

Goodnews Christian Ministry

Selected Questions From Our Readers 1997

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The following are several questions by the same writer.

Question:

"I found your page on the millenium to be quite interesting...but in error. The scripture says plainly that SATAN had filled Ananias and Sapphira. Tough to do wounded and chained in the abyss.

Also, that satan had requested permission to Sift Peter...Also equally difficult. Paul also mentions Satan's hindrance. I don't believe then that you can build such a chapter on an obviously incorrect assumption." -M.

Answer:

There is a difference between Satan's personal direction and his influence. He has a corps of angels to do his bidding, but what has been missing during the term of the rule of the Christian Church on earth has been his own personal direction in these matters.

A correlation would be Patton's army without Patton. Locked in the Abyss, his angels had

to spread his influence on earth on their own. Satan's incarceration is not an 'incorrect assumption', it is stated categorically in scripture. (Rev.20:1-2).

Satan was a being of very high station in heaven. Much higher than ordinary angels. He is much more powerful than those under him which he rules. That is why God chose to remove him personally from the action, because many on earth that were saved, might not have been, had he been here.

For certain, there would have been no millenium -- no period of peace for practicing Christians between the two wars. Life on earth would have been for them a far worse hell than it has been from the time of Christ to now had this incarceration not taken place.

March 24, 1997

Question: (More of a statement actually than a question)

"People under God's influence are under the influence of the Holy Spirit, part of God's triunity.

Satan is not (a triunity) but a single, created being, not close to equality with God. (which is what got him in trouble in the first place).

When Jesus said, "satan, get thee behind me...", it was a personal confrontation, not a disembodied influence. Jesus saw satan as plainly as Elijah saw the angels around Jericho.

Satan was created a visible cherub, and does not possess omnipresence, nor can he send his own spirit anywhere he is not, as he is singular in existence." -M.

Answer:

When Satan rebelled, he convinced a third of heaven's angels to join him. This was a massive revolution. It created for him an army of followers. Obvious in this structure are the kind of officials surrounding him which we refer to as commanders and lieutenants, sergeants, and the like.

We could also use the metaphore of corporate officers and employees. It would be the same.

Jesus, during one of His miracles indicated that there is a similar large network of officials and beings (taking and implementing orders) surrounding God. (Matt.8:9-10). We can see the same kind of network in the activities of the Church on earth.

The war that was created in heaven by Satan's revolution is over. The forces of God successfully defeated Satan and his angels and cast them out of heaven, down onto the earth. Jesus indicated that He watched this fall occur while He was still in heaven with God.

Everything that we see now is a mop-up action with a critical focus -- the rescue of the children Satan took prisoner.

As a part of this rescue, Satan was locked in the Abyss for the period encompassing the reign on earth of God's Church. (Rev.20:1+).

His officials and servants, however, were not. But they lacked the cunning and direction of Satan himself, so were ineffective in stemming the rule of Christianity on earth.

However, they have been successful in proselytizing his case. That is why we all have to come to what Billy Graham has called 'the hour of decision'.

The people of God proselytize for God while the people of this world, proselytize for the Rebel of the Abyss. We all must choose one way or the other -- this world and its prince, or the kingdom of God and its prince.

That decision is the 'sifting of Satan'. It is also a sifting by God.

Satan is spirit in nature. The angels who joined Satan's rebellion against God are also spirit in nature. The Bible refers to this cortege of evil as 'the dominion and powers of the underworld'.

We are blocked by God from seeing beings that are spiritual as a part of our exile. But when God removes this veil, we will be able to see them as clearly as we see each other. You are correct. God has unveiled some eyes from time to time, but only rarely.

Jesus indicated that there was an immensely active spiritual environment all around us, just beyond our sight. When He talked with Nathaniel about this, Jesus said, *"I tell you most solemnly, you will see heaven laid open and, above the Son of Man, the angels of God ascending and descending."* (John 1:51).

Just as Satan infected the angels who joined him with his spirit of rebellion, he also infected all of us. This means that the infection was already implaced in us long before we were born on earth.

His going to the Abyss for awhile did not change this fact.

That is why it was necessary for Jesus to go to the cross. He had to cleanse our soul of this stain, because it sentenced us all to death. And we were all born into that sentence.

His death became our death, erasing the stain, and enabling us to follow Jesus out of here to the safety of His new kingdom. It is a journey we have to make because everything here is doomed and is going to be destroyed.

You are correct that Satan is a single being. However, immitating God, he has manifested himself on earth in a pseudo-trinity.

The Book of Revelation indicates that this manifestation consists of dragon , false prophet, and beast.

In all three aspects, this monstrous triad is an enemy of the Gospel Jesus preached (the Word by which all creation exists). So wherever we see that Gospel attacked, we see Satan's spirit manifested.

March 24, 1997

Question:

"When did satan get chained (in the abyss)?" -M.

