once he leaves office, the politicians will again take over. Then anything can happen. Should the U.S. get a president who is antagonistic toward Israel while the Jews occupy Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, it could well be a signal for the world to mobilize against Israel, led by a Muslim authoritarian.

This is what caused the excitement in my heart when I heard of President Trump’s proclamation. Immediately I realized that this might signal the Lord’s soon return, which must take place before Israel is displaced by anti-Christ, possibly no later than eight to ten years hence.

I’m not setting dates, but although we cannot know the day of the Lord’s return, His Word gives ample evidence for us to recognize the signs of the times, which unbelievers cannot recognize (Matthew 16:2-4).

On the other hand, succeeding presidents may continue to hold the same position as President Trump, and allow the United States to continue as Israel’s protector. But sooner or later the entire world will turn against Israel. And that will be what sets the final hours into motion.

The spiritual implications of what is happening among nations regarding Israel today must not be missed. And those who call themselves Christians while cursing Israel are as mistaken as those Christians who support Israel to the degree that they refuse to give the Gospel to the Jews, fearing offending them. Christian Zionism fails to realize that to withhold the Gospel from the Jews while helping them build a “temple” that would facilitate the sacrificing of animals is a slap in the face of the One who shed His blood once and for all for remission of sins (Hebrews 10:10).

Perhaps the Lord’s return is four years away; perhaps it’s hundreds of years away. In any case, we must be ready to meet Him when our time comes, either through death or in the catching up of the saints to meet Him in the air. (1 Thessalonians 4:15-18).

I, for one, would like to be here when He does return. Whether or not this generation will see that blessed event for which all true believers yearn is in the Father’s hands.

Suffice it to say that, for now, the current president of the United States may indeed be a “Trump” or Herald of Christ in these last days...
SCHOOL MASSACRES
WHO’S TO BLAME?

By Albert James Dager

On August 1, 1966, 25-year-old engineering student Charles Whitman climbed to the observation deck at the University of Texas-Austin and killed 17 people, wounding 31 during a 96-minute shooting rampage. Since then, mass killings in the United States have increased in number and number of victims. Prior to the University of Texas shooting, there had been hundreds of other school shootings beginning as far back as 1764, when nine students at Greencastle, Pennsylvania, were killed along with their schoolmaster Enoch Brown by four Delaware Indians. Over the centuries other killings at schools took place, but the number of victims were for the most part fewer than four, which is the standard for defining a “mass killing” according to the U.S. government.

With the killing of 17 students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, on February 14, 2018, America has come to the point of exasperation about how to prevent such tragedies. Solutions have been proffered ranging from outlawing guns and dismantling the Second Amendment, to arming teachers. Understandably, there is fear among parents, teachers, and students who realize that there is no such thing as a truly safe place in this world.

Although the focus is currently on school safety, the greater number of mass killings have occurred outside of schools. Out of the twenty mass killings involving the most victims, five were conducted at schools—two high schools and three colleges. This isn’t to minimize the threat to schools; there have been a total of eighteen mass killings at schools ranging from elementary school (2), to middle school (1), to high school (7), to higher education (8). A number of the incidents involved schools secondarily to initial killings by those who had begun their rampage with domestic violence against family members or against others with whom they held a grudge. In some cases they had no intention of targeting the schools, but found themselves in close proximity to a school, then decided to extend their mayhem there.

Contrary to the impression given in the news media, the most common weapon used in mass killings is not the AR-15 semi-automatic rifle; for every AR-15 used, more than twice as many automatic handguns have been used. Yet the AR-15 is the target of choice for gun-control activists, no doubt because it looks “scary.”

There is plenty of blame being leveled against various entities. Anti-gun advocates lay blame on gun and ammunition manufacturers, gun dealers, guns in general, and (a favorite target of late) the National Rifle Association (NRA). Pro-gun advocates lay blame on failed law-enforcement action, mental illness, and on the killers directly.

I’d like to suggest one entity that is being entirely overlooked by both sides: public education officials, administrators, and many teachers.

When public schools were first developed in the United States, one important (if not primary) textbook was the Bible. Over time, the Bible was gradually dropped, giving way to “progressive” education standards that emphasized Darwinian evolution over the idea that man was created in the image and likeness of God. Now students are taught that they are nothing more than a higher form of animal, and that “survival of the fittest” is the rule.

With the 1963 landmark Supreme Court ruling in favor of atheist Madalyn Murray O’Hair, ending Bible-reading in America’s public schools, God’s Word was officially banned from being read, let alone followed by students.

Since that time, educators have consistently and determinedly foisted upon students and parents the false idea that the Bible may not be used even voluntarily by students anywhere on public school grounds, that prayer is likewise forbidden, even when conducted without “official” sanction by educators, and that Jesus’ name cannot be uttered anywhere on school grounds.

These are all false concepts, as proven by Supreme Court rulings where parents and students had the means to legally challenge them. But that hasn’t stopped the system from imposing these false ideas. And while anything related to biblical truth is banned, students are often required to engage in the religious practices, including prayer, of other religions, such as Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam.

Is it any wonder then, that students since the 1960s have been subjected to violence in their classrooms? They are the progeny of the 1960s hippies and their children, far removed from the God of the Bible and steeped in humanistic fatalism.

They are not necessarily all violent themselves, but there are enough of them who are spiritually and psychologically damaged to find their way into the schools to vent their frustration with life.

Prior to 1966 there had never been a mass shooting incident in the public schools conducted by disenfranchised outliers of society. Now the nation cringes in fear for its children.

What is the solution to prevent such tragedies?

From a pragmatic standpoint, it is to lock the students inside, post armed guards, and install metal detectors at every public school entrance.

But none of these solutions will address the root cause of the problem. The only real solution is to go back to where we were prior to the introduction of humanistic fatalism and anti-Christ attitudes within the government system. God’s Word is the only solution to man’s sin problem. Anything else is a Band Aid on a sucking wound. ❖
The products in this catalog are 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.

ALL PRICES INCLUDE POSTAGE & HANDLING TO U.S. ADDRESSES  ❖  FOREIGN POSTAGE COSTS ARE ON ORDER FORM

Books From Sword Publishers

**THE DAY OF YAHWEH: A Biblical Eschatology & 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: Great Delusion Leading to the Religio-Political State of the Anti-Christ**
Albert James Dager - 233 pages

The Gospel 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, Mohammed, 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? The only book on this subject offers vital information on the World Christian Movement. A most 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.
A FALSE DOCTRINE OF SUBTLE PURPOSE
Albert James Dager 106 pages

Thousands of churches and pastors are strongly influenced by the writings of Rick Warren. But are his teachings truly biblical? This book reveals many of Warren’s unscriptural teachings and shows why Christians must abandon his teachings.

B-1078 Paperback $10 - 1 lb.

TORCH OF THE TESTIMONY
John W. Kentland 251 pages

History of the Christians and those who have stood outside the Catho-
lic-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.

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.

B-1112 Paperback $9 - 1 lb.

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!

B-1008 Paperback $10 - 1 lb.

YOGA & THE BODY OF CHRIST
Dave Hunt 170 pages

Yoga is revolutionizing the fitness movement and reaches into 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.

DECEIVED ON PURPOSE: The New Age Implications of the Purpose-Driven Church
Warren Smith 106 pages

Former New Ager on Rick Warren’s Purpose-Driven agenda, exposing his penchant to quote New Agers and use Bible versions that promote New Age thought.

B-1076 Paperback $12.00 - 1 lb.

BEWARE THE NEW PROPHETS
Bill Randles 132 pages

A subject of great importance: the re-emergence of the Latter Rain Movement with all its aberrant teachings and careless eschatology. Will help the uninformed as well as those already aware of this deception to understand its threat.

B-1043 Paperback $10 - 1 lb.

