

Goodnews Christian Ministry

Questions From Our Readers 2008

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January 3, 2008

Question:

You write about Babylon. Will you define this term for me please? -KA

Answer:

In the symbolism of scripture, Babylon is a generic term. It stands for the ruling structure of civilization outside or apart from the two houses of Israel (i.e., apart from Christianity and Judaism). Basically, it is the world we find ourselves in today - all the political nations that rule the earth in our time, fostering a climate hostile to God.

It was not always the way we find it today. There was a period of time, often referred to as the "millenium" when Jesus Christ ruled the nations. That rule started with the appearance

of Jesus Christ in Judea and gained global tenure under the Roman emperor Constantine in 313 A.D.

"Babylon" suffered a mortal wound with the appearance of Jesus Christ. At the time of Christ (in the first century A.D.) the secular authority of the planet was the Roman Empire. Rome, as the governing authority on earth was the "Babylon" of the day because it ruled opposite the will of God. After a spiritual battle of almost 300 years, the rule of Christ replaced Rome's secular administration.

From 300 A.D. until 1900 A.D., enabled by Michael the Archangel's imprisonment of Satan in the Abyss (Rev.20:1-3), Jesus held sway over the nations.

Aided by the combined emperors of Constantine, Theodosius and Galerius, Christianity rose out of the catacombs to annex paganism's ruling structure of government. With that overthrow, Christ's temporal reign on earth began. The strength and breadth of Christianity's exploding power on earth made the wound to Babylon (inflicted by the Word of Christ) appear mortal.

However, scripture prophesied that this mortal wound would briefly heal in the last days (Rev.17:8). And then, at the end of this short, but bitter wrath (Rev. 20:7-10), Jesus Christ will return and make His reign eternal (Rev. 20:11-15).

History honors the Roman emperor Constantine as the symbolic Babylonian king who freed Jesus (the King of the Jews) from his imprisonment and elevated Him to the honored seat at his royal table in keeping with the prophecy of Jeremiah (Jer. 52:31-34).

Constantine freed the Church from its prison in the catacombs with his Edict of Milan. He was closely followed by two other emperors, Theodosius in the West and Galerius in the East, who gave the Church sole moral authority over the world. They forbid atheism and pagan worship throughout civilized society, edicts that remained in place until the beginning of the last century:

"You were my mace, a weapon of war. With you I crushed the nations, struck kingdoms down, with you crushed horse and rider, chariot and charioteer, with you crushed man and woman, old man and young, youth and maid, with you crushed shepherd and flock, ploughman and team, governors and nobles, but I will let you see how I make Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea pay for all the wrongs they have done to Zion. It is God who speaks." (Jer. 51:20-24).

"I was angry with my people, I had profaned my heritage. I

had surrendered it into your hands, but you showed them no mercy. On the aged you laid your crushing yoke. You said, 'Forever I shall be sovereign lady'. You never took these things to heart or pondered on their outcome." (Is. 47:6-7).

It was specifically to wipe out global paganism that Christian missionaries accompanied the worlds early adventurers and explorers as they expanded the boundaries of the western world.

In those decrees, Constantine and all the world's kings who followed him became rulers Christianized in the reign of Jesus on earth. The ruling baton changed hands. The reign of God's Church lasted 1700 years and spread across the planet, encompassing almost every regime in its path (Ps. 2:1-12).

And then came the current catastrophe. The Great Revolt (2 Thes.2:3).

The prophecy which stated that the mortal wound would heal has come true in our own time. Over the last 100 years, the entire western world has returned to secular or atheistic government, ousting Christ from all aspects of state authority and bringing to an end the 1700-year miracle of God's rule on earth. The declaration defining that divorce is termed "separation of church and state". That separation (first mandated by secular politicians in the last century) has returned the generic "Babylon" to world rule over human affairs - not as a single government - but in four loosely knit alliances of nations clustered around the West, Russia, China and the Middle East.

The return of secular and atheistic regimes to power all over the earth in the last several decades give truth to the Bible's proclamation that this is Satan's world. The fact is, finding himself suddenly released from prison, he is taking it back.

Satan was locked up by Michael the Archangel and kept in prison for the period of years that closely matched Christianity's rule on earth. In scripture this period is described as a thousand years. That is where we get the term the "millenium". It comes from the Book of Revelation (Rev. 20:2-3). In fact, it turned out to be almost 2000 years, fulfilling the prophecy of Joshua that one day would become almost two (Joshua 10:13).

Satan's incarceration allowed Christianity to flourish. His parole and release from prison has coincided with the return of the nations of the world to secular rule. Satan's new-found freedom to operate on earth again in these last days is leading Babylon and the planet to a final chaos destined to doom secular existance forever.

Scripture shows that man himself will bring the planet to this end (Rev.17:16-17). God will intervene only to mercifully end the chaos and rescue those who have chosen to follow

Christ, lifting them out of the turmoil and transporting them to His Son's kingdom in heaven.

With Christ's recent eviction from all the royal tables across the planet, the return of the western world to godless government has almost been completed. The governing baton has changed hands once again. The reign of Jesus on earth has ended and the potentates of Babylon have returned to power in Christ's place. The peg in Isaiah's prophecy, hammered into a secure place by the hand of God, is being pulled out as prophesied (Is. 22:23). For this reason, the day for the fall of the peg and the cups and saucers attached to it (all the churches of Christianity) is not far behind (Is. 22:24-25).

That is why, in the present world governments (the product of the mortal wound healing) we can see a generic Babylon wherever we look. It is a governing power that rules apart from the Church. Even its morality is different. There has been a sea change in the world because the gods of governance on earth are changing as we watch. Babylon, its mortal wound now seemingly healed, has returned to power on earth.

January 6, 2008

Question:

Does the idea of purgatory come from the Old Testament? -PL

Answer:

No. Life after death is a concept unique to the New Testament.

Like the concept of the Rapture, the concept of Purgatory is a prophecy. According to the Book of Revelation, at the front end of the saved (Rev.7:9-10) is the perfection of the 144,000 (Rev 7:4-8). At the back end of this group say others, is purgatory. There are many who believe in one of these prophecies, but not the either. There some who believe in both, and others that believe in neither. Taken together, all three possibilities show that there may be in salvation's picture, layers.

Jesus said in scripture that He had much more to reveal to the world beyond His stated Gospel, but it would be too much for the people of His own time when faith had just begun. He explained that those revelations would come later. Prophecy is the vehicle

through which the Holy Spirit has made all of these truths known to us across the Christian era.

Most of this revelation has come through an increased understanding of Old Testament visions. A large portion of the New Testament contains quotations from the Old Testament. Many are prophecies that point to the appearance of the Messiah and His intent. Even more point to Christ's Return in glory. Paul said those quotations were spoken by the prophets through the Spirit of God for our benefit; that we should learn from them the basic truths of God.

"For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope." (Rom.15:4).

Surprisingly, with all this prophecy abounding, what we have rarely seen during the era of the Christian Church is prophets, per se. Most of the prophecies that have emerged outside of scripture over the last 1600 years have appeared in the form of decrees made through councils by committee.

In this respect, while the role of prophecy in New Testament times has been large, it has come to us seemingly authorless. This is precisely the mechanism that has glorified the Holy Spirit above all others as the progenitor of Christian prophecy over the last 2000 years.

This is just as Jesus foresaw and addressed:

"I still have many things to say to you but they would be too much for you now. But when the Spirit of truth comes he will lead you to the complete truth, since he will not be speaking as from himself but will say only what he has learnt; and he will tell you of the things to come. He will glorify me, since all he tells you will be taken from what is mine. Everything the Father has is mine; that is why I said: All he tells you will be taken from what is mine." (John 16:12-15).

Question:

NOTE: When I was transferring files to change the question pages for the beginning of the new year, I reread one of the questions from last year and was moved by the Spirit that my answer at that time was not correct. The questioner asked the identity of "Cyrus" in the prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 45. My answer then was that it was Constantine, whose edict (the Edict of Milan) freed Christianity from prison in the catacombs and catapulted it into world rule.

The correct answer should have been the Apostle Paul.

A careful reading of Isaiah's words shows that it can be no one else. This mysterious prophecy shows "Cyrus" to be Christ's "shepherd" (minister), "anointed" (very high station), a convert who did not know Christ, called personally by name (Acts 9:4), given a title unbeknownst to him (the Prince of the Covenant), primary author of the New Testament, and coming from both the far north and from the rising sun (the East).

In all these words, the image of Jesus Himself is visible, but the words are directed to somebody just under Jesus, a servant of Jesus. It is Jesus, God made flesh, who does the calling. The one called is Saul of Tarsus.

"From the beginning I foretold the future, and predicted beforehand what is to be. I say: My purpose shall last; I will do whatever I choose. I call a bird of prey from the east, my man of destiny from a far country. No sooner is it said than done, no sooner planned than performed." (Is.46:10-11).

"I roused him from the north to come..." (Is. 41:25). Paul, though a Jew, was a Roman citizen.

"from the rising sun I summoned him by name." (Is.41:25). Paul was first confronted by Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus:

"Suddenly, while he was travelling to Damascus and just before he reached the city, there came a light from heaven all round him. He fell to the ground and then he heard a voice saying, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? 'Who are you, Lord?' asked Paul, and the voice answered, 'I am Jesus, and you are persecuting me.'" (Acts 9:3-5).

The Lord said to Cyrus,

"It is for the sake of my servant Jacob, of Israel my chosen one, that I have called you by your name, conferring a title through you do not know me." (Is. 45:4).

"I am he who says of Cyrus, 'My shepherd - he will fulfil my whole purpose, saying of Jerusalem 'Let her be rebuilt', and of the Temple, 'Let your foundation be laid'. (Is. 45:44:28).

Paul is a shepherd (a minister in the service of Christ). Anointed and crowned with the title "Guardian of the covenant and Sanctuary", he is seated on the royal throne at the pinnacle of God's ministerial service. Paul is the manifest fulfillment, not only of Moses, but of Joshua as well (who led the Israelites into the Promised Land in place of Moses):

"Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whom he has taken by his right hand to subdue nations before him and strip the loins of kings, to force gateways before him that their gates be closed no more: I will go before you levelling the heights. I will shatter the bronze gateways, smash the iron bars." (Is. 45:1-2).

"I it was who roused him to victory, I levelled the way for him. He will rebuild my city, will bring my exiles back without ransom or indemnity, so says the Lord God." (Is. 45:13).

Paul's occupation was a "tentmaker". His occupation matched his ordained purpose. He became the builder of all the early churches in Christendom, and through his extensive writings, and those he commissioned, he has bound together as one in Christ, all the churches of Christianity from beginning to end, from his time to ours.

"I am the Lord, unrivaled; there is no other God besides me. Though you do not know me, I arm you that men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun that, apart from me, all is nothing." (Is. 45:5-6).

"For your sake I send an army against Babylon; I will knock down the prison bars and the Chaldeans will break into laments. I am the Lord, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your king."

Paul is the author of most of the New Testament. Because of this, God has shown him to be the fulfillment of the typology of Moses. The temporal and spiritual leaders of the old

covenant were Moses and Aaron. Peter and Paul are the anointed figures they pointed to: who now stand at Christ's right and left hands.

"I have appointed you as covenant of the people and light of the nations, to open the eyes of the blind, to free captives from prison, and those who live in darkness from the dungeons."
(Is. 42:6-7).

Paul was given access to all the prophecies - all the hidden mysteries that fill his writings.