Answer:

The Bible indicates that Satan was locked in the Abyss in correlation with the development of the Church -- sometime after Pentecost (30-33 A.D.). It is not easy to put an exact date on this incarceration, but 70 A.D. is a good possibility. Nero died about then, creating an historic event that symbolised the mortal wound administered.

70 A.D. also saw Jerusalem destroyed by Rome, the temple of Herod burned to the ground, and most of the Apostles put to sleep immediately beforehand.

The Apostle John, who wrote the Book of Revelation in about 95 A.D., seems to indicate in his epistle that Satan has already been incarcerated. (Rev.17:8). So the imprisonment most likely occurred at some point between 30 A.D. and 95 A.D.

Because the Bible tells us that when Satan returns he will mobilize the world for war, we can assume that his unchaining has already occurred. The religious rule of the Christian

Church is falling apart under a great secular onslaught. That is a key sign that Satan is back with us again. It is undoing 1700 years of world history.

Another, even more profound sign is world war. (Rev.20:7-9).

We have had two global wars in less than one hundred years, plus a worldwide 'cold war'. With an entire world mobilizing for war, not just once, but over and over again, scripture's prophecy is fulfilled.

And with it all, has occurred the rise of the East. The significance of this, of course, is war on Christianity. Hostility toward Christians is a key ingredient of the militant policies now being actively pursued in the muslim Middle East.

March 24, 1997

Question:

"Where did you find evidence for a dual millenium, 2000 years,?
Is there any concrete non-symbolic evidence?" -M.

Answer:

It is not a 'dual' millenium. God has increased His offer of reconciliation by stretching out one day (Christ's Day of Atonement) and making it last longer.

The best evidence of a millenium 'almost' 2000 years long is symbolic (i.e., metaphoric prophecy) and it comes from the Book of Joshua. This is covered in depth in the chapter on the [millenium](#) in the book, 'The Clock of God'.

The most concrete non-symbolic evidence for a 2000-year millenium is history. The Church has reigned on earth now for over 1700 years.

Theodosius, as ruler of the western world, declared Christianity the single religion of his empire. He outlawed all other methods of worship. A not so sweeping, but similar edict was issued earlier by Galerius, ruler of the eastern empire.

Between the two of them, their proclamations incorporated almost the entire civilized world.

It is only in our own century that the religious power defined in these edicts has been seriously eroded. The erosion itself does not end the power of Christianity, it simply gives evidence of an end in sight.

Daniel states that the beast will crush the power of the holy people. So the erosion we now see in the secular revolt portends a beast not far away. Remember, Paul warned in his letter to the Thessalonians that just such a revolt would occur and pave the way for the Rebel's appearance.

The prophecy that this rule of the Church is the millenium predicted in the Book of Revelation is supported by at least three important facts: 1. The kingdom of God is eternal. It has no thousand year limits. 2. Gog and Magog cannot appear until the millenium is over. 3. Satan's release from the Abyss, an event also slated to occur after the millenium ends, deceives the world according to the Bible (the secular revolt now in progress) and mobilizes all its citizens for world war.

July 19, 1997

Question:

" I would like some information on a term used in Revelations, "wormwood." What is that exactly?"
-- MY

Answer:

The word 'wormwood' means bitterness or something grievous. (Webster). The Book of Revelation is all about a great 2000-year war taking place in Babylon (a place ruled by God's enemies) initiated by the sudden and victorious appearance of the sword of Christ (the word of God) within it. The prophet John apparently used the term wormwood to describe the appearance during the course of this battle of a grievous philosophy which corrupts the pure teaching of Christ. He characterizes it as falling from the sky, i.e., coming from 'above' (coming down to earth as a religion). This can best be understood as an adversarial teaching (i.e., a religion opposed to Christianity) which converts about 1/3 of the population of the earth, ruining their chances to find Christ. The relationship of wormwood with 'teaching' is revealed by John who writes of the impact of the falling ball of wormwood with water. According to John the sudden appearance of this foreign body was able to turn 1/3rd of the earth's water into bitter wormwood. Water in prophecy relates on one side to the living water of Christ and on the other side to its spiritual opposite. In this sense, wormwood is a philosophic opposite of the Gospel preached by Christ. This

seems the most likely spiritual meaning of John's vision (the spiritual meaning of any prophecy is always its most important as far as God is concerned).

A second meaning, however, is physical and this might describe pollution, radiation, etc., plunging down into the oceans, lakes, rivers and streams as the result of some grievous sinful action by man. Since Christ showed that physical death has no power over the people of God, He would be less concerned over this kind of catastrophe than with something that caused the spiritual death of their souls.

