



LAMPLIGHTER

"Prophecy is like a lamp shining in a dark place." - II Peter 1:19

Vol. XXXVII

November 2016 December

No. 6

What America Desperately Needs



Observations by the Editor

Keeping an Eternal Perspective

I am rejoicing that as I write this column, I can finally see the light at the end of the dark tunnel of this election. Regardless of who wins, I will be thankful for an end to the mean-spirited and downright nasty political advertisements that have dominated television for the past several months.

It's hard to keep an eternal perspective when you are constantly bombarded with political hype. All of us need to pause, take a deep breath and remind ourselves that our true home is not America; rather, it is Heaven.

Regardless of the outcome of the election and what happens thereafter, God is still on the throne, and He still laughs at all the feeble efforts of the world's political leaders to thwart His purposes (Psalm 2:1-6). He is not laughing because He does not care. No, He is laughing because He has the wisdom and power to orchestrate all the evil of Satan and Man to the triumph of His Son.

In the meantime, as the world grows increasingly dark, those of us who profess Jesus as our Lord and Savior need to stand strong in behalf of righteousness (Matthew 5:10-16).

One of my heroes in the faith is Don Wildmon, the founder of the American Family Association (AFA). He has stood boldly against the increasing immorality in our society for years, and he and his son, Tim, continue to do so. The sad thing is that he has often reported that some of his main critics come from within Christianity and many of them are pastors!

He says a typical letter he gets from pastors, reads something like this:

Don, you are wasting your time. Evil has greatly multiplied since you began speaking out about it. You need to face up to the fact that you are losing the battle.

I love the response that Don always gives to such a letter:

God did not call me to win. He called me to stand. We will not win until Jesus returns.



Dr. Reagan preparing radio programs in the 1990s.

And then, my friends, when Jesus does return, we are going to win BIG TIME, for Jesus is returning to pour out the wrath of God on those who are currently mocking Him and His Word. And then, Jesus is going to start reigning over all the world from Mount Zion in Jerusalem, and the world is going to be flooded with peace, righteousness and justice (Isaiah 2:1-4).

I can hardly wait for that glorious day! It is because I yearn for it so passionately that I always tell people:

I'm not a Democrat or a Republican. I am a Monarchist because I am devoting my life to doing everything I can to prepare the way for my soon coming King.

Here's the way Christian social commentator, Todd Starnes, put it recently in one of his books:

We don't need more Americans bowing down to the Democrat donkey or the Republican elephant. We need more Americans bowing down to the Lion of Judah.

Ephesians 6:12-13

12) For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

13) Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to *stand firm*. ✚

Cover art is from iStockphoto.com.

The Lamplighter

is published bi-monthly by Lamb & Lion Ministries

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 919
McKinney, TX 75070
Telephone: 972/736-3567
Email: lamblion@lamblion.com
Website: www.lamblion.com



Chairman of the Board:
Gene Hunt

Founder & Director:
Dr. David R. Reagan

Web Minister & Evangelist:
Nathan Jones

Assistant Evangelist:
Tim Moore

Chief Operating Officer:
Rachel Houck

Director of Finance:
Reva Frye

Director of Services:
Leo E. Houck

Media Minister:
Trey Collich

Media Associate:
Brett Everett

Media Assistant:
Heather Jones

Finance Associate:
Kay Bien

Finance Associate:
Todd Hutchinson

Ministry Associate:
Cathie Grubb

Ministry Associate:
Jana Olivieri

Ministry Associate:
Joyce Shurtleff

Web Associate:
Steven Stufflebean

Ministry Assistant:
Amber Todd



The Lamplighter can be viewed free of charge on the ministry's website at www.lamblion.com. It can also be received free of charge via email. The printed version is available by subscription. Contact us for information on rates and the publication schedule by calling 972-736-3567.

What America Desperately Needs

Dr. David R. Reagan

What our nation desperately needs is neither Hillary Clinton nor Donald Trump. Regardless of which one wins the presidency, America will lose.

What our nation needs above all is spiritual renewal, and that can come only through repentance.

National Sins

We need to fall on our knees before God and repent of the following facts:

- We have killed millions of babies in the name of “freedom of choice for women.”
- We consume more illegal drugs than all the rest of the world combined.
- We have one of the highest divorce rates in the world.
- We have legalized sexual perversion and same-sex marriage.
- We spend more than \$120 billion per year on gambling.
- We host 60% of all the Internet porn sites in the world.
- We have burdened future generations with trillions of dollars of debt.
- We are the moral polluter of the earth through our immoral, violent and blasphemous television programs and movies.

The Call for Repentance

God cannot bless a nation with these sins on its hands, regardless of who its leader may be. There must be repentance. The Bible makes it clear that nothing touches the heart of God as deeply as repentance — except faith (Acts 20:20-21):

20) You know that I [Paul] have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house.

21) I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.

A Biblical Example

A good example of the power of repentance is the city of Ninevah which was the capital of the ancient barbarous empire of Assyria. God called the prophet Jonah to preach to the people of this city, warning them of their impending doom.

To Jonah’s surprise, the king responded in repentance. He took off his royal garments and covered himself in sackcloth and ashes. He then issued a proclamation to his subjects, calling on



them to repent (Jonah 3:7-9):

7) This is the proclamation he issued in Nineveh: “By the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink.

8) But let people and animals be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence.

9) Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish.”

God’s heart was touched by the king’s action and the response of the people to his call for repentance, and the Lord decided to spare the city and the empire.

But 150 years later, God called a second prophet named Nahum to return to Ninevah and warn them once again of their impending doom. Nahum fearlessly proclaimed (Nahum 1:2-3):

2) The LORD is a jealous and avenging God; the LORD takes vengeance and is filled with wrath. The LORD takes vengeance on His foes and vents His wrath against His enemies.

3) The LORD is slow to anger but great in power; the LORD will not leave the guilty unpunished . . .

Nahum further declared that the nation’s sins had become so terrible and so entrenched that “your wound is incurable” (Nahum 3:19). This was an ominous statement. The same was said of the nation of Judah in its final days. Both Jeremiah and Micah proclaimed that Judah’s sins had reached the point where the “wound is incurable” (Jeremiah 10:19, 30:12 and Micah 1:9).

Ninevah refused to respond to Nahum’s message with repentance, and God destroyed the city and the Assyrian Empire. In like manner, when the people of Judah set their jaw against God and refused to repent in response to the pleas of their prophets and the remedial judgments that followed, God poured out His wrath, allowing the Romans to destroy Jerusalem, the Temple and the nation.

Some of the saddest verses in the Bible tell of God’s reluctant destruction of the nation He loved so much and had so abundantly blessed (2 Chronicles 36:15-16):

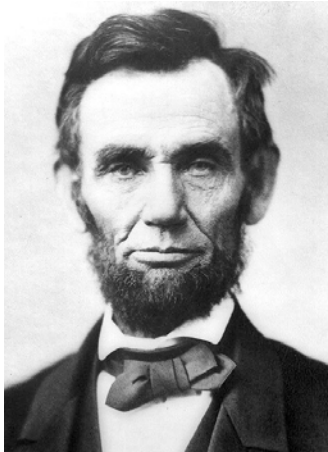
15) The LORD, the God of their ancestors, sent word to them through His messengers again and again, because He had pity on His people and on His dwelling

place.

16) But they mocked God's messengers, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets until the wrath of the LORD was aroused against his people and there was no remedy.

The grim reality is that there is a point of no return in a nation's rebellion against God.

And thus, in the final days of Judah, God told Jeremiah not to even pray for his nation (Jeremiah 7:16 and 14:11). In like manner, God told Ezekiel that even if the most righteous men who had ever lived — Noah, Daniel and Job — were to inter-vene for Judah at that point in time, their prayers could only deliver themselves and their families, but not the nation (Ezekiel 14:12-16).



Abraham Lincoln

The power of repentance can be seen in the history of our nation. In the midst of our civil war, in March of 1863, President Abraham Lincoln called for a “day of national humiliation, fasting and prayer.” He said he was motivated by the fact that through “the confession of the nation’s sins and transgressions in humble sorrow,” the Lord would show the nation “mercy and pardon.” Lincoln reminded people that the “Holy Scriptures” promise that “those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord.”

He then proceeded to make one of the most insightful spiritual statements ever put into words by a President:¹

And whereas it is the duty of nations as well as of men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions, in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord.

And, insomuch as we know that, by His divine law, nations like individuals are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world, may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war, which now desolates the land, may be but a punishment, inflicted upon us, for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole People?

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown.

But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that

all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own.

Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.

It behooves us then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.

Lincoln ended the proclamation by calling on all Americans to set aside the day of Thursday, April 30, 1863, as “a day of humiliation, fasting and prayer.” He urged them “to abstain on that day from their secular pursuits and to unite at their several places of public worship . . .”

Can you imagine an American President issuing such a proclamation today? Members of Congress would undoubtedly introduce motions for his impeachment, based upon his violation of “the separation of church and state.”

Our nation has secularized and paganized so quickly since the 1950s that most Americans today could not even conceive of a President calling the nation to prayer. Yet many did so, and some even offered public prayers themselves.



Franklin D. Roosevelt

Take Franklin Roosevelt for example. As the D-Day landings were taking place on the French beaches of Normandy in June of 1944, President Roosevelt led the nation in prayer via a national radio broadcast. The prayer lasted 3 minutes and 36 seconds and included these words:²

Almighty God: Our sons, pride of our Nation, this day have set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our Republic, our religion, and our civilization, and to set free a suffering humanity.

Lead them straight and true; give strength to their arms, stoutness to their hearts, steadfastness in their faith.

They will need Thy blessings. Their road will be long and hard. For the enemy is strong. He may hurl back our forces. Success may not come with rushing speed, but we shall return again and again; and we know that by Thy grace, and by the righteousness of our cause, our sons will triumph . . .

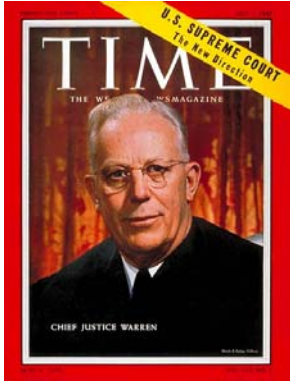
I ask that our people devote themselves in a continuance of prayer. As we rise to each new day, and again when each day is spent, let words of prayer be on our

lips, invoking Thy help to our efforts . . .

With Thy blessing, we shall prevail over the unholy forces of our enemy. Help us to conquer the apostles of greed and racial arrogancies. Lead us to the saving of our country . . .

Thy will be done, Almighty God. Amen.

Audio copies of this great prayer can be found all over the Internet. I urge you to find a copy and listen to it. It will thrill your soul. Yet, when the World War II Memorial was being planned for the mall in Washington, D.C., the Obama Administration successfully opposed any mention of the prayer or any quote from it.³



Earl Warren

heritage of our nation:⁴

I believe no one can read the history of our country without realizing that the Good Book and the spirit of the Savior have from the beginning been our guiding geniuses. Whether we look to the first charter of Virginia or the Charter of New England or the Charter of Massachusetts Bay or the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut, the same objective is present — a Christian land governed by Christian principles.

I believe the entire Bill of Rights came into being because of the knowledge our forefathers had of the Bible and their belief in it . . .

I like to believe we are living today in the spirit of the Christian religion. I like also to believe that as long as we do so, no great harm can come to our country.

Again, can you imagine a Supreme Court nominee today speaking such words? He would be dismissed as a religious fanatic who was unworthy to serve our nation in the judiciary.

Or, consider the unanimous Supreme Court decision rendered in 1892 (Holy Trinity v United States) in which the Court stated that our nation was not only historically and culturally religious, but that its very system of government and laws was based on a Christian worldview. The Court declared, "This is a religious people . . . this is a Christian nation."⁵

One hundred and fourteen years later, in 2006, President Obama joyfully and proudly declared, "Whatever we once were, we are no longer just a Christian nation; we are also a Jewish nation, a Muslim nation, a Buddhist nation, a Hindu nation, and a nation of nonbelievers."⁶ He could have also added that we have become a nation of pagans.