"I will give you the hidden treasures, the secret hoards, that you may know that I am the Lord, the God of Israel, who calls you by your name." (Is. 45:3).

Paul's identity in Isaiah's passage is confirmed by the prophet Zechariah.

In his prophecy, Zechariah described Paul as "Branch" a word in the Greek Bible translated "rising Sun" (Zech. 3:8). His imagery defines Peter and Paul as the two olive branches that stand on either side of the Lord of the world. Zechariah's prophecies describe in detail heaven's calling of Peter and Paul to their eternal royal stations in the service of Jesus Christ:

"The angel of God was standing there and said to him, 'Look, I have taken away your iniquity from you'. The angel of God then proclaimed to Joshua: 'The Lord God Almighty says this, 'If you walk in my ways and keep my ordinances, you shall govern my house, you shall watch over my courts, and I will give you free access among those who stand here. For this is the stone which I am placing before Joshua: on this single stone there are seven eyes: and I myself intend to cut the inscription on it -it is the Lord who speaks.'" (Zech. 3:1-9)

"Now listen, High Priest Joshua, you and the friends who sit before you -for you are men of good omen. I now mean to raise my servant Branch, and I intend to put aside the iniquity of this land in a single day." (Zech. 3:8-9).

"...go to the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah, who has arrived from Babylon. Take the silver and gold, make a crown and set it on the head of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest. And say this to him, "The Lord God Almighty says this: Here is a man whose name is Branch; where he is there

will be a branching out (and he will rebuild the sanctuary of the Lord). It is he who is going to rebuild the sanctuary of the Lord. It is he who is going to wear the royal insignia. He will sit on his throne as ruler. And a priest shall be at his right hand. Perfect peace will reign between these two; while the crown will be a glorious memorial...in the sanctuary of the Lord." (Zech.6:9-14).

"In reply to this I asked him, 'What is the meaning of these two olive trees, to the right and to the left of the lamp-stand?' (Speaking again, I asked him, 'What is the meaning of the two olive branches pouring the oil through the two golden pipes?') He replied, 'Do you not know what these things mean?' I said, 'No my Lord'. He said, 'These are the two anointed ones who stand before the Lord of the whole world.'" (Zech. 4:1-14).

The original Cyrus was the Persian king who signed the edict that freed the Jews from their physical prison of slavery in the original Babylon, a nation at the border of the Euphrates river in the country now known as Iraq. Constantine's Edict of Milan freed the Christians from prison in Rome, the spiritual Babylon at the time of Christ. That similarity ties these two kings together, but Isaiah's prophecy touches a far higher meaning - the divinely ordained station of Paul with Peter in the religion of God.

January 15, 2008

Question:

Does not the opulent wealth of the Vatican prove it to be unchristian? -OC

Answer:

No. Just the opposite.

The Bible has commanded all the world's wealth to be brought to the feet of Christ.

The Vatican is the City of David (the City of Christ) on earth. The day is soon to come

when the City of David in exile returns under the guidance of Michael the Archangel to Jerusalem and the two Houses of Israel become one. That day Jerusalem will bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord. When that blessing is sounded, Christ will return as promised, bringing the Rapture with Him.

If I had asked you whether the Bible was true or false, you would have said it was true. If I had asked you whether or not God keeps scripture, you would have said yes, of course He does. Your question is actually just that, because if scripture declares it to be, it will be. There are many passages just like the one I have printed below scattered throughout the Bible:

"Arise, shine out, for your light has come, the glory of the Lord is rising on you, though night still covers the earth and darkness the peoples. Above you the Lord now rises and above you his glory appears. The nations come to your light and kings to your dawning brightness.

Lift up your eyes and look round: all are assembling and coming towards you, your sons from far away and your daughters being tenderly carried. At this sight you will grow radiant, your heart throbbing and full; since the riches of the sea will flow to you, the wealth of the nations come to you; camels in throngs will cover you, and dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; everyone in Sheba will come, bringing gold and incense and singing the praise of the Lord.

All the flocks of Kedar will gather inside you, the rams of Nebaioth will be at your service. They will come up, for acceptance to my altar, to adorn the Temple of my glory. Who are these flying like a cloud, like doves to their cote? Yes, for me the ships are assembling, vessels of Tarshish in the front, to bring your sons from far away, and their silver and gold with them, for the sake of the name of the Lord your God, for the sake of the Holy One of Israel who has made you glorious.

Foreigners will rebuild your walls and their kings will be your servants. For though I struck you in anger, in mercy I have pitied you. And your gates will lie open continually, shut neither by day nor by night, for men to bring you the wealth of the nations with their kings leading them; for the nation and kingdom that refuses to serve you shall perish, such nations shall be utterly ruined.

The glory of Lebanon will come to you, with cypress and plane and box, to adorn the site of my sanctuary, to glorify the resting place of my feet. The sons of your oppressors will come to you bowing. At your feet shall fall all who despised you. They will call you 'City of the Lord', 'Zion of the Holy One of Israel'.

Though you have been abandoned, and hated and shunned, I will make you an eternal pride, a joy for ever and ever. You will be suckled on the milk of nations, suckled on the riches of kings, and you shall know that I, the Lord am your savior, that your redeemer is the Mighty One of Jacob.

For bronze I will bring gold; for iron, silver; and bronze for wood; and iron for stone; I will put Peace in as magistrate, and Integrity as the government...

Your people will all be upright, possessing the land forever; a shoot that the Lord has planted, my handiwork, designed for beauty. The least among you will become a clan and the smallest a mighty nation. I, the Lord, have spoken; in due time I shall act with speed." (Is. 60:1-22).

January 19, 2008

Question:

Can you tell me where the verse is in the Bible that tells about the fourth kingdom of Persia? -DC

Answer:

The most specific verse is in Daniel 10:2.

"And now I will tell you the truth about these things. Three more kings are going to rise in Persia; a fourth will come and

be richer than all the others, and when, thanks to his wealth, he has grown powerful, he will challenge all the kingdoms of Javan."

In ancient times, Javan meant Greece. Because of the Hellenising efforts of Alexander the Great and his country's subsequent political evolution through Rome to the modern world, it now symbolizes democracy's western world. The confrontation Daniel envisions pits East against West at a kind of 'Maginot line' drawn along the Euphrates river, a line across which all four attacks are ultimately generated.

While most wars over the last 300 years have not been religious, scripture shows religion playing a major role in the wars of the End. Daniel attributes the reappearance of religious warfare in the last days to the emergence on earth of this final Persian kingdom, the last in a continuing sequence of four eastern aggressors, pitting the people of Media and Persia against the Christian West.

Following the appearance of Mohammed in 600 A.D., Christianity and the Western world have been rocked by a succession of wars his followers have launched against them. Muslim invaders from empires composed of Persian or Arab believers have mounted three fierce invasions which, together, succeeded in overrunning Christian lands all across the western world. Those incursions did not stop until 1699. In many cases, the lands taken were never returned.

Now, three centuries later, with the rise of Muslim violence and groups like Al Queda, a 4th kingdom of Persia seems to be in ascendance. As can be seen in the quotation above, the prophet Daniel was shown by the angel who appeared to him, just such a circumstance and was instructed to build his entire book around the event, and its meaning to the world. His forecast promises that this fourth Persian empire will be larger and more destructive than the first three put together. It will bring the world to an end.

The Crusades fought back against the first two incursions, blunting the Muslim invasions in the 11th and 12th centuries. Largely because Crusade momentum had petered out in the 13th century, it was not in place to stop the Ottoman empire, the 3rd and last of these sweeping attempts by Muslims fighters to topple Christian dominance and secure as much European land as possible. The Ottoman army roared across Asia Minor, conquered Constantinople, swept through the Balkans, advancing across Hungary all the way to Vienna Austria before being finally stopped in 1577. Still, Vienna remained under seige until a final treaty of peace was signed a year before the advent of the 18th century.

With that treaty, the question of how to remove Mohammedan Turks from Europe became one of the great problems of modern time. Since then, religious and racial tensions have remained high. The war in the Balkans that left Sarajevo, the site of the 1992 Olympic

Games in ruins was a part of this problem, as is the European Union's continued tabling of Turkey's bid to join.

People today, once again reminded of this historical sequence of bitter warfare, are being compelled to revisit the Mohammedan mandate - his order 1400 years ago to conquer the earth by sword and sweep it clean of infidels (those who do not believe in him). Mohammed taught that man was too violent to accept a peaceful conversion to religion. He was convinced such a conversion had to happen, and that it must take place at the point of a sword. Perforce the armies and invasions just discussed.

While man views the world politically, God sees it in spiritual terms. Spiritually, the last 2000 years constitute the age of Christ on earth. God structured this 2000 years as the time allotted for the kingdom of God to be preached to the nations. Satan was locked in the Abyss while the Word was carried by Christ's servants all around the earth. Once that circumvention of the globe, which started in Jerusalem, has been completed, Jesus will Return.

According to Jeremiah, the last nation in the circle will be the "king of Sheshak" (Jer.25:26) - the name is thought by Bible scholars to be a cryptogram for "Babel", i.e., today's Iraq.

The Western world's combat over the centuries with three consecutive waves of Muslim invaders has proved Daniel correct over and over again in his prophecies. It is felt by many that the eastern gauntlet was thrown again (for a fourth time) in the 9/11 attack against America in 2001. The two sides (the West and the Medes) fulfilled scripture by squaring off not only in Afghanistan but in a second war with Iraq at the Euphrates. In the middle of all this, acting like a puppeteer manipulating marionettes stands Persia with its nuclear obsessions.

In Afghanistan, the prophecy that the western advance would reach India, matching the reach of Alexander the Great, was also fulfilled.

Unprecedented global warfare throughout the last century argues that Satan has been released from his prison (Rev. 20:7-8). According to Daniel, we should now expect the fourth Persian empire to grow out of the current conflict, building a ten-nation juggernaut that will eventually succeed in trampling underfoot all that it confronts, even the sanctuary and the people of the saints. Historically, we are at the beginning of that process and there is still a long way to go.

All these things were prophesied far in the past, centuries before Jesus' birth in Bethlehem.

God teaches in scripture that the way we can know Christ is true is to watch the world turn

out in exactly the way it was prophesied. So far, the accuracy of scripture's prophecies in relation to all these events, especially those voiced by Daniel, has been astonishing.

January 22, 2008

Question:

How do we separate what is true in scripture from what is false? -PL

Answer:

The operative word is "scripture"

Jesus said, "Scripture cannot be rejected." (John 10:35).

The only way scripture can be changed or altered is with scripture. That is why in our scriptures we have two Testaments. Jesus made some changes to scripture, but not many (Mat. 5 & 6). He added additional rules but, most important, taught us how to understand scripture's hidden language - its metaphore, parable, metonymy and allegory.

"Do not imagine that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete them. I tell you solemnly, till heaven and earth disappear, not one dot, not one little stroke shall disappear from the Law until its purpose is achieved. Therefore, the man who infringes even one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be considered the least in the kingdom of heaven; but the man who keeps them and teaches them will be considered great in the kingdom of heaven." (Mat.5:17-19).

In ancient fiction, especially poetic fiction, words had the power to make themselves come true. Words were not only used as signs & symbols, they were actually forces and powers unto themselves. Puns, boasts, vows, spells, and curses were thought to release energy into the natural world. We call that literature today, poetic metaphore. It is epic literature. We can see many examples of this including the Harry Potter books.

Scripture has that kind of power, only greater. Not that it's words can make themselves

come true on their own. God has decreed His support for them. He makes them come true on purpose. He has lent His power to those words so that what God intends them to say comes true.

