

new Horizons

Vol 20 No 3

May/June 2016

addressing the important issues for today and tomorrow



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CGOM

Churches Of God Outreach Ministries

With around two thousand Christian denominations vying for your attention, it's easy to miss the important issues of life and religion. It's our hope that through *New Horizons* our readers will come to understand the true meaning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Gospel was proclaimed by Jesus and by His apostles in the clearest of terms - and recorded for us in the Scriptures. Over the centuries that truth has been buried, dug up, buried again. Our desire is to restore the simple apostolic message. We hope you will be excited by what the Scriptures reveal about life, and the horizons beyond

Who We Are

The *Churches of God Outreach Ministries* is an international association of independent local assemblies - Christians who meet together for worship, instruction in the faith and fellowship. Each assembly is self-governing according to Bible principles, but co-operates through our Conference with other like-minded assemblies to work towards agreed evangelistic goals

These goals are within the framework of the commission set for his church by Jesus: "...going, therefore, disciple all nations, baptising them...and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). He further commanded that we "...Shepherd...[and] feed my sheep".

To these ends we publish Bible-based literature - eg our bi-monthly e-mail Newsletter OUTREACH, the NEW HORIZONS magazine, the BIBLE BASICS on-line home study course, and the 32-lesson Study Course. The *Outreach Ministries* also supports a network of independent fellowships and scattered brethren

We cordially invite all independent fellowships of whatever size - and individuals - to associate with us in this worldwide ministry. Our *Statement of Beliefs* and a *Publications Catalogue* is available from any of our addresses or from our web site www.cgom.org. We are pleased to offer you, without charge, any of our publications

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If you would like a copy of our *Statement of Beliefs* please request it from any of the addresses listed

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new Horizons

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Most political parties lay claim to be a 'one nation party', while radical groups seek to demolish borders between nations. Do the Christian Scriptures have a say?

The print and the broadcast media are increasingly focused on the coming in-out UK referendum: *stay*—or *leave* our association with the European Union. The future of the United Kingdom hangs in the balance, the core question being the vital one of national sovereignty.

The recent attempt to reform the EU was a failure, and the Prime Minister walked away empty-handed. As is so often the case, the public is now drowning in a torrent of misleading statistics designed to persuade, and the date chosen (June 23) avoids angry public reaction to the expected summer influx of immigrants.

The Prime Minister has brokered a deal which he claims secures our sovereignty as part of the Union, while those who wish to leave our political association with Europe believe little has been achieved. Big political and business 'guns' have lined up on opposite sides of the increasingly acrimonious argument.

European Dream

The concept of a 'United States of Europe' was conceived centuries ago—the 'European dream'—and took more concrete form over the last sixty years, now with twenty-eight nation members.

That 'dream' was conceived in the early Christian centuries, and has since been pursued by emperor after emperor, dictator after dictator, Pope after Pope. Napoleon, for example wanted to see '*...one people throughout Europe*'. Mussolini and Hitler, too, had their dreams of a United Europe. In 1965 Pope Paul VI said: '*...The Holy See hopes to see the day*

when a new Europe will arise, rich with the fullness of its rich [Catholic] traditions'. And a decade later he said that the Church alone can '*...re-awaken Europe's Christian soul where its unity is rooted*'. In Austria (1983) the Pope stated: '*...Europeans should overcome the menacing international confrontations of states and alliances and create a new united Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals*'.

Europe was consecrated to Mary by the Vatican in 1309. The European Union is the latest reincarnation of the dream. Indeed the EU flag has the twelve stars—not one per nation—and blue colour associated with the Virgin Mary.

Battle for Sovereignty ...can Britain survive?

The British people were deceived by the then Establishment led by Prime Minister Heath into joining the Union (under the guise of a free trade area) in the mid-70s, *via* a misrepresented referendum.

Sovereignty

The nation state is a divine institution. Nations develop from original family units that have grown large, each developing its unique language, culture, traditions (*see* Genesis 11). Each has a unique treasure house of God-given intellectual and economic resources and an assigned (by God) geographical territory.

The sixth century BC prophet, Daniel, explains: '*...the Most High is Ruler in the kingdom of men, and He gives it to whomever He desires*' (Daniel 4:25). The apostle Paul adds: '*...He made every nation of men of one blood, to live on all the*

face of the earth, ordaining fore-appointed seasons and boundaries of their dwelling' (Acts 17:26).

Nationhood

The ground rules for successful nationhood are patterned on the ancient nation of Israel—a nation selected by God to fulfil a promise to a faithful (to the LORD) forebear, Abraham.