July 19, 1997

Question:

"I was listening to a Christian lady on the radio who said that it was a good thing to fear God. That just doesn't sound right to me. What do you think?" HT

Answer:

Our whole society molds us in fear. From kindergarten on up. Teachers control their classrooms through scowls and the fear of grades; through punishment of unacceptable conduct, and peer pressure. As we grow up we find ourselves enmeshed in a world where fear controls almost all of our behavior. Peer pressure is probably the strongest fear we have -- fear about what our neighbors or friends or relatives might think about us if we step outside the line they have drawn around our lives. When the policeman appears behind us, we quickly check to see if our seat belts or our children's seat belts are fastened, we check the speedometer and worry about the speed limit or other traffic signs and it is all because we are afraid of getting an expensive ticket and having our insurance rates shoot up. So we often sigh a breath of relief when the policeman disappears from sight. The fear is there on purpose, to control our behavior. There is a fear of losing our wives or husbands if our actions displease them. At work more fear is used to make us behave as our supervisors dictate. We might lose our job or a promotion if we do not obey. We are told that we are expendable and only if we act accordingly can we safely remain in our position. Sometimes the threats are overt, but usually they need only to be subtle because we have been conditioned for so long to alter our actions through fear. But whether it is subtle or overt, we live in a fear-driven society.

The world is a dangerous place, so the fears work also to protect our safety. Driving the freeways, for instance, going out of the house at night in the city, or hiding from gunfire in the ghetto's. Far from going away, fear is actually increasing. We don't have a major war to worry about right now, or hydrogen bombs raining down on us from Russian missiles the

way people did in the 50's and 60's, but these fears have been replaced by others, more insidious, because they are often more personal. The corporate giants are rapaciously grabbing every company in sight, downsizing them and scattering hundreds of thousands of people from once-secure jobs into unemployment lines or lower-paying positions. They are shredding benefits, retirement programs, health insurance and now even have their eyes on the money being payed to poor. These factors have produced increasing fear in vast numbers of people, making them much more competitive, pitting them against one another, and increasing isolation. There is an underlying fear about the future -- about not keeping a job, or making home payments or putting food on the table for the kids. Large companies have sprung up to measure time management to make sure people work at high capacity every moment without rest. Such pressures are why so many people have become hostile and rude these days. In the supermarkets, for instance, or in the malls. It is because they are trying to keep up and not burn out in an increasingly violent and competitive society architected for us through fear.

So what about the fear of God?

What the Bible is telling us is that we should abandon all the fears that have been controlling our past and refocus our fear on God alone. We should behave not the way our peers want us to behave, but in the way God wants us to behave. That way, we can stop worrying about the future or about social pressures. We no longer have to care what our neighbors or family think of us. We need care only about what God thinks of us. When we turn to God and trust in Him, we can drop all those other fears from our shoulders and cast them to ground. That is because our faith is much more powerful than all the social, business and political forces that are trying through fear to control us.

When we truly fear God, we have no fear, because He has promised us eternal life and unending peace in return for our faith in Him. When we live in God, the future is not our enemy. So the closer we come to God -- the more we live in His Gospel -- the less we have to fear anything. That is because nothing can harm us. Great harm, on the other hand, exists outside of God. Those who live without God truly stand in harm's way, so for them there is much to fear.

The fear of God, then, is actually the fear of being outside of Him. Jesus came to show us how to live our lives in God's favor, and thus be structured within His camp of safety, where no harm can befall us. His promise guarantees that everything will be all right. We may not get that house up on the hill with the swimming pool and the new BMW in the driveway, but we will end up with far more. And here, we will have peace, because we have divested ourselves of all the demons of fear that drive and terrify those who don't live for God.

August 11, 1997

Question:

"I am a member of (a church) in Canada. They allow homosexual ministers. However in the Bible, homosexuality is 'an abomination in His sight'. Should I be changing churches for the fear of 'wormwood' as mentioned in Revelations or can my own faith get me through? Also I have noted the church has a 'laid back' attitude on the whole Heaven and Hell issue. They feel that everyone will go to a good place when they pass. To me they are taking it upon themselves to change what Himself has said.

2) I've heard a lot about the year 2000...relevant to the date of the Apocalypse or just a convenient number? Since nobody but the Lord is supposed to know the true date is this fiction or has He allowed this to slip through for the believers? Personally it has me concerned and very curious." KMR

Answer:

This is a very important question. Jesus instructed us to follow Him. He did not want us following ministers. In the Old Testament, the prophet Ezekiel predicted that God was going to free us from the life and death grasp ministers held over their flocks. He wrote:

"I am going to call the shepherds to account. I am going to take my flock back from them and I shall not allow them to feed my flock. In this way the shepherds will stop feeding themselves. I shall rescue my sheep from their mouths; they will not prey on them any more. For the Lord God says this: I am going to look after my flock myself and keep all of it in view...I myself will show them where to rest. I shall look for the lost one, bring back the stray, bandage the wounded and make the weak strong...I shall be a true shepherd to them. "

"I mean to raise up one shepherd, my servant David, and put him in charge of them and he will pasture them; he will pasture them and be their servant. I, the Lord God will be their God and my servant David shall be their ruler. I, the Lord, have spoken." (Ez.34:10-31).