That is why scripture can say, "*I will speak to the prophets, I will increase the visions and through the prophets I will deal out death.*" (Hosea 12:10-11). Once words such as those become bound as scripture, God carries out whatever they say. He uses His own time-frame for that fulfillment, and His own interpretation of the meaning implied. But He carries them out. That makes all scripture true. It is this power that gives scripture and its metaphors such as epic, and the timing for its fulfillment, such mystery.

"All scripture is inspired by God and can profitably be used for teaching, for refuting error, for guiding people's lives and teaching them to be holy. This is how the man who is dedicated to God becomes fully equipped and ready for any good work." (2 Tim.3:16-17).

The Old Testament is quoted almost 400 times in the Gospel of Matthew alone. 276 times in the Gospel of Luke, 287 times in the Gospel of John. 176 times in the Book of Revelation. 187 times in the Book of Acts. 175 times in Paul's letter to the Romans. 173 times in the book of Hebrews. Peter, in his brief letter quotes the Old Testament at least 65 times.

Every book in the New Testament is filled with references to the Old Testament. That is because through Jesus His disciples knew that the scriptures were inspired by God, and necessary for teaching, and refuting error. A book of errors cannot be used to refute error. One can refute error only with the truth. That is why Paul wrote:

"Remember the maxim: 'Keep to what is written' (1 Cor.4:6).

When Jesus said that "*scripture cannot be rejected.*" He was speaking not only of our scripture that hadn't yet been written, but of the scriptures of His own time-the Old Testament. Once a book has been bound as scripture, it is endowed with a power no other literature possesses. God has sworn to make it all true. This makes it profound and monumental. God has transported it far beyond literature.

In prophecy we see the Word of God being fulfilled. But in God keeping His promises, we see something quite different. Jesus told His apostles time and time again that He had to do or say certain things "*so that the scriptures be fulfilled.*" In sociology that would be called a self-fulfilling prophecy, and therefore no prophecy at all. But the issue is the fulfillment, not the prophecy. Jesus was actively showing His Apostles (and us) that God intended to fulfill His promises. That is God's imperative.

"The word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do." (Is.55:11)

We can take enormous comfort in that, knowing that if God went to such trouble to see the Old Testament fulfilled, He will go to far greater lengths to see the New Testament fulfilled as well. We can trust everything He said. We can bank our lives on it. God has created two religions on earth, setting one on top of the other just to make this truth clearly known.

In our language the word has no power to become anything but language. But in the language of scripture, the word is God - with all the power implied.

January 27, 2008

Question:

What will our new body in heaven be like? -DH

Answer:

No one knows. Paul said we will be different.

"I will tell you something that has been secret: that we are not all going to die, but we shall all be changed. This will be instantaneous, in the twinkling of an eye, when the last trumpet sounds. It will sound, and the dead will be raised, imperishable, and we shall be changed as well, because our present perishable nature must put on imperishability and this mortal nature must put on immortality." (1 Cor.15:50:53).

"Flesh and blood", he said, "cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and the perishable cannot inherit what lasts forever." (1 Cor.15:50). We know from these statements that we won't be like we are now. We will be changed. As far as what that change is, our minds cannot even begin to envision the possibilities that are available to God.

Yet all those possibilities must fit around a pattern. Jesus said,

"The children of this world take wives and husbands, but those who are judged worthy of a place in the other world and in the resurrection from the dead do not marry because they can no longer die, for they are the same as the angels, and being children of the resurrection they are sons of God." (Luke 20:34-36)

That means we will be like Jesus.

When Jesus appeared to Daniel, He came back to him from the future. He told Daniel He and Michael were battling the Prince of Persia, a person who wouldn't be born for perhaps another 800 years. He described comprehensive details of the world's End, details that wouldn't, themselves, take place for at least another 2200 years. That is why Jesus told Daniel it would be a long time.

Much of what Jesus described to him, still hasn't occurred.

Obviously such an appearance before Daniel defied the laws of Physics. Those laws however, apply only to matter. If God were ultimately subject to something so universally perishable as matter, it would diminish Him, in fact, it would destroy Him. Jesus is bigger than that - He controls the entire universe, and He proved it with His resurrection.

Matter is the holy grail of this world. Science's boundary is the universe of matter. As far as science is concerned, nothing exists in this universe except matter in one form or another. The powers that Jesus had over matter are astonishing. Not only was His resurrection proof of that, He said with simple faith even we have the power to cast mountains into the sea, and Peter was able to walk on water momentarily until his faith buckled. As far as science is concerned all those kind of things are patently impossible.

Yet God can do anything. He can make universes founded on spirit or matter at His discretion. Or anything else.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, my ways not your ways - it is the Lord who speaks. Yes, the heavens are as high above earth as my ways are above your ways, my thoughts above your thoughts." (Is. 55:8-9).

We are wed to this world by a body of perishable flesh, but our soul transcends the universe, because it transcends decay. Jesus said our souls were made imperishable; that is why He told us no one who has ever lived on this earth is yet dead to God. But the continuance of that imperishability is in question; to be decided by our response to the

Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The universe perishes but God does not. He came to make us permanently imperishable just as He is. He came to enable us to outlast the universe and matter. That means giving us a body that is more like our soul. Since we don't have receptors to see our soul (or God), we feel that means invisible. But that invisibility is only here and now. Jesus told Nathanael,

"You believe...because...I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than that...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).

Not only a new kind of body, but a new kind of vision as well awaits all who join Jesus in eternal life.

January 31, 2008

Question:

Where do we go when we die? Heaven?-PL

Answer:

Most people think so, but Jesus in John 3:13 implied otherwise. He told His disciples that no person on earth (living or dead) has ever gone up to heaven.

"No one has gone up to heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Son of Man who is in heaven...." (John 3:13)..

Jesus told His Apostles,

"I shall not be with you much longer. You will look for me, and, as I told the Jews, where I am going, you cannot come.

(John 13:33).

That is an important statement, because in it, Jesus is telling even His Apostles that they will not immediately be able to go to heaven after each of them has died. Jesus explained to them that they, too must wait until the Second Coming. Only then, after He has prepared a place for us, will He come back and take us with Him into heaven.

It is that day that everyone is still waiting for - the day of His Return in glory.

"I am going now to prepare a place for you, and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you with me, so that where I am you may be too. You know the way to the place where I am going." (John 14:2-4).

We can't go up to heaven until Jesus comes back. So when we die, we must go somewhere, but not into Christ's kingdom of God. When Jesus was on the cross, He told the thief who had faith in Him that "today you will be with me in *paradise*." Jesus did not use the word "heaven", He used a different word which is translated "paradise". This tells us that there is a place we tend to call heaven which is different from Christ's kingdom. It is an intermediate place, in between earth and the new heavenly kingdom. It is to this place of holiness that everyone goes after they die:

"When he broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of all the people who had been killed on account of the word of God, for witnessing to it. They shouted aloud, 'Holy, faithful Master, how much longer will you wait before you pass sentence and take vengeance for our death on the inhabitants of the earth?'"

Each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to be patient a little longer, until the roll was complete and their fellow servants and brothers had been killed just as they had been." (Rev. 6:9-11).

The idea of the "Rapture" argues that this intermediate place is even lower than a middle heaven. Those who propose the Rapture theory say that it will be down here on this earth, not above at all. There is nothing in scripture to support such a recombinant terrestrial-heaven idea. We must assume that all the heavens are above, that none come down to earth - especially when Jesus Himself uses the term "up" to describe our ascent to it (see above).

When someone asked Jesus a question about the resurrection, Jesus answered:

"The children of this world take wives and husbands, but those who are judged worthy of a place in the other world and in the resurrection from the dead do not marry because they can no longer die, for they are the same as the angels, and being children of the resurrection they are sons of God. And Moses himself implies that the dead rise again, in the passage about the bush where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. Now he is God, not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all men are in fact alive.'" (Luke 20:27-38)

February 4, 2008

Question:

In Daniel, what does the golden statue with clay feet stand for? -KA

Answer:

It stands for the empire called Babylon into whose hands God has submitted His people.

"The whole land (Israel) shall be devastated and reduced to a desert, while (its people) will stay in slavery among the nations for seventy years...but when the seventy years are over, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation for the wrong they have done...I will bring down on that country all the words I have pronounced against it, all that is written in this book" (Jer. 25:11-13).

In scripture, the empire of Babylon is presented to us by the Holy Spirit in three different manifestations.

We see it first as the nation that burned down the Jerusalem temple of Solomon and took the Jews into a 70-year captivity at the banks of the Euphrates. We see it spiritually reborn 657 years later in the image of Rome whose actions duplicated that of Babylon: burning down the Jerusalem temple of Herod and then herding the entire Israeli citizenry into a

2000-year captivity called the "Diaspora".

In between these two we see it presented a third way as the Jerusalem of the Pharisees, lawyers and scribes who rose up to usurp command of Judaism at the time of Christ. It is in this context that Isaiah coined the term, "virgin, daughter of Babylon" (religious child of Babylon). Scripture deals with the three as if they are undifferentiated:

"Down with you! Sit in the dust, virgin, daughter of Babylon. sit on the ground, dethroned, daughter of the Chaldaeans. Never again will you be called tender and delicate...Sit in silence and creep into shadows, for you will no longer be called sovereign lady of the kingdoms. I was angry with my people, I had profaned my heritage. I had surrendered it into your hands, but you showed them no mercy. You said, 'Forever I will be sovereign lady'. You never took these things to heart or pondered on their outcome." (Is.47:1-11).

"So listen now, voluptuous woman, lolling at ease and saying to yourself, 'I, and none besides me. I shall never be widowed, never know loss of children.' Yet both these things shall happen to you, both suddenly and on the same day. Loss of children, widowhood, at once will come to you; in spite of all your witchcraft and the power of all your spells." (Is.47:7-10).

When the Sanhedrin sold Jesus to Rome for 30 pieces of silver, an unintended consequence ripped the House of God out of their hands. Jews and Christians alike were mandated by God to go with Him in captivity to Babylon. This left both houses of Israel homeless in a foreign land under Roman rule.

"Writhe, cry out daughter of Zion, for now you have to leave the city and live in the open country. To Babylon you must go and there you will be rescued; There God will ransom you out of the power of your enemies." (Micah 4:10).

That exile, now approaching its 2000th year, shows us a symbolic Babylon stretched far beyond the boundaries of the pagan Roman Empire that started it. Today, as it has been for 17 centuries, the title "sovereign lady of the kingdoms" is a baton passed from one nation to another in the empire of Rome's successor - the western world.

The rulers of this spiritual "Babylon" have not paid attention to the writings of scripture or the teachings of Jesus. Instead, these "Chaldaeans" see their own empire the sovereign lady of the world. In their power they have bound heavy burdens on the people of God held

captive within their borders, the poor, the infirm, the widows and the rest of the saints of the Most High.

Are these not now the rumors that mark each day?

"Violence rules on earth and one tyrant cancels out another."
(Jer.51:46).

In the meantime, the preaching of the Gospel throughout that empire has been steadily eroding the grip of Babylon on the people of God trapped within its global borders. Knowing that they are in a doomed land, their spiritual flight away from it has proceeded as God intended:

"I will punish Bel in Babylon and take from his mouth what he has swallowed. In future the nations will stream to him no more. The wall of Babylon has fallen. Go out of her, my people; save your lives, each one of you, from the fierce anger of the Lord." (Jer. 51:44-45).

