



# LAMPLIGHTER

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

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**The Olivet  
Discourse:  
History or Prophecy?**



# Observations by the Editor

## Our Cover

The Mount of Olives is one of my favorite places on planet earth. From the top of it you can see the magnificent old walled city of Jerusalem. And as you absorb that breath-taking scene, you can sense that you are standing at the center of world history, where the Messiah shed his blood and where He will return to this earth.

Half way down the Mount, at the Dominus Fleuit Chapel, you can get a clear view of the Eastern Gate which has been closed in fulfillment of Bible prophecy (Ezekiel 44:1-2). It sits silently, looking to the East, awaiting the return of the King of Glory (Psalm 24:1-10).

The Chapel marks the traditional site where Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem. Appropriately, the Chapel is shaped like a tear drop. When Jesus came to Jerusalem, He always stayed with His relatives — Mary, Martha and Lazarus — who lived on the East side of the Mount of Olives, in the village of Bethany. Each morning, Jesus would walk up and over the Mount of Olives, and I imagine that He would always pause about half way down the West side, at the site of the Dominus Fleuit Chapel, to admire the Temple and to pray.

At the base of the Mount is the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus prayed in agony before His arrest. The site is occupied by ancient olive trees and by the Church of All Nations. Its windows are made of opaque alabaster that permits very little light to enter, giving the interior a dark and dreary feeling. The altar is located adjacent to an outcropping of bedrock where the agony of Jesus supposedly took place.

The Mount of Olives is covered with tens of thousands of Orthodox Jewish graves. They desire to be buried there because the book of Zechariah says that when the Messiah comes to earth, He will arrive on the Mount of Olives, and when His feet touch the Mount, it will be split asunder by a great earthquake (Zechariah 14:4). The Jews believe that those buried on the Mount will be the first to be resurrected.

Several years ago one of my close friends, Clem Stewart, died in a tragic



Dr. David R. Reagan

drowning accident. He and his wife, Nancy, had been planning to go to Israel with me. His daughter took his place, and she and her mom brought Clem's ashes with them. We held a memorial service for Clem in a garden adjacent to the Dominus Fleuit Chapel, and I scattered his ashes there at the base of an olive tree. So, there is at least one Gentile whose remains are on that Mount awaiting the return of Jesus.

Our cover photo shows a spire at the pinnacle of the Mount. It is the Russian Church of the Ascension. It marks one of two traditional sites from which Jesus ascended into Heaven (Acts 1:1-11). The other site located nearby is more authentic but is controlled today by Muslims who have transformed a small and ancient domed church on the site into a mosque.



Dome of the Ascension. The spire of the Russian Church can be seen on the right.

If you will look to the right of the spire of the Church of the Ascension you will see a building with seven arches. It is an Arab hotel known as the Seven Arches Hotel. While it was being constructed, it was discovered that it sits on a major fault line. This is most likely where the Mount will be divided by an earthquake when the Lord returns.

Our cover photograph was supplied by IsraelImages.com. ✚

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Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 919  
McKinney, TX 75070

Telephone: 972/736-3567  
Fax: 972/734-1054  
Sales: 1-800/705-8316  
Email: lamblion@lamblion.com  
Website: www.lamblion.com



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# The Olivet Discourse

## Past History or Future Prophecy?



This detailed and authentic drawing of the Olivet Discourse shows Jesus and His disciples on the Mount of Olives looking across the Kidron Valley toward the Temple Mount. This is one of 54 panoramic black and white drawings of the life of Christ that were done by Robert Doares (1911-2005). His drawings and paintings may be purchased at [www.robertdoaresart.com](http://www.robertdoaresart.com).

### Dr. David R. Reagan

Matthew 24 is a very important prophetic passage because it contains detailed prophecies of Jesus concerning future events. It consists of a speech delivered by Jesus during the last week of His life (in about 30 A.D.) as He and His disciples sat on the Mount of Olives, overlooking the city of Jerusalem and its magnificent Temple. The speech is recorded in three places: Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21.

The discourse was prompted by one of Jesus' disciples as they were leaving the Temple where Jesus had been teaching. The disciple, obviously overwhelmed by the beauty of the Temple, said, "Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings" (Mark 13:1). Jesus' immediate response was a startling one: "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another which will not be torn down" (Mark 13:2).

### A Series of Questions

This statement must have greatly perplexed the disciples of Jesus, because later, after they had ascended the Mount of Olives and had stopped to rest, they asked Jesus: "Tell us when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" (Matthew 24:3).

Note carefully the three questions Jesus was asked:

- 1) "When will these things be?" That is, when will Jerusalem and the Temple be destroyed?
- 2) "What will be the sign of Your coming?" That is, what event will signal Jesus' return?
- 3) "What will be the sign of the end of the age?" That is, what event will mark the consummation of history and the launching of a new world order?

### Jesus' Answers

Jesus does not address the first question in his discourse as it is recorded in Matthew 24. His response can be found only in Luke's account, in Luke 21:20-24. The answer is that Jerusalem and the Temple will suffer destruction when the disciples "see Jerusalem surrounded by armies" (Luke 21:20). This occurred 40 years later in 70 A.D. when the Romans besieged the city and then destroyed it. Jesus referred to this event as "days of vengeance" (Luke 21:22).

The answer to the second question is provided in Matthew 24:4-22. Basically, the point that Jesus makes is that the sign of His coming will be the Great Tribulation, a future period of seven years during which God will pour out His wrath on the nations of the world.

The third question is answered in Matthew 24:30. The sign of the end of the age will be the appearance of Jesus in the heavens, "coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory."

### Signs of the Tribulation

In the process of delivering this discourse, Jesus mentioned many signs that would characterize the period leading up to and including the Tribulation, signs which altogether would point to His soon return (Matthew 24:4-15). These included such things as false Christs, wars and rumors of wars, persecution of believers, and lawlessness. Signs of nature were also emphasized. Jesus said that natural catastrophes such as famines, earthquakes, pestilence and signs in the heavens would increase like birth pangs — in frequency and intensity.

The only positive sign Jesus mentioned was the preaching of the Gospel to all the nations of the earth (Matthew 24:14).

According to Jesus, the climactic sign of the Tribulation would be the erection of what the prophet Daniel had called "the

abomination of desolation,” which would be situated “in the holy place” of the Temple (Daniel 11:31 and Matthew 24:15).

### The Theological Issue

So, what about it? Is Matthew 24 history or prophecy?

It is a crucial prophetic question. The passage clearly portrays a period of intense tribulation that will precede the Second Coming of Jesus. Has this terrible period of tribulation already occurred or is it yet to occur? And what about the Second Coming of Jesus? Has it already occurred? Have all the events described in Matthew 24 been fulfilled or do some of them await fulfillment?

### The Conflicting Views

The Premillennial viewpoint, both historic and modern, holds this passage to be predictive, yet-to-be-fulfilled sometime in the near future. According to the Premillennial view, the return of Jesus will be immediately preceded by a period of worldwide, unprecedented tribulation that will particularly focus on the Jewish people.

The majority viewpoint of Christendom, both Catholic and Protestant, is the Amillennial view. This view spiritualizes Bible prophecy and concludes that there will be no future Tribulation or Millennium. Amillennialists argue, instead, that we are simultaneously experiencing both the Tribulation and the Millennium right now and have been doing so since the Cross. We are supposedly in the Millennium because the Holy Spirit is restraining evil through the Church. And we are simultaneously in the Tribulation because the Church is experiencing persecution.

Although Postmillennialists argue that the Millennium is still future, they maintain that the tribulation aspects of Matthew 24 were fulfilled in the First Century destruction of Jerusalem. They conclude, therefore, that there will be no future Great Tribulation.

The group with the strangest attitude toward Matthew 24 are those Amillennialists who are also what is called “Full Preterists.” (The word, Preterist, is Latin for “past.”)

There are degrees of Preterism. A moderate Preterist believes all of Matthew 24 was fulfilled in the 70 A.D. destruction of Jerusalem, except the Second Coming of Jesus. But the “Full Preterist” takes the position that every aspect of Matthew 24, including the Second Coming, happened in 70 A.D.! They argue that Jesus returned spiritually in the destruction that the Romans inflicted upon Jerusalem. They also argue that the prophecies refer to the end of the Jewish Age and not to the end times.

Matthew 24 thus emerges as a key prophetic passage. Those who spiritualize prophecy (Amillennialists and Postmillennialists) either argue that its tribulation prophecies were fulfilled in



The Russian Orthodox Church of Mary Magdalene, located on the West slope of the Mount of Olives. (Photo by the author.)

70 A.D. or have been fulfilled in the history of the Church, and they therefore reject the idea that it points to a period of severe tribulation immediately preceding the return of Jesus. Amillennialists who are Full Preterists argue that all of it, including the prophecy about the Lord’s Second Coming, was fulfilled in 70 A.D. Those who interpret prophecy more literally (Premillennialists) contend that all aspects of the passage await fulfillment. They therefore feel that it definitely points to a future period of tribulation before the Lord returns.

So, what about our central question? Is Matthew 24 history or prophecy? Is it past or future? Was it fulfilled in 70 A.D. or is it yet to occur?

I believe Matthew 24 was *pre-fulfilled* in prophetic type in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and is therefore yet to be *fulfilled* in history. And I think I can prove that

from the passage itself.