There is no doubt that we have jettisoned our Christian heritage in favor of a society dominated by secularism and paganism. And we are reaping the consequences as we witness the moral

collapse of our society.

The Warning of Romans Chapter 1

In Romans chapter 1, Paul tells about how God deals with a rebellious nation He has blessed. If the nation persists in its rebellion after it has been warned by prophetic voices and remedial judgments, God will step back and lower His hedge of protection and allow evil to multiply (verses 22-25). The result will be a sexual revolution, like the one that occurred in our nation in the 1960s.

If the nation ignores this judgment, God will step back a second time and lower His hedge of protection even more. This will produce a plague of sexual perversion in the form of homosexuality (verses 26-27). We began experiencing this at the turn of this century.

If the people continue to refuse to repent, God will step back a third time and deliver the nation over to a "depraved mind" (verses 28-32). That is where we are today. Just consider, for example, the two photos below that were taken recently at demonstrations in Washington, D.C.



Our Continuing Rebellion

June 26, 2015 is the day our nation's fate was sealed. That was the day our Supreme Court decided to legalize the abomination of same-sex marriage. In the process, the consenting judges decided to ignore our Constitution, disregard 2,000 years of Western civilization, and hold God's Word in contempt.

Repentance is the only thing that can save our nation — not Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump or any other politician. But how can repentance take place when sin is so entrenched and

even celebrated?

Our wound has become incurable. We can no longer hope for survival as a nation when we are thumbing our nose at God and holding His Word in open contempt.

Consider again the ominous words of the prophet Nahum (Nahum 1:2-3):

2) The LORD is a jealous and avenging God; the LORD takes vengeance and is filled with wrath. The LORD takes vengeance on His foes and vents His wrath against His enemies.

3) The LORD is slow to anger but great in power; the LORD will not leave the guilty unpunished . . .

Individual Hope



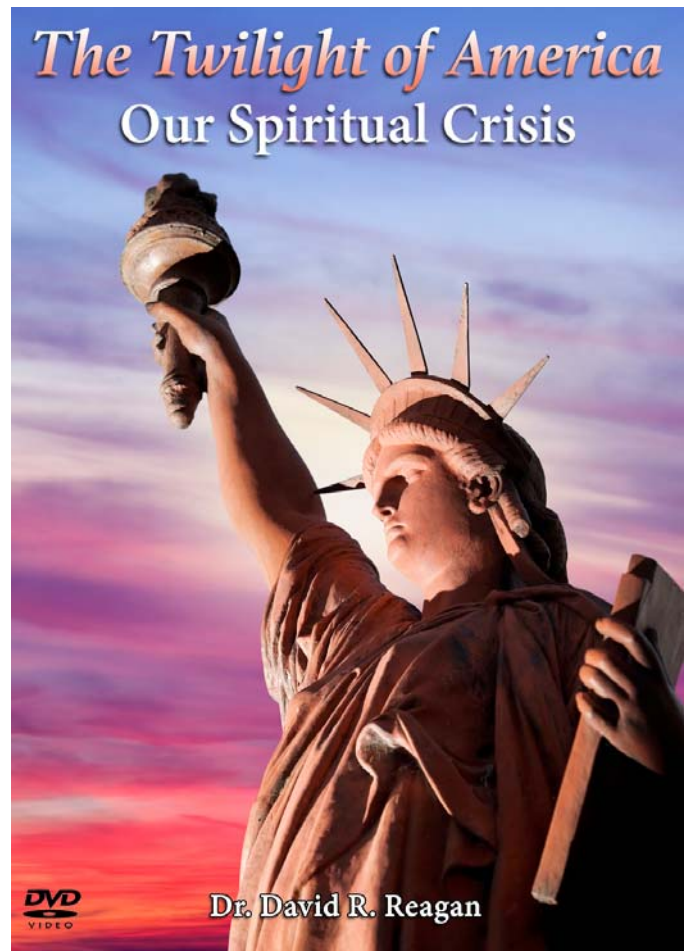
The only hope we have left is the individual hope that God's Word gives us when we accept His Son, Jesus, as our Lord and Savior.

That hope is great beyond words, and I cling to it in faith, reminding myself daily that while all the world is mocking God and His Word, He sits in Heaven and laughs — not because He does not care, but because He has the wisdom and the power to orchestrate all the evil of Satan and Man to the triumph of His Son (Psalm 2:1-9).

Maranatha! ❖

Notes:

- 1) Abraham Lincoln, "Proclamation Appointing a National Fast Day," www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/fast.htm.
- 2) FDR Presidential Library, "Franklin Roosevelt's D-Day Prayer," <http://docs.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/oddday.html>.
- 3) Todd Starnes, "Obama Administration Opposes FDR Prayer at WWII Memorial," www.foxnews.com.
- 4) Roger Schultz, "A Christian America: Earl Warren and Our Christian Roots," <http://chalcedon.edu/faith-for-all-of-life/the-resurrection-5/a-christian-america-earl-warren-and-our-christian-roots>.
- 5) Justia, "Church of the Holy Trinity v. United States 143 U.S. 457 (1892)," <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/143/457/case.html>.
- 6) Sojourners, "Transcript: Obama's 2006 Sojourners Call to Renewal Address on Faith and Politics," <https://sojo.net/articles/transcript-obamas-2006-sojourners-call-renewal-address-faith-and-politics>.



Dr. Reagan's passionate and rousing overview of America's spiritual crisis brought the audience to its feet when he delivered it at the Lamb & Lion annual Bible conference in 2014. The presentation impressed Bill Perkins of Compass International Ministries so much that he decided to show it at his Steeling the Mind Conference in Denver that year.

Although the sermon is contained in the ministry's 2014 conference album, there has been so much demand for Dr. Reagan's specific presentation that we decided to make it available as a single video album.

In the sermon, Dr. Reagan documents in detail our nation's drift from its Christian heritage — a drift that has turned into an outright revolt in recent years. He also presents detailed examples of the Christian persecution that is resulting from our nation's increasing secularism and paganism.

It is a breathtaking and chilling presentation that will drive you to your knees in prayer for America.

The presentation runs approximately 50 minutes and contains many illustrations, charts and photos. The cost is \$20, which includes the cost of shipping. You can order it through our website at lambion.com, or you can call our office at 972-736-3567 between 8am and 5pm, Central time.

This is a message that should be shown in every church in America. Consider asking your pastor to show it to your congregation. ❖

The Power of Repentance

Steve Howell and Nathan Jones

Is there power in repentance? The Minor Prophet Haggai proves to be an ideal person to teach about the power of repentance. His message loomed large for the Jewish post-exilic community — the Jews who came back home from Babylonian captivity.

Back in 586 B.C., Jerusalem had been destroyed by the Babylonian siege. God's temple had been demolished, the city decimated and the people exiled to Babylon for a seventy-year period.

God allowed them to remain in captivity during this time as a lesson to the nation, but He still remained faithful to His covenant promises. After the Babylonian empire was overtaken by the Persians, God motivated the new Persian king to decree that the Jews could return to their homeland in order to rebuild the Temple (2 Chronicles 36:22-23).

The Problem

By 538 B.C., a remnant of Jews returned. Things went well initially. The Jews quickly completed the foundation of the Temple. But then, opposition came from others who lived in that area. The enemies of the Jews began intimidating them and frustrating their work. The Temple rebuilding project was forcibly ceased and left unfinished. The Temple's foundation sat in Jerusalem for years, a memorial to incomplete projects and misplaced priorities.

It was now the end of August 520 BC, just before the start of the harvest. While this should have been a time of excited anticipation, it was looking more like a time of dread. The crops were suffering because of a severe drought and a general poverty seemed to have seized the people. They were underfed, unquenched, and unable to pay for adequate clothes or services (Haggai 1:6). They could hardly scrape together enough to sustain themselves, let alone prosper.

The Prophetic Message

The people were wondering "Why?" and the prophet Haggai felt led to provide God's answer. Haggai pointed out that the people had given up on the rebuilding project and were saying, "The time has not come, the time that the LORD's house should be built" (1:2).

In other words, the Jews had rationalized their failure to finish the Temple and decided it could sit on the backburner. So, instead of focusing on God and making Him their priority, the people were concentrating on the building of their own residences. The governor could live in a paneled house, yet God's house was in shambles.

Because of this backwards thinking and misplaced priorities, God had withheld blessings from his people. Since they focused on their own priorities instead of His, God had resorted to economic judgments to challenge His people to focus on spiritual realities instead of physical realities. But they had not paid attention.

Negative responses to other prophets' messages had produced an expectation of more failure on the part of the people, but the Jews suddenly decided to respond positively to Haggai's blunt message when he cried out, "Consider your ways!" (1:5). ". . . All the remnant of the people obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet . . . and the people feared the presence of the LORD" (1:12).

Within 23 days of Haggai's message, the people had resumed construction of the Temple. The people in a very short stretch of time had assembled plans, agreed to an order of building, attained workers, and acquired materials. Amazing! Though guilty, they did not wallow in despair. Instead, they repented and took action.

Strength to Carry On

A little less than one month after the start of the project, morale began to suffer because it became clear that this Temple was not going to be on a par with its predecessor. The Temple built by Solomon was built from the finest materials around. It was a gleaming structure, an architectural wonder. This new incarnation, though, was a modest reconstruction, merely functional and not beautiful.

Still, God told all the leaders and the people to "Be strong!" and "Work, for I am with you!" (2:4). God provided encouragement and motivation to the people during their time of despair. He reminded them that this temple, while less impressive structurally than its predecessor, was approved by God Himself.

God's perspective on the Temple was that its outward appearance was less important than the working of His own Spirit. God had plans to make this Temple more glorious. In fact, history shows that resources poured in from the nations later to upgrade the Temple so that the Second Temple overshadowed the First Temple. This new and upgraded Temple was also going to see a new and upgraded Presence, as Jesus Himself would set foot there several centuries later.

Future Hope

The nation had suffered during its harvest because the attitude of selfishness had spread like uncleanness. They were afflicted with crop failures and poor harvests because of their own actions and attitudes. God caused their agricultural and economic disaster, but it was a direct result of the people's choices. Now, however, things would be different. "From this day I will bless you," God promised (2:19). Finding no more guilt due to the people's obedient response to His messages, God began to open up blessings upon them.

The guilt of the people in this matter was finally pushed aside. Its impact on the people and the leadership gave way to forgiveness and blessing. Their positive response to the preaching of Haggai shows us that the best responses when we are guilty of sin are simple yet effective: repent and obey. There is indeed power in repentance! ✚

Editor's note: The authors of this article are also the authors of a great new book titled, *12 Faith Journeys of the Minor Prophets*. You can secure a copy of this 313 page book for \$20, including the cost of shipping. You can order it through our website at lamblion.com or by calling 972-736-3567 Monday thru Friday, 8am to 5pm Central time.

The End of Discernment When People Live Like Mongrel Dogs

Don McGee

(Editor's note: Don McGee is the founder and evangelist of Crown & Sickle Ministries based in Amite, Louisiana.)



Discernment might be defined as the exercise of judgment and civilized taste. If that is anywhere close to being in the context of modern culture then, without doubt, we have lost it. Europe lost it many decades ago, and the debasement of spiritual and social norms that wrecked the structure of decency on the Old Continent has done the same in the New World, seemingly with a vengeance.

Our Moral Free-Fall

In order to be very clear, the intention of this article is not to leave the reader with the idea that 21st Century culture has accidentally stumbled and fallen, thus damaging its ability to recognize spiritual and moral squalor. That would be a mistaken conclusion.

Where western culture is today spiritually and morally is not the result of an accident. Society is wallowing in the muddy shallows of debasement because it has chosen to be there.

In humanity's headlong rush to estrangement from God it has thrown overboard most every vestige of conduct that separates human standards of living from those of mongrel dogs, just like Bible prophecy said it would do, "... as in the days of Lot..." Leviticus 18 presents the precedent for the spiritual degradation and its attendant fallout that has enveloped modern civilization.

I used to own a couple of hunting dogs whose sole purpose for living was the hot pursuit of whitetail deer in order for me, or another hunter, to put meat in the freezer and a full-grown trophy version of Bambi on the wall. Of course my dogs had biblical names — Joshua and Caleb — but that did not change the fact that they had no inhibitions and discernment whatsoever. They were dogs, and male dogs at that.