The two clay feet demonstrate that for all its power and might, the global version of Babylon will fall and be destroyed just as Nebuchadnezzar's version had been, and both in the same way, in a single night by an invasion from Persia. In that coming invasion, the king who rules Babylon will perish, exactly as he did in the first.

Those two destructions are symbolized by the collapse of the two clay feet that form the base of the seemingly invincible golden statue to Bel that represents Babylon's world supremacy.

The first empire of Babylon is represented to us in scripture by two kings. The earliest is Nebuchadnezzar who burned down Solomon's temple and took the Jews into captivity. The last is Belshazzar, who witnessed the handwriting on the wall which announced his impending death at the hands of an invading Persian army. Daniel interpreted the vision and told Belshazzar it would happen that very night - and it did.

All that has been incorporated into scripture to serve as the template for its repeat in our own time. Just as the ancient Jews were held captive by the Babylon of the past, so are we, today, held captive by its symbolic successor. And just as it did in Belshazzar's time, a new handwriting has appeared and written itself across the towers of Manhattan as its ruler watched.

It's message is clear. Another Prince of Persia is now close at hand, at the very gates of the western empire - the empire that has ruled the world and God's people since the days of

Nero, the tyrant who began the captivity. His Babylon was felled by a fatal wound delivered by the sword of Christ. But in the last days we have watched that fatal wound heal in a great revolt that has returned to power over the nations all those who oppose God.

"We tried to cure Babylon; she has got no better. Leave her alone and let us each go to his own country. Yes, her sentence reaches to the sky, rises to the very clouds...Sharpen the arrows, fill the quivers! The Lord has aroused the spirit of the king of the Medes because he has a plan against Babylon to destroy it; this is the vengeance of the Lord, the revenge for his Temple." (Jer. 51:9-11).

"May her violence to me, and all my sufferings be avenged on Babylon!' say the people of Zion; 'On the inhabitants of Chaldaea be my blood!' says Jerusalem." (Jer. 51:35).

A curse in scripture carries with it the power of its own completion as spoken. For those who have bowed to the golden statue, who have committed their own effort toward the ridicule and mistreatment of the poor, the downtrodden, and the saints of God without repentance, a fate of unimaginable sorrow awaits. In the Book of God, every thought has been noted, every action written down.

After the age of the pagans is over, when the 70 years granted to Babylon have ended as they seem to be ending now, and the roll of the saved is complete, God will destroy Babylon forever. At that time, Jesus will suddenly manifest Himself in a glorious Return, and take us with Him to His kingdom in heaven just as He promised.

"When the 70 years granted to Babylon is over, I will visit you and fulfill my promise in your favor by bringing you back to this place.

I know the plans I have in mind for you - it is the Lord who speaks - plans for peace, not disaster, reserving a future full of hope for you. Then when you call to me, and come to plead with me, I will listen to you. When you seek me you shall find me; when you seek me with all your heart; I will let you find me." (Jer. 29:10-14).

February 6, 2008

Question:

On your [question page](#) you list 176 Old Testament quotations in the Book of Revelation. My commentary by William Barclay lists over 500. Did you miss a few?-PL

Answer:

Probably I missed alot. I was counting the most obvious quotes. There are voluminous references to the Old Testament scriptures spread all through the New Testament books. Not just quotations per se, but hundreds of references as well. The Old Testament is the template on which Christianity has been built.

February 7, 2008

Question:

December 21, 2012? Is this the date of the End? Has anyone ever asked you about this?
-YK

Answer:

Yes, I have received several e-mails relating to that date. A Mormon reader in paricular sent a fascinating account with a Dec 2012 end date stemming from a Mayan calendar. Another reader saw an alien invastion in late 2012 that would bring the antichrist.

Any discussion among Christians about the end of the world should heed Christ's words:

"Now having met together , they asked, 'Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel? Jesus replied, 'It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has decided by his own authority.'" (Acts. 1:6-7)

Not only did Jesus tell His disciples that they were not to speculate about the time for the end of the world, He told them it will happen when least expected.

That should rule out the day completely. Even the year. When we look at the timeline prophesied in the Book of Daniel, that year seems far too early, anyway. The collapse of the western world alliance has not yet occurred. Nor has a ten-nation confederacy risen up in Europe, Asia or the Middle East. Not only must these things happen, the nucleus of the ten-nation confederacy must pass through several major regimes after it is born (Dan.11:5-45).

Extremely militaristic, the first of those regimes will take its stand in Jerusalem itself. Poised to conquer the entire nation, it will withdraw only after Israel, in capitulation, agrees to a treaty merging itself with the Palestinians. (Dan.11:16-17). None of this could take place if America were the world power it is today. So even that has to change so dramatically it is virtually unimaginable at the present moment (Dan. 8:8?).

It doesn't seem plausible that all this can be compressed into the next 4 years. Every year brings major events and 2012 is certain to be no exception. Moreover, every year lately seems to be bringing the sprouting seeds of Christian prophecies that point to the last day. We can expect that to occur in 2012 as well.

But not the End itself. That day and year are just too well advertised and expected.

February 15, 2008

Question:

What are the connections between the lenten season and prophecy if any? -PL

Answer:

Lent recapitulates liturgically the stress of our efforts to live the life of Christ - a life of deprivation and want - in a world overtly hostile to all things Godly.

Satan's trickery has forced God to allow Satan to sift His people like wheat (Luke 22:31; Is. 30:28). We don't understand this, but Satan has somehow got his wish to analyze the core character of every person on earth (Is.1:25). That refining subjects all of us who try to follow Christ to a trial by fire as we try to keep the Gospel in a world that lives in opposition to it. (Is.48:9-11).

The fire separates the wheat from the chaff. God cannot prevent this purifying fire, but will rescue us from it unharmed at the end if we remain in Jesus. According to the prophet Zechariah, 2/3rds will be cut off, destroyed by the sword wielded by Jesus Christ, and the remaining third will be led into the fire by that same Word for purification and refinement (Zech. 13:7-9).

We find ourselves in a world where not everyone is of God. That is another concept difficult to many (wheat and chaff in relation to humanity) but it is one our newspaper overwhelmingly corroborates daily. When asked why this is so, Jesus answered with a parable:

"The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. While everybody was asleep his enemy came, and sowed darnel all among the wheat, and made off. When the new wheat sprouted and ripened, the darnel appeared as well. The owner's servants went to him and said, "Sir, was it not good seed that you sowed in your field? If so, where does the darnel come from?" "Some enemy has done this" he answered.

And the servants said, "Do you want us to go and weed it out?" But he said, "No, because when you weed out the darnel you might pull up the wheat with it. Let them both grow till the harvest; and at harvest time I shall say to the reapers: First collect the darnel and tie it in bundles to be burnt, then gather the wheat into my barn." (Matt.13: 24-30.

The harvest is the time of sifting. Fulfilling the metaphore in the prophecy of the Pentateuch, it is the two days (Ex.10-12) of washing and cleaning (baptism and repentance in Christ) that constitute the Christian era on earth.

Lent is the season in the liturgical calendar that acts as a sacramental metaphore of this sifting - the suffering we are called on to endure because of our life following Christ. It presents with a 40-day fast that recapitulates Christ's desert temptation experience.

The story illustrating Satan's attempt at chicanery during his time with God in heaven is

presented biblically in an allegorical format in the book of Esther.

Briefly, the story of Esther is that of a Jewish people who have been sentenced to death by an evil official in the Persian court. He tricked the king into authorizing Israeli execution on a gallows built specifically for that purpose in the capitol city of the kingdom. Unknown to the king, his beloved wife Esther is a Jewess. She intercedes for her people, admits her race, exposes Haman's trickery and is able to have the sentence reversed. As a result, it is Haman who is executed on the same gallows he built for the Jews.

The principal figures in the Book of Esther point to God/Jesus (the king), the Bride of Christ (Esther), Michael the Archangel (Mordecai), and Satan (Haman). The Jews ordered to be executed on Haman's gallows stand for the two Houses of Israel - the Christians and Jews.

The liturgical expression of the sifting ends with Holy Week (the wrath, crucifixion and finally, resurrection, the focal point of our hope and trust in God). The reversal of the divine sentence can also be seen in a reference in the Book of Daniel:

"Then I asked to know the truth about the fourth beast,...This was the horn I had watched making war on the saints and proving the stronger, until the coming of the one of great age who gave judgment in favor of the saints of the Most High, when the time came for the saints to take over the kingdom."
(Dan 7:19-22).

The sentence that God reversed is the banishment that occurred from the Garden in Eden, when humanity was sent into the wilderness in exile. That exile was life in the flesh - a death sentence. Jesus paid the penalty of this sentence in our place, restoring to us the possibility of salvation. Lent liturgically presages the tribulation and anguish the people must endure before the sentence is officially reversed at the day of Judgment:

"Thrones were set in place and one of great age took his seat...a court was held and the books were opened. I gazed into the visions of the night, and I saw, coming on the clouds of heaven, one like a son of man. He came to the one of great age and was led into his presence. On him was conferred sovereignty, glory and kingship, and men of all peoples...became his servants. his sovereignty is an eternal sovereignty which shall never pass away, nor will his empire ever be destroyed..." (Dan.7:9-14).

For this reason, while Lent is a season of doing without, as a reminder, it is also a season

of hope for all who choose to follow Christ instead of the prince of this world - all who repent their sins and change their lives in His name.

We can also see the lenten season recapitulated in our flesh. As we struggle through life, our bodies begin to physically wear out. As we approach the End, the road gets increasingly difficult, until finally, we reach the point where we have to imitate Holy Week itself in our own lives. Thus we live the life of Christ all the way to our final days.

It is the same with the Church. All these things come to it as well. That is why Jesus told Peter:

"I tell you most solemnly, when you were young you put on your own belt and walked where you liked; but when you grow old you will stretch out your hands, and somebody else will put a belt round you and take you where you would rather not go." "In those words Jesus indicated the kind of death by which Peter would give glory to God. After this He said, 'Follow me'" (John 21:18-19).

This allegory not only describes Peters final days, it demonstrates the dark days that must come at the end to the Church that has been built on him; for it, too, must repeat the life of Christ in its own life on earth:

"Forces of his will come and profane the sanctuary citadel, they will abolish the perpetual sacrifice and instal the disastrous abomination there. Those who break the covenant he will corrupt by his flatteries, but the people who know their God will stand firm and take action. Those of the people who are learned will instruct many; for some days, however, they will be brought down by sword and flame, by captivity and by plundering. And thus brought down, little help will they receive, though many will be plotting on their side. Of the learned some will be brought down, as a result of which certain of them will be purged, purified and made white - until the time of the End, for the appointed time is still to come." (Dan. 11:30-35).

Thus Lent also incorporates, liturgically, what is to come. Tribulation and want and even wrath. And then the glory of everlasting life.

Of the fasting, Jesus said:

"Then John's disciples came and asked him, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast? Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast. (Mat. 9:14-15).

Passages scattered throughout the scriptures show us the vacuum from God's word that will accompany the age to come. Daniel says that "*truth will be flung to the ground*" during those times (Dan. 8:12). The fasting that marks the lenten season recapitulates this period of spiritual famine. Scripture says that people in those days will go from north to east looking for the word of God but not find it.

"See what days are coming-it is the Lord God who speaks-days when I will bring famine on the country, a famine not of bread, a drought not of water, but of hearing the word of the Lord. They will stagger from sea to sea, wander from north to east, seeking the word of the Lord and failing to find it." (Amos 8:11-12).