### The Proclamation of the Gospel

Let’s begin with verse 14. It states that all the events described in Matthew 24 will take place at a time when the Gospel has been preached to all the world.

This certainly had not taken place by the year 70 A.D. In fact, it still has not taken place to this date. Using modern technology like radio, television, movies, satellites, and the Internet, we have been able to proclaim the Gospel to more people than ever before in history, but we still have not reached all the people in the world.

The book of Revelation reveals that this will not be accomplished until late in the Tribulation when God will send forth an angel who will preach the “eternal gospel” to “every nation and tribe and tongue and people” (Revelation 14:6).

### Daniel’s Prophecy

Next, let’s consider verse 15. It says the period of intense persecution of Jews will begin when “the abomination of desolation,” spoken of by Daniel, is seen “standing in the holy place.”

We have no historical record of such an event taking place in 70 A.D. Unlike the Greek tyrant, Antiochus Epiphanes, who desecrated the Temple’s holy place in 168 B.C. by erecting within it an altar to Zeus, the Roman general Titus took no such action in 70 A.D. before he destroyed the city and the Temple.

### The Intensity of the Tribulation

The third point to note is found in verse 21. It says that the period of Jewish persecution that will follow the desecration of the Temple will be the most intense in all of history, “since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall [be].”

These words were not fulfilled in 70 A.D. The persecution which the Jews experienced under Titus was severe, but it pales in comparison to what the Jews suffered during the Nazi Holocaust of World War II.

Josephus says the Romans killed a million Jews in the 70 A.D. siege of Jerusalem. Historians are convinced that this number is greatly exaggerated. But even if it is true, it is nothing compared to the six million Jews who perished at the hands of the Nazis.

Furthermore, the prophet Zechariah tells us that during the end times a total of two-thirds of the Jewish people will die during a period of unparalleled calamity (Zechariah 13:8-9). In other words, there is a period of Jewish persecution yet to occur that will even exceed the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust. According to the book of Revelation, this will occur during the second half of the Tribulation. It is the reason that Jesus referred to that part of the Tribulation as the “great tribulation” (Matthew 24:21).

Consider verse 21 again: “for then there will be a great tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall.” Did Jesus mean what He said or not? Surely this is not an example of hyperbole — of exaggeration to make a point. Everything in the passage screams that we are to take Jesus’ words literally.

The conclusion is inescapable. The tribulation experienced by the Jews in 70 A.D. was not the greatest “since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall be.”

### The Severity of the Tribulation

The fourth piece of evidence is found in verse 22. Jesus says that the period of “great tribulation” (verse 21) that He is talking about will be so severe that all life will cease unless the period is cut short.

You and I live in the only generation in history when these words could be literally fulfilled. There was no possibility in 70 A.D. that the siege of Jerusalem would lead to the extinction of all life. But that is a very real threat today due to the development and deployment of nuclear weapons.

The best selling book of 1982, *The Fate of the Earth*, proved that if there is ever an all out nuclear exchange between the United States and Russia, all life on earth will cease to exist.

### The Proximity of the Tribulation

The fifth clue that Matthew 24 is yet to be fulfilled is found in verse 29. It says the Lord will return “immediately after the tribulation of those days.” How can we escape the impact of the word “immediately”? I don’t think we can. It clearly ties the preceding events to the immediate time of Jesus’ return.

As I have already pointed out, some Amillennialists who are also Preterists have tried to deal with this problem in a fanciful



**Dominus Flevit Chapel is located on the western slope of the Mount of Olives, near the top. The name means, “The Lord Wept,” and thus the church was designed by its architect, Antonio Barluzzi, to look like a tear drop. It sits on the traditional site where Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44).** (Photo by the author.)

way by claiming that the Second Coming of Jesus actually occurred in 70 A.D.! But to argue, as they do, that Jesus returned spiritually, and therefore invisibly, is to deny the promise made in Acts 1:11 that Jesus will return in the same manner in which He ascended to Heaven — bodily and visibly.

The claim that the Second Coming occurred in 70 A.D. is, of course, ludicrous, but it shows the extent to which some people will go to try to make Scripture conform to a particular pre-conceived doctrine.

### The Context of the Tribulation

The final evidence that Matthew 24 was not fulfilled in 70 A.D. is to be found in verses 32-35, where Jesus says that all the things He has spoken of concerning the Tribulation will be fulfilled during the generation that sees the “fig tree” reblossom. Here is the key to the timing of the prophecy’s fulfillment.

What is the “fig tree”? The fig tree is often used in Scripture as a symbol of the nation of Israel (Jeremiah 24:1-10; Hosea 9:10; Joel 1:7; and Luke 13:6-9). So, I think what Jesus is saying here is that all the events prophesied in Matthew 24 will be fulfilled at the time when the nation of Israel is re-established.

But we really don’t have to guess at the symbolic meaning of the fig tree. Think back for a moment to what had happened the day before. Jesus had put a curse on a barren fig tree (Matthew 21:18-19), causing it to wither. It was a prophetic sign that God would set the Jewish nation aside because of their spiritual barrenness — that is, their refusal to accept Jesus as their Messiah.

Now, the next day, Jesus calls the fig tree to mind and says, “Watch it. When it reblossoms, all these things will happen.”

The setting aside of Israel occurred in 70 A.D. The reblossoming took place on May 14, 1948 when the nation of Israel was re-established.

### A Fact to Ponder

Matthew 24 is not history. The terrible events of 70 A.D. were a classic prefillment in type of the ultimate fulfillment that will occur immediately before the Lord returns.

Matthew 24 is prophecy yet to be fulfilled. It is going to be fulfilled soon, for Israel has been regathered, the nation has been re-established, and the nations of the world are coming together against the Jewish state. The wrath of God is about to fall. We are on the threshold of the Great Tribulation.

As you ponder this reality, are you ready for it? Have you received Jesus as your Lord and Savior? The Bible says that if you put your faith in Jesus, you need not fear the wrath of God, for “having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him” (Romans 5:9). ✚

# The Olivet Discourse: Frequently Asked Questions

Dr. David R. Reagan

There are many issues concerning Jesus' Olivet Discourse that have been hotly debated over the years and which still cause storms of controversy. I thought it would be good to address some of the most frequently asked questions that stimulate argument.

But this certainly does not mean that the discourse has no relevance to the Church. Jesus knew the church would be established. And He knew that Christians would look to His words for insights and guidance.

To say the Olivet Discourse has no relevance to the Church is equivalent to saying that the Old Testament has no relevance because it was written by and for Jews. Or, that the letters Paul wrote to the Corinthians have no relevance to the Church at large because they were directed to a particular First Century congregation.



A view of the Old City of Jerusalem looking west from the Mount of Olives. The Dome of the Rock and the Eastern Gate are in the distance, across the Kidron Valley. In the foreground are some of the tens of thousands of graves that cover the western slope of the Mount. Orthodox Jews desire to be buried on the Mount of Olives because they believe, based on Zechariah 14, that the Messiah will come to that site when He comes to earth, and they want to be the first to be resurrected. (Photo by the author.)

## **1.** *Does the Olivet Discourse have any application to the Church?*

This may seem to be a strange question, but it is a source of constant argument because some contend that the passage is relevant only to the Jews. They take this position because Jesus addressed His remarks to His Jewish disciples and because the Gospel of Matthew was written for a Jewish audience. Also, in the midst of the discourse, Jesus says that they should pray that the desecration of the Temple does not occur on a Sabbath, because when it occurs, they will need to flee the city, which they could not do on a Sabbath day.

It certainly is true that when Jesus delivered the discourse He was speaking to His Jewish disciples and not to the Church. The Church, in fact, had not yet been established. That would not occur until the Day of Pentecost, some 50 days after Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection.

The fact of the matter is that all of God's Word is relevant to the Church either directly or indirectly. Even those sections of the Mosaic Law that were specifically given to Israel — like the sacrificial and ceremonial laws — contain spiritual insights that apply to the Church. Take, for example, the biblical principle that there is no forgiveness of sins apart from the shedding of blood (Leviticus 17:11).

Or, consider the Old Testament passage in 1 Samuel 15:22 that says that obedience to the Lord is better than burnt offerings and sacrifices. The sacrificial system is not a part of Christianity today, but the spiritual principle contained in the verse is still relevant — namely, that ritual practices of the Christian faith like baptism and communion are not more important than being obedient to God in our daily lives.

For those who claim that Matthew 24 applies only to Jews, what are they going to do with Mark 13 and Luke 21 where the



**The Church of All Nations is located at the base of the Mount of Olives, adjacent to the Garden of Gethsemane. It commemorates the traditional site of Jesus’s agony before His arrest. (Photo by holylandphotos.org.)**

Olivet Discourse is also recorded? These were Gospels written to the Gentiles. Also, the Olivet Discourse was probably delivered only a few days before Jesus spoke the words of John 14 to His disciples. Those who deny that Matthew 24 has any relevance to the Church are the same persons who believe that the promise of the Rapture in John 14:1-4 was meant for the Church. Both speeches were delivered by Jesus to Jewish audiences, and both were delivered before the Church was established.

As for Matthew being a book directed primarily at Jews, that is true, but it is also the only one of the four Gospels that specifically mentions the Church, and it does that in two passages (Matthew 16:18 and Matthew 18:17). Furthermore, the book closes with the “Great Commission” which is considered to be the “marching orders” for the Church (Matthew 28:19-20).