What set them apart from other nations was their covenant with God: '*...Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine*' (Exodus 19:5). That covenant included their readiness to abide by the divine Law, the foundation of which is the Ten Commandments and the statutes and judgments based on it (*ch* 20f).

This, though neglected, is the gold standard for every sovereign Constitution—throughout the ages.

The fusion of disparate nations—different in language, heritage, culture—in a union flies in the face of God's wise decision to establish mankind in sovereign nations. It is noteworthy that the prophets predict the survival of nation states even during the millennial reign of the Messiah: '*...He will settle arguments between nations*' - Isaiah 2:4.

The resurrected King David, for example, will under Christ then head the Israelite nations, the House (government) of Judah and the House of Israel (Jeremiah 31:33, 30:9). Isaiah, too: '*...He [Messiah] shall judge among the nations*' (2:4). But it will be a time of co-operation and not conflict among the nations, old enmities buried: '*...In that day Israel shall be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth*' (19-24).

[*Note.* This results from the direct intervention of Jesus the Messiah and not from the gradual evangelization of mankind by the Christian church.]

Sovereignty—'*not being subject to the authority of another State*'—is the argument wielded by both sides, and surely must be at the heart of the discussion. The 'ins' claim we won't lose it nor do we need it. The 'outs' claim we have already lost it. But the 'S' word hasn't really been at the heart of the discussion, the focus instead being on the economy and the relatively small welfare benefits factor.

The God Factor

There is, however, a transcending factor that eclipses such factors as sovereignty, economy or benefits. It's the God-factor: '*...righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a shame to any people*' (Proverbs 14:34). Sin, of course, is any behaviour that conflicts with God's revealed will, and that includes His Law, His guidelines for a successful civilisation.

'*Righteousness*': in the context of nationhood that's the application of divinely-revealed law. Begin to tamper with that foundation and—whether the United Kingdom chooses 'in' or 'out' there will be an on-going deterioration in all aspects of life. The economy. Health and well-being. Financial management both public and private. Law and order. The integrity of the family. Security of our borders. God speaks on all aspects of life.

Citizens of the United Kingdom have, *via* the referendum, been given the challenge of determining the nation's future. A referendum will provide the opportunity to determine whether we remain subject to European Union laws or to again become a sovereign nation.

The nation votes—but *it is God who determines!* He '*...changes the times and the seasons; He causes kings to pass away, and sets up kings*' (Daniel 2:21).

As notes the recovering (and repentant) King of Babylon: '*...He does according to His will among the army of Heaven, and among those living in the earth. And no one is able to strike His hand or say to Him, What are You doing?*' (ch 4:35).

Historically, God, the all-powerful Creator, has manipulated kings and nations to choose to conform to His pre-determined scenario for the 'times and seasons'.

One hundred and fifty years before his accession as king, Cyrus was predicted through the prophet Isaiah to '*...complete all my [God's] pleasure*' (Isaiah 44:28). Foreseeing Israel's future captivity in Babylon, God chose Cyrus to provide the means to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple.

Earlier (c.720BC), the northern House of Israel had sunk into idolatry and civil disorder. By way of correction God stirred up the King of Assyria to remove them from the Land: '*...Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger! And My fury is the staff in their hand. I will send him against an ungodly nation [Judah]*' (Isaiah 10:5-6).

Babylon, too, exceeded common decency norms and came under condemnation. God contained them by manipulating the ancient Persian nation: '*...I stir up the Medes against them*' (Isaiah 13:17).

Still in Charge

It is gross error to imagine that God has taken 'hands off'! He remains in control of world affairs, and is especially concerned with those nations descended from His nation of Israel—several of which are now associated with the European Union.

The LORD, however, is patient, longsuffering. All these nations have strayed far from His prescribed path and are ripe for His correction, long delayed. But it is inevitable, if we are to survive. 'Israel' will, unless we turn back to God and His ways, experience a time of severe priva-

tion. God's protective hedge—His Law—has been systematically uprooted from our national polity—how we conduct our affairs.

[God's correction, note, is focused on our ultimate restoration.]

The Future

Towards the end of the first century, the apostle John was presented with a vision of the end of man's rule. It envisaged a union of ten nations in Europe, bent on forging the continent into one sovereign nation, a 'Holy Roman Empire'. This 'beast' has, as predicted, raised its head several times over the centuries under a string of dictators from Charlemagne through to Hitler and Mussolini.

The task of harmoniously welding disparate nations, cultures and religions into one by democratic means is impossible. As said a modern proponent, former Belgian Prime Minister Paul-Henri Spaak, '*...we don't want a Committee but a man of sufficient stature to hold the allegiance of all people. Send us such a man, and, be he god or devil, we will receive him*'.