One shepherd is the whole meaning of the Gospel. We have in these four holy books the entire commandment of God; and in the New Testament, the fundamental teaching of the Church. No minister has power to overrule Jesus. He is the 'David' that scripture promised and the only shepherd of our souls.

The churches are essential because they give us an outlet for fellowship and community guidance in our trek with Christ. Because of this they are much like hospitals for the sick -- pouring out the cure of Christ to all who come by. But they are not God. And occasionally they pour out poison instead of Christ.

There are many stories in the media these days where ministers, driven by worldly instincts, have lured children under their care into the kind of webs you speak of. This is an unspeakable tragedy and clear proof of the abomination. As Christians we must not set up the people who instruct us in scripture as the guardians of our lives. Only Christ.

The Bible is clear about right and wrong and Jesus made that distinction crystalline. We are living in a fateful age when all the guidelines of yesterday seem to be crashing down around us. This changing of the times was predicted from the beginning.

The year 2000 probably has great significance. It apparently doesn't match the birth of Christ (said to be in 6 BC or 4 BC) and it exists by an apparent mistake of the calendar. The Holy Spirit usually instruments such anomalies. The end of the world, however, is not likely to be so soon.

What we are seeing now is the fall of the Church from public favor -- the end of the Christian era. And in that respect the age we are entering is ushering in all the fateful repercussions of that event. When peace and order leave, they are replaced by violence and chaos. There is a definitive point in time when the two era's interchange. The 'Son' sets and the night returns. Perhaps the year 2000 will mark that interchange Perhaps it will usher in one of the wars spoken of by Daniel.

We can only keep faith in Jesus and stay true to His Gospel and be secure in the knowledge that we have overcome the world and entered the favor of God.

You are correct. Not everyone is going to be given access to heaven. The Bible is clear on that as well. And again, Jesus made it certain.

August 6, 1997

Question:

"It does look like the world is beginning to approach the times (you write about). How long do you believe until we start seeing some very obvious signs that these times are upon us, will I, aged 18, live to see these times ? How long do you believe until this begins to come crashing down ? What kind of time frame ?" AW

Answer:

There are two ends coming at us simultaneously. Our own life has one end. The earth's life another. They are both related. If we put Christ in command of our lives He will raise us

up to eternal life. If we fail to do that, both ends are the same. No one can tell either date. An auto accident, for instance, may be only a few hours away. God will hold back both dates if we commit to His Gospel, to give us time to accomplish that commitment to His satisfaction. The final end of the world cannot come until the world itself rejects Christ. We can see elements of that apostasy already in the events around us, and this rejection, the Bible predicts, will grow. We can watch that process evolve simply by reading the newspapers and watching the changing focus of world leaders. But those who convert and follow Christ bypass all this. The world will pass away as the Bible predicts, but those who follow Jesus will never pass away.

August 6, 1997

Question:

How do explain these imminency statements of the inspired authors of scripture, that clearly teach a first century return of Christ? I am a full-preterist who believes with all of my heart that Jesus came in judgment in 70 AD with the Roman armies when the Temple was leveled and Jerusalem was destroyed along with over a million Jews. Their world came to a fiery end, and the New Covenant, where there is neither Jew nor Gentile, was ushered in with all it's glory. MW

Answer:

History's facts certainly cannot be argued, although I doubt that Jesus came with the Roman army. God, who knows past, present and future, placed His Christ here at an appropriate time when all was in readiness for that appearance. Jesus came, not with Rome, but in the Gospel; conquered the earth, and set up His kingdom here. The Holy Spirit appeared at Pentecost 52 days after the crucifixion. And from that Pentecost moment grew quickly a mighty Church that conquered the world. We have lived in the light of that victory for the last 2000 years. Yet Jesus preached of a 'night' coming when no one can work. That 'night' is an intermediate period that precedes the restructuring of the heavens when Satan is destroyed completely and death disappears forever.

Had the Jewish leaders listened to Jesus, laid down their arms and made peace with their Roman occupiers (turning the cheek God demanded of them), there would have been no Roman invasion of Judea, no million deaths or slavery, no dispersion to Babylon. The Vatican would now be in Jerusalem and the Pope would be a Jewish High Priest. But the Jewish leaders rejected the message Christ brought to them and so it was taken (by force

and by treaty) to Rome where it was distributed to the pagans who listened and converted en masse. So much so that the Roman Empire itself denounced paganism and instituted Christianity as the official state religion of the world. The fall of Rome did not affect this dictate. Christianity has dominated the western world and its assorted governments ever since.