**2. Do the signs of the times contained in the Olivet Discourse apply to our day and time, or do they apply only to the Tribulation?**

The Olivet Discourse is full of what we call “signs of the times” that point to the Lord’s return. Some argue that these signs will be confined to the Tribulation and will be provided for the benefit of those living during the Tribulation. In other words, the signs have no relevance to the Church existing on earth before the Tribulation.

But this cannot be true. We can look around us today and see the precise signs mentioned in the Olivet Discourse. They are already appearing on the world scene.

There is no way these signs can be confined to the short

period of the seven years of the Tribulation. They may intensify during that time, but they don’t just pop-up overnight once the Antichrist signs a treaty with Israel and the Tribulation begins.

Jesus said these signs would be like birth pangs (Matthew 24: 8). It is a fact that all the signs mentioned in the Olivet Discourse began to intensify like birth pangs during the 20th Century, increasing both in frequency and intensity.

Some counter by arguing, “But there are no signs of the Rapture. It is an imminent event that could occur any moment.” That’s correct, but I am not talking about signs of the Rapture. I am talking about signs that point to the beginning of the Tribulation and the Second Coming of Jesus.

**3. Concerning the fig tree parable, what is the symbolic meaning of the fig tree?**

As I said in the main essay in this issue, I believe the fig tree is a symbol of the nation of Israel. (See “The Context of the Tribulation” on page 5). My reasons for this conclusion are twofold:

- 1) The fig tree is used as a symbol of Israel in both the Old and New Testaments (see the references on page 5).
- 2) The day before the Olivet Discourse Jesus had put a curse on a fig tree, causing it to wither. This was a symbolic prophecy that the nation of Israel would cease to exist because of their rejection of Jesus as their Messiah. Then, the next day, He reminds His disciples of the fig tree and says, “Watch it. When it blooms again, the generation that sees that will witness My return.”



**Orthodox Jews tending to a tomb on the Mount of Olives.**  
(From the author's collection of photos.)

Over four hundred years ago the Puritans seized on this passage and argued that one day Israel would be re-established and that when that happens, the generation that witnesses it will be the generation that will experience the Lord's return.

Some deny that the fig tree has any relation to Israel whatsoever. They argue that all the parable means is that just as the blooming of the fig tree is a signal that summer is near, so also, the coming together of all the signs Jesus mentioned will be an indication that He is soon to return.

I would agree that the parable carries this meaning, but I still believe that the fig tree was selected because it symbolizes Israel. And by using this common symbol of Israel, Jesus gives us a more precise time for His return. I think this is important because I believe God wants us to know the season of His Son's return (1 Thessalonians 5:1-6). He does not wish that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).

I think it is interesting that in Matthew 24 Jesus speaks very clearly and precisely for 28 verses (verses 4-31) about the signs that will lead up to His return, and then, suddenly, at verse 32, He shifts into symbolic language by telling a parable. Why did He suddenly switch to coded words?

I believe it is because the parable contains a prophecy about a very specific event that will clearly reveal the season of His return, and that event is the re-establishment of the nation of Israel. He wanted to limit the understanding of this key event to those who have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. As 1 Thessalonians 5:4-6 puts it, there is no reason for the Lord's return to overtake believers like a thief because they are "sons of light and sons of day." In other words, they have the internal illumination of the Holy Spirit to understand passages of Scripture that are unintelligible to unbelievers.

**4. What did Jesus mean when He said that the generation that sees the blossoming of the fig tree will witness His return? What generation was He talking about? And how long is a generation?**

I believe that Jesus meant exactly what He said — that the generation that sees the re-establishment of the nation of Israel is the one that will witness the Lord's return. This is the most important reason I believe that we are the terminal generation.

People frequently ask me how long is a generation? The answer is that it depends upon context. In Genesis 15:13-16 a

generation is defined as 100 years. In Psalm 90:10 it is 70 years. A generation based on the genealogy presented in the first chapter of Matthew calculates to be about 50 years. Job 42:16 says Job lived 140 years and saw four generations during his lifetime, which would make a generation 35 years. The Bible frequently refers to a generation as being 40 years (Numbers 32:13; Psalm 95:10; and Hebrews 3:8-10). Some passages seem to indicate that a generation was viewed as starting at age 20 (Exodus 30:14; Numbers 1:3; and Numbers 14:29). If that were so, and you add 40 years, then a generation would have been from 20 to 60 years of age.

But the word is also used generically to refer to people living at a particular time, and when it is used this way, it does not refer to any specific number of years. An example can be found in Jeremiah 7:29 where the prophet declares that God has rejected "the generation of His wrath." That is simply a reference to the people living at that time. It would be like making a reference to the "Nixon generation," meaning all the people living during the time that Richard Nixon served as President. In like manner, people refer to the "Hippy Generation," which is a reference to young people living during the 1960's.

I believe the term is used generically in Matthew 24:34. All it is saying is that the people living at the time the nation of Israel is re-established will be the ones who will witness the return of the Lord. It could be a person who was a small child at that time and who will be 80 years old when the Lord returns. No time period is meant or implied.

**5. Can the Rapture be found in the Olivet Discourse? Or, does Jesus speak exclusively about His Second Coming?**

Many very fine Premillennial Bible prophecy experts have taken the position that the Rapture is nowhere to be found in the Olivet Discourse. To the contrary, Amillennialists and Postmillennialists argue that the Rapture can be found in Matthew 24:31.

Let's consider the latter position first. Matthew 24:31 reads as follows: "And He [the Son of Man] will send forth His angels with a great trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other."

The most detailed description of the Rapture (Jesus coming for His Church) is contained in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.



**Dennis Pollock and the author at the grave of Menachem Begin, the only Israeli Prime Minister buried on the Mount of Olives. He was buried there at his request rather than at the Israeli National Cemetery on Mount Herzl because he was an Orthodox Jew.**



Comparing it to Matthew 24:31, we find two similarities — the blowing of a trumpet and the gathering of the elect.

But there are also several differences:

- In 1 Thessalonians 4, believers are gathered in the air when Jesus appears in the sky and are taken to Heaven. In Matthew 24 they are gathered after the arrival of Jesus on earth, and there is no mention of them being taken to Heaven.
- In 1 Thessalonians 4, the Lord Himself gathers the elect, whereas in Matthew 24, they are gathered by angels.
- The gathering in 1 Thessalonians 4 includes the resurrection of the bodies of the dead in Christ. There is no mention of anyone being resurrected in Matthew 24:31.
- In 1 Thessalonians 4, the spirits of the dead in Christ return in the clouds with Jesus. In Matthew 24 Jesus returns alone.

Those who insist that the Rapture is mentioned in Matthew 24:31 are actually contending that the Rapture and the Second Coming are all one event, producing what I call, “the yo-yo Rapture.” I call it this because they are proposing that Jesus will appear for His Church, the living and dead in Christ will be raised up to meet Him in the sky, and then He will immediately return to earth with them. This is not a biblical scenario because Jesus said in John 14:1-4 that when the Rapture occurs, the living and dead in Christ will be taken back to Heaven.

All “gatherings” mentioned in the Bible do not refer to the Rapture. At the Rapture the bodies of the dead in Christ will be resurrected and taken up to meet the Lord in the sky where their spirits will be reunited with their bodies. The living in Christ will follow, and the bodies of both groups will be glorified. They will then be taken to Heaven.

At the Second Coming, two additional gatherings are going to occur. According to Luke 17:22-37, all unbelievers who are alive at the end of the Tribulation when Jesus returns will be gathered and consigned to death, their bodies being given over to the vultures.

But at the Second Coming there will also be a gathering of “the elect” (Matthew 24:31). This could be talking about all believers who are alive at the end of the Tribulation, but it is most likely referring only to Jewish believers because it is quoting Deuteronomy 30:1-5, and that passage is a prophecy that when the Jewish people finally accept their Messiah (which, according to Zechariah 12:10 will happen at the end of the Tribulation), God will gather them back to their homeland and establish them as the prime nation of the world during His Son’s millennial reign.

If the Rapture is not referred to in Matthew 24:31, can it be found anywhere else in the Olivet Discourse? Many, if not most Premillennialists contend that Jesus simply did not mention the Rapture.

But I respectfully disagree with that position. I believe Jesus mentions the Rapture in verses 36-44 of Matthew 24. The first reason I see the Rapture in these verses is because Jesus says, “of that day and hour no one knows . . .” How could He possibly be referring to His Second Coming? Keep in mind that He has just told His disciples exactly when He was going to return —



**An Orthodox Jew pauses to pay tribute at a tomb on the Mount of Olives. The proper way to do this is to leave a “stone of remembrance” on the top of the tomb. (From the author’s photos.)**

“immediately after the tribulation of those days” (Matthew 24:29).

From both the prophecies of Daniel and the book of Revelation we know the Tribulation will last exactly 7 prophetic years (years of 360 days each). Anyone living at the beginning of the Tribulation (when the Antichrist signs a treaty with Israel) could calculate the exact day of the Lord’s return because we are told that the Tribulation will last precisely 2,520 days (Revelation 11:3 and Revelation 12:6). So, again, when Jesus says no one can know the day of His return, He must be speaking of the Rapture, and not the Second Coming.