In view of the present parlous financial state and the democratic deficit of the European Union, such an individual will indeed be the catalyst for full union. But it won't be a 'god' (except in his own mind)! Most of the current twenty-eight members will pull out, or be forced out. A letter to the *European Journal* (1996) wrote of '*...a European super-state from which there will be no escape short of civil war, bloodier even than the [Balkans] fracas*'.

One World

Such a leader, however, won't be content with a 'United States of Europe'. A Resolution of the *Congress of Europe* in 1948 states: '*...The creation of a United Europe must be seen as an essential step towards the creation of a United World*'.

That's what the Christian Scriptures have predicted. And that's why Jesus Christ must intervene to prevent His precious creation from destruction. **Q**

A great lie undergirds all the world's major religions. It could just ensnare you into idolatry - and death

Babylon: fountain of error

Religion appears as a confused jumble of sometimes weird and wonderful ideas, a hodge-podge of strange notions, a witch's brew of exotic doctrine. Yet there's a surprising unity of belief underlying all the great world religions. On close examination it's clear that the fabric of the world's varied and conflicting religions is formed of the same warp and weft, the same materials!

And - perhaps most shocking of all in our culture - the same threads are woven into *Christianity*!

Ever since the idea was publicized by Alexander Hislop in his densely researched and thoroughly documented book *The Two Babylons*, most informed Protestants have clearly seen the relationship between ancient Babylonian religion and the doctrines of Roman Christianity. What's devastating is that these same teachings are by no means confined to the Roman Catholic Church. The same fundamental precepts pervade all of main-stream Christianity!

An Unfinished Revolution

Of course there are differences. The Protestant Reformation - that unfinished revolution - swept away the more obvious abuses of Bible teachings. Gone was the notion of salvation by works. Gone was the error of the "unbloody sacrifice", the Mass. Gone was much of the rank pagan superstition. Gone, too, were indulgences and adoration of images and priestcraft, and the Mariolatry so beloved of a succession of Popes. Martin Luther and his followers succeeded in "cleansing the temple" of 16th century Christendom of its more overt abuses of Bible teachings.

Their efforts - often resulting horrifically in the blood of martyrdom - ensured the survival of the Christian religion before it could be swept away by demonic forces. We can't but be grateful for their dedication, their response to the call of God, and

their love for His Word.

But did the Reformers go far enough? Were the changes they instituted more than superficial? Did they plumb the depths of the Babylonian conspiracy designed to enslave mankind in *one world religion*?

The fact is, there remain substantial doctrinal abuses in mainstream Christianity which pave the way for the fruition of that conspiracy in our day. The Bible clearly reveals that just prior to the return of Jesus Christ to our planet as King of kings, "...*all the world*" - except God's faithful elect - will unite in the worship of the arch-conspirator, Satan.

Billions Deceived

Can you conceive what that means? Already there are six billion plus human lives eating and breathing and surviving on Earth. Perhaps one in three claim to be Christian - near enough two thousand million souls! Will *they* worship Satan? There will be a choice. But the unsavoury alternative will be exile or martyrdom. How many will choose to resist Satan's wily designs? Will you?

Most Christians, of course, are "nominal" - they simply don't think to take a stand against error. Especially when the alternative is unemployment, starvation, torture or death! They will - without too many qualms and perhaps at first unknowingly - "...*worship the Beast*" and his mentor, Satan.

But there are other millions of men and women who profess Jesus Christ and who are strong in their belief. What of them? It's clear from Scripture that God promises at least some of his elect a measure of protection

from the coming holocaust. The question is, will you - if you class yourself as one of God's elect - recognize the false world religion when you see it? Or will you fall for it? *Have* you fallen for it?

Satan is the arch-deceiver! We're told in Scripture that he deceives the whole world (Revelation 12:9). That he blinds men to the truth of the Gospel (II Corinthians 4:4). That *the whole world* "...*lies in the Wicked One*" (I John 5:19). That there's a spiritual veil over all nations only to be removed after the return of the Messiah (Isaiah 25:7).

And that many believers in Jesus will come to embrace "strong delusion" (II Thessalonians 2:11). How can this come about? How can even Christians embrace Satanic worship? What is there about the new satanic world religion that will attract the worship of all mankind?

Let's look at some aspects of this "new" religion.

A New Religion?

The new religion that will bind all mankind in its deadly embrace is here - *now*!