Scripture clearly predicts that the world will one day renege on its conversion, turn its back on God and follow its own pleasures. Jesus called this period a 'night' because it involves a period when all across the earth the light of Christ will be extinguished from sight. The Book of Revelation states that this world apostasy will precipitate the release of Satan from his chained imprisonment in the Abyss; and upon his return he will foment a period of great violence on earth, mobilizing all the nations for war. At the conclusion of this planetary chaos, the nations will be gathered to Israel and a 'Second Coming' of Christ will exchange the heavens and the earth.

You gave many examples predicting a First Century return of Christ. Yet these also have application to the final days as well. I will list several of these as we go down the list.

Jesus to His twelve apostles:

"..you shall not finish going through the cities of Israel, until the Son of Man comes." (Mt.10:23)

As far as all the cities of Israel are concerned, these are still being born today. Tel Aviv, for instance, and many others. They did not exist even a hundred years ago. And much of Israel is still in dispersion. The Jews have not yet converted, so Christ has not gone through this area of the planet yet.

Jesus to His disciples:

**"...there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."
(Mt.16:27,28)**

Jesus and his kingdom appeared to several disciples on Mt. Tabor when He and Moses and the voice of God appeared to them in the transfiguration. Also, Stephen, when he was being stoned, saw the kingdom of God coming before he died and gave witness to this fact.

Jesus to His disciples:

"...this generation will not pass away until all these things take place." (Mt.24:34, See Lk.21:32)

This generation refers to the reign of homo sapiens. Mankind. More than

that, it refers to the progeny of Noah who repopulated the earth following the disastrous flood when all of mankind was destroyed with Eden because of sin. This generation includes all the people that lie between the flood's destruction and the one coming later which Christ predicted.

Jesus to Caiaphas:

"...hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." (Mt. 26:64)

Jesus to Nathanael:

"...you shall see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." (Jn.1:51)

These statements refer to the day of Judgment when all shall be arraigned and the truth of the spiritual world of God is revealed to a blind world.

Jesus to Peter:

If I want him (John) to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me! (Jn.21:22,23)

The Book of Revelation tells us that there are two resurrections. Most of the Apostles died around the year 70 AD when Nero devastated the early Church. Only one Apostle that we know of lived much later. John wrote the Book of Revelation, they say in the AD 90's. Perhaps he stayed behind and did not participate in the first resurrection, waiting with us until the second when Jesus returns in Glory with all the angels.

Paul to all who were beloved of God in Rome:

" ...it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand." (Ro.13:11,12)

The day at hand spoken of by Paul refers to the Day of Christ, his thousand year reign on earth -- a time extended to 2000 years by the power and kindness of God in harmony with the prophecy in the Book of Joshua who says that God stopped the sun in the sky and made one day into almost two. For to God a day is like a thousand man-years. The 'day' Paul speaks of here is the time of the reign of

the Church -- the period of the victory of Christ on earth when the pagans convert.

Paul to the church of God at Corinth:

...I hope you will understand until the end...(2Cor.1:3)

Our understanding must stay with us until the day we go to sleep -- the end of our own lives. As Jesus instructed His disciples to go and tell John the Baptist: "Go back and tell John what you hear and see; the blind see again, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, the Good News is proclaimed to the poor; and happy is the man who does not lose faith in me". (Matt.11:2-5).

August 11, 1997

Question:

"What do you think about the new book everyone is talking about called 'The Code of the Bible'...(that is finding) predictions hidden in the lines of scripture?" MD

Answer:

I have not read the book, only excerpts, so I cannot reply very well to your question. I do believe, however, that any book about Bible prophecy that ignores Jesus Christ has to be false. Reviews on this book declare that it suggests prophecies were mathematically interweaved into the words of the Torah that refer to the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel. Obviously this is a book written for our times. I cannot imagine God scripting into Bible verses such trivia and ignoring the momentous spiritual importance and world impact of Christ and Mohammed. It sounds to me much like the equally modern assertions that Nostradamus (who, by the way, also ignored Jesus Christ) wrote about Marilyn Monroe. The author of this book, Michael Drosnin, is Jewish. He sees no Christ. His prophecies see no Christ.

August 23, 1997

Question:

Could you please answer me these questions---

1. Why was December 25 chosen as Jesus birthday celebration?
2. Why are we so certain that April 7, 30 A.D. is the date of his crucifixion? JN

Answer:

In the earliest days of Christianity, birthdays were not celebrated. Important persons were honored by Christians on the day of their deaths because this was the day that marked their successful passage into the promised kingdom of Christ.

In the case of Jesus, no one knows on what day He was actually born. There are possible prophecies in scripture which allude to the fact that it may have coincided with the Feast of Tabernacles in late September or early October, but that occasion has never been acknowledged by Church fathers.

Instead, the Church settled on two dates in the dead of winter. One, December 25, the day of the Roman feast of the birth of Sol (the sun god); and the other, January 6, the day now known as the feast of 'epiphany'.