That means they would publicly and in broad daylight propagate with any gyp that came around. They enjoyed rolling in rotting carcasses and had no qualms about taking care of bodily functions at any place and at any time no matter how disgustingly offensive. For these and other reasons their pen was some distance from my house, and they were consigned to riding in the

back of my truck while en route to and from the woods. The Occupy Wall Street bunch along with the Spring Break crowd remind me a lot of my dogs.

However, to be honest about the matter, my dogs had no choice because living like that was simply part of their being dogs.

Moral Choice

But, such rationalization cannot be afforded human beings regarding their dog-like conduct. What is now being publicly displayed by those who see themselves as the world's current trend-setters and future leaders has no excuse of any kind, much less something based upon species genetics.

One of the great distinctions between humans and dogs is that humans have a choice in developing a moral conscience and exercising its associated discernment. Said another way, when people live like mongrel dogs it is because they choose to do so. And, like dogs rolling in rotting flesh, they really, really enjoy it.

True, some people have been living with the morals of pot-licker hounds for millennia (actually, apologies might be in order to all pot-licker hounds), but never have people been able to shamelessly flaunt it before the entire world in real time while being excused under the "culture-toleration" exemption. This rationalization is scraping the bottom of the proverbial barrel. God allows for no such toleration and it would be of great benefit if society would do the same.

The Nature of the Problem

How did this happen, and why? I can offer only a microcosm of the answer, and it is in the context of Bible prophecy. Said succinctly, in order for Satan to do what he will ultimately do to humanity, he must destroy any semblance of spiritual discernment, and he has seen phenomenal success in this area.



It is important to see that what he has accomplished was not through a by-the-numbers, sharply-defined, multi-step process. That would not work because the degradation would be too easily defined and too easily recognized even by the spiritually weak.

Rather, Satan has chosen to use a slide-to-ruin, smooth process without distinct stages. Something that is smooth is more easily swal-

lowed than something sharp. Essentially, and without going into intricate detail, the result of lost spiritual discernment leads to the loss of moral discernment and other debasements that have been wrecking lives, homes and churches for a long time.

The Main Problem

Number one on the list is the refusal to judge. It has been said that the most quoted Bible verse is Matthew 7:1, "Do not judge so that you will not be judged." If Satan has ever been successful in duping people into taking a verse from its context it is this one.

Can anyone in their stable, God-given mind make that verse mean that tolerance is the key to godliness? Yet, that is exactly

what is being taught in multitudes of pulpits and in untold numbers of Bible classes each week. Especially in “seeker-friendly” churches and in those churches that push the unbiblical, but popular “social gospel.” Must we wonder why some Christians (especially teens and young adults) dress, talk and live as they do?

Consider some words of great wisdom from F. F. Bruce, the great Scottish scholar and son of a Plymouth Brethren preacher. He said, “Judgment is an ambiguous word, in Greek as in English: it may mean sitting in judgment on people (or even condemning them), or it may mean exercising a proper discrimination. In the former sense judgment is depreciated; in the latter sense it is recommended.”

A.W. Tozer, the great American pastor, preacher and author, said, “Among the gifts of the Spirit, scarcely one is of greater practical usefulness than the gift of discernment. This gift should be highly valued and frankly sought as being almost indispensable in these critical times. This gift will enable us to distinguish the chaff from the wheat and to divide the manifestations of the flesh from the operations of the Spirit.”

Corrupted Christianity

Some believers are nothing less than dismayed after comparing men like Bruce and Tozer to the likes of Brian McLaren, Rick Warren and others who are absolutely void of biblical discernment. The reason for this glaring distinction is that the former had a centralized view of spiritual authority — namely, the Bible. The latter, Emergent Church leaders, are determined to transform Christianity into a constantly developing and decentralized “conversation,” as they call it, and to “deconstruct” historical Christianity and rebuild it as they think it ought to be.

Further, most readers would also be dismayed to know how much influence these men wield in what has historically been Evangelical circles. Think not? In 2005 a Barna Group survey found that *The Purpose Driven Church* by Rick Warren was voted as the second most influential book in the lives and ministries of American church leaders. It ranked just behind *The Purpose Driven Life*, also written by Warren. So, what is the fallout from leaving the centralized authority of the Bible and going to a lets-talk-about-it-in-order-to-feel-good system of discernment?

Moral deconstruction follows spiritual deconstruction. When what God says no longer carries life-influencing weight then something must fill the vacuum. When discipleship becomes a “conversation” built upon the rubble of “deconstructed Christianity” then it no longer has a sure foundation, and thus easily falls to any prevailing wind.

Case in point. At a recent prophecy conference a woman had some comments and questions about current standards among young Christians. She was very concerned because her granddaughter is a Bible class leader in her youth group. This girl, in her late teens, “goes to youth group meetings dressed in shorts so tight and short that her . . . (certain regions of her derriere are openly visible — I had to soften up her description a bit) and her parents and the pastor and youth pastor say nothing!” Her conversation continued about what Christian girls are now wearing to their proms and that it must be an embarrassment to God. I agreed. The truth is that what they are wearing gives them all the dignity and class of a wild-west saloon floozy. But, I

suppose it makes for a wave-less way of life at home and at church.

A Twisted Theology

“Cheap grace” theology (though God’s grace is indeed free it was not cheap) has been taught for so long in Bible colleges, seminaries and pulpits that it has become woven into the fabric of pastoral counsel. It is the idea, or at the very least the strong perception, that God’s grace does away with God’s commands, something that could not be further from the truth.

It is the belief that being saved by grace and obeying God’s commands about the way we live are mutually exclusive. The indecisive, indiscriminate, undiscerning church is long and loud about, “Neither do I condemn you,” but is eerily silent about, “Go and sin no more.” It is absolutely impossible for a person who chooses to live a life of darkness to, in reality, be a Christian living a life of righteousness (John 8:1-12).



(jrenseyblog.wordpress.com).

The following is often said and bears repeating. The False Prophet of the Tribulation will not have very far to go in order to construct and impose a global religion that will be palatable to most people left behind when the church is taken out.

There will be no need for discernment and judgment regarding what God has said because there will be a demand for allegiance to the Antichrist under penalty of death. Worship might be some kind of adoration-liturgy with oaths and other such trappings, but in the context of morals and lifestyles, nothing further will be required. Without Godly discernment nothing else will matter as it often does not matter even now. Anyone with biblical discernment can clearly see that much of professing Christianity is already at that point today.

The Need for Action

The broken-hearted grandmother mentioned above is only one of many Christians who are very concerned about what is happening in their churches. Ironically, it seems to be people like her who actually see what is happening, and generally they are ignored because their concern is seen as being too reactionary.

Church leaders often seem more concerned with the orchestration of the Sunday morning entertainment, current outreach programs, the latest praise and worship digital technology and numbers. Not that numbers mean a great harvest, but that numbers mean a large financial offering. Strong words? Yes. Because the situation is critical and time is running out very quickly.

Nobody wants to experience difficult and oppressive times. However, church history indicates that those things cause God’s people to shed the excesses and to simply get back to, “This is what the Lord says...” (Zechariah 1:3) ❖

Walking the Walk

Tim Moore



(Editor's note: Tim Moore is a commercial pilot, a colonel in the Air Force Reserve, and a member of the House of Representatives of the Kentucky State Legislature. He also serves as an Assistant Evangelist for Lamb & Lion Ministries.)

This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.
(Matthew 15:8)

As I write this column, it remains to be seen who will occupy the White House for the next four years. During this presidential election cycle, much attention has been focused on the manifest shortcomings of both candidates. Evangelical voters (a distinct block in the minds of political pollsters) have found it difficult to be enthusiastic about the “lesser of two evils.”

Still, as important as this election is in the life of our nation — in terms of policies toward Israel, Supreme Court justice nominations, budget priorities, and undoing some of the current administration's mess — other even more troublesome dynamics are evident in America today.

The Uniqueness of America

Our nation is rather unique in the world today, and not merely because of the size of our economy or the potency of our military or the influence of our culture. We are not even unique for believing that our culture, our way of life, and even our system of government is better than any other in the world (although our current President has been reluctant to ascribe to that kind of Americanism). Many other nations and peoples perceive their own culture, way of life, and system of government to be superior. No, we are unique among nations for our bold declaration of trust in God and for our expectation that God will bless us.

Just this summer, I helped commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the United States Congress adopting “In God We Trust” as the national motto. In Kentucky, our Governor honored that anniversary with a proclamation. And, thanks to the work of my fellow co-chair of our Legislative Prayer Caucus just a few years ago, that motto is enshrined at the front of our House and Senate chambers. I was even encouraged to see that motto shamelessly displayed on a police cruiser when I was in Louisiana recently. To date we have maintained that motto on our US currency — despite efforts by the ACLU and Americans United for the Separation of Church and State to get it declared unconstitutional.

Our unofficial national anthem is “God Bless America,” written by the Jewish songwriter Irving Berlin. Many prefer it to the official anthem. And, that prayerful sentiment — God Bless

America — has become the standard tagline on political speeches of every persuasion.

There was a time when such a sentiment would have been recognized as heartfelt, and in line with the aspirations of our nation. That is not to say that we were without shortcomings in past generations. America has had its own blind spots throughout its relatively short history. But few would have disputed our Christian heritage and underpinnings.

When I was in high school, our history textbooks lauded the virtues of America's Puritan work ethic. Even secular authors credited the Pilgrims with seeking to form a more perfect union based on the tenets of the Bible. In conflict after conflict, Americans were quick to call down the “blessing of heaven on their arms.” When Jimmy Stewart's character in “It's a Wonderful Life” says that everyone was in church praying for blessing after Pearl Harbor and offering thanksgiving after V-E and V-J days, that pattern fit very well into our national fabric.

How far we've come since then!

The Jaded America of Today

America is now the world's greatest consumer of illegal drugs, greatest producer (and consumer) of pornography, and has



America Adrift

perpetrated 43 years of carnage against millions of unborn innocents. Most outrageously, some of the same politicians who mouth “God Bless America” at the end of every speech advocate the very policies that our holy God detests.

Having said that, I would submit that our aspiring leaders are actually reflections of our corporate soul. And, although it is easy to focus our frustration on a given President, official, or candidate, the policies they espouse are usually echoes of what is already transpiring in our culture.

I'll give you an example. My own father recently expressed disgust at President Obama's executive orders that have enshrined same-sex marriage, transgender identity politics, and confused bathroom labeling. He tied the President's advocacy with the Supreme Court's decision requiring the legalization of same-sex marriage. But, as I reminded him, our culture had already shifted before the President decided to seal this new ideology in federal regulations.

Consider the fact that in addition to universities, most Fortune 500 companies had already embraced same-sex partner benefits for a number of years. They had also moved to eliminate any perception of discrimination against transgender employees — even though such people would have been considered

unbalanced and mentally unstable just a few years ago. How many born-again Christians are heavily invested in these corporations but have never expressed outrage over their unbiblical policies?

And, lest you think that all is well within the walls of Christendom, I would point to the rapid shift within many mainline (and even some professing Evangelical) denominations. Their sudden decision to embrace homosexuality belies many years of foundational erosion. And, if you attend a conservative, Bible-believing church, ask what your teens and twenty-somethings believe on these issues. Other than trending more pro-life, the Millennial Generation is abandoning scriptural attitudes on these and other issues.



What Are We to Do?

Regardless of who wins the Presidential election, the trends in our culture are clearly and diametrically opposed to the Bible. So, what should we do as darkness descends in our land?