Around the world millions are - usually unknowingly - turning to a counterfeit religion. And they are not all from LaVey's 'church of Satan'. They come from all world religions. They are Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist. *And they are from Christian roots, too.*

A few wear outward regalia but most are just like the average John and Mary Doe next door. And probably are! And, likely, they sit next to you in the pew on Sundays.

But however sincere in their belief they may be, however ignorant of its source, the devotees of this religion are participating in the final grand-slam attempt by Satan to dethrone God and to revel in the adulation of

Quotations from the Bible in New Horizons are from translations which clearly express the meaning in modern terms

all mankind. Mankind's arch rival will stop at nothing to achieve his ends!

In the next few years all he has worked and plotted to achieve for six thousand years will come within his grasp. He will all but succeed!

The lies he expressed in the Garden of Eden, and the teachings built on them, have now become the building blocks of virtually every form of religion. His takeover of mankind is - but for one factor - ascertained.

An Old Religion

The "new" religion is in fact the same religion Satan taught Mother Eve in Eden - and spread throughout the world from Nimrod's kingdom in ancient Babylon. For centuries ancient Babylon was its headquarters, gushing its foul stream worldwide - westwards to Europe, and eastward to India, to China. Its capital moved to Pergamos in Asia Minor in the 2nd century BC. And then was transplanted to the city on seven hills - Rome. Soon it will be on the move again, this time to Jerusalem!

The Reformers rightly identified Rome and its religion as deeply scarred with error. But they missed a fundamental point. The religion of Rome is merely one outlet pouring out a catechism of error mixed with truth into the mind of man! For the great underlying fountain of error flows through myriad openings.

Wherever the lies are taught - there is Satan's lie. And no great world religion is uncontaminated!

The multitudes of humanity have indeed been deceived into rejecting the truth of God and accepting the lies of the evil adversary of all that's holy and good. Hindu, Muslim, animist, Buddhist, Confucian, Shintoist - and, let it be said, Christian - have all drunk deeply from the "golden cup" of error poured out from ancient Babylon.

And soon the "god" who authored the error will demand open worship from all mankind!

Do You Believe...?

Let's examine one error common to all mainstream religions. It's a Satanic lie, and underpins all false religion from the beginning! From it stems evil teachings that blind mankind to truth, and chain him to error.

Do you as a Christian believe there is a *hell fire*? That - with "refinements" to cater for the innocence of childhood or other exceptions - unrepentant men, women and children will at death for ever be tormented in a fiery pit totally subservient to the whims of the Devil and his demonic hordes? However avoided in "polite" Christian circles and conversation, this is a basic teaching of the Christian faith. Yet it stems from the great lie taught to our first parents in Eden!

Do you believe that billions now dead are forever lost and being tormented in a fiery hell - because the missionary didn't reach them in time, because they never had opportunity to accept Jesus Christ? This, too, stems from the same lie.

Do you believe that your departed loved ones are now in *heaven* "enjoying" the presence of God? Billions do - and not only Christians! The idea comes from that lie.

Do you believe in *re-incarnation* - the idea that each of us has had a succession of lives in order to become "good"? Most of mankind believes it, including increasing numbers of professing Christians. That, too, comes from the lie!

Do you believe that man's *soul* (or spirit) can after death freely roam around, haunt its former residence or friends, make contact with the living directly or through a medium or a ouija board or other device? *That same lie!*

Do you believe that you are, now, 'god'? That all men have in them the 'divine spark'? *That same lie!*

What was the lie taught by Satan to our first parents?

"You Won't Die"

Simply - "...*you shall not surely die*". When Mother Eve rehearsed to Satan what God had told Adam about the awful effects of eating from the forbidden tree, he assured her "You shall not surely die. Eat of this and you will live for ever - just like a god". Billions have believed him - including virtually all of mankind now alive.

Yet here's what God told our first parents: '*...the LORD God commanded the man, saying: 'Of every tree of the garden thou may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it; for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die'*' (Genesis 2:16-17). That could not be any clearer!

It has caused millions of tortured deaths in the name of religion since it was first uttered. In a sense, it has been responsible for every human death since creation! For in believing the satanic lie death passed on all mankind. And this false notion has been responsible for uncounted - except by God! - deaths of the people of God throughout the ages.

It simply isn't true! In this teaching of the *immortality of the soul*, Satan forged iron chains of the spirit that bind mankind to a lifetime of superstition.

Evil Power

The stark fact is that through six millennia Satan has prepared the minds of all mankind to give him the worship he craves.