Next, Jesus says that when He returns, society will be like it was in the days of Noah, when right up to the last moment people were “eating and drinking” and “marrying and giving in marriage” (Matthew 24:38). In other words, life will be continuing as normal when He returns.

But this could not be talking about the Second Coming because life will be anything but normal at the end of the Tribulation. At that time more than half the population of the world will have been killed, including two-thirds of the Jews, and the whole world, according to what we are told in Revelation 13-19, will be in absolute chaos.

Additionally, if you will take a look at the Olivet Discourse as it is recorded in Luke 21, you will find that Luke adds an observation that Matthew’s account does not contain. In the section where Jesus starts talking about how His return could occur any moment, Luke quotes Him as saying: “Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36, NKJV).

Those words sure sound to me like a reference to the Rapture of the Church. ✚

## A New Cult Bible —

The Thomas Nelson Company in Nashville, Tennessee, one of the world's leading Bible publishers, recently announced that it has produced a new study Bible called the "Remnant" Bible. It is being advertised as "the last study Bible you will ever need." Incredibly, the Bible features the study notes of E. G. White who happens to be Ellen G. White (1827-1915), a false prophet whose writings serve as the foundation of the cultic group known as The Seventh Day Adventists. Once again, a so-called Christian publishing house has proved that it will do anything for a buck. You can find information about the Bible at [www.theremnantstudybible.com](http://www.theremnantstudybible.com).

## An Apostate Seminary —

The Claremont School of Theology in Claremont, California, has announced its intention to start training Jewish rabbis and Muslim imams, with the hope of ultimately adding programs to train Buddhist and Hindu priests. This is a school that is affiliated with the United Methodist Church and which has historically trained people for the Christian ministry. The president of the school, Jerry Campbell, said that the decision was motivated by a belief that "the world's religions need to work together for the common good." Can you imagine the prophet Elijah offering to help train the priests of Baal? Or the apostle Paul offering to help train the priests of Aphrodite?

## An Abominable Proclamation —

On June 18th President Obama issued a Father's Day Proclamation to honor the fathers of our nation. In it he made the following observation: "Nurturing families come in many forms, and children may be raised by a father and mother, a single father, two fathers, a step father, a grandfather, or caring guardian." Two fathers? Since when is a homosexual relationship a nurturing environment for a child? And why did the President feel compelled to pollute a proclamation honoring fathers with a reference to his political agenda to promote homosexuality? It was not the President's first time to impose his social agenda on a family observance. In similar fashion, he made reference to "two mothers" in his Mother's Day Proclamation issued on May 9th. In response, Tim Wildmon, president of the American Family Association, said, "Same-sex parenting is not in any way the moral or functional equivalent of the parenting done by a mom and dad. Yet our president is so committed to normalizing homosexual conduct that he is putting the twisted sexual desires of adults ahead of the needs of children."

## A Pathetic Motto —

The American Humanist Association has launched a publicity campaign built around the motto, "In Good We Trust." It is being promoted with billboards that feature an image of a U.S. quarter bearing a revision of the motto, "In God We Trust," substituting "good" for God. Roy Speckhardt, the executive director of the AHA, explained that his organization is trying to make the point "that you don't have to believe in God to be good." The Word of God says to the contrary that "There is none who does good, there is not even one" (Romans 3:12). And in Jeremiah 17:9 you will find the reason.

# TIMES and Seasons

## The Gulf Oil Spill —

Ever since taking office in January of 2009, President Obama has been determined to force Israel into surrendering its heartland and half its capital to its sworn enemies. In June of 2009 the President visited with Saudi King Abdullah and promised that he would force the Israelis to withdraw from the West Bank and most of Jerusalem by 2012.

American foreign policy in the Middle East has been motivated by our insatiable appetite for oil. In short, in recent years both Democrat and Republican Presidents have been willing to sell-out Israel for access to Arab oil. On April 19th Israel celebrated its 61st birthday. The next day the Deep Horizon oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico blew up, and the greatest oil spill in U.S. history began. It was as if God was saying to our nation, "Since you have decided to sell-out Israel for oil, I have decided to give you a glut of oil." There can be no doubt that the oil spill is another remedial judgment that God has placed upon our nation. In Joel 3:2 God says that He will severely judge all nations in the end times who are involved in trying to divide the land of Israel. Pray for President Obama's eyes to be opened to the spiritual message of the oil spill.

## Insanity on College Campuses —

Syracuse University in New York recently announced that it has hired a pagan chaplain "in line with its goal of being more inclusive of all religions on campus." The chaplain, Mary Hudson, described paganism as "basically an umbrella term meaning anyone who follows a polytheist religion . . ." Paganism includes many different groups, such as Wicca and Druidism.

The University of Illinois has fired an adjunct professor who taught courses on Catholicism. The professor, Ken Howell, was accused of engaging in hate speech because he taught that the Catholic Church believes that homosexuality is a sinful lifestyle that is contrary to both nature and the Scriptures. (And universities are supposed to be places of intellectual inquiry where all ideas are given a fair hearing?)

The U.S. Supreme Court, by a vote of 5-4, ruled in June that a law school in California could legally deny recognition to a Christian student group because it excluded homosexuals as members. (And our Constitution guarantees both freedom of religion and freedom of association!) ❖



## Concerning Bible Prophecy —

“There is no part of Scripture richer or more munificent in rewards for the faithful inquirer. It is a garden of flowers, a cabinet of wondrous jewelry. It is a vast and varied landscape, filled with beauty and grandeur, the horizon of which is fringed with the bright dawning glories of eternal day. Here, and here alone, we can see the real scope and magnificence of man’s redemption. Here, and here alone, we can trace God’s providential plans to their ultimate consummation, and learn the real majesty of His counsels of love. At every step there is something to encourage and comfort us under the fatigues and trials of life; something to confirm our faith and to fill us with glorious anticipations.” — **Dr. F. E. Marsh**, British pastor and prolific writer. Written in the 1930’s between the two world wars.



From the devotional messages of Adrian Rogers: “When I was in seminary, my wife Joyce told me, ‘You’re going to flunk if you don’t start hitting your school books.’ Instead, I was reading on prophecy, and I told her, ‘I’ve got to find out what this is all about. They’re not teaching it in school.’ And as I would study these things, I felt God building me. There is a blessing to be found in a study of prophecy . . . There’s nothing that fuels the flames of evangelism like a proper understanding of prophecy.” — **Adrian Rogers** (1931-2005) was an American pastor and writer who served three times as president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

## The True Danger to America —

“The danger to America is not Barack Obama but a citizenry capable of entrusting a man like him with the Presidency. It will be far easier to limit and undo the follies of an Obama presidency than to restore the necessary common sense and good judgment to a depraved electorate willing to have such a man for their president. The problem is much deeper and far more serious than Mr. Obama, who is a mere symptom of what ails America. Blaming the prince of the fools should not blind anyone to the vast confederacy of fools that made him their prince. The Republic can survive a Barack Obama, who is, after all, merely a fool. It is less likely to survive a multitude of fools such as those who made him their president.” — From the German language newspaper, *Prager Zeitung*, which is published in the Czech Republic, April 28, 2010.



**James A. Garfield**

“Now, more than ever before, the people are responsible for the character of their Congress. If that body be ignorant, reckless and corrupt, it is because the people tolerate ignorance, recklessness and corruption. If it be intelligent, brave and pure, it is because the people demand these high qualities to represent them in the national legislature. If the next centennial does not find us a great nation, it will be because those who represent the enterprise, the culture and the morality of the nation do not aid in controlling the political forces.” — From a speech by **James A. Garfield** (1831-1881), 20th President of the United States.

## The Belittling of America —

“The United States was described by President Abraham Lincoln as ‘the last, best hope of earth.’ Most Americans agreed then. However, with the ascent of the Left in America — in our educational institutions, in our news and entertainment media, and in the arts world — fewer and fewer Americans believe this. On the contrary, the Leftist view of America, which pervades American life, is of a country deeply morally compromised by endemic racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, militarism, imperialism, and a rapacious capitalism that leads to immoral levels of economic inequality . . . As the Left’s power increases, America’s power recedes — and the world further deteriorates. Under the rule of the Left, the last, best hope of earth has decided that the United Nations and Western Europe deserve that title, not the United States.” — **Dennis**

**Prager** is an American syndicated radio talk show host, syndicated columnist, author, and public speaker.

## Random Thoughts —

From **Mike Gendron**, founder and director of Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries in Garland, Texas:



**Mike Gendron**

“The Bible is what God says. Religion is what man says God says.”

“The Emerging Church Movement is leading Evangelicals back to Rome.”

“If you don’t stand for truth, you will end up falling for anything.”

“An evangelist is a person a church calls in to deliver a message that the pastor would be fired for delivering.”



**Erwin Lutzer**

From **Erwin Lutzer**, pastor of Moody Bible Church in Chicago:

“Islam is both an oppressive and possessive religion. The average Muslim is bound to it by fear.”

“There is in America today an attitude of willing blindness toward Islam.”

“I’ve never met a Christian who did not want to be an overcomer, but I have met very few who wanted anything to overcome.”

“God’s sheep sometimes cannot tell the difference in grass and AstroTurf.”