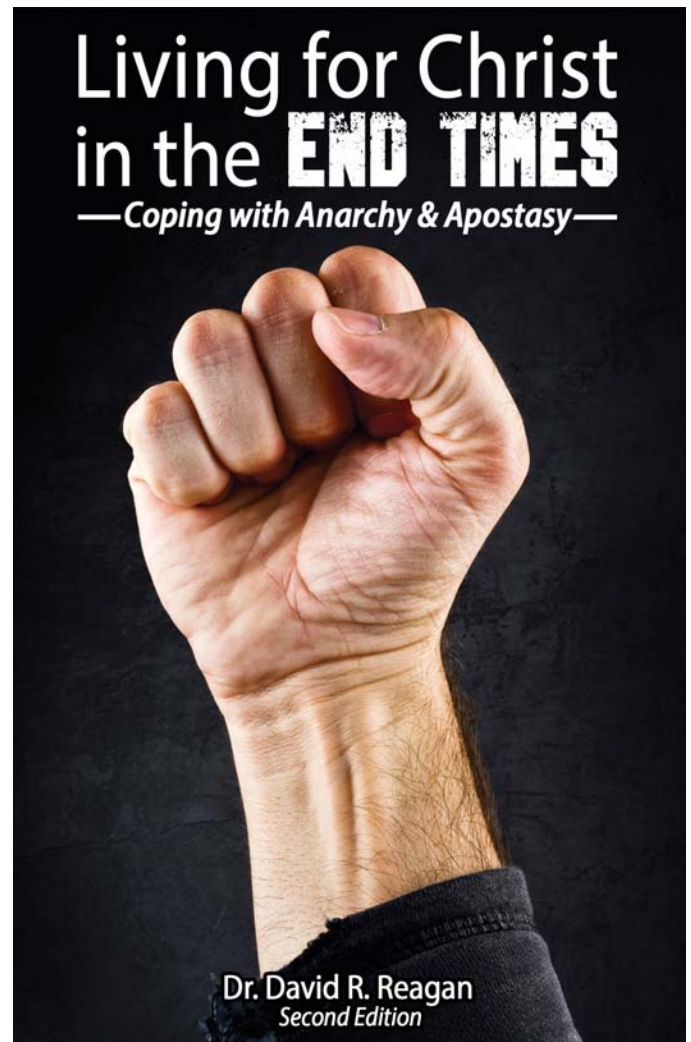
First, recognize that God told us the world would descend into immorality and wickedness as the season of Christ's return draws near (Matthew 24:37-39).

Second, realize that the darkness we observe settling around us is evidence that the Lord is at the very gates of heaven. That is why Adrian Rogers used to say, "It's getting gloriously dark!"

Third, receive with gladness the opportunities the Lord is affording us for shining His light in our dark world. That may mean that, like California Pastor Walter Howe, we will have the opportunity to share Jesus Christ in jail when we are wrongly prosecuted and imprisoned. It will undoubtedly mean that those around us will observe our living testimony when we refuse to bow to political correctness despite threats to reputation, livelihood or safety.

I am convinced that blasé calls for God's blessing from a people (and their leaders) who are wallowing in sin is an affront to our holy God. It is like taking His Name in vain to have such little reverence for His Word and His provision for blessing.

Regardless of the outcome on November 8th, elect to glorify Jesus Christ in all you say and do. Put on His armor of light (Romans 13:11-14) and shine in our darkening world. And, as you pray and work in the time and place the Lord has put you, stay alert, for our Blessed Hope is coming soon! ❖



This is the 2nd edition of Dr. Reagan's hard-hitting presentation about the special challenges that Christians face at the beginning of the 21st Century due to the decay of society and the increasing apostasy in the Church.

After outlining in detail the moral and spiritual challenges we face, Dr. Reagan then proceeds to present ten principles that Christians can follow to overcome paganism and live victorious lives:

- Standing on the Word of God
- Believing in the Power of God
- Relying on the Holy Spirit
- Practicing Tough Faith
- Ordering Priorities
- Keeping an Eternal Perspective
- Standing for Righteousness
- Persisting in Prayer
- Surrendering in Worship
- Clinging to Hope

The final two chapters present prophetic material from the Bible which shows that Christians will ultimately triumph over paganism when Jesus returns in glory and power.

The book runs 328 pages in length. It sells for \$20, including the cost of mailing. ❖

I have a bone to pick over this!

Pat Franklin

(Editor's note: Pat Franklin and her husband, Alan, are journalists who reside in the London area of England. This insightful article was posted on their website in May of this year. You can find their website at www.thefreepressonline.co.uk. They provide Christian insights concerning both British and international events.)



The only way to forgiveness, cleansing, and being made worthy of Heaven is by putting our trust in Jesus. He said He is the way, the truth, and the life, and no one comes to the Father except through Him (John chapter 14).

Sounds good to me! You can choose Jesus this very day. You can become a saint today! Jesus said that most people would reject Him and choose the broad way that leads to Hell. But you do not have to be in that dread crowd!

You can choose the narrow way, through Jesus Christ, the way that leads to eternal life. Jesus has paid the terrible penalty our sins deserve, but if you refuse to accept Him, you put yourself beyond help.

Jesus is the Only Way

There is no other way to obtain forgiveness of sins. The blood of Jesus was shed for us. It was the terrible price He paid to redeem us. But if you reject Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, you will die with your sins still on your soul.

The most religious people of Jesus' day were the hard-hearted Pharisees, who adamantly rejected Him. Repentant sinners fell at His feet. I am one of the last group. Won't you join me at His feet?

It is the best place in the world to start your walk with Jesus.

A prayer: Dear Jesus, is this true? Are You real? Can I really belong to You, be one of Your people? Will You forgive even me? All my sins? Please help me believe the truth. Please forgive my sins. I put my trust in You and ask You to save even me. Amen. ✚

A bone fragment said to be from the elbow of "Saint" Thomas Becket was brought to England from Hungary at the weekend and put on display, first at the Catholic Westminster Cathedral in London, and later at the Church of England's Canterbury Cathedral. There was much pomp and ceremony and marching about by important people in expensive clerical garments. This is what passes for Christianity in England today.

I don't want to be rude, but bones belong in the ground. And saints are not "made" or "declared" saints by any religious hierarchy. If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, you are a saint, redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, chosen, set apart by God Himself (1 Corinthians 1:2).

The True Saints

A "saint" is a follower of Jesus, whether living or dead. "To the saints at Ephesus," Paul wrote (Ephesians 1:1). It doesn't mean we are wonderful people. It means we are sinful people who have accepted the wonderful gift of salvation provided for us by Jesus.

I don't know anything much about Thomas Becket, but if he really is a saint, he would find the goings on this week intensely aggravating and embarrassing. He would tell the church authorities to get rid of that piece of bone and turn instead to the Word of God, the Bible.

Thomas lived in the 12th century, when the Bible was not available in English. Both the Catholic Church and later the Church of England banned the Bible. Translation into English carried the death penalty and many died at the stake, burned alive, before this changed.

Much blood has been shed so that we can hold God's Word in our hands and read it for ourselves. Now, almost anywhere in the world people can read God's Word in their own language.

So we have no excuse whatever for venerating a sliver of bone in a fancy display case.

A Crucial Question

Are you a saint, dear reader? You have a choice. Jesus opened the door of Heaven when He died on the cross of Calvary. He paid the penalty for every sin that men and women have committed. He died for sinners, and we are all in that sinking boat. All have sinned and fallen short, the Bible tells us in Romans chapter 3.



Alan and Pat Franklin are pictured above on the day in 2005 when they launched their Internet newspaper called *The Free Press*. They speak out strongly on the moral issues that are conflicting Britain, and they enthusiastically supported the withdrawal of Britain from the European Union.

Evangelicals Assisting the Pope

Mike Gendron



Mike Gendron

(Editor's note: Mike Gendron is the founder and director of Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries in Plano, Texas. You can find his website at pro-gospel.org. Mike was a devout Catholic for over 34 years before he became a born-again Christian in 1981. At that point, he gave up his very successful business career to attend seminary, after which he founded the ministry he has served since that time.)

On July 16th, Pope Francis called for unity among all Christians at an ecumenical prayer rally in Washington, D.C. Hundreds of thousands of Christians heard his video message along with messages from evangelical leaders Ronnie Floyd, Ravi Zacharias, Luis Palau, Josh McDowell, Francis Chan, Ann Voskamp and others.

Organizers of the event attempted to gather one million Christians and Catholics in unified prayer and worship with a goal to bring unity to all who "love Jesus." The event, called "Together 2016," was about laying aside what divides us to lift up Jesus who unites us.

The gathering fell short of the million person goal. It was intended to run from 9am to 9pm, but officials shut it down at 4:40pm after medical personnel became overwhelmed with the number of people — more than 400 — who were overcome by extreme heat.

The Purpose of the Event

Before the rally, Nick Hall, the founder of PULSE (pulse-movement.com), who came up with the idea for "Together 2016," said that adding the Pope to the lineup was the best news yet. He said,

We are humbled and honored by his involvement and are eager to share his message with the crowd that gathers. That His Holiness would choose to speak into this historic day is a testament to the urgency and the need for followers of Jesus to unite in prayer for our nation and our world.

While some may admire Hall's zeal, it is clearly not based on knowledge. For him to refer to a wolf in sheep's clothing as "His Holiness" demonstrates his lack of knowledge of God's Word. God alone is holy! Anyone who does not know Scripture cannot discern between holiness and depravity or between true and false prophets.

The Evangelicals who were featured on the program need to know that the Lord Jesus did not come to bring peace on earth but rather division (Luke 12:51). His Gospel has always divided believers from unbelievers. The Lord Jesus said He is the door that must be entered for salvation (John 10:9). Those words caused division among the people who heard them (John 10:19). Clearly, those who have been sanctified by the Gospel must avoid uniting with those who embrace another gospel and have deserted Christ (Galatians 1:6-9).

The Evangelical leaders scheduled to speak with the false prophet of Rome either do not know the exclusivity of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ, or they do not know the false and fatal gospel of Catholicism; or perhaps they know, but chose to be disobedient to Scripture.

Scriptural Warning Against Compromise

God's Word gives us a clear command: "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols?" (2 Corinthians 6:14-16).

Evangelicals who worship God in Spirit and truth must have no agreement with Catholics who worship idols, relics and a false Christ. To do so would be seeking to please men over God (Galatians 1:10).

The Evangelical leaders who stood with the Pope betrayed the Gospel, the Reformation, and all those martyred by Rome. It was the Word of God proclaimed by the Reformers that broke the tyrannical hold of the popes over the visible church. Now these Evangelicals are aiding and abetting the Pope's attempt to reverse the Reformation. The truths that set the Reformers free from religious bondage and deception are being suppressed or ignored.

Catholic Apostasy

It is very disturbing to see Evangelical leaders cooperating with the enemies of Christ and His Gospel. The apostate church of Rome has condemned Christians with over 100 anathemas for believing the infallible truths of God's Word. We must wonder if these Evangelicals know that the worship of the Eucharist and veneration of Mary is idolatry (Exodus 20:3-5)? Don't they know that Rome's plan of salvation is a false gospel that condemns those who teach it (Galatians 1:6-9)? Don't they know that the sacrifice of the Mass and the dogma of Purgatory is a blatant denial of the finished, perfect, and sufficient work of Christ's atonement (Hebrews 10:10-18)?

As more and more Evangelical leaders embrace the Pope as a brother-in-Christ, they must be warned and called to repentance. Those who promote unity with false teachers, without challenging their errors, leave their own convictions and beliefs open to question. Anyone who embraces false teachers is giving credibility to their heresies. All Christians will be held accountable to God for the souls that are misled by our unwillingness to contend for the faith. ✚

Apostasy —

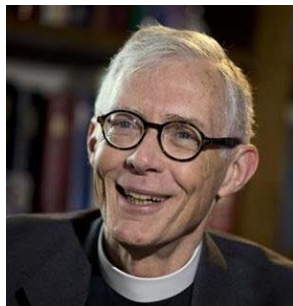
In August, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America voted to end all aid to Israel and to divest itself of investments in any companies profiting from Israel's "occupation" of Palestinian territory. The church also called on the President to recognize a Palestinian state.

The church President Obama is a member of — The United Church of Christ — voted last year to participate in a boycott of all Israeli products. The Presbyterian Church USA has also voted to divest from the Jewish state.

Also, in August of this year, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA was opened with a prayer by a Muslim imam who said: "Allah, bless us and bless our families and bless our Lord. Lead us on the straight path — the path of all prophets: Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Moses, Jesus and Mohammed."