In his writings, Paul was opposed to an ecclesiastical calendar, but the Holy Spirit overruled him, saying 'yes' to it. Jesus told His Apostles that this would happen, that their understanding would be broadened later by the Holy Spirit because at the beginning it would be too difficult for them to comprehend. It is this calendar that acts like the pictures that filled the churches of the Middle Ages, imparting understanding of scripture to those not sufficiently schooled to deal with deep theological concepts.

The ecclesiastical calendar acts like a word picture. Not only does it demonstrate complex theology in an easy format, it keeps those concepts current, so that they do not slip into the dark recesses of time and disappear, leaving God's people to become easy prey for the charlatans who feed on misunderstanding so that they can corrupt the unaware and steal their souls from the Father.

February 19, 2008

Question:

Where does it say in the Bible that women cannot be priests? -PV

Answer:

The Apostle Peter wrote that all baptised Christians are priests; both men and women alike. This ecclesiastical status was conferred on every Christian believer through baptism:

"He is the living stone, rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him; set yourselves close to him *so that you too, the holy priesthood that offers the spiritual sacrifices which Jesus Christ has made acceptable to God*, may be living stones making a spiritual house." (1 Peter 2:4-5)

"...you are a chosen race, *a royal priesthood*, a consecrated nation, a people set apart to sing the praises of God who called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light." (1 Peter 2:9).

In the Book of Revelation it is written:

"You are worthy to take the scroll and break the seals of it, because you were sacrificed, and with your blood you bought men for God of every race, language, people and nation *and made them a line of kings and priests*, to serve our God and to rule the world." (Rv. 5:9-10).

The word "man" in the verse above is not literal. It is metaphoric, stemming from the word "mankind". The priesthood is conferred on all Christians because they have been given the job of consecrating the entire universe to God. And kingship because God has decreed that the People of God shall rule the world. Had women been excluded from God's priesthood, they would be unable to offer any spiritual sacrifices, and therefore incapable of pleasing God by obeying Christ's commands. This would make them aliens to the promise.

"All baptised in Christ, you have all clothed yourselves in Christ, and there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, *male and female*, but all of you are one in Christ Jesus. Merely by belonging to Christ you are the posterity of Abraham, the heirs he was promised." (Gal.3:27-29).

The Law was only a reflection of these realities (Heb. 10:1+) God did not want the

sacrifices the Law laid down. He took no pleasure in the holocausts or sacrifices for sin offered by the Hebrew priests. *"As it says in the scroll of the book, 'Here I am, I am coming to obey your will. He is abolishing the first sort to replace it with the second: Justice, mercy and good faith'"* (Heb.10:8-10). Those are the sacrifices that please God.

"We have our own altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat...through him, let us offer God an unending sacrifice of praise, a verbal sacrifice that is offered every time we acknowledge his name. Keep doing good works and sharing your resources, for these are the sacrifices that please God." (Heb. 13:13-16).

This concept of God's people as a priesthood is not new. It stems from the Book of Exodus:

"If you obey my voice and hold fast to my covenant, you of all the nations on earth shall be my very own nation...I will count you as a kingdom of priests, a consecrated nation." (Ex.19:5).

This passage shows that God meant to include women from the beginning, but the traditions of the Jewish elders blocked that intent, nullifying God's will. Jesus rectified this misdirection by offering God's spiritual priesthood to all people, men and women alike. And not just to Jews, but to pagans as well. Everyone who is baptised in Christ becomes a priest of God in His name. And a High Priest at that.

We have seen that in the Law there were two priesthoods, a high priesthood that followed the lineage of Moses' brother Aaron, and a low priesthood made up of the Levites. These latter were the caretakers of the Temple and its trappings. Only the higher priesthood could head the Sanhedrin or conduct the sacrifices or enter into the naos, the inner chamber where the Ark of the Covenant used to be housed.

The Holy Spirit has built the Christian religion on the template of the Mosaic Law and Prophets. Thus we see in Christianity both priesthoods replicated according to God's true will. The high priesthood is that which flows to all Christians through Peter. It is spiritual and offers the sacrifices that truly please God, mercy, justice and true faith. It is conducted in the inner chamber where God dwells inside men and women, now housed inside the soul of every baptised Christian. The Ark is now in us.

Because we have the inner chamber of the temple inside ourselves - because God dwells inside us and not in a building or some other architected chamber - we house the complete Temple of God inside ourselves, everything that once stood in Jerusalem on the holy mountain. And more, because we have the Word of God which the institution in Jerusaelm

forbid entrance to when He came to them, asking to be admitted.

The physical priesthood, that which is built on the Levites, is the lower priesthood. It is lower because, being physical, it cannot last. It will pass away. The high priesthood will never pass away. God has made it eternal.

The fact that every baptised Christian is a high priest in God is the very reason why every baptised Christian has complete authority to baptise. Usually this authority is deferred to the lower priesthood, the ministers and priests who are the caretakers of our churches. But in emergency situations, we must exercise this power too. It is commonly seen in neonatal units in the major hospitals where coding babies, in the absence of ministerial presence, are baptised according to their grieving parents wishes by nurses, doctors, therapists or others who are, themselves, Christians.

Some churches refuse to baptise babies. This, too can be considered an emergency situation. When the parent wishes their baby to be baptised, any baptised Christian can perform the sacrament. That is because no person is ever baptised into a church. There is no clerical theology attached to baptism as far as God is concerned. Every baptism is into Christ alone. That is why most churches accept the baptisms of other denominations.

The priesthood, once conferred, cannot be taken away. Therefore baptisms performed by reprobate ministers are just as legal, just as binding as those performed by the most saintly. It is only at the Judgment that the good are separated from the bad.

No one ever has to be baptised twice, but churches usually ask for written proof. This is not for God. It is to make sure the baby was properly baptised (touched by water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit). In the absence of this proof, most churches want to rebaptise the child just to make sure.

That is as it should be, because baptism is very important. It is the legal mechanism that frees us from the Law. It is also the mechanism that confers on us the royal priesthood of God. Baptism breaks our prison chains so that we can follow Jesus Christ to eternal life in His new Kingdom in heaven.

But I digress. Your question concerned women priests. While most churches allow Christian women (already priests according to God) to be ministers and priests in the lower tasks as well, others do not. This is not a matter of God, it is a matter of the tradition of each church's elders. Scripture's position is as stated above.

February 24, 2008

Question:

What did Jesus mean that the kingdom of God is within you? -KL

Answer:

"The coming of the kingdom of God does not admit of observation and there will be no one to say, 'Look here! Look there!' For, you must know, the kingdom of God is within you." (Lk.17:20-21; Mt.3:2; Lev.26:11)

"The hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. True worshippers must worship the Father in spirit and truth; that is the kind of worshiper the Father wants. God is spirit, and those who worship must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:21-24)

It isn't what we worship inside a building or city that counts to God.

It is what we worship inside ourselves:

The gods of this world include money in all its forms: the stock market, finance, real estate, mansions, cars, diamonds, and gold and all the other luxuries of life. They also include power in all its forms: politics governance and warmongering.

False god worship is manifested in prestige, social status, fine clothes, and all the sexual lusts. Add to these, pride-the drive for world acclaim - social, personal, academic, athletic and artistic supremacy. These are among the battalion of false gods whose worship competes with the Father of Christ. These false gods are the worldly spirits that are worshipped by mankind during life on earth.

Jesus Christ has called us to choose between this world's gods and the teachings of the Gospel which is the image of the true God of creation. It is a question of obedience to a master. We are called to choose between two masters - the prince of this world or the God of heaven imaged on earth by Jesus Christ. The winner of this competition stamps on our soul his unique mark.

Whose mark do we honor?

All competitive worldly drives must take second seat to the obedience of faith. No one can claim worldly excellence when they have assumed the mantle of a slave; giving away their possession, or going two miles when asked to go one. This is why Jesus said "those who find their life will lose it...those who love their life in this world will lose it as far as eternal life is concerned".

If we write, we should write for God. If we draw, we should draw for God. If we speak we should preach for God. Those with money should see to the welfare of the poor. No one lights a lamp, said Jesus, without putting it on a lampstand so that it gives light in the house for all to see. The church is that house.

We are called to give up everything so that our only worldly ambition is to do good according to the commandments of the Father Almighty. That is a tall order, especially since we have to live in this world while we are trying to make the transition. That passage is the trial by fire through which God cleanses our soul for eternal life. Our new body in Christ can only dwell in a soul that God has cleansed in this way.

During that cleansing, some fall away, lured into evil by temptation. Even then,, forgiveness stands only a breath away, waiting patiently, though perhaps in vain, for repentance.

We are called in Christ to sacrifice on an internal altar - a spiritual altar hidden within our own soul. It is our own choice whether we choose to offer on this internal altar sacrifices to God through Jesus by obeying the Gospel He preached, or to Satan through succumbing to the false gods of this world that encourage us to disobey the commandments of Christ.

This is not a community choice. It is individual. Salvation comes one by one - each by personal name - one altar at a time.

February 28, 2008

Question:

You agree then that the true church is the church of the heart? -KL

Answer:

Yes, except your question compares a physical entity with a spiritual entity. Jesus did not come to torpedo the existence of churches. They are essential!

In this we must trust the work of the Holy Spirit. He has not made a single mistake since Jesus first appeared in Bethlehem. Everything He has done on earth has been perfect. It may look chaotic, the river divided into so many streams, but God's work of salvation has been accomplished in perfection through the historical structure of Christianity.

There are two major veins of understanding in the religion of Christ. The single gate to salvation and the multitude of paths the religion presents with respect to reaching that gate. Conceptually, the two are quite different.

Almost all religious talk in the world centers on the second, the path.

Both are founded on the outline of scripture-that God interrupted time by sending Jesus to the earth to liberate His lost people who had been imprisoned by Satan. That rescue changed the entire structure of history. A time descended on the world during which the path to salvation was preached by many different churches.

The moment for that teaching would be short, said Jesus. It would be bordered by war and involve the incarceration of Satan so that the people's escape could be completed successfully within the narrow time frame prophesied.

Prophecy has been essential to this success. The code of the Bible is that the past is prologue. God sent two faiths, one in Moses to establish the matrix for that prologue and the other in Christ, the true religion of God, to fulfill it. Thus we have two parts to the one Bible, the first to make the prophecies and the second to complete them.

Just as the Guardian gives way to the true Father, so must Moses give way to Jesus. Moses will never return, nor will his temple or religion. The future belongs only to Jesus. The churches are there to support and promote the message of salvation, but they cannot preempt Jesus any more than can Moses.

That is because salvation itself belongs only to those whose faith in God compels them to live according to the Gospel that Jesus preached. That is the one and only gate in, and all churches lead to it so long as they herald Christ's Gospel. It is up to each listener to hear that Gospel and take heed of it.

March 3, 2008

Question:

The thought of a master race...is this not a variation on a Judeo-Christian theme? -OP

Answer:

Were Judeo-Christianity measured in terms of DNA (genetics), then it would be. However, measured on faith in Christ it represents a stand against sin.

This choice (on which side of the line one is to stand in relation to sin (as determined by the Gospel) is the "decision" Jesus compelled the people of the world to make when He forced them to choose sides once and for all. (Ez. 9:3-7). That choice is what Jeremiah's famous "cup" stands for (Jer.25:14-29).

The elixer in that cup are these very words - this very choice.