## Interpreting Bible Prophecy —

“If the prophecies aren’t literally fulfilled, it’s impossible to know when anything is fulfilled. If the prophecies aren’t literally fulfilled, there is no need to watch for anything. If the prophecies aren’t literally fulfilled, there are no signs of anything. If the prophecies aren’t literally fulfilled, we need to forget about heaven, rewards, the resurrection of the dead, etc., because those things won’t literally happen.” — Daymond Duck, Bible prophecy teacher and writer from Tennessee. ✚

# Aesop on Bible Prophecy

Nathan Jones

“I was wondering, is Nathan Jones still on this planet? Stop it with this rapture nonsense and wake up!”

As Web Minister for Lamb & Lion Ministries, I get to reach out through the Internet and converse with people all over the world. What a great opportunity to share with them the saving news of Jesus Christ and the hope-filled message of His soon return!



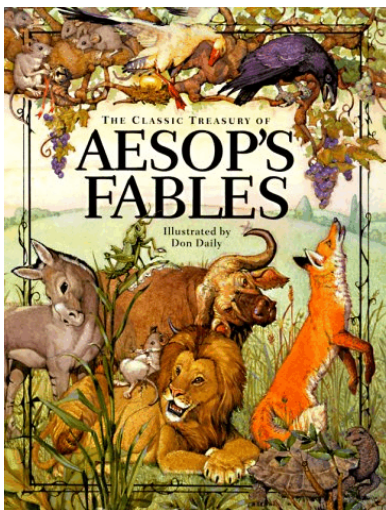
Nathan Jones

Sometimes the people aren't too receptive to the message, though, and share back in emphatic statements questioning my state of mind, such as the email excerpt above. I've come to realize there will always be people who disagree with your views on anything, especially Bible prophecy.

Bible prophecy is like having a thousand piece puzzle and we're missing the picture on the cover of the box, so we're guessing and turning pieces every which way to see where they fit. At this time we are left not quite 100% sure of all the details because the events are future and haven't happened yet.

We Christians can share in the view that we are looking forward to a future with Jesus, but there is always going to be some disagreement about the non-essential doctrines such as are related to the end times. Some handle that well, and some do not. At times when people can be kind of rude and a little hard on the Beav, I seek some comfort in Aesop's fable called “The Man, the Boy and the Donkey.”

## Aesop's Fable



The fable tells of a boy and an old man who are taking their donkey to sell at the market. As they are walking along beside the donkey, they pass by a crowd and hear some people whispering to each other saying, “Those two guys are so stupid since they could be riding their donkey.” Well, the old man and the young boy agree that the people are right and so they climb up on the donkey's back.

As they continue moving along, the boy and old man pass by another group and hear somebody exclaiming, “That poor donkey is carrying all that weight. That's a clear case of animal abuse. Let's call PETA.” And so, the boy gets off, leaving the old man riding the donkey.

As they continue to walk on their way, they hear some more passersby saying to each other, “Look at that selfish old man, making that poor little kid walk.” Feeling ashamed, the old man switches with the young boy and begins walking.

They go further on and next hear a woman chide, “That kid is so selfish to make that poor old man walk.”

Well, the predicament just plain dumbfounds the old man and young boy. They can only look at each other in dismay and sigh.

After a time of just standing there not knowing what to do, the two of them both have an “Aha!” moment. They find some sticks and make a sort of gurney. They place the donkey on the gurney and start carrying the donkey to market.

Now, if the donkey was Balaam's donkey it would have been saying, “Suckers, this is great!”

Donkeys are heavy, and as they were walking along a ravine, the boy stumbled, spilling the donkey over the side. The donkey fell to the bottom of the ravine and was killed, leaving them with nothing to sell.

## The Application to Bible Prophecy

The moral of Aesop's story is — you can't please everybody. Likewise, with Bible prophecy, everyone tends to color their interpretation of events the way they'd like them to turn out. We all agree with how it ends — Jesus wins! But, the stepping stones to the conclusion are arranged differently.

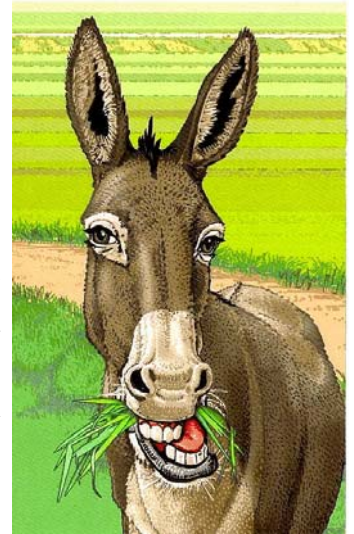
Take the Tribulation for instance. Some Christians just discount the notion of a literal Tribulation altogether; others really want to participate in the horrors of the Tribulation to prove their mettle to God; while others such as myself are more than ready to go to Heaven in the Rapture beforehand. We can't all be right, though.

And so, while we may not always agree on interpretations of end time events, we still must stay true to a sound study of Scripture in light of who the God of the Bible is. Anything beyond those bounds, well, we know why they get those funny looks.

Anything within those bounds, we will all just have to wait for God to correctly arrange the puzzle pieces as events occur. God makes us do this so that we continue to dive into His Word and study, resulting in a closer relationship with our Savior.

Remember, draw your guns only for the essential doctrines, and do so always in edifying speech and brotherly love.

“By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” — John 13:35 ✚



# Sorry, Mr. President, Socialism's not in the Bible

John Aman

(Editor's note: John Aman is director of communications at Coral Ridge Ministries and a co-author of the new book *Ten Truths About Socialism*. He serves as a guest columnist for OneNewsNow.com. This column was published May 22, 2010.)



Having placed 50 percent of America's economy under government control, the Obama administration is now angling for a tighter grip on the financial sector.

The operative word is "fairness," which is shorthand for Obama's famous campaign promise to "spread the wealth around."

When critics said that this remark to "Joe the Plumber" displayed Obama's socialist leanings, Obama justified it by citing Scripture: "My Bible tells me there is nothing wrong with helping other people," said then-Senator Obama. "That we want to treat others like we want to be treated. That I am my brother's keeper, and I am my sister's keeper. I believe that."

But Obama, who once dismissed the Bible's relevance to politics, saying, "People haven't been reading their Bibles lately," may need to go reread his Engels. Co-author with Karl Marx of *The Communist Manifesto*, Friedrich Engels knew better than Obama about collectivism's clash with Christianity, stating,

... if some few passages of the Bible may be favourable to Communism, the general spirit of its doctrines is, nevertheless, totally opposed to it ...

Despite Engels and Marx (who dismissed religion as the "opium of the people"), Obama and many others still manage to see Socialism in the Bible. They point to the early Church which, at first glance, seems like a model socialist community.

## Socialism in the Early Church?



The New Testament reports that the first believers "had all things in common" (Acts 4:32) and "all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need" (Acts 4:34-35).

But unlike Socialism, the sharing was voluntary, not coerced, and the money was given not to the state, but the church. As Southern Baptist leader Richard Land puts it on the new Coral Ridge Ministries documentary, *Socialism: A Clear and Present Danger*, "It's one thing for you to give out of compassion to someone who's less fortunate. It's

an entirely different thing for the government to confiscate your property and give it to someone else."

## Socialism's Conflict with the Ten Commandments

While the Bible asserts property rights and the rights of inheritance, Socialism assaults them. Marx and Engels put the "abolition of property" first in a ten-step program for implementing Communism. That's not exactly a Christian thing to do. The eighth commandment, "You shall not steal" (Exodus 20:15) applies every bit as much to the men and women who hold the reins of political power as it does to everyone else.

So does the 10th commandment, "You shall not covet" (Exodus 20:17). Coveting, or envy, is a powerful driver of Socialism, which is in a perpetual snit that some people have more than others. So when President Obama castigates "Fat Cats" on Wall Street, decries "economic inequality," and warns, as he did in his 2009 budget statement that a "disproportionate share of the nation's wealth has been accumulated by the very wealthy," he stokes a destructive impulse that is condemned by Scripture.



Newsweek magazine has become one of the most liberal magazines in America. A February 2009 issue celebrated our nation's drift toward Socialism.

Socialism also runs afoul of the first commandment, "You shall have no other gods before Me" (Exodus 20:3). Socialist governments seek to play God — to take His place as the ultimate sovereign. Consider the veneration that Russians once gave to the embalmed remains of Lenin and Stalin, the Nazi-prescribed prayer to Hitler ("Thy Reich [kingdom] comes, thy will alone is law upon the earth"), and the personality cult surrounding North Korea's "Dear Leader," Kim Jong-il.

The sixth commandment, "You shall not murder," is also widely ignored by Marxist regimes. Marx and Engels proclaimed that their aims could be "attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions." Their disciples, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot, and other communist henchmen, killed 100 million people, a "tragedy of planetary dimensions," as the French publisher of *The Black Book of Communism* put it.