Meanwhile, in July the Western District of the Methodist Church elected the denomination's first openly gay bishop despite the church's ban on same-sex relationships among the clergy. The person elected was Karen Oliveto who serves as pastor of Glide Memorial United Methodist Church in San Francisco.

"The Very Reverend" Gary Hall, the Dean of the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. recently announced from the pulpit that "it is a sin to oppose homosexuality." The Bible makes it clear that one of the signs of a society in revolt against God is people calling good evil, and evil good (Isaiah 5:20).



Gary Hall

Russian Totalitarianism —

In July, Russian President Vladimir Putin banned virtually all types of evangelism in Russia outside the confines of a church building. The ban includes evangelism within private homes and over the Internet. The saddest thing about this ban is that it is supported behind the scenes by the Russian Orthodox Church because they do not want Western groups evangelizing within Russia. Their strong feeling is that anyone born in Russia should be a member of the Russian Orthodox Church, and no other.

Christian Persecution —

Open Doors, a ministry dedicated to the protection of persecuted Christians worldwide, recently announced that 2015 was the worst year for Christian persecution in modern history. Not surprisingly, the so-called "religion of peace" was mainly responsible for most of the persecution. Thus, Islamic extremism was the source of Christian persecution in 41 of the 50 countries studied in the Open Doors report. Nine of the top 10 persecuting nations were Muslim. The only one without a Muslim majority was the number one worst persecutor — namely, North Korea. Other countries in the top ten included Somalia, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Sudan, Iran, Pakistan, Eritrea and Nigeria. It is becoming increasingly obvious that a passionate hatred of Christianity is sweeping the earth, and very few global leaders have been willing to speak out against it, including President Obama.



Israel —

The Obama Administration has been highly critical of Israel for allowing Jewish settlements to be built within the West Bank. Over and over our State Department has stated that the presence of Jews in Judea and Samaria — what the world refers to as the West Bank — is an obstacle to peace in the Middle East.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu finally got fed up with all this bickering about Jews residing within the West Bank, and he decided to speak out strongly about it. "I'm perplexed by this notion," he said, "because no one would suggest that the two million Arabs living inside Israel are an obstacle to peace. Because they aren't." He also lashed out at the silly charges that are constantly made against Israel to the effect that the Israelis are engaged in "ethnic cleansing." He pointed out that the only ones trying to ethnically cleanse anything are "the Palestinians who are demanding a state free of Jews."

Meanwhile, the academic bastion of Liberalism in the United States, the University of California at Berkeley, announced it was going to offer an anti-Israel course on "The De-colonization of Israel," based on the premise that Israel is the last colony of British imperialism! Basically, it was a course on how to exterminate the Jewish state. The so-called professor was supposed to be Hatem Bazian, a street orator whose disgust with America is such that he has called for an American Intifada. Fortunately, the outcries from American Jewish leaders and other supporters of Israel were sufficient to get the course shut down. The UC Berkeley administration announced that it had decided that the course was designed for political indoctrination, and not open academic inquiry. Duh!

Ingratitude Gone to Seed —



Colin Kaepernick (28 years old) is the backup quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers of the National Football League. In August during the team's preseason games, he started sitting down during the playing of the national anthem. The reason he gave was, "I am not going to stand up to show pride in a flag for a country that oppresses black people and people of color." That is an incomprehensible statement when you consider the fact that the nation he is protesting against has a black President twice elected, a black Attorney General, and a black Secretary of Homeland Security. Furthermore, Kaepernick has a six year contract with the 49ers for \$114 million, including a \$12 million signing bonus. What a poor oppressed man! ❖

Thoughts from a Conference —

Dr. Reagan was recently one of several speakers at an annual Bible prophecy conference sponsored by David Hocking's ministry, Hope for Today. The conference was held at the Calvary Chapel in Chino Hills, California. The theme of the conference was "America: Is There Any Hope?" During the conference, Dr. Reagan wrote down pithy statements by the other speakers, many of which are reproduced below.

Barry Stagner is pastor of Calvary Chapel in Tustin, California.

"Denying God as Creator leads to rejecting His moral authority."

"Rampant immorality is the consequence of rejecting God's authority."

"There is no greater human peril than to lose the fear of the Lord."

"When immorality becomes the law, judgment is imminent."

"Fetus is the Latin word for baby. Thus, to say, 'It's not a baby, it's a fetus,' is the same as saying, 'It's not a baby, it's a baby.'"



Barry Stagner

"The homosexuals say they are looking for equality. No, they are looking for an exception to God's law."

"People often say, 'If God said it, I believe it, and that settles it.' The correct version should be, 'If God said it, that settles it.' It is irrelevant what you believe about it."

"Many churches are seeking to become what the world wants rather than what it needs."

"One of the major problems with the Church today is that truth is being established by consensus and not by Scripture."

"Moves of God's Spirit are being measured by emotional experiences and not by personal transformations."

"Methodology is being elevated above theology. Accordingly, marketing has become a church industry."

Andy Woods is pastor of the Sugar Land Bible Church in the Houston, Texas area and also serves as a professor of systematic theology at The College of Biblical Studies in Houston. He was an attorney before he decided to enter seminary.

"We have to be in the last days because the Bible speaks of 'the last Trump.'"

"Our Founding Fathers quoted four times more from the Bible than any other source, most frequently from the book of Deuteronomy. This was true because it emphasizes limited government. Deuteronomy 17:14-20 places



Food for Thought

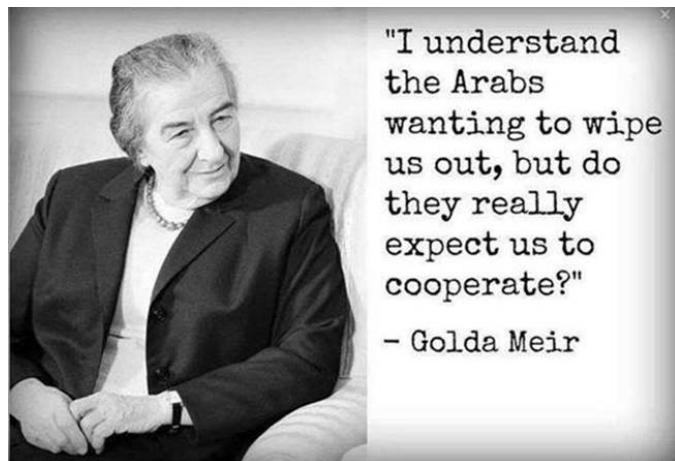
limitations on the king and requires that when he is coronated, he must write a copy of the Law in the presence of the Levitical priests! Perhaps we should require new Presidents to write a copy of the Constitution in the presence of our Supreme Court justices! And how about requiring each new Supreme Court justice to do the same?"

"Jesus taught the right to bear arms and to defend ourselves. Consider what He said to His disciples when He sent them out to preach, as recorded in Luke 22:36: '... whoever has a money belt is to take it along, likewise a bag, and whoever has no sword is to sell his coat and buy one ...'"

"The degree of acceptance of homosexuality is a barometer of society's revolt against God."

"Americans must stand beside the Lone Star State!" [Dr. Reagan, a Texan, was disappointed to learn that he was speaking of Israel and not Texas!]

Israel —



"Jerusalem is not only the capital of Israel and of world Jewry; Jerusalem is, in accordance with the words of the prophets, also the spiritual capital of the whole world." — David Ben-Gurion, the first Prime Minister of Israel.

"Jerusalem is the beating heart of our nation . . ." — Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"I often hear people accuse Israel of 'Judaizing Jerusalem.' That's like accusing America of Americanizing Washington, or the British of Anglicizing London. You know why we're called Jews? Because we come from Judea." — Benjamin Netanyahu.

A Very Insightful Thought —

"If the folks coming across our borders were Evangelical Christians hoping to find the freedom to homeschool their kids, Obama would call out the Marines." — Ted Starnes, a Christian social commentator. ✚

Israel —

After many months of negotiations, the United States and Israel have agreed on a \$38 billion military assistance package to the Israeli Defense Force (IDF). The funds will be paid out over the next ten years at the rate of \$3.8 billion per year. This is an increase from the \$3.1 billion our nation gave Israel annually under a previous ten year security deal. This is the largest military assistance package that the United States has ever given to any country. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised the deal as an “historic agreement” which ensures “an unprecedented level of security assistance to Israel.”

Righting a Wrong —

Lieutenant Commander Wes Modder, Navy chaplain, was subjected to military discipline because he shared a biblical worldview in 2014 with an officer who he did not know was a homosexual. To counter the charges of intolerance and discrimination that were lodged against him, the law firm of First Liberty headed up by Kelly Shackelford decided to provide him with legal counsel. In March of 2015, 35 members of Congress expressed their support for Modder by sending a letter to Navy Secretary Ray Mabus and Chief of Chaplains Rear Admiral Margaret Kibben. That same day the Restore Military Religious Freedom Coalition sent a petition containing over 100,000 individual signatures expressing their support for Modder. In September of this year, the charges were finally dismissed, and



Wes Modder

Modder was allowed to retire with an honorable discharge and a medal of commendation. He has recently accepted the position of pastor of Stone Church in Chicago, Illinois.

Religious Freedom in Mississippi —

In April, Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant signed into law a piece of legislation titled, “Protecting Freedom of Conscience from Government Discrimination.” It provides a shield against potential government attacks on people of faith for their beliefs regarding marriage and gender identity. After signing the bill, Governor Bryant stated that the legislation merely reinforces the rights which currently exist for the exercise of religious freedom as stated in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.



Phil Bryant

Change to Citizenship Test —

Thanks to the strong objections of Oklahoma Senator James Lankford, the Department of Homeland Security recently agreed



Good News

to correct an error in the test that it was administering to citizenship applicants. The error related to a question about what rights Americans have under the First Amendment. To correctly answer the question, the person being tested had to circle “freedom of worship.” The problem, of course, is that no such freedom is mentioned in the First Amendment. Rather, the amendment states that one of the freedoms guaranteed is the “free exercise of religion.” As we have pointed out previously in this magazine, there is a big difference in “freedom of worship” and “freedom of religion.” Freedom of worship means the freedom to worship as you please within a church building. Freedom of religion refers to the right to express and practice your religious convictions in the public arena. President Obama always refers to freedom of worship and never to freedom of religion, so it is doubtful that the erroneous answer on the test was just an innocent mistake. But thanks to

Senator Lankford, the error has been corrected.

Freedom of Speech —

For 70 years it has been a tradition for seniors at East Liverpool High School in Ohio to sing the Lord’s Prayer at the end of their graduation ceremonies. But this year, the school district officials decided to ban the singing of the prayer because The Freedom from Religion Foundation complained. There is absolutely nothing illegal about the students singing such a song of their own free will, but the Foundation likes to bully school districts with such demands, always threatening them with legal action. And most districts cave-in to the demands. The school’s choir director said the ban “broke her heart.” Well, the students decided they were not going to stand for it. So, as soon as the class valedictorian finished his speech, the seniors stood and began to recite the prayer. Praise God for their courage in taking a stand in behalf of their constitutional right.

A Decision for Life —

In May, the General Assembly of the United Methodist Church voted 445 to 310 to reverse the denomination’s 46 year-old support of the Roe v Wade decision to legalize abortion. The delegates also voted to withdraw from The Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, a pro-abortion organization. Such resolutions are good for eight years. The national headquarters of the UMC had recommended that the previous resolution supporting abortion be re-approved, but they were rebuffed by this vote.

A Repudiation of Apostasy —

In January, the Anglican Communion voted to censure its American branch, the Episcopal Church, during a meeting held in Canterbury, England. Specifically, the delegates voted to suspend the Episcopal Church from voting and decision-making for a period of three years. The vote passed by a whopping two-thirds margin due to the strong influence of African bishops who loudly condemned the American church for its liberal stance regarding homosexuality. The Anglican Communion consists of 44 member denominations from around the world, representing about 85 million Christians. ✚

Fascinating Statistics

The Bible

The latest joint poll by the American Bible Society and the Barna Group showed:

- 80% view the Bible as sacred literature (down 6% since 2006).
- 64% believe the Bible has more influence on humanity than any other text.
- 33% believe the Bible is not a sufficient guide for meaningful living (up 10% since 2006).
- 44% claim to read the Bible at least once a month.