THE PILGRIM CHURCH
E. H. Broadbent 448 pages

The real story of the faith is not recorded in history, which has largely been tainted by Roman Catholic influences. This classic will trill you with stories of unknown heroes of God’s faith. Wonderful.

B-1053 Hardcover $22 - 2 lbs.

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 the Queen of Heaven? These questions and more are answered with tact and compassion for Catholics.

B-1111 Paperback $15 - 1 lb.

12 STEPS TO DESTRUCTION
Martin & Deidre Bobgan 247 pages

Exposes the codependency/recovery heresies that infect churches with “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.

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.

B-1028 Paperback $10 - 1 lb.

PSYCHOHERESY
Martin & Deidre Bobgan 468 pages Revised & expanded from 259 pages

This greatly expanded edition offers almost twice the new evidence on the fallacies of psychological counseling and psychotherapy. From experts on the field of psychology and its inroads into the churches.

B-1011 Paperback $16 - 2 lbs.

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.

B-1085 Paperback $10 - 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.

B-1108 Paperback $11 - 1 lb.

EARTH’S Earliest Ages
G.H. Pember 326 pages

A 19th-century classic addressing the pre-Adamic theory and the early history of Satan. Offers a biblical account of the fall of man and the Flood eras, and modern distortions of the texts and contexts of both. Deemed controversial by some.

B-1104 Paperback $12 - 2 lbs.

PERSON-TO-PERSON MINISTRY
Martin & Deidre Bobgan 250 pages

Reveals the sin of problem-centered counseling, shows how it leads Christians into feeding the flesh and quenching the Spirit. Gives reasons why Christians must abandon the problem-centered approach in favor of becoming Christ-centered.

B-1097 Paperback $12 - 1 lb.

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.

B-1102 Paperback $16 - 2 lbs.

GOD’S SUPER-APOSTLES
Geivett & Pivec 159 pages

Is God reviving the offices of apostle and prophet today? Will those who do not obey them incur the wrath of God?

B-1114 Paperback $5 - 1 lb.

EXPOSED: The False Faith Healing-Prosperity Gospel
Danny Frigulti 226 pages

Exposes more than 100 falsehoods found in Word-Faith teachings about sickness, healing, faith, positive confession, quantum faith, money, inner healing, creative visualization, etc.

B-1133 Paperback $5 - 2 lbs

THE HARBINGER: Fact or Fiction?
David James 224 pages

Is the N.Y. Times bestseller, The Harbinger, leading Christians astray? Is the alleged “ancient mystery” that holds the secret to America’s future not biblical? This important book offers the truth.

B-1110 Paperback $5 - 1 lb.
NEW DVD

VAXXED: FROM COVER-UP TO CATASTROPHE

Exposes an insidious collusion between government, the pharmaceutical industry, and the media to cover up the effects of the MMR vaccine that is wreaking havoc on the lives of innocent children.

Based on thoroughly documented evidence from unimpeachable sources, including the leading scientist at the CDC for the study on the connection between the MMR vaccine and autism.

From the time the vaccine was introduced in 1972 to the present, the rate of autism in children has risen from 1 in 10,000 to 1 in 50. And the rate continues to grow exponentially. We are told that the connection has been debunked. But we are being lied to in order to protect the multi-trillion dollar profits that this vaccine offers to the pharmaceutical industry.

The world will continue to suffer from this scourge, but Christians need the truth to protect them from the world’s evils.

WARNING: Contains two instances of strong language.

DVD 2038

ORDER FORM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM #</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
<th>$/UNIT</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

□ CHECK ENCLOSED PAYABLE TO SWORD PUBLISHERS

NAME ____________________________________________
COMPANY ________________________________________
ADDRESS _________________________________________
CITY ___________________ STATE ______ POSTAL ZONE __
COUNTRY __________________ PHONE (________) ________

PLEASE SEND ORDER TO:
SWORD PUBLISHERS
PO BOX 640
SEQUIM, WA 98382
(360) 477-4180
www.swordpublishers.com

INTERNATIONAL POSTAGE RATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CANADA/MEXICO</th>
<th>OTHER FOREIGN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 lb. $15.00</td>
<td>$18.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 lbs. $22.00</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 lbs. $28.00</td>
<td>$32.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 lbs $35.00</td>
<td>$40.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5+ lbs.: Inquire by e-mail at contactus@swordpublishers.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABORTION</td>
<td>Some Cogent Arguments</td>
<td>LOST TOMB OF JESUS: A Death Blow To Christianity?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>ECUMENICAL ROADS LEAD TO ROME (Vol. 23-No. 2)</td>
<td>MARTIAL ARTS &amp; THE CHRISTIAN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALLEGIANCE</td>
<td>To Whom Do We Pledge? (Vol. 25-No. 3)</td>
<td>MASONIC HISTORY OF AMERICA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANGELS</td>
<td>ON ASSIGNMENT: Or Demons of Deception?</td>
<td>MOSQUE AT GROUND ZERO? What's Wrong With That?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARE YOU</td>
<td>IN A CULT? Questions to Answer</td>
<td>MUSIC: What Difference Does It Make?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAPTISM</td>
<td>IN THE HOLY SPIRIT: Are the Gifts for Today?</td>
<td>NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION: New Move or Old Deception?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BENNY</td>
<td>HINN: Pros &amp; Cons</td>
<td>ORIGINS OF CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHRISTIAN</td>
<td>ZIONISM</td>
<td>POPE VISITS US, UN: Affirms Marxist Agendas While Moralizing About America’s Evils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHRISTIANS,</td>
<td>ZIONISM, AND AMERICAN POLITICS</td>
<td>PSYCHOLOGY: Science Or Religion?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COALITION</td>
<td>ON REVIVAL (COR): A Biblical Analysis</td>
<td>PURPOSE-DRIVEN PROGRAM: A Growing Phenomenon in the Churches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COVENANTALISM</td>
<td>A New Name For An Old Spirit</td>
<td>QUANTUM CHRISTIANITY: Has the Gateway to Heaven Been Discovered?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.S. LEWIS:</td>
<td>The Man and His Myths</td>
<td>RENOVARE: Spiritual Formation Groups On The Rise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DELIVERANCE:</td>
<td>Demonization and the Christian</td>
<td>RESTORING HONOR: Cheers, Jeers, Smears (Vol. 33-No. 3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DID</td>
<td>JESUS NAME THE ANTI-CHRIST? (Vol. 32-No. 4)</td>
<td>ROMAN CATHOLICISM: Is It A Cult?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMERGENT</td>
<td>CHURCH: A New Path To An Old Religion</td>
<td>6 ROMAN CATHOLIC DOCTRINES That Nullify Salvation By Grace</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVANGELICALS &amp; CATHOLICS TOGETHER</td>
<td>FACTS &amp; FALLACIES OF THE RESURRECTION: Did Jesus Really Die On a Friday and Rise On a Sunday?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOD’S</td>
<td>NOT DEAD: What’s Behind the Scenes? (Vol. 37-No. 2)</td>
<td>SPIRITUAL WARFARE FOR PARENTS: Important Safeguards Against Worldly Influence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HALLOWE’EN:</td>
<td>Should Christians Be Apart?</td>
<td>TERRORISM IN AMERICA: Where Are We Headed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The</td>
<td>HARBINGER: Book Review</td>
<td>THIS PRESENT DARKNESS: Spiritual Warfare - Fact Or Fantasy?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEAVEN</td>
<td>IS FOR REAL: But Are the Testimonies?</td>
<td>TITHING: Are We Under the Law?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOLIDAY</td>
<td>LAUGHTER: Rodney Howard-Browne &amp; Toronto Blessing</td>
<td>TRANSHUMANISM: Recreating Humanity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILLEGAL</td>
<td>IMMIGRATION: What is the Biblical Response?</td>
<td>TREASON IN THE CHURCHES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INNER</td>
<td>HEALING: A Biblical Analysis</td>
<td>UNICORN: Fabled Beast Of Myth And Magic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISLAM:</td>
<td>Religion of Peace or War?</td>
<td>VAXXXED: From Cover-up to Catastrophe (Vol. 40 - No. 2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The</td>
<td>ISLAMIZATION OF THE CHURCHES</td>
<td>WHAT IS “THE CHURCH”?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JEHovah’s WITNESSES:</td>
<td>Their Teachings vs. Scripture</td>
<td>WHY DOESN’T GOD HEAL? Can Christians Learn How To Heal? Churches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JESUS</td>
<td>CALLING: A Review</td>
<td>WORD-FaITH/POSITIVE CONFESSION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOEL</td>
<td>OSTEEN BITES THE DUST: Another Victim of Larry King</td>
<td>WYCLIFFE ARABIC BIBLE: Product of World-Christian Movement?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAKELAND</td>
<td>OUTPOURING: (Vol. 31 - No. 2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIFE</td>
<td>AFTER DEATH: Should We Believe the Testimonies?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE</td>
<td>LOSS OF CONSCIENCE: How the West Was Lost</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WE DO NOT CHARGE FOR OUR REPORTS. IF YOU WISH TO SEND A GIFT, PLEASE MAKE PAYABLE AND SEND TO:

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT
PO BOX 640
SEQUIM, WA 98382
www.mediaspotlight.org
If Paul were a false teacher and a heretic too...
By David Nathan

If Paul were a false teacher and a heretic too,
We could only trust 14 books of this Testament New.
But hark, what of Peter who calls him “beloved brother”?
He too is deceived, so there goes another.

We are now down to 12 that can truly be trusted,
But wait, I forgot about Luke; I’m getting quite flustered.
A traveling companion and a supporter of Paul,
Can we possibly trust him? I say, "not at all"!

From 12 down to ten which surely are true,
But then there is John whom we now must review.
A friend and companion of "Peter the Deceived,"
Whom we’ve now come to realize cannot be believed.
Not once does John correct him regarding old Paul,
As he did with Diotrephes in his book, number four.

Revelation by John, the last apostle alive,
Brings the tally of this untrusted man’s canonical books now to five.
Another five gone from the ten that remain; what else could go wrong?
But our consideration of James and Jude, we must now add to this song.
Neither two warned of Paul, that sinister false brother,
Yet they obviously knew him; their plot is now uncovered.
So these two must be gone from our five that remained,
Leaving us three books that now surely can’t be defamed.

The Jerusalem council which Matthew attended
Was where those who opposed Paul were summarily upended.
He is not to be trusted this collector of taxes.
So, too, must his book face the anti-heretics’ axes.

Three become two with the exit of Matthew’s.
Where next do we search but through the book to the Hebrews?
Attributed to either Paul, Barnabas, or Apollos,
But it makes no real difference because its message is bogus.
Its message is Paul’s that’s as clear as can be.
It must be removed from Christian history.

We have only one left, which is ascribed to John Mark,
A nephew of Barnabas who from Paul did depart.
There is now only one book that still steadfast remains.
Although only one, ’tis far better than none,
Until we consider the pedigree by whom it was done.
A disciple of Peter whom we know was deceived
By a man we call Paul whom we have urged you, “do not believe!”

Not one book is left if you believe Paul was a deceiver;
Not one book that can be trusted by the New Testament believer.
Without Paul we are all doomed to follow the Law.
You see, without him there is no New Testament at all!

With the passing from this life of Billy Graham has come the end of an era where the Gospel was proclaimed to millions of people sans the showmanship of today’s televangelists and their flashy methods. I have in the past been critical of Graham for his ecumenism and sometimes questionable responses to questions regarding unbelievers and their eternal destiny. That was Graham in the flesh—a trait we all share. But when he was on the podium addressing huge crowds, no one can deny that he had a gift. His message was clear and distinct: the only way to God is through His Son, Jesus Christ. And although he touched on sin he often avoided mention of eternal suffering. His primary message was to tell people about how much God loves them. Yet God used him to bring many to Himself.

To his credit, there was never a whiff of a scandal, either sexual or financial.

We may find fault with some of what Billy Graham has said off the podium, but like all of us, he answers to the Lord, not to men.

Let us agree with the Apostle Paul, and rejoice that whatever the motive, and whatever faults may be found in the message and the messenger, the Gospel has been proclaimed (Philippians 1:15-18).
As we approach the end of this Age of the Gentiles, we are witnessing the fulfillment of biblical prophecy that points to the Lord’s Second Coming. In spite of so-called prophets who are predicting “breakthrough” blessings from God via encounters with angels—who “prophesy” that the nations are going to be turned to God and believers in Jesus are going to reap a windfall of health, wealth, and all things good, the truth is that as the end approaches, evil will grow worse. The Apostle Paul’s second letter to Timothy should serve as a warning:

Yes, and all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. (2 Timothy 3:12-13)

Granted, not all believers in Jesus suffer the same degree of persecution. But from the mildest form (shunning by family and/or friends who resent the Gospel), to the harshest form (physical torture and death), the spirit of anti-Christ is the same. The world, currently Satan’s domain, is enmity against Yahweh. So we cannot expect the world to embrace us or to decide that the Gospel is the truth worth following. Jesus’ words are especially telling:

As it was in the days of Noah, so it shall also be in the days of the Son of Man [Jesus’ return]. They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise, also, as it was in the days of Lot, they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built. But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from the heavens and destroyed them all.

Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. (Luke 17:28)

Until the Lord appears to receive His saints, it will be business as usual for the world system. Yet in the midst of it there will be increasing elements of destruction—wars; rumors of war, nations fighting against nations, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in diverse places (Matthew 24:6-8). But these are only the beginning of sorrows. Evil will grow worse—evil that will afflict the Body of Christ:

Then they will deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you, and you shall be hated by all nations for My name’s sake.

Then many will be offended, and will betray one another, and hate one another. And many false prophets will rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

That is the prophesied position of the Body of Christ from Pentecost to the end of this age. Apostasy will plague Christianity. Yet the Lord’s promises that he who endures to the end shall be saved (Matthew 24:9-13).

And the most telling of all prophecies is that of Jesus as recorded in Matthew 24:24:

For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

The last-days false christs and false prophets will be most deceptive. But today’s false christs and false prophets don’t have to perform great signs and wonders to deceive; all they need do is make claims of signs and wonders, of speaking with angels and/or with Jesus, purporting to convey direct
words of revelation from Heaven. The gullible among Christians are plentiful to keep them on the circuit, selling their “prophecies” that in truth are nothing more than obtuse utterings of biblically-sounding phrases and allegorical interpretations of God’s Word, promising nothing but good.

Such “prophecies” work in the United States and some other western nations, but one need only read of the plight of Christians in all other parts of the world to see the real face of anti-Christ. In non-Christian nations, anti-Christ works to kill and discourage believers through physical persecution; in “Christian” nations, he works to destroy the purity of the faith among the Christian masses. He drives believers to ruin through the use of government force to cause them to act contrary to their consciences. His onslaught in the “Christian” nations is primarily physical; his onslaught in the non-Christian nations is primarily spiritual and psychological.

Persecution of Christians is commonplace in non-Christian countries. But in some cases, there is persecution by Christians against non-believers and even other Christians. In all cases we can see anti-Christ at work.

RELIGION

At the start of this decade, on January 20, 2010, eight Muslims firebombed a Christian church in Malaysia. The Muslims objected to Christians referring to Yahweh as “Allah” although that is the misnomer applied to Him in Arabic Bibles influenced by the Muslim culture in which they live.