## Conclusion

Barack Obama may say that the Bible tells him to be his brother's keeper (his youngest half-brother reportedly lived in a shack in Kenya on \$1 a day at the time he said this), but he ought to go back and reread what God's Word actually says. Engels was right. Socialism has nothing in common with Scripture. ✚

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# The Conservative Crackup

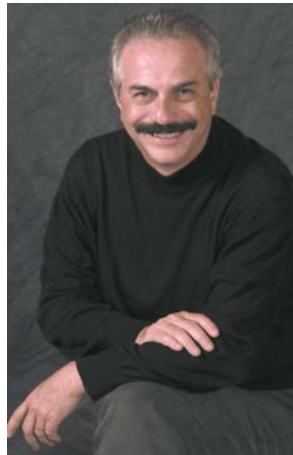
**Joseph Farah**

(Editor's note: Joseph Farah is the founder and director of World Net Daily, a highly respected Internet news service. His website can be found at [www.WorldNetDaily.com](http://www.WorldNetDaily.com). This article was posted on June 17, 2010, and is used by permission.)

What does it mean to be a “conservative”? That is a question that is getting thornier and thornier.

In recent years, some of the “conservative” movement’s heavy-weight personalities have distanced themselves from the Republican Party leadership because of efforts to move left and to create a “big tent.”

Yet the very same tendency is at work right in the heart of the “conservative” movement today. And it is being championed by stalwarts of the movement’s leadership.



**Joseph Farah**

## Confused Conservatism

For instance, a group called GOProud that supports same-sex marriage and openly homosexual activity in the U.S. military ranks was permitted to be a sponsor of the Conservative Political Action Conference in Washington this year. And, more recently, Grover Norquist, founder of Americans for Tax Reform, signed on to the group’s board of advisers, saying:

GOProud is an important part of the conservative movement. I am proud to join GOProud’s Board of Advisers and to help in advancing their common-sense conservative agenda of limited government, lower taxes and individual liberty.

“Conservatives” embracing same-sex marriage and open homosexual service in the military?

Are those “conservative” positions?

I don’t pretend to speak for the “conservative” movement. In fact, I don’t even label myself a “conservative” precisely because the term has become so ambiguous.

Nevertheless, the answer should be an unequivocal “no.”

But why isn’t it? Why are more “conservative” leaders accepting positions — even embracing them — that were once considered anathema?

It all has to do with how and where we get our definitions of right and wrong.

## The Proper Basis for True Conservatism

Are the worldviews of conservatives based on nothing more than the principles espoused in Barry Goldwater’s 1960 book, *The Conscience of a Conservative*?

Or, are there more transcendent values that “conservatives” are beholden to defend?

One of the reasons I don’t like the term “conservative” is because it sounds defensive. “Conservatives” need to define what it is they are “conserving.” Is it lower taxes? Is that the deep, ultimate, eternal truth of the “conservative” movement? Is it just about guns? Is it just about stuff you touch and feel? Is it just about materialism?

Apparently, that is the reality for a growing number of “conservatives,” who have become almost indistinguishable from “libertarians” in their worldview.

*To me, “conservatism,” along with any other “ism,” is worthless unless it has a moral core based on God’s revelation to humanity in the Bible.* My only interest is in defending and conserving God’s eternal values and principles, not Barry Goldwater’s.

“Conservatives” need to grasp that they can be just as morally lost as Barack Obama if their ideology is based on the “do-your-own-thing ethic” that is being popularized in their movement today.

Yes, I am a freedom advocate and take a backseat to no one in promoting liberty. But the liberty I pursue is a liberty founded on God’s commandments to us. America’s Founding Fathers recognized we could only be a truly self-governing people if we maintained a Judeo-Christian worldview in which individuals were accountable to God for their behavior.

That’s how and where “conservatives” run into conflicts over a transcendent issue like homosexuality and even the question of when life begins.

## Which Issues Are Moral?

For years the Republican Party has debated whether so-called “social issues” should be a part of its platform. “Big tent” Republicans said no. “Conservatives” said yes. Now this debate is being reignited within the “conservative” movement.

But the debate is a phony one from the start.

What are “social issues”? They are issues that have to do with people. Which means all political issues are social issues. Taxes are a social issue every bit as much as abortion is. What’s the distinction? Some of the brave new “conservatives” might tell you abortion and homosexuality are matters of individual morality. That’s certainly true. But it is no more true than the fact that taxing is a question of individual morality.

All political issues are social issues. All political issues are moral issues. It’s simply a question of what kind of morality you bring to the table.

If it is not a biblical morality, if it’s not God’s morality, then it is man’s. And that is a very shaky foundation for any political movement. ❖

# “Words Matter!”

Dr. David R. Reagan

During the last presidential campaign, Hillary Clinton decided to make the point that Barack Obama was all smooth talk with no substance. In her attack on him she said that “talk is cheap” and that words were nothing without action.

Her attack really riled Obama, and he fired back with these memorable words (which he plagiarized word for word from a speech by Governor Deval Patrick of Massachusetts):<sup>1</sup>

Don't tell me words don't matter. “I have a dream” — just words? “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal” — just words? Just words? “We have nothing to fear but fear itself” — just words? Just speeches?

Obama was right, words do matter. They matter a lot. The old saying, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me,” is a lie. Words can hurt, and hurt deeply. They can even destroy. Just tell a child repeatedly that he or she is “dumb” and watch how it impacts their life.

## Euphemisms

Euphemisms have always been a part of language, as people have used substitute words or phrases to soften the impact of something they want to say. So, instead of calling a person a liar, one might say, “I think you may have your facts wrong.” Or, instead of describing a person as being fat, you might say the person is “plump” or “heavy set.”

Euphemisms are motivated by politeness. Instead of referring to a friend's occupation as a “garbage man,” you might call him a “sanitation worker.” Instead of describing a family member as “retarded,” you might call him “mentally challenged.” Rather than ask how to find a “toilet,” you will probably ask directions to a restroom.

An interesting example of a euphemism can be found in the Bible. Since the name of God — Yahweh — was considered sacred by the Jews, they refused to pronounce it out loud. So, when reading the Scriptures orally, they developed a tradition of substituting the word, Adonai (Lord), for Yahweh. When the translators were preparing the King James Version, they decided to follow this tradition by injecting a translation code. When Yahweh appeared in a verse, they indicated its presence with the word, LORD (all in caps). When the word Adonai appeared, it was rendered as Lord.

Euphemisms constantly change. What was accepted as proper yesterday might be considered highly improper today. “Negro” became “Colored” and then was followed by “Black” and “Afro-American.” Today, the only acceptable term is “African-American,” a term I personally don't like and refuse to use because I consider it divisive for us to think of each other in hyphenated terms. I am reminded of a t-shirt I saw on a teenage Black boy at a mall. On the back of the shirt, it read:

I'm not Black.  
I'm not Colored.  
I'm not African-American.  
I'm a born-again Child of God!



This editorial cartoon by David Horsey illustrates the silliness that political correctness can create. (Wikipedia)

## Political Correctness

In modern times the use of euphemisms has been elevated to a fine art through the development of political correctness, often referred to as “PC.” Despite its many negatives, there are some positive aspects to this movement. For example, it has been effective in subduing the use of ethnic slurs like Nigger, Gringo, Kike, Dago, Kraut, Mick, and Camel Jockey.

Even so, it can result in some crazy situations. Consider what happened at a City Council meeting in Washington, D.C. in 1999. While discussing the city's budget for the next year, an aide to the mayor said he thought the budget was “niggardly.” That is a word that means “stingy” or “miserly.” Despite the fact that it was a legitimate word, all hell broke loose, and the aide was fired for speaking a “racial slur.” (He was later rehired.)<sup>2</sup>

Another positive aspect of PC is that it has motivated the change in a lot of job titles that were once male-dominated and reflected that fact in the name. Mailman has become “Mail Carrier.” Fireman is now “Fire Fighter.” A policeman has become a “Public Safety Officer.” Chairmen are now referred to as “Chair Persons.” But some of these make-overs have gotten out of hand, as when a gas station attendant is referred to as “a petroleum transfer technician” and a car wash worker is called “a vehicle-appearance specialist.”

This kind of nonsense prompted the comedian, Henny Youngman, to claim that his brother-in-law was a “diamond cutter.” His actual job was mowing the field at Yankee Stadium!

## Negative Aspects of PC

Unfortunately, most political correctness is not positive in nature. That's because it is used by Liberals to promote their political agendas. They also use it as a powerful form of censorship. On most university campuses today, students have to be very careful what they say or else they can get in trouble with the thought police and even be required to attend sensitivity-training.

Liberals use political correctness to disguise sin and thus make it more palatable. A sexual pervert becomes a “sexually dysfunctional person.” A prostitute is referred to as a “sex worker.” Homosexuals are “gay people.” Gambling is “gaming.”

As you can see from these examples, Liberals use PC to soften the image of behavior they are sympathetic to but which the general public finds unacceptable, usually because the behavior violates Judeo-Christian principles which the Liberals hold in contempt.

### Abuses of PC

PC becomes a form of censorship when it is used to force people into conformity. For example, a person could get into trouble today on the job or in school for making reference to an “American Indian.” The politically correct terminology is “Native American.” I personally refuse to use that term because I consider it to be nonsensical. I was born and raised in the United States. If I am not a Native American, then what am I? Some sort of alien?

Another example of PC being used as a form of censorship can be found in the fact that more and more academic journals will not publish papers that use the terms B.C. or A.D. because these terms reference time to the birth of Jesus. Authors must instead use the terms B.C.E. and C.E. which stand for “Before the Common Era” and the “Common Era.”<sup>3</sup>

PC can also become very tedious, to the point of being downright silly. “Lame” became “crippled,” which was then renamed “handicapped,” which was subsequently replaced with “disabled.” But that was not good enough. Next came “physically challenged.” And now, believe it or not, the politically correct term is “differently abled.” Or consider the fact that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People now considers the term “colored people” to be a racial slur!