Barna's conclusion based on these statistics and others: "While the majority of Americans hold the Bible in high regard, Bible skeptics are on the rise, including openly anti-Christian groups."

Religion

The First Liberty Institute, America's foremost legal defender of Christian values, reports that there were 1,285 attacks on religion in the United States during 2015. This includes attacks on all forms of religion, and not just Christianity. That's a doubling of the number of attacks in three years, since 2012.

According to the Barna Group, 43% of Americans in general agree with the statement, "It doesn't matter what religious faith you follow because they all teach the same lessons."

Also, according to Barna, the combined number of unchurched people in America totals 156 million (out of 318 million), and the average churchless person is a white male who is less educated and unmarried.

Christianity

Recent Barna polls indicate:

- 92% of Americans believe Jesus was a real person.
- 56% believe Jesus was God.
- 52% believe Jesus sinned.
- 40% say they have repented of their sins and asked Jesus to be their Lord and Savior, claiming to be born-again Christians.

But only 9% of Americans can be classified as "Bible-believing Christians." These are people who say they believe all the following statements:

- Absolute moral truth exists.
- The Bible is completely accurate in all of the principles it teaches.
- Satan is a real being or force, not merely symbolic.
- A person cannot earn their way into Heaven by trying to be good or by doing good works.
- Jesus Christ lived a sinless life on earth.



- God is the all-knowing, all-powerful Creator of the world who still rules the universe today.

Among Americans in the 18-23 age group, only 1% qualify as "Bible-believing Christians."

Though the vast majority of Americans (78%) claim to be Christians, most have stopped attending church. Less than 20% make it to church in a typical week, and almost 4,000 churches are closing in America each year. Half of all churches in the U.S.

did not add any new members to their ranks in the last two years.

The Barna group pegs the average Protestant church size in America at 89 adults. 60% of Protestant churches have less than 100 adults in attendance. Only 2% have over 1000 adults attending.

Forty percent of those who identify themselves as "Born-again Christians" believe that Christians and Muslims worship the same God.

Society

The Federal Education Department reports:

- The homeschool movement in America has grown by 62% in the last decade, now representing 3.4% of school-age children.
- 91% of parents cited concerns about the environment of public schools.
- 64% of parents said they wanted their children to receive religious instruction.

Regarding abortion:

- In the past four decades, 336 million children have been aborted in China, more than the total population of the United States (318 million).
- 58 million babies have been aborted in the United States since the legalization of abortion in 1973. That's over 3,500 per day and over 1.3 million per year.

Regarding the cultural revolution in the United States:

- According to the latest Gallup poll, only 3.8% of Americans identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. The same poll showed that Americans believe that the number is 23%.
- The latest Barna study shows that 65% of Americans now believe that it's a good idea for a couple to live together before getting married. A Gallup poll showed that more professing Christian couples are also cohabitating before marriage.
- A recent Barna poll showed that 74% of the younger Millennial Generation agree with this statement: "Whatever is right for your life or works best for you is the only truth you can know." Only 38% of the eldest generation agreed with this statement. ❖

The Christmas Comparison

Nathan E. Jones

If you are one of us who still remembers what the real reason for the Christmas season is, you can't help at this time of the year but to think about Jesus. When thinking, though, how in your mind's eye do you picture Him?



“The Nativity” by the Le Nain brothers (three brothers who painted together in France in the 17th Century).

The Christmas Jesus

Because the Christmas holiday is a celebration of the Savior's birth, when picturing Jesus, one's mind naturally depicts a baby. Popular nativity scenes portray Luke's description of Jesus as a tiny babe swaddled in strips of cloth and lying in an animal trough. His parents, Mary and Joseph, gaze down adoringly. Shepherds and wise men gape in amazement from their perches along stone walls. The heavenly host flies above majestically singing, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

While the angels add a sense of the divine to the Nativity Story, and Hollywood has added the additional touch of a beam of Bethlehem starlight spotlighting the little family, for the most part the scene is rather pastoral — a peasant family sitting in the hay among animals in some sort of cave. It is meant to be a very humble scene.



“The Crucifixion” by Leon Bonnat, a French painter (1833-1922).

The Easter Jesus

Because Christmastime happens to also be celebrated among cultural Christians and even non-Christians, the humble imagery of the baby Jesus remains in the mind's eye. That is, until Easter. Then Jesus is portrayed altogether differently. Now He's all grown up, fully bearded, but frail and emaciated. His lithe body suffers from beatings and is covered in lash marks. He is nailed naked to a tree where he limply hangs bleeding. And there Jesus remains on that cross in the mind's eye, at least

until Christmas returns and resets the mental image of Jesus back into a tiny baby again. And the circle continues.

The Popular Jesus

One of the most popular scenes from the movie *Talladega Nights* is when the lead character, race car driver Ricky Bobby (played by Will Ferrell), says grace with his family over a feast of fast food. He begins each praise and prayer request with “Dear Lord Baby Jesus” until his wife, Carley, impatiently interrupts with a, “Hey, you know, Sweetie, Jesus did grow up. You don't always have to call him ‘baby.’” Incensed, Ricky responds with, “Well, I like the Christmas Jesus best and I'm saying grace. When you say grace you can say it to grownup Jesus, or teenage Jesus, or bearded Jesus, or whoever you want.” Even Ricky's father-in-law, Chip, chimes in with, “He was a man! He had a beard!”

From there, the conversation degenerates as each family member describes the “Jesus” they prefer: a ninja fighting off evil samurai, a guy sporting giant eagle's wings, or a cool fellow singing lead vocals in a band, and so on.

Christians watching this movie tend to squirm dumbfounded over whether this scene borders on blasphemy or comedy, and yet one cannot help but come away with a profound revelation — most people have created their own personal “Jesus.”

People see Jesus in the only way they've ever encountered Him, and that's often only during Christmas and Easter. And therefore, Jesus remains to most as either a helpless baby or a dying man.

The Prophetic Jesus

The beauty and majesty of God's Prophetic Word introduces us to a third Jesus that few rarely if ever encounter because they never study Bible prophecy. In the prophecies concerning Jesus' Second Coming, human frailty is stripped away revealing Christ's true glory, a divinity that the Apostles could only glimpse at the Transfiguration. Christ's true form stunned James and John into silence and Peter into babbling. The Apostles witnessed Jesus in His eternally glorified state.



“The Transfiguration” by the Danish painter, Carl Bloch (1834 - 1890).

What Child Is This?

Wendy Wippel



(Editor's note: The author is a molecular biologist with degrees from Ohio State University. She worked for a while with the Centers for Disease Control before deciding to specialize in medical writing. She is currently finishing up a Ph.D. in biblical studies and lives with her husband and two teenage daughters in Mississippi.)

It's the Christmas season, and amid the baking and the bustling and the bows, it's easy to lose sight of what the fuss is all about. A baby. As the old carol asks, "What child is this?"

There's a lot riding on your answer. Because that baby is the central figure of human history. Human history, in fact, is divided into two eras (BC and AD) by His existence. (Your birth date? Counted from His.)

A Simple Life With Unequaled Impact

He never traveled more than 100 miles from home, but His followers permeated every country in the world with His story. He never wrote a book, but more have been written about Him than anyone else in history. By far. The first book about Him (the Bible), has been translated into almost 3,000 different languages. The Quran has been translated into only 50 languages.

He had only 12 disciples, but billions of people discuss His teachings every day. According to one Harvard professor (not a Christian), the Sermon on the Mount alone represents the "most luminous, most quoted, most analyzed, most contested, most influential moral and religious discourse in all of human history." The professor adds, "This may sound like an overstatement, but it is not."

He was homeless during His public life, but many of the world's most beautiful buildings were built in His honor (Notre Dame, Westminster Abby, Hagia Sophia, Chartres, St. John's Cathedral, and so on).

He died as a criminal, but today thousands of names of cities and countries memorialize His life. (San Salvador, for example, which means Holy Savior, or San Juan, named for the apostle John. And so on.)

He never married, but more wedding vows have asked His



"The Glorified Jesus on the Isle of Patmos" by contemporary American painter Pat Marvenko Smith.

thunders with the sound of many waters. Jesus' holiness blinds like the sun in its strength. The Jesus the elderly Apostle John encountered caused him to fall at Jesus' feet as a dead man!

Jump ahead to Revelation 19 and you'll stand in awe of the description of Jesus as He triumphantly returns to earth as a warrior king dispensing righteousness as a judge waging war against Satan's forces. Jesus bursts out of the heavens riding His white war charger as the armies of Heaven trail endlessly behind Him. Jesus' eyes blaze like fire, atop His head sit many crowns, His robe is dipped in blood, and He strikes the enemy nations dead with the sword of the Word protruding out of His mouth. Emblazoned on Jesus' thigh is the title: "King of kings and Lord of lords."



"I Am Coming Soon" by contemporary American artist Stephen Gjertson.

Often it is more palatable to paint Jesus inside the box of one's mind as a little baby or suffering servant, but are those the real Jesus? In part, yes, for they were as much a part of Jesus as our own baby, childhood, and teenage selves once were to us then, but are no longer.

Jesus eternal is the Jesus of Bible prophecy, so stand in awe of your Savior this Christmas season and all year long! ❖

Nathan Jones is Lamb & Lion's Web Minister. He also serves as an Associate Evangelist and is available to speak at churches and to conduct Bible prophecy conferences.

blessing than any other.

He never had kids, but there's a really good chance you're named after one of His family or His friends.

Untold numbers of people throughout history have willingly gone to their deaths rather than renounce His name.

It begs the question, "What child IS this?"

The Speculations of Men

Author Ralph Waldo Emerson (an atheist) observed that the name of Jesus was not so much written as ploughed into the history of the world. And author H.G. Wells (also an atheist) said this:

A historian like myself finds the picture centering irresistibly around the life and character of this most significant man . . . The historian's test of an individual's greatness is . . . did he start men to thinking along fresh lines with a vigor that persisted after him? By this test Jesus stands first.

Jesus is recognized by skeptic and saint alike as the turning point of history. What child IS this?

We've had 2,000 years to speculate: A really moral man? A great philosopher? A champion of social justice? A pacifist? A mythical figure? A revolutionary? An example for all of us to follow? A fruitcake?

Those really aren't the right questions, though. The real



"Adoration of the Shepherds" by Guido Reni (1640).

question is "Who does He think He is?"

Who Jesus Said He Was

And Jesus, tellingly, said none of the above. Jesus said that He came to "seek and save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). Jesus said that He came to "give His life as a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28). In fact, He said that He came specifically for that one moment in time, His crucifixion (John 12:27). And Jesus said that He came to be the make-or-break issue in your life and mine: "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind" (John 9:39).



What child is this? We all have to answer that question for ourselves. And eternity rides on our answer. Why? Because God created humans to be with Him. But you probably know what happened next: Adam and Eve disobeyed the one rule that God established, and humanity became tainted with sin. And as descendants of Adam and Eve, we inherited that condition. We're all SIN POSITIVE.

The problem is that sin can't survive in the presence of the holiness of God, but that same God still loves us and wants us to be with Him. So Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost.

We're what was lost.

Some Christmas carols call Jesus another name: Emmanuel. It means "God with Us." And Jesus, God in the form of a man, came to earth to make a bridge. A bridge described in a lot of different places in the Bible.:

To all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God (John 1:12),

He who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life (John 5:24).

For God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten son, so that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

Maybe you're thinking "that's great for you, but it's just not my thing." Or "I have my own faith." Or "we all worship the same God."

Then what child is this? One that made some pretty amazing statements:

I am the way, the truth, the life. No man comes to the Father but through Me (John 14:6).

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me (Matthew 28:18).

Nobody else said that. Not Mohammed. Not Confucius. Not Buddha. Not Joseph Smith. Nobody. People these days say that makes Christianity exclusive. Except that Jesus also said that whosoever believes in Him can have eternal life.

Whosoever.

His public life lasted barely three years, but it shaped the rest of history. So what child is this? You can call Him a liar. You can call Him a lunatic. Or you can call Him Lord. "Undecided" isn't really an option. He didn't mean for it to be.