The Old Testament bears witness to a special people on earth, the people of God. At first, this people were considered to be a race. Scripture showed them to be descended from the union between Abraham and his wife Sarah. Yet not everyone in this descendancy were seen to share in the reward. Just special ones. For instance, Abraham and Sarah's son Isaac bore two sons, Esau and Jacob. Esau sold his birthright to his younger brother Jacob for a bowl of lentils and was thus viewed eliminated from the promise.

Jacob's 12 sons formed the 12 tribes of Israel (ever after to be designated the template for the house of God on earth). But Jacob also had daughters, yet they were not understood to figure in this formula.

The 12 sons ended up in Egypt, most as a result of a famine and were later imprisoned there by Pharaoh. Their escape from the clutches of captivity to a foreign enemy power, juxtaposed against their relationship with God is one of the two overarching themes that will haunt this people for the rest of history. The other is the tribe's expectation for the coming of a Messiah to defeat their enemies and give them dominion over all the earth's inhabitants.

The Jewish understanding of this story further contracted the reward. Seeing the destruction and permanent exile of the 10 northern Israeli tribes, they supposed themselves

to be sole heirs to the promise, embracing the idea that the 10 lost tribes were like Esau, discarded by God because of sin. Their conclusion was that it is to them alone (the Jews - the fourth tribe of Israel) that the Messiah will come, and to them alone that dominance over the earth will be granted.

The prophets agreed that the Messiah would be Jewish, but argued against the Jewish singularity. The promise, they said, was given to all 12 tribes and would be fulfilled in all twelve (Ez.11:14-21). Not only that, but it would be extended to believing pagans as well, and would be offered across the entire earth (Is. 49:6).

"All the pagans will come and adore you, Lord, all will glorify your name..." (Ps.86:9).

" Understand, then, that the salvation of God has been sent to the pagans; they will listen to it. (Acts 28:28).

"It is not enough for you to be my servant, to restore the tribes of jacob and bring back the survivors of Israel; I will make you the light of the nations so that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth." (Is. 49:6)

When Jesus came to Judea, He came in the image of the prophetic understanding. Not only did He extend the offer to all 12 tribes as well as to the pagans - to men and women alike - He showed that the promise included eternal life, a miraculous gift of bodily resurrection from death wholly unexpected by the Jewish elders. Moreover, He revealed that God's kingdom was not of this earth.

Jesus had been sent by God His Father to rescue the captive Israelites and lead them to a spiritual kingdom far beyond the borders of earthly imagination or understanding. He showed the Jewish religion to be a "guardian" covenant (Gal.3:24-26), a template, to be fulfilled by the true religion (i.e., new and everlasting covenant) of God in keeping with the prophecy of Jeremiah:

"See, the days are coming - it is God who speaks- when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel (and the House of Judah), but not a covenant like the one I made with their ancestors on the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt.

They broke that covenant of mine, so I had to show them who was master. "No, this is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel when those days arrive: Deep within them I

will plant my Law, writing it on their hearts. Then I will be their God and they shall be my people. There will be no further need for neighbor to try to teach neighbor, or for brother to say to brother, 'Learn to know God!' No, they will all know me, the least no less than the greatest since I will forgive their iniquity and never call their sin to mind." (Jer.31:31-34).

We find in this outline a disputation between 'exclusion' and 'inclusion', with the old covenant adherents favoring the former, but Christ offering the latter, a global reach without geographic, racial, sexual or church boundaries to all who renounce earthly sin and walk in His righteousness thereafter.

"No need to recall the past, no need to think about what was done before. See, I am doing a new deed, even now it comes to light; can you not see it? Yes, I am making a road in the wilderness, paths in the wilds. The wild beasts will honor me...because I am putting water in the wilderness (rivers in the wild) to give my chosen people drink. The people I have formed for myself will sing my praises." (Is.43:18-21).

"And God will...stretch out his hand over the River, and divide it into seven streams, for men to cross dry-shod, to make a pathway for the remnant of his people..." (Is.11:15).

"Pass through, pass through the gates. Make a way for the people. Bank up, bank up the highway, clear it of stones. Hoist the signal for the peoples. This the Lord proclaims to the ends of the earth: Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Look, your savior comes, the prize of his victory with him, his trophies before him'. They shall be called 'the Holy People', 'the Lord's Redeemed'. And you shall be called 'The-sought-after', 'City-not-forsaken'." (Is.62:10-12).

"And through it will run a highway undefiled which shall be called the Sacred Way; the unclean may not travel by it, nor fools stray along it." (Is.35:8).

March 5, 2008

Question:

You wrote that prophecy is only to be found through church committee's under anonymous authors:

"Surprisingly, with all this prophecy abounding, what we have rarely seen during the era of the Christian Church is prophets, per se. Most of the prophecies that have emerged outside of scripture over the last 1600 years have appeared in the form of decrees made through councils by committee. In this respect, while the role of prophecy in New Testament times has been large, it has come to us seemingly authorless. This is precisely the mechanism that has glorified the Holy Spirit above all others as the progenitor of Christian prophecy over the last 2000 years." -Letters January 6, '08.

Nowhere else? -JY

Answer:

That statement related to the great prophecies of the Christian religion such as the concept of the Trinity, the inclusion of the pagans in His salvation, or the understanding of the nature of baptism, etc. These teachings are in keeping with Jesus' message to his Apostles that He had much more to tell them, but that it was too much for them at that time (during Christ's lifetime on earth) to really understand, but He would send the Holy Spirit to lead them to a full comprehension of these unstated truths - which He has done.

The backbone of prophecy in the Christian age are the ministers who broadcast the message of Christ to the world as they preach from the pulpit.

Those messages, in of themselves, form the greatest prophecy of all time. When coupled to the words of the Hebrew prophets, this is stunning prophecy shown fulfilled. That is the message we often hear on sundays at church. From dynamic monuments of inspiration such as Francis Assissi or Billy Graham, to the least known ministers in scattered outposts, the message of God's offer of salvation comes through loud and clear for anyone with ears to hear.

It is Peter and Paul, the scripture itself, put into real life. This is the purest form of God's prophecy and it has been preached day after day for almost 2 millenia.

Those sermons are rarely written down in books, but taken altogether, they give us a continuous evolution of living Jeremiah's, Ezekiel's, Hosea's, Micah's, Isaiah's, John's,

Matthew's, Marks and Luke's - a barrage of the highest form of prophecy ever uttered on earth, and we do not have to go out into the wilderness to hear it.

As Jesus said, pray always for more preachers!

March 17, 2008

Question:

The Bible's statement that Jesus will rebuild the temple in 3 days is traditionally understood to mean that He will resurrect Himself from the dead on the third day after being crucified. Which He did. Could it also apply to His kingdom being completed within 3000 years of His crucifixion (since it says a day to God is 1000 years to man)? -DE

Answer:

Yes, of course. And when you examine the three days Jesus was entombed, there were three days involved, but the hours were far less than 3 times 24. He was resurrected very early on sunday morning, perhaps before sunrise. We should expect the same thing to happen on the third day of the Christian era.

If we count the Christian era as beginning with the Christian calendar, the world entered the "third day" (the 3rd 1000-year cycle) on January 1st, 2001. This date in that sense would correspond with the beginning of the "sunday" of Christ's resurrection in Jerusalem.

We do not know when He will return, but we can fairly well assume that it will be quite early during this "third day". Since the "third day", like the two that preceded it will be 1000-years in length, quite early can entail alot of years and months. But this is the "day" to expect His Return in glory.

April 16, 2008

Question:

Ted, A headline from today - " Hamas Cleric Predicts 'Rome Will Be Conquered by Islam'"
"A sermon last Friday by a prominent Muslim cleric and Hamas member of the Palestinian parliament openly declared that "the capital of the Catholics, or the Crusader capital," would soon be conquered by Islam."

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,351242,00.html>

This was a story from FOX News. It appears the prophecy is now more than an ideology, it is a strategy of the Islam's radical wing. The days appear to be growing dark.-JF

Answer:

I missed the headline, but the Bible didn't. It's still hard to grasp that we seem to be in the strategic age to watch all this happen. It is interesting that their focus on Rome relates to the Crusades. It figures.

April 19, 2008

Question:

At what point in the prophesy are we now? -PL

Answer:

In the allegorical template of Judaism we are at the time of Pharaoh's final hour - his attack on the rear-guard of the departing Israelites. The mood has changed in Babylon. No longer does it support our departure along the path of Jesus. The forces against Christ are gathering strength and the attack is beginning - much like the attack against the Israelites as the last of them proceeded through the parted waters of the Reed Sea.

Today the last of the Christian faithful are making their way to the land of God's promise. The winds of change are everywhere and prosperity is in collapse. This is the way it was prophesied - the time of tribulation and chaos ushering in the physical assault against the Church. And then the Return of Jesus.

"I have told you all this so that your faith may not be shaken. They will expel you from the synagogues, and indeed the hour is coming when anyone

who kills you will think he is doing a holy duty for God. They will do these things because they have never known either the Father or myself. But I have told you all this, so that when the time for it comes you may remember that I told you." (John 16:1-4).

This darkness will be shattered by the eternal light of God as He Returns in victory to take eternal command of creation.

April 20, 2008

Question:

I watched the History Channel program about the Bible Code. Have you seen it? Do you think it is plausible and does it go along with what you present? -NJ

Answer:

No. As far as I am concerned it is not plausible. Certainly not for Christians. This program talks about a hidden code in scripture that when revealed presents a Torah devoid of religion and obsessed with tabloid journalism.

It offers a 2-hour examination of a contorted alphanumeric code that virtually ignores the Messiah, and makes not a single mention of Jesus Christ. How can this be when the focal point of the entire Bible was to define a messianic mission for the salvation of mankind? They leave us a Bible code filled with TV stars and terminal violence, but no Messiah? That's total nonsense, is it not?

The Jewish Torah revolves around only one thing - the anticipation of a coming "Messiah", a word meaning 'code breaker'. Yet the History Channel program uses the word "Messiah" just once (and that, only in passing) in 2 full hours of programming.

By contrast, the New Testament (itself a code) incorporates thousands of Messianic quotations in narrative from the Old Testament - a sweeping scriptural proof of prophecy in Jesus considered by billions the definitive revelation of the hidden code of God's entire religious purpose.

Not only does that program ignore the Messiah,, mention of the words "Jesus" or "Christ" cannot be found in its entire script. This despite the fact that over 2 billion people on the

planet are Christian, a third of the population of the entire earth, all of these people a direct outgrowth of the Jewish Jesus and the Hebrew Bible through their relationship with the 12 tribes of Israel - a vast population absent from the program, but referred to again and again in the narrative of the scriptures.

Instead of the monumental messianic figure Jesus on whose shoulders 2000 years of the earth's most salient history rests, the "code" program ponders Timothy McVey, Elvis Presley, Oswald, Ruby, and a similar array of individuals and events scattered across the 20th century. It leads nowhere except to the end of the world. It sees no salvation, no hope, no eternal life. Just annihilation.

It reads like a Nostradamus knock-off, uttering in its own way the kind of 'quatrains' found in supermarket tabloids of interest only to those who follow the fleeting stars and events of modern times. If you want to know about the attack on Pearl Harbor, the fall of the Twin Towers, the names of the hijackers, Napoleon, Waterloo, Elba, and Gore versus Bush in Florida, it's all there in the code presented. If you are looking for God or religious insight, the code is silent as a tomb.

Jesus showed that the hidden code of the Bible is in the narrative of scripture itself, clear and observable to all. It was never hidden in complex ancient codes that masked the names of such biblical luminaries as the freeway sniper, John Lee from a 3000 year old audience.

"I have spoken openly for all the world to hear." (Jn.18:20).