PC can really become dangerous when it is used to advance a political agenda. And this is where the Obama Administration excels. Illegal aliens have suddenly become “undocumented immigrants.” Terms like “Islamic terrorism,” “Islamic radicalism,” and “Muslim extremism” have been banned. The Global War on Terrorism has become “The Overseas Contingency Operation.” (The what?) The words, “crusade” and “jihad” have also become taboo.<sup>4</sup>

Think of it — our government officials can no longer even identify our enemy by name! It would be like FDR issuing an order during World War II that no one in the government could identify our enemies as Japanese Imperialists or German Nazis.

### An Ominous Shift in Vocabulary

Realizing how important words are to Liberals in general and to the Obama Administration in particular, you can understand the widespread concern among Christian leaders that has sprung up recently concerning a very subtle but monumental shift in vocabulary within the Obama Administration regarding religious freedom in our nation. It all began in November of 2009 when President Obama spoke in Texas at the memorial service for the victims of the Fort Hood massacre. A few days later he did it again in speeches both in Japan and China. What he did was to substitute the expression “freedom of worship” for “freedom of religion.”<sup>5</sup>

This is an exceedingly important change in terminology. So important, in fact, that in May of this year, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom issued a report expressing

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## “Freedom of worship is not the same as freedom of religion.”

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grave concern about it.<sup>6</sup>

Here’s the point: freedom of religion includes freedom of worship, but freedom of worship does not include freedom of religion.

Freedom of worship gives me the right to pray or read the Bible in the privacy of my home or church, but nothing beyond that. It does not include the freedom to share my faith with others. No freedom to hand out materials on the street or preach in a park. No freedom even to wear a cross around my neck or on my lapel.

Some commentators believe that one of Obama’s motives is to throw a sop to China and the Muslim world where freedom of religion is denied but private worship is allowed in some areas. They believe Obama is giving a signal to these nations that we are not going to do anything about their denial of freedom of religion. Others fear he is signaling to the secular leaders in this country that he plans to aide and abet them in their demands for a crackdown on public expressions of religion in our nation.<sup>7</sup>

Whatever the motives may be, the shift in vocabulary is monumental and must be monitored carefully. Already, it has spread to other Obama Administration officials. In December of 2009, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton used the same terminology three times in a speech at Georgetown University. Here is an example:<sup>8</sup>

To fulfill their potential, people must be free to choose laws and leaders; to share and access information, to speak, criticize, and debate. They must be free to worship, associate, and to love in the way that they choose.

Notice how she referred to “freedom of worship,” not freedom of religion. And in passing, I might ask, “Since when has the right ‘to love in the way you choose’ become one of our basic human or constitutional rights?” Does this guarantee the rights of pedophiles and prostitutes and those engaged in polygamy and bestiality?

Where is the Obama Administration headed with this change in words? Remember, it was Obama himself who said, “Words matter!” ❖

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#### Notes:

- 1) Rachel Sklar, “Yes, You Can Borrow My Speech: Why Obama’s Lifted Words Matter,” *Huffington Post*, February 19, 2008, [www.Huffingtonpost.com](http://www.Huffingtonpost.com).
- 2) Wikipedia, “Controversies about the word ‘niggardly,’” <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>.
- 3) Wikipedia, “Common Era,” [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common\\_Era](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_Era).
- 4) Fox News.com, “Obama Bans Islam, Jihad From National Security Strategy Document,” [www.fox.news.com](http://www.fox.news.com).
- 5) Paul Cooper, “Why is Obama changing ‘freedom of religion’ to ‘freedom of worship’?” [www.rightsidenews.com](http://www.rightsidenews.com).
- 6) USCIRF Annual Report, [www.uscirf.gov](http://www.uscirf.gov).
- 7) Sarah Eekhoff Zylstra, “‘Freedom of Worship’ Worries,” *Christianity Today*, June 22, 2010, [www.christianitytoday.com](http://www.christianitytoday.com).
- 8) Hillary Rodham Clinton, “Remarks on the Human Rights Agenda for the 21st Century,” [www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/12/133544.htm](http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/12/133544.htm).



# “Christ in Prophecy” Broadcast Schedule

## National Networks

<b>Daystar Network</b> <b>DirecTV Channel 369</b> <b>DISH Channel 263</b> On cable networks throughout the nation.				
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Wed. 4:00pm	Wed. 5:00pm	Wed. 6:00pm	Wed. 7:00pm

<b>Inspiration Network</b> Available on cable networks <b>DirecTV Channel 364</b> <b>DISH Channel 259</b>				
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Fri. 9:00am	Fri. 10:00am	Fri. 11:00am	Fri. Noon

<b>The Church Channel</b> <b>DirecTV Channel 371</b>				
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Sat. 6:30pm	Sat. 7:30pm	Sat. 8:30pm	Sat. 9:30pm

<b>National Religious Broadcasters Network</b> <b>DirecTV Channel 378</b>				
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Sun. 2:00pm	Sun. 3:00pm	Sun. 4:00pm	Sun. 5:00pm

## Regional Networks



“Christ in Prophecy” is broadcast throughout southern Louisiana on the **Family Vision Network** at various times. See: [www.kajn.com/familyvision](http://www.kajn.com/familyvision).



**New Mexico Family Stations** is a network consisting of two stations in Albuquerque: KAZQ, Channel 32 and KTQS, Channel 36. Our program is broadcast on Thursday at 11:00pm and on Saturday at 3:00pm.

## The Internet

You can access our weekly television program through our website at [www.lamblion.com](http://www.lamblion.com). Go to the home page, scroll down to the bottom, and click on “Current TV Show.” You can also watch our TV programs on the Tangle website at [www.tangle.com/lamblion](http://www.tangle.com/lamblion). ✚

# Missions Outreach

We continue to support a large number of missions on a regular monthly basis — 7 domestic and 12 foreign. We recently received a \$25,000 donation designated for five of the missions that we support. It is always a joy and a blessing to us to serve as a channel of blessings to others.



**Pastor Blanco teaching the Bible at a police academy.**

Each year we try to bring one of our foreign missionaries to the States to attend the December meeting of our board of trustees. Two years ago our special guest was John Ishmael from India, head of Revival Literature Fellowship. This past year we tried to bring Nazir Gill from Pakistan, but he was never able to get a U.S. visa. This year we have invited Pastor Remegio Blanco in the Philippines to join us. We need \$2,000 to cover all the expenses of his visit.

## Missions Snapshots

**Don McGee** is the founder and director of Crown & Sickie Ministries in Amite, Louisiana. Don is a Vietnam veteran who served in the Louisiana State Police before becoming a full time pulpit minister. In 2002 he felt led of the Lord to devote the rest of his life to the proclamation of the Lord’s soon return. Since that time, he has become a highly respected teacher of Bible prophecy. His website can be found at [www.crownandsickle.com](http://www.crownandsickle.com). Don is available to hold conferences and meetings. He is a very dynamic speaker.



**Dr. Marco Samaniego** is the founder and director of Hands of Luke Ministries in Juarez, Mexico. It is a ministry that operates a large orphan’s home and cares for single moms. It also provides breakfast each day to over 600 children who live in the poorest areas of Juarez. Each year at this time we try to help them raise money for their annual Thanksgiving and Christmas meals during which they feed more than 20,000 people. ✚



**Carmen and Marco Samaniego**

# A Blessed Conference!

Almost 700 people came to the Lamb & Lion Annual Bible Conference which was held in the Dallas area the last weekend in June. The theme of the conference was "Defending the Faith."

The conference began with a fantastic musical interpretation of the book of Revelation that was presented by Larry McCoy and his team of singers. The featured speakers and their topics were:

- Brannon Howse of Worldview Ministries, "The Truth of the Christian Worldview."
- Mike Gendron of Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries, "The Truth of the Bible."
- Jobe Martin of Christian Discipleship Ministries, "The Truth of Creation."
- Dave Reagan, "The Truth of the Virgin Birth."
- Eric Barger of Take a Stand Ministries, "The Truth of the Divinity of Jesus."
- Ron Rhodes of Reasoning from the Scriptures Ministries, "The Truth of the Resurrection."

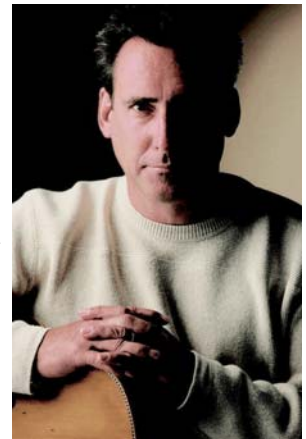
All six of these presentations are available in an album containing two DVDs. The cost is \$25.



Larry McCoy (in the center) and his team of singers present the book of Revelation in song. His wife, Faith, is on the right, and his friend, Dennis Miller is on the left.

The conference concluded with a banquet that celebrated the 30th anniversary of Lamb & Lion Ministries. The featured speaker at the banquet was Ed Hindson, one of America's foremost Bible prophecy speakers and writers. His presentation is available separately on DVD for \$5.