What Sets Jesus Apart

Jesus was crucified because He claimed to be the Messiah, a Messiah described in Isaiah as "wounded for our transgressions," whose chastisement made peace for us with God. Jesus said that He came to give His life as a ransom for many. Nobody else said that. Not Mohammed. Not Confucius. Not Buddha. Not Joseph Smith. Nobody.

That's what sets Jesus apart. Only He laid down His life for your sins and mine. And when He died on that cross (a fact documented in Roman records) it would have certainly seemed that was the last history would hear of Him.

But the cross that He died on is now the world's most common symbol, engraved on tombstones, mounted in and on churches, scattered on hillsides and hung around a whole lot of necks. (And at Ground Zero. At least for now.)

So what child is this? That's the question.

A Crucial Question For All Of Us

G. K. Chesterton observed: ". . . since Jesus died on the cross it has never been quite enough to say that 'God is in His Heaven and all is right with the world,'" since, according to the Bible, "God left His Heaven to set it right." God, in the form of Jesus, left Heaven to seek and save that which was lost, meaning you and me. When He died on the cross, God was saying that He loves you. He Himself came to earth to give His life as your ransom. It was the God of all the universe, whispering into your ears, "I do."

And that God, who still loves you, stands at the altar, waiting for your answer. He'll wait. He has all eternity to do so.

Do you? ❖

Guest Article

The Mysterious Festival of Hanukkah

Michael Norten



(Editor's note: Mike Norten is a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary. He has served on the staff of ministries like Campus Crusade, and has been a speaker at numerous Bible conferences. He has also served as an assistant pastor and interim pastor at various churches. He is the author of a highly acclaimed book about the feasts of Israel, titled, *Unlocking the Secrets of the Feasts*.)

Everyone has some awareness of the holiday called Hanukkah, because of its proximity to Christmas. You hear people say, "Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah." Many Jews even exchange gifts within their respective families, primarily with the children because of the influence of Christmas.

As we all know, Hanukkah is very much a Jewish celebration, but should it have any interest or significance for Christians?

The purpose and the traditions of this festival are so intriguing, that Christians should appreciate Hanukkah more than just a passing acknowledgment of the season. Jewish celebrations are packed full of meaningful rituals and observances, which serve as wonderful illustrations of spiritual truths.



Feasts of God and Man

When the traditions point in some way to Jesus, Christians should especially take note. Unlike the seven annual feasts or festivals from Passover to Tabernacles, Hanukkah was initiated by humans themselves, rather than God.

The seven biblical feasts in Leviticus 23 are called "the Lord's appointed times." Hanukkah on the other hand was created in the mind of man. This by no means should minimize the significance of the observance, because it is honoring God.

After all, we celebrate Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas, which were all established by Man as very important and meaningful holidays.

The Origin of Hanukkah

Hanukkah is a holiday that lasts eight days to remember and celebrate two important events in history that were really connected with one major event. The first was the victory that the Hasmonean Jews had over the Syrian Greeks in a revolt led by the Maccabean brothers in 164 B.C. The second event, which is also the primary event in the remembrance, is the eight days of the cleansing and rededication of the Temple after the Jews had retaken it. The word Hanukkah actually means “dedication.”



Antiochus IV Epiphanes

Daniel 8:9-12, 23-25 and 11:21-35 prophesied that a leader would rise up and cause persecutions to those living in Israel. This man proved to be Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who was a prefiguring of the coming Antichrist of the last days.

Antiochus did many deplorable things, such as prohibiting the Jews from practicing their laws, and in addition to that, he sacrificed a pig on the altar. Antiochus even erected a statue of Zeus right outside the temple. He demanded that the Jews worship his false god. He even killed the Jews if they refused to eat pork. One can understand why he is called a “despicable person” in Daniel’s prophecy (Daniel 11:21).

A priest by the name Mattathias, with the help of his five sons, started a revolt and was successful. After the victory of the Maccabean revolt, one of his sons, Judas Maccabeus, led a project to cleanse the temple and refurbish it.

According to the *Talmud* there was a miracle that happened at the time they celebrated the cleansing. They found only one container of oil for the lamps, which was sufficient for only one day. And yet, each day they discovered that the container had sufficient oil for another day, and this multiplication of the oil continued for eight days. The following year these days were appointed a Festival with the recital of Hallel (Psalms 113-118) and the proclamation of thanksgiving.

From then on the Jews called this festival the “Festival of Lights.” To this day Jews remember the miracle of the oil by the lighting of a menorah during the celebration of Hanukkah.

Celebrating Hanukkah

Unlike the traditional menorah that has seven branches, the Hanukkah menorah has nine candlesticks. The one in the middle that is elevated above the others is called the “*shammus*,” which means “servant.” On the first night the servant candle is used to light the first candle on the far right. Before the first candle is lit, three blessings are recited:

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to kindle the Chanukah light.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who performed miracles for our



Hanukkah Candelabra

forefathers in those days, at this time.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion.

Before each subsequent candle lighting, only the first two blessings are recited. On the second night the servant candle is used to light the first candle again and then the second one next to it. This procedure is repeated each night until all eight candles are lit.

Christian Significance

The miracle according to tradition is interesting, but there are other elements Christians need to appreciate that are even more applicable today. The first application we should note is that “eight” in the Hebraic numeric system points to a “new beginning.” This is very poignant to the Christian, because it reminds us that, after we are cleansed by the blood of Christ at salvation, we have a new beginning as the temple of the Holy Spirit and a new life in fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ.

Secondly, it is fascinating that the middle elevated candle is called the “servant” that brings light to the other candles. It reminds us of the messianic prophecy of Isaiah 53, where the Messiah is called the Servant. Jesus, our Messiah, is our sole source of light.

Another very interesting fact about Hanukkah is that it is observed on the calendar during the time of year when the nights are the longest and the darkest. In my book, *Unlocking the Secrets of the Feasts*, in the chapter about the Feast of Tabernacles, I explain in detail the evidences that Jesus was born during the time of the Feast of Tabernacles (September) and conceived in the time frame of Hanukkah (December). The evidences are derived from the Gospel of Luke and the Hebraic calendar.

Radiating Light

The Feast of Tabernacles, which looks forward to the Messiah dwelling or “tabernacling” with mankind in the future Kingdom, is called the “Show of Lights,” whereas Hanukkah is called the “Festival of Lights.” When Jesus declared that He was the “Light of the World,” He had those two festivals surrounding the event of His birth as bookends.

Finally, when we see the progressive lighting of the menorah getting brighter each evening, Christians can remember that we shine more and more of Christ’s light each day as we grow and walk in His light. ❖

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever



My husband and I had been happily married for five years but hadn't been blessed with a baby. I decided to do some serious praying and promised God that if He would give us a child, I would be a perfect mother, love it with all my heart and raise it with His Word as my guide.

God answered my prayers and blessed us with a son. The next year God blessed us with another son. The following year, He blessed us with yet another son. The year after that we were blessed with a daughter. My husband thought we'd been blessed right into poverty. We now had four children, and the oldest was only four years old.

I learned never to ask God for anything unless I meant it. As a minister once told me, "If you pray for rain, make sure you carry an umbrella."

I began reading a few verses of the Bible to the children each day as they lay in their cribs. I was off to a good start. God had entrusted me with four children and I didn't want to disappoint Him.

I tried to be patient the day the children smashed two dozen eggs on the kitchen floor searching for baby chicks. I tried to be understanding when they started a hotel for homeless frogs in the spare bedroom, although it took me nearly two hours to catch all twenty-three frogs. When my daughter poured ketchup all over herself and rolled up in a blanket to see how it felt to be a hot dog, I tried to see the humor rather than the mess.

In spite of changing more than 25,000 diapers, never eating a hot meal and never sleeping for more than 30 minutes at a time, I still thank God daily for my children.

While I couldn't keep my promise to be a perfect mother — I didn't even come close — I did keep my promise to raise them in the Word of God. I knew I was missing the mark just a little when I told my daughter we were going to church to worship God, and she wanted to bring a bar of soap along to "wash up"

Jesus, too. Something was lost in the translation when I explained that God gave us everlasting life, and my son thought it was generous of God to give us his "last wife."

My proudest moment came during the children's Christmas pageant.

My daughter was playing Mary, two of my sons were shepherds and my youngest son was a wise man. This was their moment to shine. My five-year-old shepherd had practiced his line, "We found the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes." But he was nervous and said, "The baby was wrapped in wrinkled clothes."

My four-year-old "Mary" said, "That's not 'wrinkled clothes,' silly. That's dirty, rotten clothes." A wrestling match broke out between Mary and the shepherd and was stopped by an angel, who bent her halo and lost her left wing. I slouched a little lower in my seat when Mary dropped the doll representing Baby Jesus, and it bounced down the aisle crying, "Mama-mama."

Mary grabbed the doll, wrapped it back up and held it tightly as the wise men arrived. My other son stepped forward wearing a bathrobe and a paper crown, knelt at the manger and announced, "We are the three wise men, and we are bringing gifts of gold, common sense and fur."

The congregation dissolved into laughter, and the pageant got a standing ovation. "I've never enjoyed a Christmas program as much as this one," laughed the pastor, wiping tears from his eyes.

"For the rest of my life, I'll never hear the Christmas story without thinking of gold, common sense and fur." "My children are my pride and my joy and my greatest blessing," I said as I dug through my purse for an aspirin. ❖

(This article appears in many places on the Internet without any author being designated, but our research indicates it was written by Linda C. Stafford and appeared in the book, *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Christmas Treasury*.)



(<http://standrews.us>)

Expanding Our Outreach

We are excited to announce that we began broadcasting on an additional national Christian television network during the week of October 9.



The new network is Upliftv. It is a new and unique television network that features more Christian and inspirational films than any other channel. Upliftv's programs are a balanced combination of Bible teaching programs during the day and family movies in the evening.

Our program, "Christ in Prophecy," is being broadcast twice a week on this network — Monday and Friday at 9:30am Central time, following the James Robison show. Upliftv is being carried on DirecTV on channel 379. It will start broadcasting on the Dish satellite system on December 16 on a channel yet to be announced. Please pray for us to achieve an effective outreach through this new outlet for our television program.

Video Production

We have issued a very important new video program called, "In Defense of the Pre-Trib Rapture." It was produced in response to a very mean-spirited video that was produced by a ministry in California that viciously attacked anyone they felt was responsible for the development of the concept of a Pre-Tribulation Rapture.

In this video, Dr. Reagan responds in a kind manner to all their attacks. In the process he interviews six Bible prophecy experts, including Tommy Ice, Andy Woods, Mark Hitchcock, Wayne Watson, Charles Ryrie and Tim LaHaye.

This video shows clearly that the idea that the Pre-Trib Rapture was conjured up by some weird people in the early 19th Century is a total myth.

The video runs one and a half hours in length. It sells for \$20, including the cost of shipping. You can order it through our website at lamblion.com, or you can call our office at 972-736-3567, Monday through Friday between 8am and 5pm Central time.

Dr. Reagan is currently working on the completion of another new video that will feature the illustrated songs of Larry McCoy who has put the entire book of Revelation to music. This video will be featured in the next issue of this magazine. ❖

Television Broadcast Schedules

National Networks:

Daystar — Wed. 6:00pm CT, DirecTV 369, Dish 263, Cable, AT&T U-verse 563, Broadcast Stations, World Satellites, & Web Streaming (daystar.com).

TBN (The Trinity Broadcasting Network) — Tue. 3:30 CT, DirecTV 372, Dish 260, Cable, AT&T U-verse 560, Broadcast Stations, World Satellites & Web Streaming (www.tbn.org).

TCT — Sun. 7:30pm CT, DirecTV 377, ten broadcast stations in the Midwest, & Web Streaming (tct.tv).

NRB (National Religious Broadcasters) — Sun. 4:00pm CT, DirecTV 378 & Web Streaming (<http://nrbnetwork.tv>).

Upliftv — Mon. & Fri. 9:30am CT, DirecTV 379 (www.upliftv.com). The Dish satellite system will start carrying this network in December on a channel yet to be determined. **NEW!**

Regional Networks:

VTN (The Victory Television Network) — Covering the state of Arkansas. Tues. at 10:30am CT and Sat. at 2:00pm (vntv.com).