Conversely, four days later, in the north-central Nigerian city of Jos, Christians went on a rampage against Muslims, killing 364 and destroying some 1,000 homes and shops by fire. The local Catholic archbishop claimed that the real cause for the violence was not religion but “the struggle for ethnic and political superiority in the city.”

Two months later, on March 10, Muslims attacked a Christian community near Jos in revenge for the violence against Muslims in January, killing and displacing many.

On January 1, 2011, another clash between Muslims and Christians took place in the Egyptian city of Alexandria, sparked by a bomb that killed some 30 Christians attending their church service. In response, angry Christians attacked Muslims and wreaked havoc at a mosque.

These are merely a few of the ongoing incidences of warfare between Christians and others. In all these cases, anti-Christ gained victories by urging violence both against and by Christians. Those “Christians” who engaged in violence against Muslims—whether one considers them justified or not—were used by anti-Christ to bring a strong reproach against the name of Jesus.

It is one thing to defend oneself in the heat of the moment when attacked; it’s another thing to plot and carry out revenge. Vengeance is still the Lord’s; He will repay.

A different form of Christian persecution against others has been perpetrated by members of the Westboro Baptist Church of Topeka, Kansas, who regularly stage pickets and angry demonstrations against average people stricken by bad circumstances. On January 13, 2011, they sought to picket the funeral for nine-year-old Christina Taylor Green, one of six people killed in Tucson, Arizona, when Jared Lee Loughner opened fire at a political rally for Democrat Representative Gabrielle Giffords. According to the religious philosophy of Westboro Baptist Church, led by “fundamentalist” pastor Fred Phelps, bad things happen to bad people as a result of their sins. They often picket funerals of American soldiers killed in combat, to express the idea that the soldiers deserved to die for their sins and lack of repentance.

They also picket “gay pride” parades and other activities with which they find offense, warning of God’s displeasure and coming judgment for the sins of the participants.

One may agree that judgment is coming upon the world for its sins, but picketing funerals in judgment against the deceased as individuals brings a reproach against the name of Jesus and serves anti-Christ’s agenda more than the Lord’s agenda. As Jesus said to those who were about to stone the woman caught in adultery, “Let he who is without sin cast the first stone.”

Are the Westboro Baptist Church members without sin? Or are their sins just of a different nature than those against whom they protest?

Another reproach against the name of Jesus began with the publishing in the December, 2010, issue of Reader’s Digest, a prediction by Family Radio owner Harold Camping that “The Bible guarantees the end of the world will begin May 21, 2011.” Camping claimed in numerous follow-ups to the ads as well as billboards that May 21 would be the date of the “rapture,” and that the world would come to an end on October 21, 2011. Camping’s convoluted explanation of his prediction misrepresented Scripture. When his prediction failed to come to pass, he placed the blame on others and on God for changing His mind.

As much good as Family Radio had done in the past, much of it was nullified by Camping’s presumptuous “prophecy” that greatly aided anti-Christ in many ways. One way was the wholesale exploitation of Camping’s gullible followers who sold all they had and gave the proceeds to him to spread his false prophecy. Not to mention the laughing stock he made of the Body of Christ before the unbelieving of this world.

Roman Catholicism

On February 28, 2013, a rare occurrence took place when Pope Benedict XVI resigned, becoming the first to do so since Gregory XII in 1415. Prior to Gregory XII, the only pope to resign voluntarily was Celestine V in 1294. This presents a problem for Catholicism: how does one resign from a position in which he was presumably “anointed” by the Holy Spirit? Is the Catholic Church left with two popes?
Benedict’s resignation opened the way for Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Argentina to be elected the 266th pope, taking the name Francis I. Francis I made history as the first pope to come from the Americas and from the Southern Hemisphere, and most significantly, as the first Jesuit pope. Some Catholic traditions suggest that this pope is to be the last before the end of the world. However, among those traditions the last pope is to be named Peter.

As a cardinal, Bergoglio demonstrated strong pro-Marxist sympathies, which are contrary to biblical truth in many ways. Since becoming pope, Bergoglio has exhibited sympathies antithetical to biblical truth, particularly toward homosexuality, the existence of “hell” or the Lake of Fire (what he and most Christianity mistakenly call “hell”), and a belief in universalism.

Roman Catholicism continues to exercise tremendous power as a religio-political movement, similar to Islam. Both claim jurisdiction over Jerusalem; both are anti-Semitic at their core; combined, both control the minds of one-fourth of the world’s population—the perfect combination for anti-Christ to temporarily meld their ambitions to displace the Jews from Jerusalem as prophesied will happen before the Lord returns to the earth to establish His Millennial Kingdom.

Almost three years after his election as pope, on February 12, 2016, Francis I signed an Ecumenical Declaration with Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill. It was the first meeting of the leaders of these two denominations since their split in 1054.

This ecumenical action is a continuation of the Vatican’s attempt to eventually bring all Christendom under the papal umbrella, an important element to anti-Christ’s unification plans that will prepare most Christians for the last-days deception that will eventually result in the prophesied “Mark of the Beast.”

**SEXUAL DEVIANCY**

On December 23, 2010, Barack Obama signed into law Congress’s repeal of the Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell Law, paving the way for sexual deviants to serve openly in the U.S. military.

Acceptance of homosexuality, lesbianism, transgender-ism, and other forms of sexual deviancy have continued to increase worldwide. During this decade a number of countries and U.S. states have legalized same-gender marriage. On May 6, 2011, Brazil’s Supreme Court ruled in favor of homosexual unions having the same rights as married heterosexuals. Four years later, on May 23, 2015, Ireland legalized same-gender marriage. It was the first country to legalize same-gender marriage by popular vote. On June 30, 2017, Germany legalized same-gender marriage. Austria and Australia legalized same-gender marriage in December, 2017. Sixty-one percent of Australians voted in favor.

On March 30, 2017, the state of North Carolina repealed its bathroom law that restricted use by transgender persons.

Prior to his election to his second term, Obama stated that he believed marriage is between one man and one woman. Shortly after his re-election in 2012, he betrayed that sentiment and pushed for same-gender marriage. When same-gender marriage was affirmed by the Supreme Court he had the White House lighted with rainbow colors in celebration.

The worldwide acceptance of sexual deviancy is evidence of anti-Christ’s influence over the nations, affirming that Satan is the god of this world. Satan’s purpose in promoting sexual deviancy is to mock and destroy God’s order of creation as proclaimed in His Word.

**POLITICS**

With the election of Barack Obama to a second term, followed by Donald Trump as a Washington DC outsider, this decade has seen unprecedented political events, both positive and negative.

For the entire eight years of Obama’s residency in the White House anti-Christ wreaked havoc in America. Obama’s lies, Marxist philosophy, anti-American and anti-Christ sympathies, and promotion of sexual deviancy and abortion were displayed in speeches and actions not only in America, but abroad. The anti-Christ forces in America were certain that they would continue to advance their agenda with the election of Hillary Rodham-Clinton to succeed Obama.

But our Father in Heaven had a different plan. And although Clinton allegedly amassed a greater majority of the popular vote, Donald Trump won in a landslide electoral vote victory. Immediately upon his winning the presidency the darkest side of the anti-Christ elements in our nation expressed themselves with violence against Trump and his supporters. Vitiolic and hateful insults, false accusations of racism, homophobia, Islamophobia, misogyny, fascism, and even Nazism have been bandied about with impunity, again with impunity. No public figure has been so mercilessly attacked by anti-Christ through such a large segment of the population. Even before his inauguration the entire Democrat Party, 95% of the mass media, and huge masses of entertainment celebrities called for his impeachment and even his assassination. No public figure has been so mercilessly attacked by anti-Christ through such a large segment of the population. The spiritual dimension of these attacks is evident considering the anti-Christ sentiments held by these people.