The Roman empire ruled the world at the time of Christ and soon after His death, this empire converted almost en masse to His message. At the same time, the empire divided into two segments, one controlling the west and the other the east. Two different emperor's ruled this divided kingdom. The result formed two predominate centers of Christian worship in the world. Rome and Constantinople.

The Roman segment chose December 25th while the eastern Church selected to celebrate Christ's birthday on January 6.

It was a common practice among Christian leaders to 'Christianize' major pagan feast days superimposing Christ over important celebrations practiced for centuries before He came. This re-molded the celebration, changing it from a pagan moment, to a Christian one. It was brilliant strategy and was in keeping with the mission of the Holy Spirit, which had been sent by God into a pagan Babylon to convert it from paganism to Christ.

As their influence expanded across the world with the rapid development of western civilization, Church leaders actively 'Christianized' everything they came into contact with that was pagan. Burying pagan practices, such policies played a major role in giving Christ the supremacy on earth that the Bible predicted for Him. Under a rising secular influence in the latter half of this century, the practice is being reversed and great apologies are now being offered to native tribes and peoples as Christ is removed and ancient traditions are

restored. This also was predicted.

While the western church flourished, the eastern church was attacked and subjugated by muslims. Their capitol, Constantinople fell to these Islamic invaders and was renamed Istanbul. For this reason, the rise of civilization went to the west, not to the east.

With the expansion of western civilization (governments sympathetic to Christ and championing His cause) Rome became the dominate Christian center on earth while the eastern church was left fighting trying simply not to disappear under the weight of governments opposed to Christian philosophy. For this reason, December 25th predominated as the day of the world's celebration of Christ's birth.

It was a date that served God well. In northern Europe the pagan Celtic and German tribes considered the winter solstice an important event of the year. On this occasion they celebrated their chief festival, an event called 'Yule', to commemorate the return of the burning-wheel. Holly, the wassail bowl, mistletoe and the Yule log are all ancient relics of this Celtic and German past -- a pagan past now long forgotten because of its transformation to Christ.

Any pagan aspect of Christian celebrations is far overshadowed by an overlapping relationship with ancient Hebrew feast days and festivals. The most important Christian holidays always superimpose over Hebrew celebrations dictated by the Old Testament. This fact cannot be overemphasized.

The Holy Spirit directed the Church to choose dates that served the divine will of God. That the celebration of Christ's appearance in the world would be practiced in December and on the 25th day of the month was prophetically documented in the Bible long before Jesus was born.

It is not merely coincidence that Christmas coincides by day and month with the Jewish festival called the 'feast of lights' (Hannukah). This Jewish festival falls on the 25th of Kislev, a lunar month that coincides to a large extent with the solar month of December.

The relationship between these two celebrations is striking. The Jewish festival of lights celebrates the purification (re-dedication) of the temple and the restoration of its sacrifice.

Jesus was the true meaning of this monumental event. He offered Himself to purify the sacrifice and cleanse a contaminated people so that they could be restored to God. He appeared as the true light of God on earth, a light that imparted eternal life, a light that appeared on the day of His birth. A festival of light to honor His coming was in perfect keeping with the religious calendar, especially a calender in which the two dates so closely coincide.

Nor has the importance of December 25th served its whole purpose for God. This date (and January 6th as well) have important roles to play in the future with the appearance of

the Beast and his fateful abomination of the sacrifice, and the events that follow it. This relationship is explored in detail in Chapter 34 of the 'Last Days of Babylon', a chapter that will appear on the web in coming months.

In answer to your second question concerning the exact date that Christ went to the cross. No one is completely certain that Jesus died in 30 A.D. However, we do know that His crucifixion occurred on one of two dates, 30 or 33 A.D. That is because it is well documented in the scriptures that His crucifixion occurred on a Friday that coincided with Passover, the 14th of Nissan in the Hebrew calendar.

The approximate year is known by the people involved in His inquisition or surrounding it. For instance, Pilate (governor of Judea 26-36 A.D.), Caiaphas (high priest 18-36 A.D.), etc.

Only twice in this time period did the 14th of Nissan fall on a Saturday. One was April 8, 30 A.D. and the other was on April 4, 33 A.D. Since Jesus was crucified on Friday, His death would have occurred on either April 7th or April 3rd, depending on which of these two years the event occurred.

In the Gospel of John (2:20) a Jew exclaims to Jesus that "it has taken 46 years" to build the temple. Since building on this sanctuary began in the winter of 19 B.C., the date for this statement must be Passover of 28 A.D. Such a date would argue for a crucifixion in 30 A.D.

However, the Bible also states that John the Baptist began to preach in the 15th year (See Luke 3:1) of Tiberius Caesar's reign (29 A.D.). That suggests that Jesus, who began His preaching after John, was not crucified until 33 A.D. But this passage in Luke is complicated by the fact that two methods were in use in those days when calculating time. If the Syrian method was used (common in Judea), the 15th year of Tiberius' reign began in 26 A.D., a date that would place Christ's crucifixion in 30 A.D.