It is in the time-honored verses of Isaiah and John that the code of the Bible is truly revealed, not in a parlor trick of stairstep letters, improbably reconstituted.

April 29, 2008

Question:

Do you believe that the increasing cost of food throughout the world is an indicator of Rev 6:6, and could you elaborate on this verse's specific details regarding oil and wine? Thank you. -JF

Answer:

Many would apply it that way since food scarcity is the common interpretation of that passage of scripture. Certainly this passage brings scripture's warnings to mind whenever the ill-wind of famine blows and that is not a bad thing because it verifies scripture. And as I have shown over and over in my writings, scripture says all the works of God go in pairs by opposites. God has made it that way, so double or even multiple interpretations are likely accurate.

My understanding of the "four horsemen of the apocalypse" differs from that of most scholars. My experience studying the prophecies of scripture leads me to an alternative interpretation. I see the passages concerning these four horsemen as a picture of the 2000-year reign of Christ on earth in Satan's world after Satan, himself, has been locked in the Abyss to prevent his adversarial powers from thwarting what God has in mind for the world.

After God's short reign has run its course and all the lost children of God have been rescued, Satan will be released - his return verified by world war. That change will come to pass when the people stop believing the message of Christ. That change in world attitude is clearly documented in Paul's Second Letter to the Thessalonians.

The horse in verse 6:6 in the Book of Revelation, in my view, relates to a market economy, the foundation of Babylon's existence. During the course of God's reign on earth (formed by the treaty Christ made with Babylon at the cross) the economics of Babylon will be allowed to proceed as long as the nations agree to permit and encourage Christian conversion (the oil and wine).

History has borne this arrangement out. The price of grain is a measure of the "Wall Street's" of the world. The financial barons (the commodities traders) set those prices. Bad governance and greed alters the settings, while populist reaction to starvation (the pitchforks) resets them. There is a two-thousand year track record to prove this arrangement.

In my understanding, the mandate not to touch the oil and wine relates to the activities of the Church. As long as the churches are allowed to preach and the civic governments encourage that preaching, i.e., as long as they keep their hands off the sacramentals of oil and wine, God's moratorium (Christ's Peace Treaty on the cross) will remain in place, keeping the rescue intact. As long as the rescue is not blocked, Christ's treaty will allow the economics of Babylon to continue in place.

Once the sacramentals are attacked, however, the treaty will end and God's offer will be rescinded. This was prefigured in Pharaoh's time (at the Exodus), and it applies to our flight

as well. When the attack against the last column of Christians takes place, the fiery waters of the cosmos will crash down on Babylon's army and its evil prince will experience the spears of heaven.

The first horse in this sequence, the white horse, to me, represents Christ. He did not come to bring peace to the earth, but a sword. This goes so much against the grain of most understandings of God that it is easily overlooked. But that is the fact. It is that sword marching across the earth over the last 2000 years that marks western civilization and its impact on world affairs across this span of years. It has split nations and households and fulfilled in its totality Christ's message: *"a man's enemies will be those of his own household."*

The horses representing plague and hades can also be seen in the historical sequence. Plague and famine throughout these years have been endlessly recurring. Hades represents the final tribulation, the worst of all. Many believe (myself included) that we are now entering into this last phase of the apocalypse.

There can be little doubt that Satan has been released from his prison in the Abyss. World war has consumed the planet for almost a hundred years now. That is the sign according to the Book of Revelation that Satan's release has taken place. Not only has world war (warfare on a scale unimaginable to the ancients) scourged the earth in violent death, but terrifying waves of genocide have left millions more in the flames of hades. So many Christians have been consumed in these genocides that it is as if the rapture itself has been a concomitant of the purges.

As the historical sequence has shown, all these horses overlap. Though one and then another has the spotlight, they all seem to play at the same time in Christ's 2000-year battle against evil for the salvation and rescue of the hidden souls Satan has scattered across the world.

I think it is easier for us now to see the impact of Satan's incarceration.

It's result: Paganism and secularism were forbidden in his absence. All western governments championed Christ. Atheism was outlawed. Not until 1917 in Russia did atheism return openly to the earth - a span reaching all the way back to the Roman declarations at the beginning of the Christian era. The battle of good over evil was a lot easier with Satan removed. Had Satan been present then (as he is now in his return) God's battle for souls during that period would have been as it is today - an environment so filled with contrary messages, especially from high office, and the extraordinary temptations of our age - that a reign of Christ on the planet could not have occurred by preaching alone.

Yet many still see the four horsemen as a body of riders that will be unleashed only in the

last days. That, too, is a viable alternative. Here is a comment from a reader following that interpretation:

"The breaking of the seals and the four horsemen of which we are to endure do not necessarily come as a lion, but subtly. The down fall of the dollar, America on the cusp of losing its dominance in the world, the rise of China and Russia, rising inflation in Asia, rising food prices, etc... It is so easy to pay no attention to it. It is not global warming it is the sins of man. We need to pray for stronger faith and a heart to know Jesus. My comment." -W

May 4, 2008

Question:

Which is the month of Loos in the Hebrew calendar? I have not read any month named Loos in that calendar. The months of the Hebrew calendar that I know of are: Tishri, Heshvan, Kislev, Tevet, Shevat, Adar, Adar 2, Nisan, Iyar, Sivan, Tammuz, Av and Elul.
-ACF This is with regards to your article in the website
<http://www.goodnewspirit.com/herodstemple.htm> which states:

"In 70 A.D., just 40 years after Jesus was crucified, the Roman army burned down Herod's Temple in Jerusalem. It was a stunning loss. It happened on the 10th day of Loos in the Hebrew calendar (August 29th in 70 A.D.), the exact same day the Babylonians had burned down Solomon's temple 657 years earlier. Like bookends, the identical dates spoke loudly of divine correlation. The Bible's ancient prophecies agreed. "

Answer:

You raise an interesting question. Loos is the Macedonian name for the 4th month, "Tamuz" in the Hebrew calendar (June/July) according to modern records. Others have it represent the 10th day of the fifth month, "Av" (Jeremiah 52:13), a date that is said to correspond to August 29th. Both Solomon's temple and Herod's temple were burned down on this same day.

May 4, 2008

READERS NOTE:

Thanks for your very useful web page on the Apocrypha. For a Protestant (?) site it is very fair and balanced. There is, however, one glaring error-

the "Song of the Three Holy Children" and "Susanna" ARE accepted as (deutero)canonical Scripture by the Greek & Roman Catholic churches. -HJ

May 12, 2008

Question:

Please send me a more detailed doctrinal statement of what you believe. Thank you. -L

Answer:

This is a prophecy site, not a theological (doctrinal) site. We preach no theology except faith in Jesus. Our belief is that everyone, whether they choose to be Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox or otherwise, should welcome the person Jesus into their hearts and turn their lives over to Him to be remade in His image exactly as He commands in accordance with the New Testament. Jesus promised the reward for this conversion is eternal life.

Prophecy is not theology. Instead, it is the closest we can come to proof that our faith is well grounded. Prophecy is a warning to change and a proof of the truth of that warning - proof that everything is going to happen in the future exactly in the way it has been predicted to happen.

Prophecy when it is fulfilled is the ultimate witness that the promise of Christ is true - that Jesus will come again to reward all who have faith in Him.

The pages on this website study those predictions and detail the ways in which their fulfillments are manifest. Jesus warned His followers that they must not ignore these signs but regard them for what they are, images of the color of the sky at sunrise, proof of the changing of the times.

The world has enjoyed almost 2000 years of Christian rule on earth. That rule has not been without its troubles, but during its entirety, salvation has been openly preached by thousands of different churches and ministers and God's will has been accomplished in all that preaching. Now the world is in the process of dramatic change. All across the earth, faith in Jesus is in freefall. The morning sky is crimson.

What does this mean? As it is written, "*Work while you still have the day, night is coming when no one can work*". (Jn.9:4). Is that time now? Are we watching the approach of darkness? The surest source of our understanding is structured in the prophets of scripture.

"Does the trumpet sound in the city without the populace becoming alarmed? Does misfortune come to a city if God has not sent it? No more does the Lord God do anything without revealing his plans to his servants the prophets." (Amos 3:6-7).

That is a promise of God. It means that all our questions have already been answered in one sure source. It is that source that we explore.

May 20, 2008

Question:

Thank you for all the info you provide freely online. I was wondering who and what person(s) are responsible for this ministry.. -BA

Answer:

Thank you for your appreciation. I apologize for taking so long to get back to you. It is my sincere belief that the persons responsible for this ministry are the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. No denominational organization is behind these efforts.

Many, many people ask me about this.

My ministry is a prophecy ministry. The Lord has written in scripture that God takes no great action on earth without first alerting the people ahead of time (Amos 3:6-7). We live in one of the most extraordinary times in Christian history. On January 1, 2001 the world

entered the "third day" of Christ's religion on earth. It was a seminal moment - almost completely unseen or even comprehended by the denominational body.

In the prophecies of Moses it is written that in preparation for the visitation of God, the people must wash and clean for two days and on the third day see Him face to face (Ex. 19:9-16). Echo's of this sequence reverberate through scripture (Hos.6:1-3; Is.29:1-2, 5-7; John 2:19). An image of this vision occurred in Jerusalem in the forward years of the first century A.D. when Jesus appeared in the flesh to die on the cross as atonement for mankind's sins (for those who accepted Him as their Savior).

A replay is set for His Second Appearance when God and all the angels of heaven gather in the skies above Jerusalem in preparation for the rescue of Christ's faithful and the Judgment of the planet.

The "washing and cleaning" is repentance and baptism, the focal point of God's "Day of Atonement" on earth in Jesus Christ. It is written of that day that it is "a single day made into two" by the power of God (Joshua 10:12-14). In other words, a single day made into two days of washing and cleaning in Christ. Scripture tells us that a day to God is like a thousand years to man (2 Peter 3:8-9; Ps.90:4). That expanse of time brings us from A.D. 1 to A.D. 2001, the two thousand-year era of Christ's preaching on earth.

The fact that we are living today at the very instant of the transition from preaching to the "Third Day" when Jesus is to return face to face, makes these days the most momentous ever seen since the departure of Jesus before the eyes of His Apostles. He is about to come back. Everything has changed. We can see that just looking at the times we are living in and comparing them to the 2000 years just ended, but what we have witnessed with our own eyes is just the tip of an iceberg compared with the things scripture tells us about the changed times ahead.

I was instructed by the Holy Spirit to write about those changes - to call attention to them - to help carry out the Lord's command that the people of God be informed that the era of Christ is in the rapid process of being transformed as the light fades into the darkness that Jesus said must come before He returns.

We have entered the day when the Church itself must bear its own share of the cross. It is a time when every Christian must brace themselves in faith and not follow after the masses who choose to leave Christ and embrace the wickedness of a world structured to meet amid great violence, its true Master.

May 23, 2008

Question:

Question:

Luke 14:26, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

I'm sure you get asked a lot about this verse. I tried to research it but didn't really trust the information I was getting. There is really a lot of division (understandably so) over this verse of scripture. There are many who say the Greek word used in the verse literally means hate, loath, and despise. Some say it means to love less. I would really like to get your opinion. -PL

Answer:

The seeming harshness of the verse is a Hebraism.

Yet Jesus did not mean His words here to be mild. The roughness of the Judean language acts as its own metaphor. His insistence that we break with this world was not a suggestion. It sounds to me as if you have heard the various interpretations of this verse of scripture, so I will give you an answer from another perspective.