It is questionable whether any American president has been so embattled in his attempts to govern according to his constitutionally-granted powers. Even common-sense actions have been met with spite and derision. Attempting to protect the nation from terrorist infiltration, he signed executive orders barring entry into the country by people from high-risk Islamic countries. His order was promptly challenged by Democrats using the Ninth District Court of Appeals to
block them. He has received virtually no cooperation from Democrats who, in turn, accuse him of refusing to cooperate with them. This, after they have accused him of being mentally incompetent and unfit for the office of president.

Whether or not he knows or understands it, President Trump has in many ways acted upon the biblical ethics that formed the basis for the founding of this nation.

When, on December 6, 2017, President Trump declared that the U.S. will recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, virtually the entire world erupted in outrage—further evidence of anti-Christ’s control over the world system.

Trump’s overturning of many of Obama’s executive orders relating to the economy, international dealings, medical care, and terrorism are giving anti-Christ fits. The rage will continue unabated until Trump is out of office by one means or another.

Turkey

On April 16, 2017, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan won a referendum on an 18-article constitutional reform package granting him sweeping new powers. It is feared by many that Erdogan will work toward changing Turkey from a secular republic to an Islamic Ottoman-style authoritarian state.

Jesus told the assembly at Pergamus (in modern Turkey) that He knew it was situated where Satan’s seat is (Revelation 2:13). Personally, I believe the last-days anti-Christ will arise from Turkey as a Muslim authoritarian. We’ll have to wait to see.

Meanwhile, anti-Christ continues to stir the pot of fear and deception with the threat of North Korea’s nuclear weapons program gaining speed and threatening the United States. President Trump’s hardline response has been met with ridicule by his detractors who would prefer to follow the road of appeasement.

Although, apart from the military-industrial complex and some hawks in Congress, no one (ostensibly) wants war, history is replete with accounts of disastrous consequences for following that road. If anti-Christ manages to suck the U.S. into another conflict it could spell the end for both nations as well as our allies in the Asian Pacific area.

Roy Moore

On December 12, 2017, Republican Roy Moore was defeated by Democrat Doug Jones in a tightly contested race for the Alabama Senate seat. Moore enjoyed a large majority of voters in his favor until allegations of sexual misconduct against one Beverly Young Nelson were alleged by Democrat Gloria Allred (fitting name). Allred and Nelson contended that Moore sexually assaulted Nelson when she was 16 years old, offering as evidence Nelson’s high school yearbook allegedly signed with sentiments by Moore. Moore’s attorneys wanted the evidence submitted for forensic inspection, claiming that the writing was not Moore’s, in addition to other challenges. Allred and Nelson refused to submit it to them.

Although no allegations were proven against Moore, he lost to Jones by a slight margin. Curiously, Allred and Nelson stopped pursuing the accusations after his defeat. Wouldn’t a legitimate grievance be pursued further? Curiously, I noticed that when Nelson was on camera recounting this traumatic event some 40 years after, that despite the dabbing of a handkerchief at her eyes, there were no tears. How do people cry without tears?

Whether or not Moore was guilty of the accusations only he and Nelson know. But anti-Christ gained a victory by besmirching the reputation of a man who has throughout his political and judicial careers championed the causes of morality and constitutional law.

And whether or not Moore was guilty of the accusations, would not his exemplary life after the alleged incident have at least demanded absolute proof before turning from supporting him! No matter, because anti-Christ, who hates Moore for his past decisions to protect constitutionally-guaranteed freedom of religion for Christians and biblical symbols, has made him a pariah in his own Republican Party.

TERRORISM

Islamic terrorism has continued to increase in the number of incidents worldwide. Space doesn’t permit a full account of its growth.

On March 2, 2011, Pakistani Minister of Minorities, Shahbaz Bhatti, a Christian was assassinated by Islamists for having spoken in favor of reforming Pakistan’s laws against blasphemy, which carry a death sentence.

On April 9, 2017, Islamic suicide bombers attacked two Egyptian Coptic churches in Tanta and Alexandria, killing 44.

On December 17, 2017, Islamist terrorists attacked a Methodist church in Quetta, Pakistan, killing nine Christians.

The United States has largely managed to avoid anything as huge as the September 11, 2001, attacks against the World Trade Center in New York, but there were incidents that hit home here. Besides the rise of Antifa, which has spread terror in several large cities in protest of President Trump and causes with which its followers disagree, a number of incidents by others took place.

On April 15, 2013, two Chechen Islamist brothers detonated two bombs near the finish line of the Boston Marathon, killing three and injuring 264.

June 12, 2016, saw 49 people shot dead in the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida. (Pulse caters to homosexuals.) The perpetrator, Omar Mir Seddique (aka Omar Mateen), was shot dead by police. Mir Seddique called 9-1-1 during the shooting, describing himself as “Mujahideen” (Islamic Soldier” or “Soldier of God”).

Understandably, the incident stirred sympathy for sexual deviants, furthering anti-Christ’s cause. As believers in Jesus, we, too, must bear sympathy for the dead and their loved
ones. It is not our place to rejoice when such things occur, but mourn the death of the lost whether or not they are in open sin. “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

Even so, such incidents of persecution against sexual deviants further anti-Christ’s agenda to confuse God’s creation (Leviticus 18:22-24).

On October 1, 2017, a puzzling terrorist attack took place in Las Vegas, Nevada, during a country-western concert. In the worst gun massacre in modern U.S. History, 58 people were shot dead and 489 were injured by gunfire from the Mandalay Bay Hotel. The official report from law enforcement, including the FBI, is that it was the act of a lone gunman, Stephen Craig Paddock, 64, of Mesquite, Nevada. Paddock is said to have amassed 23 semi-automatic rifles, some equipped with buttstocks to simulate automatic fire, with which he rained down a torrent of bullets upon attendees of the concert for some ten minutes.

Paddock was known to be a quiet, unassuming person with no particular interest in guns and no military training. Authorities say they have found no motive for the shooting.

However, many eyewitnesses have testified that the bullets were coming from several areas, principally below the windows on the 32nd floor from which Paddock is said to have fired. Few photos of the scene on the 32nd floor of the hotel have been released. The most prominently displayed photo shows the legs of a man lying next to an AR-15 with a 30-round magazine attached.

Only five days later, FBI special agent in charge, Aaron Rouse, said that investigators had found “no connection with an international terrorist group.”

Really? In five days, with no motive for Paddock to do such a thing, plus numerous eyewitness accounts of additional shooters? Some even testified that they experienced shots reaching the Belagio Hotel, which is not in the line of sight from the Mandalay Bay Hotel room from which Paddock allegedly fired, and is hidden by a taller building between.

I’m not a conspiracy theorist, but some things just don’t add up: the speed at which authorities determined Paddock acted alone; the media blackout of the incident with no additional information since that week; the sheer number of weapons found with Paddock’s body and at his home; the difficulty controlling automatic rifles; the media and law enforcement disregard of many eyewitnesses caught in the gunfire.

In spite of the FBI denying that any other persons were involved, the Sheriff said Paddock “had to have help at some point” to kill 58 people and wound 489.

Before this incident I had never heard of buttstocks, nor have many gun owners I know. How someone unfamiliar with guns would know about them, secure them, and use them raises questions. Automatic rifles are particularly difficult to manage for someone inexperienced in guns.

May I offer my conjecture, seeing as how conjecture on the part of the FBI and other authorities seems to have ruled in this case?

Considering that ISIS claimed Paddock as a recent convert acting on behalf of ISIS, it seems that the FBI may have acted hastily in dismissing that possibility in such a short time as five days.

I suggest that Islamic terrorists either kidnapped or blackmailed Paddock into being their patsy. They forced him to purchase weapons and take them to the hotel where they would launch their reign of terror. They then shot him during the interim of some 55 minutes between the last shot and the police breaching the room.