Like everyone else, we are left to take our pick. Most scholars have chosen the date you specified, but not all.

September 1, 1997

Question:

"Are the books Ws. and Wis. are in the apochrypha? I'm not familiar with them." NT

Answer:

Both are abbreviations for the Book of Wisdom which is a book of the Greek Bible used by the Eastern Orthodox, Coptic, Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches (among others). It was removed from most Protestant Bibles by Martin Luther because it was originally penned in Greek instead of Hebrew. At the funeral of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, the first reading came from this book:

"...the souls of the virtuous are in the hands of God, no torment shall ever touch them. In the eyes of the unwise, they did appear to die, their going looked like a disaster, their leaving us, like annihilation; but they are in peace. If they experienced punishment as men see it, their hope was rich with immortality; slight was their affliction, great will their blessings be. God has put them to the test and proved them worthy to be with him; he has tested them like gold in a furnacae, and accepted them as a holocaust. When the time comes for his visitation they will shine out; as sparks run through the stubble, so will they. They shall judge nations, rule over peoples, and the Lord will be their king forever. They who trust in him will understand the truth, those who are faithful will live with him in love; for grace and mercy await those he has chosen." (Ws.3:1-9)

September 22, 1997

Question:

(Paraphrased for brevity) 'You write that it is stated in scripture that part of the dead will participate in a first resurrection and reign with God during the thousand years (Rev. 20:4-10) and that this first resurrection has already taken place. Are you trying to say that there are people (now living) on this earth that have been resurrected from the dead?' MD

Answer:

No. The answer to your question lies in the fate of Peter and Paul and the rest of Christ's principle Apostles. Where are they now? Where do they currently reside? Are they reigning with Christ? If so, where? Certainly not on either hemisphere of this earth.

Heaven is a vast place and the Bible shows us that it is tiered as well. In the Lord's prayer we petition God with Christ's own words: "...*thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*" These words show that wherever heaven is, God reigns and His word is being kept there in its entirety. Today.

The question you raised revolves around the issue of the first resurrection described in the

Book of Revelation (Rev.20:4-5). When did that resurrection take place? Has it taken place? And, if so, where is it being fulfilled?

The prophecy in these pages states that it already has taken place and that it occurred around 70 A.D. It swept up to heaven all people who died in Christ up to that date. The rest of the dead which includes all Christians who have lived and died after that date, must await the second resurrection when the thousand year period (the reign of Christian baptism on earth) is finished. Those participating in the first resurrection were raised to life in heaven and are reigning there with God right now.

Question:

(This also was a part of the question above, and it, too, is paraphrased for brevity) 'If the time we are living in now is the millenium, then when did the beast rule the earth to make a mark on people's foreheads and hands?' (Rev.13:15-17). MD

Answer:

Except for Jesus, everyone who has ever been born on earth has come into life here stained with the mark of Satan's sin.

We are living today in a special time -- the time of Christian baptism when a mark opposite that of the beast is being offered to the world. Anyone not receiving the mark of Christ, remains eternally stained with the mark of sin. (of the beast).

The essential aspect of Satan's mark, (as with Christ's mark) is spiritual. It cannot be seen. When indicating that this mark is made on the forehead or hand, John gave us, not only an image of the future, but also a spiritual symbol. Universal sin clouds the mind (the mark on the forehead) and produces wicked works (the mark on the hand). If Satan rules our minds, or our actions, the work of our hands, we can be said to have his mark on us. It is self evident. Baptism in Christ washes away the stain of Satan and cleanses us from the mark that Satan has made on our soul.

The Book of Revelation, Chapter 20:7-10, shows us that at the end of the millenium (the period of Christian baptism on earth), Satan will return and take back possession of the earth from the Church. Over a wide area, he will put an end to Christian baptism. At that time he will raise up his beast who will attempt to place a physical mark in the name of Satan on everyone under his rule.

God will then pull the plug. The end of the world will come as prophesied. There will be a great trial of all people. At the same time, the coronation of Jesus will take place in a

divine ceremony attended by countless angels and people. At the conclusion of these events the new earth and sky will descend from the highest heaven, and those found acceptable will be led into it to attend the great wedding feast and reign with Christ for all eternity.

November 6, 1997

Question:

"I have a question concerning 'Daniel's Unsealed Book' or 'Daniel's Book unsealed.' Just exactly what is this book, I have heard of it many times, and if it is sealed, When is it going to be unsealed ? Another question could be, Where is this book now ? Is it the same book of Daniel as the Old Testament?" AW

Answer:

The book is the same one as in the Bible.

It concerns the time of the End. (Dn.8:17).