Family Vision Network — Sun. 12:30am CT, Mon. 8:30am, and Wed. 7:00pm, Three Broadcast Stations and Cable throughout Southern Louisiana (familyvisiontv.com).

KSCE — Sun. 10:30am MT, Broadcast Station in El Paso, TX. DirecTV & DISH Local 38, Cable, AT&T U-verse 38, & Web Streaming (ksce.tv).

CFNT — Broadcast station in Wichita Falls, TX. Fri. 3:00pm CT (cfnt.org).

Internet Networks:

Our programs are available on demand on these websites.

HisChannel — HisChannel.com

LightSource — LightSource.com

YouTube — YouTube.com/user/ChristinProphecy

Vimeo — Vimeo.com

GodTube — GodTube.com via LightSource.com

DailyMotion — (European equivalent of YouTube.) DailyMotion.com/us

Lamb & Lion Ministries — LambLion.com

We Need YOU As A Prophecy Partner!

Our Prophecy Partners serve as the financial foundation of this ministry. They are also our prayer warriors. Their faithful and generous donations and their fervent prayers are what make it possible for us to proclaim the soon return of Jesus worldwide.

We would like to invite you to become one of our Partners. All you have to do is make a commitment to pray for us regularly and provide us with a donation of \$25 or more per month. In return, Dr. Reagan will send you a letter each month about the ministry's activities, together with a gift such as a video program or a publication related to Bible prophecy. Prophecy Partners also receive a complimentary subscription to this magazine.

Please help us continue to expand our outreach via television and the Internet. You can sign up as a Prophecy Partner through our website at lamblion.com or by calling our office at 972-736-3567. Thanks! ❖

Put Yourself In This Picture!



Looking from the Mount of Olives toward the Temple Mount in the Old City of Jerusalem.

Our next pilgrimage to Israel is set for April 29 through May 10, 2017. It will be hosted by our Assistant Evangelist, Tim Moore.



Tim Moore
at the Jordan River

Tim is a Colonel in the U.S. Air Force Reserve. He is also a commercial pilot and an elected member of the Kentucky State Legislature. He is an expert in Bible prophecy, and he is an experienced host of Israel pilgrimages.

The group will fly to Tel Aviv via Lufthansa Airlines. They will spend two nights in Tel Aviv, two nights in Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee and five nights in Jerusalem.

Every aspect of the pilgrimage has been planned by Dr. Reagan to ensure the greatest possible spiritual impact. The sites to be visited will be related to the life of Jesus or to end time Bible prophecy. It is an experience that will bring the Bible alive to you and deepen your faith.

The Spring of the year is a wonderful time to visit Israel

since the nation is a major supplier of flowers to Europe, and in the Springtime, the fields are ablaze with colorful flowers.

If you are interested in joining the group, please let us know by either calling our office at 972-736-3567 or by emailing us at lamblion@lamblion.com. We will then send you a detailed brochure.

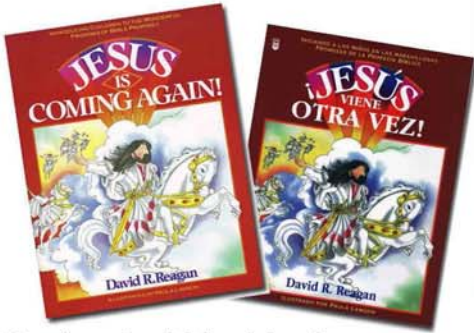
This 12 day trip to the Holy Land costs \$4,200 per person. That price includes airfare, bus transportation within Israel, hotels, all entrance fees, and three meals a day. The only extra cost is a fee for tips. Tim will be assisted by a great Messianic Jewish guide named Erez Bar-David.

Highlights of the pilgrimage will include a visit to Independence Hall in Tel Aviv, a cruise across the Sea of Galilee to the headquarters of Jesus' ministry at Capernaum, baptism in the Jordan River (for those interested), a walk through the Old City of Jerusalem, a tour of the Dead Sea area, and a worship service at the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem.

One of our pilgrims once commented, "This pilgrimage has converted my Bible from black and white to technicolor!" You will definitely come back home with a greater understanding of the Bible and the life of Jesus. Hope you can join us for this great spiritual experience. ✨

KEEPING CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS

Share the Good News of Jesus with these select Bible Resources, on sale now!
 Enjoy free shipping and a complimentary gift with each order.
 Hurry! Offer Ends December 9, 2016.



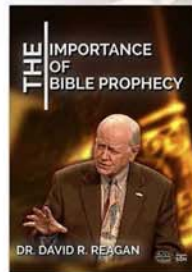
Get the only children's book that teaches about the Rapture. Available in both English and Spanish. Beautifully illustrated and also includes a page for coloring and suggestions with Scripture references for how to share the message of Salvation and Jesus's return with children! **\$10**



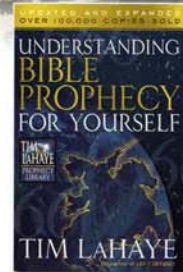
Our 2017 Holy Land calendar features beautiful photos from various sites in Israel. **\$10**



Modern Day Signs of the Times DVD. **\$10**



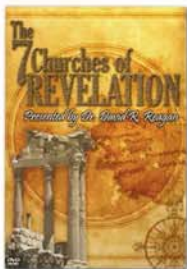
The Importance of Bible Prophecy DVD. **\$10**



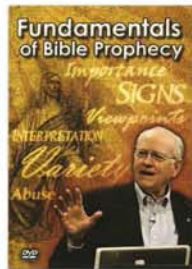
Understanding Bible Prophecy For Yourself Book. **\$10**



Receive 10 copies of this booklet for **\$30** and save \$20! Great Stocking Stuffer Idea!



The 7 Churches of Revelation OR Fundamentals of Bible Prophecy Each DVD album features downloadable teacher and student study guides. Save \$5 on each set ordered! **\$20**



12 Faith Journeys of the Minor Prophets Wrath & Glory, 2nd Revised Edition Save \$10 when you order this bundled book set! **\$30**

LAMPLIGHTER
Prophecy is like a lamp lighting in a dark place. - 1st Peter 1:19

The gift that gives all year long!
 Lamplighter Magazine Subscription
\$25 - 6 issues - Bi-monthly

Visit our online store at **LambLion.com**
 or contact us at
(972) 736-3567, M-F, 8a-5p CST
 to place your order today!

Ministry News

Schedule of Activities —

November:

Nathan Jones speaks at the Strategic Angel Care Ministry Banquet in Plano, TX (10).

Tim Moore hosts the Lamb & Lion Annual Pilgrimage to the Holy Land (12-23).

Dave Reagan attends the Messianic Leadership Roundtable sponsored by Jewish Voice Ministries in Phoenix, AZ (14-16).

Dave Reagan speaks at the Messianic Jewish Alliance Regional Convention in Dallas, TX (20).

December:

Lamb & Lion Board of Trustees Retreat in McKinney, TX (2-3).

Dave Reagan and Nathan Jones attend the Annual Pre-Trib Study Group Conference in Dallas (5-7).

January:

Dave Reagan attends the Acts 29 Board Meeting in Panama City Beach, FL (14).

February:

Dave Reagan speaks at the Steeling the Mind Conference at the Danforth Hotel in Spokane, WA (15).

Visitors from Israel —



Baruch & Rebecca Korman

We were recently blessed by visits with two couples whose ministries are based in Israel. The Kormans have a TV show of expository teaching called Love Israel. It is carried on the Daystar Network here in the States. The Calics are developing a Messianic television network in Israel called Bless Israel.



Daniel & D'vorah Calic



Surprise Meeting —

Dr. Reagan recently spoke at a Bible prophecy conference in Chino Hills, California that was sponsored by Dr. David Hocking's ministry, Hope for Today. Dave was surprised to encounter Johanna Michaelsen, the author of the best-selling book, *The Beautiful Side of Evil*, which tells the fascinating story of her deliverance from the dark world of the occult. Dave had never met her personally before.



Dr. Reagan with Johanna Michaelsen

Inbox Videos —

Our Web Minister, Nathan Jones, and his assistant, Steven Stufflebean, are continuing to produce new Inbox videos. These are short and snappy videos that teach some fundamental truths about Bible prophecy. They are designed to answer common questions many people ask the Ministry about the end times. Check them out on our website at lamblion.com. Just type the word, Inbox, into the site's search box. ❖



**LAMB
& LION
MINISTRIES**

P.O. Box 919, McKinney, TX 75070
Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid

PAID

McKinney, TX 75070
Permit No. 11

2016

Bible Conference Video Album

This video album contains all the presentations that were made at our 2016 annual Bible conference whose theme was “The Great Debates of Bible Prophecy.” The album contains three DVD discs, with two presentations on each disk. Each presentation runs approximately 50 minutes in length.

The presentations contained in the album are:

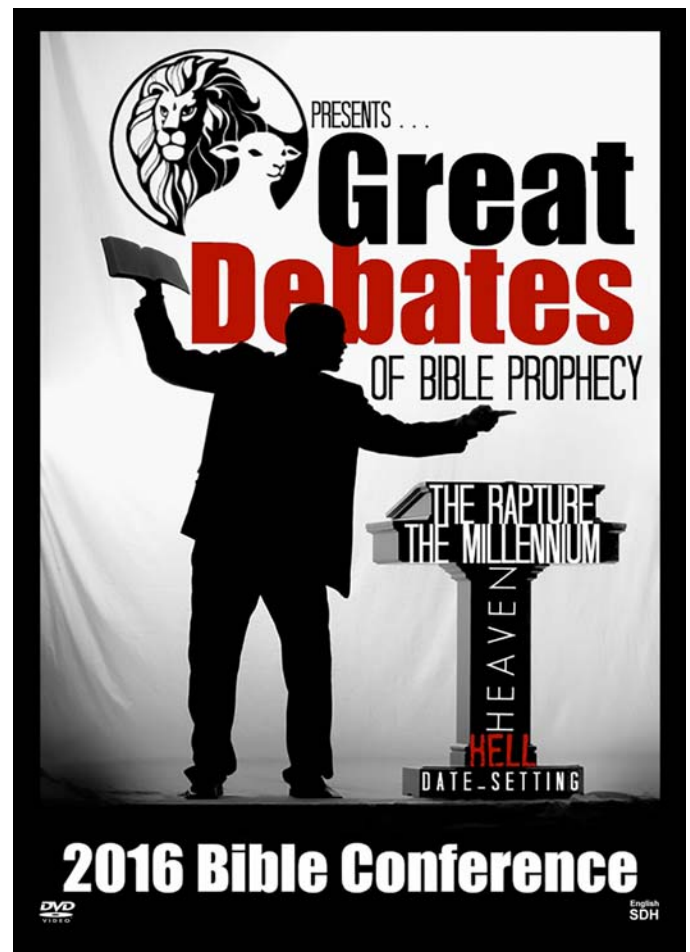
- “Why We Should Support Israel” by Dr. David Hocking.
- “Date-Setting: What Can We Know?” by Tim Moore.
- “The Rapture: Pre, Mid, Late or Post-Trib?” by Ron Rhodes.
- “Heaven: Ethereal or Literal?” by Dennis Pollock.
- “The Millennium: Literal or Symbolic?” by Nathan Jones.
- “Hell: Eternal Punishment or Punishing?” by Dave Reagan.

The total running time of the three disks is approximately 270 minutes. The cost is \$25, which includes the cost of shipping.

These presentations are appropriate for both individual and group study.

Special Bonus!

With each order, we will include a free copy of Dr. Reagan’s most recent publication, a booklet titled “Are You Ready for the Lord’s Return?” This is an evangelistic publication that has proved to be very popular. One person was so impressed with it that he ordered 1,500 copies; another ordered 3,000!



To order a copy of the album, call 972-736-3567 between 8am and 5pm Central time, Monday through Friday, Central time or place your order through our website at www.lamblion.com.



Our 2017 Holy Land calendar is also ready for distribution. It sells for \$10, including the cost of shipping. It features photos of Jerusalem. ✚