The first shots were fired at 10:05 PM.
At 10:12 the first two police officers arrived on the 31st floor and announce hearing gunfire directly above them.

At 10:15 the last shots were fired.

It isn’t until almost one hour later, at 11:20 that police entered the room to find Paddock dead on the floor.

Viewing footage of the carnage, I heard uninterrupted automatic gunfire that lasted as long as 10 seconds. An AR-15 automatic rifle fires thirteen rounds per second. A thirty-round magazine will be emptied in just over two seconds. A 100-round magazine will empty in about 7 seconds. For ten seconds of uninterrupted gunfire there would have to be a larger magazine or barrel magazine holding more than 100 rounds. Either that, or there would have to be more than one gunman firing together and consecutively.

But what do I know? Surely the government wouldn’t lie to us or cover up a true terrorist attack.

Would they?

Anti-Christ uses governments to keep their citizens in the dark on many important issues concerning their lives, particularly in the sensitive area of Islam with its claim to be a “religion of peace.” He wouldn’t want his religion besmirched if he could help it.

I hope our readers will forgive this lengthy conjecture, but when one smells a rat, one feels compelled to air things out. It serves anti-Christ to hide any suggestion that Islam is anything other than a “religion of peace,” which has been the claim from the first attacks in the modern era.

Just sayin’....
to angrily challenge him, claiming he was sympathetic to Nazism. His denunciation of the white supremacists fell on deaf ears. But Anti-Christ works on both sides to achieve his agenda of hate.

Another Islamic terrorist attack took place in New York City on October 31, when an immigrant from Uzbek, Sayfullo Saipov, drove a rented van the wrong way down a pedestrian and cycle path at full speed. Police said Sayfullo screamed “Allahu Akbar” (Allah is great) as he exited the vehicle and ran from the scene. He was shot dead by police.

On November 5, 2017, 26 people were killed and 20 others injured when Devin Kelley, who had received a bad conduct discharge from the Air Force, opened fire during services at the First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs, Texas. Police found Kelley dead in his truck after he had run off the road near the county line while fleeing. He had been fired upon at the church by a neighboring resident, who was off the road near the county line while fleeing. He had been fired upon by a neighboring resident, who was off the road near the county line while fleeing.

CONCLUSION

As we conclude this series, we remind our readers that the future for anti-Christ is bleak, spelled out in Scripture. Revelation 19 reveals the Lord returning to the earth to establish His Kingdom. Anti-Christ will try to prevent this:

And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse, and against His army. (Revelation 19:19)

This revelation tells of the anti-Christ’s preparation for the battle of Armageddon. But here he will meet his end:

And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet who worked miracles before him, with which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast, and those who worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword by Him who sat on the horse, and all the fowls were filled with their flesh. (Revelation 19:20-21)

That will be the end of the man of sin (the anti-Christ) who will do Satan’s bidding. But the end of Satan, the anti-Christ spirit, will continue for a time.

When the man of sin is destroyed, the Lord will establish His Millennial Kingdom on the earth for one thousand years, during which Satan will be bound in the bottomless pit (abyss). At the end of the thousand years Satan will be loosed to test the hearts of all those who lived under the righteous but rigorous rule of Jesus. He will again attempt to dethrone the Lord, but will fail:

And when the thousand years are over, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison and shall go out to deceive the nations that are in the four quarters of the earth—Gog and Magog "Gog and Magog"—to gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

And they went up on the breadth of the earth and encircled the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of the heavens, and devoured them. (Revelation 20:7-9)

This is the final battle when Jerusalem will be surrounded, not by the armies of anti-Christ, but by the armies of Gog and Magog as prophesied in Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39.

And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever. (Revelation 20:10-13)

Once evil is forever banished from the earth, Yahweh will destroy the present cosmos by fire to purify it of all the material corruption that has accumulated over eons via the spiritual and physical warfare since the fall of Satan. He will then create New Heavens and a New Earth:

And I saw New Heavens and a New Earth, for the first heavens and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea.

And I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (Revelation 21:1-2)

It is after the Millennium, and upon the establishment of the New Earth, that the New Jerusalem will descend from Heaven as the Bride of Christ. The present-day “Church” is not the Bride of Christ. All believers will have a part in the Bride of Christ, which is the New Jerusalem, including the saints who have lived through all the ages since Adam.

And I heard a great voice out of Heaven saying, “Look! The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, or sorrow, or crying, nor shall there be any more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

And He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” (Revelation 21:3-5)

Until the Lord puts an end to anti-Christ’s machinations once and for all, we as His people must remain vigilant in our walk with Christ. His desire is that we be conformed to His image.

Although we will never be perfected and sinless in our corruptible flesh, we can be perfect in our hearts and minds toward Him. That alone will be a defeat for anti-Christ during this present age.
Question: Many groups that minister in prisons preach the O.T. dietary laws are still intact. True?

G.B., Navasota, TX

Dear G.B.,

This question has plagued the Body of Christ since the time of the apostles. As soon as they began to take the Gospel to the Gentiles, disputes arose concerning questions about circumcision and eating certain foods, particularly in regard to the Gentile believers. What it came down to was whether or not the Mosaic Law was still in effect for those who believed in Christ.

In his letter to the Galatians, the Apostle Paul chastised them for having turned back to the Law of Moses after having been freed by Christ:

But now, after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how do you turn again to weak and beggarly elements to which you desire to again be in bondage?...

So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

Therefore stand fast in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Look, I Paul say to you, that if you are circumcised, Christ shall not profit you. For I testify again to everyone who is circumcised that he is a debtor to do the whole law. (Galatians 4:9–5:3)

Paul was speaking a truth that was later affirmed in different words by James:

Whoever keeps the whole law, yet offends in one point, he is guilty of all. For He who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery, yet if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the Law. (James 2:10-11)

If we do not understand and lay hold of our freedom in Christ, we will seek to attain righteousness by keeping the Law. But no one is justified by keeping the Law (Galatians 3:11).

This seems contrary to human reasoning because we know that sin is the transgression of the Law (1 John 3:4).

So how do we reconcile this seeming dichotomy?

The Law is not (or should not be) the motivation for our living righteously before our Father in Heaven. If we attempt to keep the Law we are seeking to attain righteousness by our own efforts—self-righteousness. But if we are now motivated by the prompting of the Holy Spirit who leads us along the path of righteousness, we will move in the freedom of Christ. He will not lead us into sin. Rather, He leads us to the Word of God which instructs us in our faith, never compromising our freedom in Christ.

Now, regarding the subject of clean and unclean food, we know that the designation between clean and unclean preceded Moses. Noah was instructed to take two from among the unclean animals, and seven from among the clean animals. But prior to that, Yahweh said to Adam, “Every living thing that moves shall be food for you” (Genesis 9:3). There was no prohibition against eating any animal.

If our motivation in abstaining from eating what God’s Word calls “unclean” is to keep the Law, then we are in error. If, on the other hand, the Holy Spirit wishes us to refrain from unclean meat, then we are to do so. He will convict us, every one, in the matter, and will chastise us if we act contrary to His wishes.

The designation of clean vs. unclean is based on the nature of the different animals. Clean animals are herbivores; unclean animals are carnivores or omnivores. Carnivores eat the remains of other dead animals; omnivores eat the same, plus garbage.

The first specific prohibition against eating unclean animals is found in Leviticus 7, which relates to the Mosaic Law. Prior to that, there is no specific prohibition stated by Yahweh. The Israelites were not to eat the unclean animals, or touch their carcasses or anything a dead animal—clean or unclean—touches. This pertained to the carcasses of clean animals as well as unclean animals, if the clean animals died naturally, by accident, or attack by predators. To do so would make the person ceremonially unclean until the evening, rendering him disqualified to enter into the congregation for worship.