It was sealed by the declaration of God, to be kept tightly closed until its day was at hand. (Dn.8:26; 12:4). Up to now scholars have always interpreted Daniel in the events of Antiochus IV Epiphanes circa 175 B.C., and in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D. In other words, it has been interpreted as a work of the past, not of the future. This approach has effectively sealed its prophecies. Yet the dictums in Daniel's book indicate that they chronicle something vastly different. Jesus, when He was speaking to His apostles about the end of the world, gave reference to one of Daniel's visions (Matt.24:15), indicating the deep relationship between this storied Hebrew prophet and the events of the coming tribulation.

Daniel's work can be considered unsealed when current events show that the future his visions concern have begun to unfold in modern times. It's unveiling signifies that the time for the End has arrived. The very fact that this book has suddenly become the focus of intense prophecy shows that the time has probably grown quite close. More than that, though, the book chronicles activities that have begun to be re-enacted on the modern stage. And that is compelling, especially since it follows so closely the reconstruction of Jerusalem -- one of the most important signs concerning the End defined in other prophecies of the Bible.

The most important key, however, that unlocks the seals on the Book of Daniel is the understanding that its central prophecy revolves around the liturgy of Christ, not that of Moses. The 'perpetual sacrifice' is Christian communion. Daniel's prophecies have nothing

to do with Jewish bloodletting -- slicing the throats of sheep and doves.

For more on this book and its implications, see:

["The Book of Daniel Unsealed"](#)

December 15, 1997

There is an article this week in U.S. News & World Report concerning prophecy and the Millenium. The article is quite good and can be accessed at U.S. News Online at the following Web address:

<http://www.usnews.com/usnews/news/prophigh.htm>

The primary question raised by the author concerns the possibility that apocalyptic prophecy can do more harm than good. Examples given include the non-Christian Heaven's Gate cult, and the Branch Davidians. Certainly Jonestown would qualify as well, having claimed over 900 lives in a single mass-suicide. Perhaps one could include the massacre of the Jewish zealots at Masada just after the death of Christ.

The Essenes were a Jewish militant apocalyptic organization with a cult headquarters at Qumran above the Dead Sea and their religious philosophy was chemistried in the same crucible that produced the Jewish remnant at Masada. And their fate was the same as well. The zealots of that age were assured that God would intervene in the assaults against them and bring the eternal kingdom promised by the Bible. The Branch Davidians were like-minded.

But all these people were polar opposites of Christ. According to Jesus, the implementation of the kingdom had to follow strict rules of non-violence. He assured His followers that it would be born in an atmosphere of gentleness and peace, not in an envelope of fear, anger or hatred.

Violence would overwhelm it, yes, but it must not issue from it, He said. In other words, it would appear in the visage of people like Mother Theresa and Princess Diana, not in the barbaric swords of soldiering. So any organization that embargoes itself behind iron gates with armaments has violated Jesus' directive and decisively cut itself off from the path He outlined.

Apocalyptic prophecy has its true genesis in reality. We are born dying. We build lives and civilizations that try to mask this reality by preoccupying our minds in asundry endeavors and interests, but the bottom line is not money. It is death.

Science has shown us that not only are our own lives short and illusory, but the planet's life

is transitory as well. The sun has a finite life, and when its fuel begins to exhaust, its fires will engulf the earth. Moreover, the deeper science investigates the universe, the more terrifying our fragile condition here is shown to be. Life on earth is completely foreign to the cosmic environment that surrounds us.

Moreover, the planet and life upon it have been molded by catastrophic events that are ongoing. Apocalyptic prophecy pokes holes through the mask and shows the images that society's managers don't want to face. If there were no solution, there would be little point in declaring these mortal realities

But it doesn't take a rocket scientist to realize that if we understand the dangers facing us, we can put plans into action that allow us to circumvent the disasters that would be inevitable were no knowledge dispensed. That is why we study hurricanes and their courses. It is why we plot earthquakes, volcanoes and the orbit of comets.

Christ brought the world from God an offer of eternal life. Billions believe His claim that He outlined a course of action that completely circumvents death. If He is true, then the declaration of God's offer and the path prescribed need to be published in the largest headlines the world can muster. The conditions of His offer need to be shouted in terms so clear that no one can avoid hearing them.

Christ gave us momentum for doing this by declaring that the end of the world is not far away, it is close. There is an apocalypse on a close horizon that will kill all the inhabitants of the world, He said. It may be nuclear war. It may be cometary debris. It may be a black hole. We have no way to know. Nor do we know that what He said is even true. Only faith can give us that answer.

But we do know that we are born dying and that in a few short years, perhaps, days or weeks, we will be dead and the offer He brought us from heaven will be extinguished forever. That is why there must be such urgency in the preaching. That is why there is apocalyptic preaching and that is why it will continue to the end.

No one else has ever offered such great hope to a world whose people are so quickly passing away.

-In Christ Jesus,
E.C.S. Leavenworth

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**"The Only Thing They Insisted On Was That
We Should Remember to Feed the Poor"**

Galatians 2:10