Some Christians discover Christ in old age and turn to Him to be saved only moments before death. Most others, however, come to Him much earlier. The vast majority are born, baptised and confirmed into the Church at a young age. Considering most live into their 60's and 70's, or even later, they are called to address this commandment thousands of times during the course of their religious lives.

Almost every one of the 365 days we experience each year brings us face to face with this issue. Spanning a lifetime, thousands of days present this question to us over and over again. We respond in different ways to the multitude of shades in which we are confronted with it. Some days we are strong and ready for it and meet it with great success. Other days, we are blindsided, and that success is in doubt. God does not sit, axe in hand, waiting for that one time we stumble and fail so He can say, "Aha!" so He can condemn us to death. We are told over and over again in scripture that He is slow to anger and quick to forgive, and scripture cannot be rejected.

Built into the framework of Christ is a profound fount of forgiveness. It is opened to us when we are baptised, and it continues to flow into us when we are kind to others, when we give to the poor, the widows, orphans and all who ask, when we turn the other cheek to assault, or show mercy. In the Lord's Prayer, we are strongly instructed that God's forgiveness of our own trespasses is profoundly dependent on our forgiveness of others.

We live and work in Christ under the constant flow of this divine river of grace pouring out of the cross, washing us clean of sin in a perpetual bath of forgiveness necessitated by our sinful nature. It is this and this alone that keeps us in grace post baptism.

As long as we remain in Christ, getting up each time we stumble, asking for forgiveness, and returning to the path of His righteousness, we cannot fail. That is what it means to carry His cross and follow after Him, and not lose faith.

Trying to live Jesus' word in this world brings us into endless conflicts. We are met with them every single day. This world is hostile to Christ - a hostility growing deeper now that the nations have chosen to reject Him. That antagonism erects all sorts of roadblocks and obstacles that block our path to success in this world. They change the very meaning of success. This opposition and our response to it, the sacrifices we are called to endure because of our fidelity to the Gospel, is the route of the cross. It comes to us day by day, each confrontation changing our lives by the response we take, moving us farther away from the world and closer to God, or visa versa.

Since the world operates all around us in every way, every hour of every day, we are confronted with this conflict not only from enemies, but from those close to us as well (often without their even being aware of it). We are called to think of Christ at all times and be alert to those occasions when forces other than God's are at play in our lives, confident that our willingness to forgive others and show mercy to all will protect us from our moments of weakness. Jesus has promised that it will.

May 29, 2008

Question:

In your book "The Last Days of Babylon", can you tell me in one sentence what is Babyon? -AE

Answer:

In the phrase "separation of Church and state", Babylon is state.

The phrase, said to have been coined by Mussolini in the 1920's, has become the catchphrase of the nations in their recent expulsion of Jesus Christ from His ruling seat over western world politics. That expulsion ended a continuous Christian reign on earth of 1700 years and has ushered in in its place, secularized government.

Paul called this remarkable event the "great revolt" (2 Thes.2:3)

It is preparatory to, and actually a part of another scheme, the pursuit as fugitives of the rear guard of the very people Christ has called over those 1700 years to follow Him to His knigdom, a replay of the efforts of pharaoh 4000 years ago in Egypt (Ex.14:28-29). The result will be the same. But this time, the waters that crash down on the world forces now gathering for the assault will be armed in cosmic fire (Jer. 51:58).

The only survivors will be those who have chosen Church over state.

June 8, 2008

Question:

Which church is best? -DH

Answer:

The prophecies show that the division of Christianity into seven churches is a division of labor, not a matter of rightness or wrongness.

This metaphoric number which encompasses scores of denominations is not a matter of which church is true or not true, it is a division of labor that characterizes the essential nature of Christ's Church on earth: *"Where I am there my servant will be also."*

"...God will...stretch out his hand over the River, and divide it into seven streams, for men to cross dry-shod, to make a pathway for the remnant of his people..." (Is.11:15).

Christianity is built on the template of Judaism. That is why the format is familiar. In Judaism we see a single temple overseeing the sacrifice and thousands of synagogues supporting it. It is the same in Christianity. There is one seat of Peter, a holy priesthood overseeing from its captivity in Babylon the perpetual sacrifice - the Eucharist - and, beyond that, in place of rabbi's, millions of ministers forming a vast multi-denominational scattering of preaching that stretches to the ends of the earth.

Salvation is offered everywhere from every tributary of this ubiquitous river of preachers and institutions.

"An argument started between them about which of them was the greatest, Jesus knew what thoughts were going through their minds, and he took a little child and set him by his side and then said to them, 'Anyone who welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For the least among you all, that is the one who is great.'" (Luke 9:46-48)

This is true even of the churches. The route to salvation is not the Law (it is not theology). It is faith in Jesus. Period! Exclamation point! All churches preach that faith, but tend to wrap it up in their own theology (Law). Yet it is only faith in Jesus that saves - faith proved by obedience to the Gospel.

"My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and put it into practice". (Luke 8:21).

The division of labor (this division of churches) has been designed by the Holy Spirit to search throughout every aspect of the creation to find all who are hidden and still held captive by Satan so that they may be rescued, just as their brothers and sisters have been, over the last 2000 years, through faith.

June 11, 2008

Question:

Who is the mother in the 12th chapter of Revelation? Is it Judaism? Is it the Jews? Is it Jerusalem? Is it Sarah, the wedded wife? Is it the Church? Is it the Holy Spirit? Is it Mary, the mother of Jesus? Or is it all those things? -BE

Answer:

Revelation 12

"Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman, adorned with the sun, standing on the moon, and with the twelve stars on her head for a crown. She was pregnant, and in labor, crying aloud in the pangs of childbirth. ·Then a second sign appeared in the sky, a huge red dragon which had seven heads and ten horns, and each of the seven heads crowned with a coronet. ·Its tail dragged a third of the stars from the sky and dropped them to the earth and the dragon stopped in front of the woman as she was having the child, so that he could eat it as soon as it was born from its mother. ·The woman brought a male child into the world the son who was to rule all the nations with an iron sceptre, and the child was taken straight up to God and to his throne ·while the woman escaped into the desert where God had made a place of safety ready for her to be looked after in the twelve hundred and sixty days."
(Rev.12:1-6).

According to Daniel, this 3-1/2 year period (the 1260 days) is the time of the uprising of the disastrous abomination in the holy place & the abolition of the perpetual sacrifice. (Dan.12:11-12). It will be presaged by the assassination of the holy bishop, the "man in white" ([See Fatima prophecy](#)).

The passage (Rev.12:6+) tells us the Church will be taken into the desert to a place of safety during this violent period. It is a vision that relates to the last days - to the 3-1/2 years, a time that embraces the most pivotal events in the end-of-the-world sequence.

It begins when Satan is released from his prison in the Abyss (See Rev.20:7-8)

"As soon as the devil found himself thrown down to the earth, he sprang in pursuit of the woman, the mother of the male child, ·but she was given a huge pair of eagle's wings to fly away from the serpent into the desert, to the place where she was to be looked after for a year and twice a year and half a year. So the serpent vomited water from his mouth, like a river, after the woman, to sweep her away in the current, ·but the earth came to her rescue; it opened its mouth and swallowed the river thrown up by the dragon's jaws. ·Then the

dragon was enraged with the woman and went away to make war on the rest of her children, that is, all who obey God's commandments and bear witness for Jesus." (Rev.12:13-17).

Our true 'Holy Mother' is wrapped around the Gospel - the Holy Spirit and will of the Father - the Word which created the universe, and which brings each of us to life the moment we take it into our hearts and are reborn into its nature. Jesus proved this when he said,

"Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?' And stretching out his hand toward his disciples he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers. Anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven, he is my brother and sister and mother.'" (Mt. 12:48-50).

This is what being 'born again' (John 3:1-8) is all about. It is our spiritual union with the word of Christ. Born again is what happens to us the moment our soul is fused with the Holy Spirit. We were born into the substance of Babylon when we came out of our earthly mother's womb, and Jesus came to transform us from that worldly material existence into the substance of heaven by imparting His Holy Spirit into us.

The mother is Jerusalem, yes, but a city of another sort - the new Jerusalem in heaven, the new creation of Christ and the mother of all Christians. From her flows a river of life, the Holy Spirit. It pours out of the breast of Christ and comes into each person reborn into Jesus. The "mother" in scripture is the mother of that rebirth. That rebirth is the "born again" moment. We leave our first birth into Hagar (life in the flesh - a Babylonian existence) and are lifted up to brotherhood with Jesus and into His new city and creation..

We are not citizens of this world any longer. We are pilgrims on a holy journey. We must not love this world or anything that is in this world. Our new world is the city of Jesus Christ, the new creation in the heavens - our holy mother. That is the city we have been reborn into, the city that is the mother of Revelation. It is our eternal home and dwelling place.

We are cautioned not to regard our life here as a compromise with this world and its ways. Babylon cannot be made good by replastering. We cannot paint a thin veneer of religion, tastefully, but mildly washed over a worldly life. God wants us to move with great haste down the path He has prescribed, fully absorbed in His commandments. We need to "go overboard" for God. No dual life or compromise with Babylon is acceptable (Rev. 3:15-16). We have to live like Christ, spreading the word of God and doing good. The citizens of this world must regard us as different from themselves.

Then we will live in the mother of Revelation, the city of God, and she in us.

Scripture makes clear that her children are all who obey God's commandments and bear witness for Jesus (Rev.12:17).

June 24, 2008

Question:

It seems like the Muslims are positioning themselves to take over the earth. What does the Bible say about this? -JD

Answer:

The biggest religious news story in the last 1700 years (since the day Christianity climbed out of the Roman catacombs) has been the collapse of Christ's rule of the nations. This collapse began about 90 years ago, spearheaded by the emergence of atheistic government in Russia in 1917. It was culminated in 1963 when the United States, the last major world government still willing to compromise its secular authority in favor of Christ and the Gospel reversed its stand and tossed God out of its ruling hierarchy once and for all. Paul predicted this would occur. He called it, in his second letter to the Thessalonians, the "great revolt".

Everything we see today, the rise of atheistic government, 20th century hedonism, runaway sexual license leading to promoted homosexuality, even the rise of the terrorists - militant warmongers cloaked in harsh religious garments, has poured out of this revolt.

The reversal of the nations has only just begun. Scripture tells us the rejection will soon turn into open hostility and finally a frontal world assault on God. Accompanying this anger, actually ushered in by it, a time of severity never seen before in human history will descend on this people. The culmination of this revolt will be the appearance of the tyrant scripture terms the "Lawless One", or "beast".

Paul termed the revolt a pivotal sign of the end of the age. It has come in conjunction with the rebuilding of Jerusalem, two profound events that book-end a blizzard of signs that Christ's offer of reconciliation to the nations is about to be withdrawn, a fact that guarantees with certainty that Christ's Return is drawing near. Despite the fact God's window of salvation is rapidly closing, billions of people across the earth still remain

unrepentant and unsaved, hovering only moments from doom, unmindful of what is descending on the world from above.

The church is going to be handed over into the power of men. The world is going to be turned over into the power of the East. Omnipresent in the scriptures, these two prophecies pervade almost every book, reechoing again and again a constant theme - the world's betrayal of God and its consequences. Rejecting a peaceful master, it is ushering in a harsh one in His place - a tyrant.

On earth, nothing will ever be the same again.

For those still left with ears to hear, the only escape is Christ. Despite the lateness of the times, all who put their faith in Him will be saved.

[1963 - The Final Betrayal](#)

[The Great Revolt](#)

-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