If an Israelite violated these ordinances, he had to wash himself in order to be granted the right to enter into the congregation. If he disobeyed and entered into the congregation to eat the sacrifices, he became unclean himself, and was to be cut off from his people (a euphemism for being put to death) (Leviticus 7:21).

Additionally, there were prohibitions against eating the fat of clean animals, or the blood of any animal (Leviticus 7:24-27). To do so would likewise incur the death penalty.

The prohibition against eating unclean animals pertained to the stigma of death, which is the reward for sin. Although the sacrifices required death to the animals sacrificed, no
animal that was by nature associated with death, such as a carnivore could be a sacrifice.

The reason for the prohibition against eating unclean animals was that by doing so, one became unclean himself, having death within him. Yet there is no specific penalty stated for eating unclean animals than that for touching them. The Hebrews had to wash themselves and their clothes and remain unclean until that evening. Clearly, the prohibition was for ceremonial purposes rather than health, although health may have been a secondary purpose.

It is true that many unclean animals under the Law are bad for one’s health, and should be avoided to a large degree. Some things are too repulsive to eat. But we can sin just as well in eating foods designated “clean” under the Law, if we do not exercise prudence. But health is not stated as a specific reason for the prohibition against eating unclean animals. And if the purpose was primarily ceremonial, then it pertained to the rituals and sacrifices, all of which have been done away.

Now, if we are still under the Mosaic Law pertaining to the eating of unclean things, then we must obey the entire Law. To do otherwise would violate the Law in some fashion or other. Thus, those who touch the carcasses of any dead thing would not be allowed to enter into the congregation. He would have to wash himself to be ceremonially clean once again. And those who eat unclean animals and enter into the congregation would have to be put to death, or at least be banned from entering into the congregation.

So any believer in Christ today who ate ham or bacon would have to suffer the penalties of the Law.

If one keeps the Law by not eating foods designated “unclean” under the Mosaic Law, but will not agree with the provision that those who do eat such foods must be put to death, he is guilty of the whole Law, having violated a portion of the Law. Again, we turn to James 2:10-11.

Additionally, these prohibitions pertained specifically to the congregational setting related to the offering of sacrifices.

Can you see where this is leading?

Just as it is impossible to keep the feasts according to the whole Law because they require sacrifices; so, too, it is impossible to keep the dietary laws that pertain to sacrifices, and that judge a person worthy of death. If a person insists on keeping the feasts, but does not offer sacrifices, he has not fulfilled the whole Law; he is guilty of breaking all the Law.

Christ’s death on the cross fulfilled the Law. By His sacrifice He once and for all did away with the need to keep offering sacrifices. Thus, all the Law pertaining to the sacrifices under the Mosaic Law have been done away. We no longer offer sacrifices of animals because Christ’s sacrifice was sufficient to assuage the wrath of the Father for all who believe in Jesus and live according to His commandments under the New Covenant made with the houses of Judah and Israel (Hebrews 8:8).

And His commandments are not grievous, as were the commandments under the Mosaic Law:

For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not grievous. For whoever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that overcomes the world: our faith.

Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? (1 John 5:3-5)

How the matter of circumcision was handled is the blueprint for how we consider all the Law.

In the Book of Acts we read that certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, saying, “Unless you are circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved.”

A large dispute arose, which prompted the brethren to send Paul, Barnabas, and certain others to go to Jerusalem to consult the apostles and elders regarding the question.

And when they came to Jerusalem they were received by the assembly and by the apostles and elders. And they declared all things that God had done with them.

But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees who believed, saying that it was necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the Law of Moses.

And the apostles and elders came together in order to consider this matter.

And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up and said to them, “Men and brethren, you know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe. And God, who knows the hearts, bore them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit even as He did to us, and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

Now therefore why do you test God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.”

Then all the crowd kept silent and gave attention to Barnabas and Paul declaring what miracles and wonders God had performed among the Gentiles by them.

And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, “Men and brethren, listen to me. Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. And the words of the prophets agree to this, as it is written, ‘After this I will return and will again build the tabernacle of David which has fallen down, and I will again build its ruins and I will set it up so that the
remnant of men and all the Gentiles, upon whom My name is called, might seek after the Lord,’ says the Lord, who does all these things.” Known to God are all His works from the beginning of the world. Therefore my determination is that we not trouble those who are turned to God from among the Gentiles, but that we write to them that they abstain from pollution from idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. For from olden times Moses has in every city those who preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day."

Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole assembly, to send chosen men from their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas—namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren.

And they wrote letters by them after this manner: “The apostles and elders and brethren send greetings to the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia. Forasmuch as we have heard that certain who went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls by saying you must be circumcised and keep the law, to whom we gave no such commandment, it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul—men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, we have sent Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication, from which, if you keep yourselves, you shall do well. Fare you well.” (Acts 15:4-29)

Why, today, do we have Christians (many of whom are not even Jews) insisting that we must keep the Mosaic Law to any degree?

But what about the Ten Commandments? Are they no longer applicable? Can we break them with impunity?

The Ten Commandments were part of the Law given as a schoolmaster. They helped us understand how we are to relate to God and to man generally. But once we came to Christ we no longer needed the schoolmaster. Our conscience is guided by His Word and the Holy Spirit. Now we approach the Ten Commandments in the same manner as Jesus did:

“You have heard it said by those from old times, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you, that whoever looks at a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery in his heart.” (Matthew 5:35)

This is why we are instructed by the apostle Paul:

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God. (Romans 12:2)

It takes an act of one’s will to resist the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the Devil. But that is what is meant by walking in the Spirit and not in the flesh. To attempt to keep the Law on its own merits is walking in the flesh. And by the works of the Law, no flesh will be justified:

But when Peter came to Antioch, I withstood him to his face because he was at fault. For before certain came from James, he ate with the Gentiles. But when they came he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. And the other Jews acted hypocritically in concert with him, inso- much that Barnabas was also carried away with their hypocrisy.

But when I saw that they did not walk uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel, I said to Peter in front of them all, “If you, being a Jew, live after the manner of Gentiles, and not as the Jews do, why do you compel the Gentiles to live as the Jews do?”

We Jews by nature, and not Gentile sinners, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ so that we might be justified by the faith of Christ and not by the works of the Law. For no flesh shall be justified by the works of the Law. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves are also found sinners, is Christ therefore the minister of sin? It cannot be.

For if I build again the things that I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For through the Law I am dead to the Law so that I might live to God.

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

I do not violate the grace of God, for if righteousness comes by the Law then Christ died in vain.

O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you so that you would not obey the truth—before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been plainly set forth, crucified among you?

This only would I learn about you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing about faith?

Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh? Have you suffered so many things in vain, if it is still in vain?

Therefore, He who ministers the Spirit to you, and works miracles among you, does he it by the works
of the Law, or by hearing about faith even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness!

Therefore, know that those who are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, proclaimed the Gospel to Abraham earlier, saying, “In you shall all nations be blessed.”

So then those who are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. For as many as are of the works of the Law are under the curse, for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not continue in doing all those things that are written in the Book of the Law.”

But it is evident that no man is justified in the sight of God by the Law, for the just shall live by faith. And the Law is not of faith, but the man who does them shall live in them.

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”) so that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: although it is but a man’s covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no man annuls or adds to it.

Now the promises were made to Abraham and his seed. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, and to your seed, who is Christ.

And I say this: that the covenant that was confirmed earlier by God in Christ, the Law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot annul that it should make the promise of no effect. For if the inheritance is by the Law it is no longer by promise. But God gave it to Abraham by promise.

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

Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? It cannot be. For if there had been a law given that could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the Law. But the Scripture has concluded all under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

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

There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise. (Galatians 2:11-3:29)

After faith came, we were removed from the bondage of the Law.