Plans for next year's conference have already been completed. The conference will be held once again at the Marriott Hotel in Allen, Texas (a suburb of Dallas). It will begin Friday evening, June 24, and run all day Saturday, June 25. The theme will be "Christianity Under Attack."



Dallas Holm

The conference will begin with a concert by Dallas Holm. Special music throughout the conference will be supplied by Jack Hollingsworth. The featured speakers and their topics will be:

- Kerby Anderson of Probe Ministries, "The Challenge of Islam."
- Ron Rhodes of Reasoning from the Scriptures Ministries, "The Challenge of Humanism and Atheism."
- John Morris of The Institute for Creation Research, "The Challenge of Evolution."
- James Walker of Watchman Fellowship, "The Challenge of Apostasy."
- Frank Wright, president of the National Religious Broadcasters, "The Challenge of Government."
- Dave Reagan, "The Promise of Victory."

Dr. Reagan will also be the featured speaker at the dinner on Saturday evening. The conference will be free of charge. Registration will be limited to 700 and will open after the first of the year. The tentative cost of the banquet will be \$35. ✚



Brannon Howse makes a point during his presentation about the truth of the Christian worldview.

# Ministry News

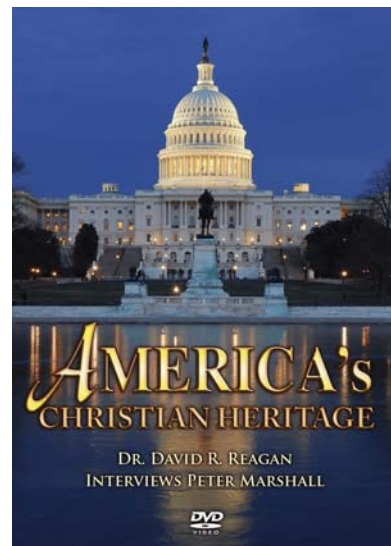
## Schedule —

In **September**, Dr. Reagan will go to Washington, D.C. to attend the meeting of the President's Council of the National Religious Broadcasters (14-15). He will return to Denver, Colorado to speak at the Stealing the Mind Conference which will be held at the Denver South Marriott Hotel (18). In **October** Dr. Reagan will speak at the annual conference of Olive Tree Ministries which will be held at Grace Church in Eden Prairie, Minnesota (8-9). In **November** Dr. Reagan will be one of the speakers at a prophecy conference to be held at First Baptist Church in Alma, Arkansas (5-7). Later that month he will lead a pilgrimage group to the Holy Land (12-23). In **December** Dr. Reagan is schedule to speak at the Annual Pre-Trib Study Group Conference in Dallas (7-9).



## New Video —

The ministry has produced a new video album featuring Peter Marshall, an expert on the Christian heritage of our nation. The album runs 70 minutes in length and contains three interviews. The first concerns America's Christian heritage. The second focuses on the current challenges to our heritage. The third consists of a fascinating conversation about Peter Marshall's famous parents and the wonderful Christian heritage they bequeathed to him. The album sells for \$12 plus the cost of shipping. To order, call 800-705-8316 Monday through Friday between 8am and 5pm Central time.



## Special Delivery! —

One of our Prophecy Partners, Merelyn Pickering, lives in Waianae, Hawaii. She often orders our resources and has gotten to know Dr. Reagan's daughter, Rachel Houck, over the phone. Each time she places an order, she bemoans the fact that it takes so long for the item to reach her in the mail. Unknown to her, Rachel and her family had been planning a vacation trip to Hawaii. Shortly before they were to leave, Merelyn called and placed an order for one of our new videos. Once again she said she wished she could get it quickly. So, Rachel decided to deliver it to her personally via special delivery! Two days later Rachel arrived at her house and surprised her. They are pictured below.



Merelyn Pickering on the left with Rachel Houck.

## Book Translations —

Our books continue to be published in foreign languages. Our Children's book, *Jesus is Coming Again!* has been published in Spanish. *God's Plan for the Ages*, our comprehensive survey of Bible prophecy, was recently published in Telugu, one of the main languages of India. Dr. Reagan's overview of the book of Revelation, *Wrath & Glory*, has been published in Telugu, Urdu (the language of Pakistan), Nepali (the language of Nepal), and Chinese. Hopefully, it will be available soon in Spanish. ✚



## Conference —

Lamb & Lion's Web Minister, Nathan Jones, has put together a special Bible prophecy conference for young adults and families. It will be held at McKinney Fellowship Church in McKinney, Texas. It will start Friday evening, October 22nd, and will continue all day Saturday, the 23rd. The theme of the conference will be "Future Hope." The conference will begin with a concert by The Andrew Heath Band and a presentation by Vic Batista, the dynamic pastor of Calvary Chapel Aventura located in the Miami, Florida area. On Saturday, the speakers will be Steve Howell, Don Perkins, and Nathan Jones. Steve Howell is the Adult Education Minister at Tonganoxie Christian Church in Tonganoxie, Kansas. Don Perkins is the founder and director of According to Prophecy Ministries in San Diego, California. You can find detailed information and registration instructions at [www.lamblion.com/futurehope](http://www.lamblion.com/futurehope).

## Prophecy Partners —



Halcie Cravens of Anderson, California, recently celebrated her 92nd birthday. She is one of our Prophecy Partners. We have 2,300 Prophecy Partners who support our ministry with prayer and finances. See [www.lamblion.com/donate.php](http://www.lamblion.com/donate.php) for details.



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## New Book Published!

### What will happen when you die?

- Will you cease to exist?
- Will you experience soul sleep?
- Will your soul be reincarnated?
- Will your body be resurrected?
- Will you go to purgatory to suffer for your sins?
- Will you go directly to Heaven or Hell?
- Will you face a judgment before God?
- Will you be given a second chance to get right with God?
- How can you be certain of life after death?

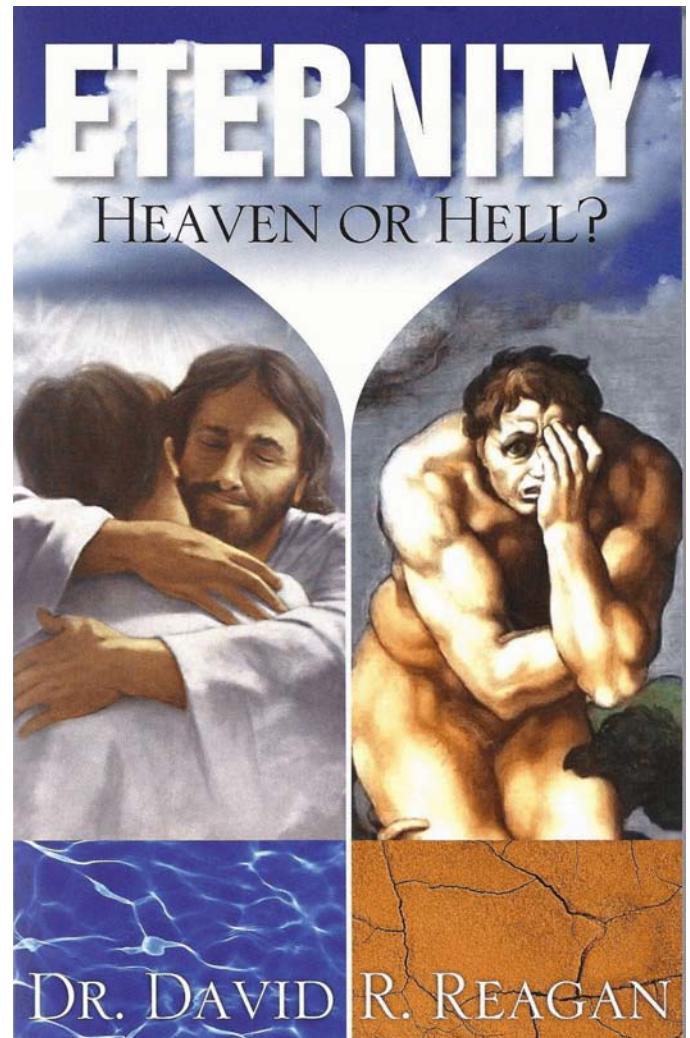
These and many other questions about death and its aftermath are dealt with in Dr. Reagan's new book, *Eternity: Heaven or Hell?*

In addition, Dr. Reagan deals with questions pertaining to salvation: Are there many roads to God? Can salvation be earned through good works? Can salvation be lost? He also takes an in-depth look at the resurrection of Jesus, examining the evidence for it and discussing its essentiality to the Christian faith.

What more important topic could there be than that of eternity? Every person who has ever lived or who is alive today has an eternal destiny of either Heaven or Hell.

Atheists deny this. Their greatest hope is that there is nothing after death. (What a hope!) But their denial of both Heaven and Hell is futile, and it violates our basic nature, for one of the instincts we are born with is the sense that there is something beyond this life.

The Bible says that God has "placed eternity in our



hearts" (Ecclesiastes 3:11), just as He has given us an instinctive knowledge that He exists (Romans 1:19 and 2:14).

Accordingly, the Bible exhorts us to live with an eternal perspective. We are to "set our minds on the things above, and not on the things that are on earth" (Colossians 3:2 and 1 John 2:15-16).

This book will help you think about eternity as never before. 200 pages. \$15. To order, call 800-705-8316 or check our website at [www.lamblion.com](http://www.lamblion.com). ❖