There are those who say that whatever part of the Law is not specifically nullified in the writings of the apostles (the “New Testament”) is still applicable. Others say that only what is nullified in the writings of the apostles are no longer applicable. Still others say the Law still pertains to the Jews, even those in Christ, but not to the Gentiles. Some “Messianic” churches believe this latter idea which is refuted by Galatians 2:28: “There is neither Jew nor Greek. We are all one (the same) in Christ Jesus.”

The first two are saying basically the same thing. But their understanding is faulty.

But then why did Paul have Timothy circumcised (Acts 16:1-3)? Was he not abiding by the Law?

Yes, but not for righteousness’ sake. He did so in order that he might have the ears of the Jews to whom he wanted to present the Gospel. In his own life he acted both in accordance with the Law and in his freedom in Christ, depending on how he might reach the lost:

For though I am free from all men, I still have made myself a slave to all so that I might gain the more.

And to the Jews I became as a Jew so that I might gain the Jews—to those who are under the Law, as under the Law, that I might gain those who are under the Law;

To those who are outside the Law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ) so that I might gain those who are outside the Law.

To the weak I became as weak so that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men so that I might by all means save some. (1 Corinthians 9:19-22)

We are free to keep the law in such cases, but we are not free to keep the Law for the sake of self-justification. Remember that we were unclean before we came to Christ. What makes us clean in the eyes of the Father is not our keeping the Law, but our faith in His Son. The more we lean toward the Law, the farther away we lean from the Father.

The entire Law is done away; we now live by faith in Jesus who gave His life for us. We are to be led by His Holy Spirit. And pertaining to food and drink, His Holy Spirit has taught us how to live according to our life in Christ:
Receive him who is weak in the faith, not discussing disputes. For one believes that he may eat all things. Another, who is weak, eats herbs. Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats, for God has received him.

Who are you that judges another man’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Yes, he shall be held up, for God is able to make him stand.

One man esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He who regards the day, regards it unto the Lord, and he who does not regard the day, it is to the Lord that he does not regard it. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks, and he that does not eat, it is to the Lord that he does not eat, and gives God thanks.

For none of us lives for himself, and no man dies for himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s.

But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you disdain your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, “As I live,” says the Lord, ‘every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.’

So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Therefore, let us not judge one another any longer, but rather judge this: that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way.

I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself, but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

But if your brother is bothered by your food, you do not walk in love. Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died. So then do not let your good be spoken evil of.

For the Kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God, and approved by men.

Therefore, let us follow after the things which make for peace, and things by which one may edify another.

Do not destroy the work of God for food. Indeed, all things are pure, but it is evil for that man who eats giving offence.

It is good neither to eat meat, nor to drink wine or anything by which your brother stumbles, or is offended, or is made weak.

Do you have faith? Have it for yourself before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in that thing which he allows.

And he that doubts is judged if he eats, because he does not eat by faith. For whatever is not by faith is sin.

We then are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not please ourselves.

Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ did not please Himself, but, as it is written, “The reproaches of them that reproached you fell on Me.” (Romans 14:1-15:3)

The lesson is that the strong should not denigrate the weak or make them feel inferior by eating or drinking what we wish in their presence, if what we eat or drink offends them. In Christ, there is nothing unclean in itself; we make it unclean with our conscience. If our conscience offends us, then we are not to eat or drink (or do anything) that that makes us feel guilty.

Let us not judge those who eat what they will, or who refrain from what they will according to their conscience.

Yet let us also not be timid to oppose those who teach unsound things pertaining to the Law, insisting that believers in Christ are still bound by the Law to any degree.

They may infect the weak—the new or ignorant believer—so we should not judge those they infect. Rather, we must judge the teachings of those who infect the Body of Christ.

Now, I’m certain that I have offended some good brethren who still believe they are under the Law regarding food and drink. That is not my intention.

It is my intention to answer those who have questions regarding this matter. That is why I have consulted such lengthy portions of Scripture to affirm our freedom in Christ. But not our freedom in Christ only; it is to affirm that we not turn our freedom in Christ into liberty to offend our brother.

In the final analysis, what must guide us in all we do and say is love. We may be scripturally correct in our position, but if we lack love as the basis for our expressing that position, then we have violated the Lord’s commandment to love all—even our enemies.

Bear with patience those who disagree. If persons on either side of the issue break fellowship with those on the opposite side, they will answer to the Lord for their lack of love toward their brethren.

In Jesus’ love,

Al
POP SINGER DORIS DAY has always been an “Al’s favorite.” Many of our age fondly remember the glory days of big bands and Doris’s lovely voice. Another great voice backed by big bands was that of Frank Sinatra. Regardless what one may think of him as a person, he did have a unique voice. But that isn’t why I am singling him out. It is a song he was identified with called Love and Marriage—a song about things that naturally go together—things that you “can’t disparage.” Like love and marriage, and a horse and carriage.

Lots of things come to mind that people are inclined to pair together. To name just a few, there’s ice cream and cake, flowers and spring, boys and girls, and countless others.

For those who know Christ, in our spirits we understand that trials and blessings also go together. Many of our readers are aware that in the past couple of years we’ve experienced difficult trials because of Al’s weak heart and other health issues. But there surely have been some sweet blessings along the way to buffer these difficulties.

Both times Al was hospitalized this year he received excellent treatment from the doctors and nurses who took care of him. I particularly appreciated the kind hearts and patience of the nurses whose sole purpose is to help people recover. One of the greatest blessings was confirmation from the saints that they have faithfully prayed for us. What joy that brought, knowing that through their prayer intervention our concerns are before the Lord. Brothers and sisters in the Lord that live nearby reached out to help us and encourage us in any way they could.

One of my daily prayers is that I may abide in Christ. Abiding in Christ gives me an overall sense of peace and trust. Recently while reading the Gospel of John and meditating on chapter 15, I especially loved verse 7—the part about abiding in Christ: “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.”

This chapter describes another pairing of things that go together—the vine and the branches. How wonderful to be assured that we are grafted into the Branch.

Then the Lord called my attention to verse 1: “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine dresser.” Another pairing.

But, hold on! The following verse refers to the vine dresser who does the pruning! I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine dresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes so that it may bear more fruit. (John 15:1-2)

Suddenly I realized I didn’t love this part so much. But I also know that pruning is necessary in order for the branches to bear fruit according to God’s Word.

Today I’m grateful, knowing that my faith and trust in the Lord has grown since undergoing these stressful tests. So praise the Lord for His tender care and His strength to carry us through these trials!

ARE YOU WILLING TO RETHINK SOME DEARLY-HELD TRADITIONS CONCERNING THE LAST DAYS AND ETERNITY?

AN ESCHATOLOGY DIFFERENT FROM ANYTHING YOU’VE YET HEARD!

THE DAY OF YAHWEH IS AVAILABLE FROM SWORD PUBLISHERS

www.swordpublishers.com

Sword Publishers
P.O. Box 640
Sequim, WA 98382

Item #B-1109 Paperback - $18 (Free U.S. Postage)
SEND A GIFT SUBSCRIPTION TO YOUR FRIENDS

If you would like to send some friends a free subscription to Media Spotlight, please fill in the information below and send it to:

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT - PO BOX 640 - SEQUIM, WA 98382
or e-mail us at contactus@mediaspotlight.org

A SPECIAL GIFT WILL BE INCLUDED FOR FIRST-TIME READERS:

A COPY OF

VENGEANCE IS OURS: THE CHURCH IN DOMINION

The seminal treatise on Dominion Theology
And the only book extant that deals with that subject
Available only in the United States
(We’re sorry, but foreign postage is far too expensive for us now.)

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY__________________________STATE_____ZIP______

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY__________________________STATE_____ZIP______