Satan is an incredibly intelligent spirit entity - but an intelligence that is warped, confused, incredibly evil, and implacably opposed to the Creator God. His is a mind that is dedicated to overthrowing God from His heavenly throne. A mind that will do everything in his power to replace the Almighty Creator! That uses every person or organization or religion or government or philosophy to further his evil ends. Who appears as "an angel of light" promising eternal life, if necessary, to ensnare and deceive.

cont'd p.6

Governments focus on ‘the economy’ as the measure of national prosperity. Are they right?

“It’s the Economy”: really?

Famously, the battle cry for an American election was ‘*It’s the economy, stupid*’. It won the vote. Facing a referendum on its sovereignty, the British electorate, too, are told ‘it’s about the economy’.

And, of course, the ‘pound (or dollar) in your pocket’ is a high priority for most of us. Yet in the West, at least, we enjoy greater material prosperity than previous generations. Earth has yielded vast resources that have more than compensated for our burgeoning population growth, while ingenuity has figured how to increase productivity. We all benefit materially.

Much of our ‘prosperity’ derives from reliance on the usurious banking industry. In Britain, for example, the private debt burden is estimated at well over a *trillion* pounds (£1.7t). That’s £1,700,000,000,000! The US national debt is officially four trillion dollars but the true figure has been estimated at more than five times that. And wars don’t help.

National debt can be absorbed—for a time. But it will in the end catch up with us, and financial experts are already screaming renewed warnings. Personal debt bites more quickly. Overspend and the bankruptcy court with all its painful consequences looms. Your home may be repossessed and you are out on the street. Your family and business ruined. Friendships severed.

Who’s To Blame?

To seek improved quality of life is praiseworthy and to be considered by all. And indeed given human ingenuity and the products of nature’s bounty it is disgraceful if such improvement stalls. Government—ignoring personal responsibility—seeks to re-distribute national income, to grab from the productive to help, often, the feckless and thus provoking tax-dodging, the black economy and other illegality.

We can pin blame for excessive na-

tional debt, at least in part—and especially but not exclusively in ‘third world’ nations—on corruption and profligacy at the top of government and business. Failed technology drains the national coffers—for example Government computer systems. And the arms industry absorbs vast sums. Unnecessary bureaucracy, too, with multiple thousands of useless jobs financed from the public (taxpayers) purse. And then there’s the huge ‘welfare’ drain. No wonder national debt soars.

What of personal debt? The Christmas season gives a clue, for that’s when most debt accumulates around the neck of unbelievers and believers alike. It’s the time for perhaps a third of retail sales—also a clue.

There’s a malaise in the human heart that wants to spend, spend, spend. Possessions—we want them. A more luxurious home, more exotic holidays, nicer designer clothes, better furnishings, well-turned-out children, treasured *objets d’art*. And if the factor that underpins these—a sufficient income—can’t be achieved by legal pursuits then there’s always the illegal, the ‘black economy’.

National Prosperity

We may, in general, be more prosperous than before, have more ‘goods’, more leisure, live longer. Is a strong economy, though, *real* prosperity?

The downside, what we all live with,

is neglect of the sick and the elderly, widespread violence, broken dysfunctional families and gross immorality in high places, fraudulent practices and corruption, a lack of integrity and the grasping for possessions. - and the decline of religious faith.

Government—they bear much responsibility for all this—has failed to curb such excesses. Indeed, “*The whole head is sick and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot to the head there is no soundness in it*” (Isaiah 1:5). There are clear reasons.

Imagine a society in which there is the mirror image of this ‘downside’: the elderly and the disadvantaged are respected and cherished, intolerance of every form of violence, minimal divorce, adultery and ‘co-habitation’ marginalized, sound transparent practice in government and business, justice upheld, honesty everywhere, and contentment.

Crime curbed (police time, unlocked doors). Lasting marriage supported (divorce eats up billions of tax revenue). Financial probity (trust the banks?). Burdensome pressures and finances would be minimized as exorbitant taxation is rolled away. But, did you notice anything? Such good practice is age-old.

Such practices are the public face of the divine pattern for a prosperous society. Paint in one more brush stroke and the picture is clear, for there is still a missing ingredient.

Through Moses and confirmed by Jesus and his apostles God tells us: “*Take heed lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes, lest when you have eaten and are full, and have built goodly houses and live in them, and your herds and flocks multiply, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, then your heart be lifted up and you forget the*

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free 32-lesson Study
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is for many a
‘Book of Mystery’

unsigned articles are by the Editor

LORD your God" (Deuteronomy 8:11-14)

This solemn warning was delivered to ancient Israel upon their inheritance of the Land of Canaan. But doesn't it ring true to our twenty-first century Western nations? What prosperity is ours. Haven't we '*eaten and are full*'? Don't we have '*goodly houses*'? Isn't there abundance of agricultural products? Only at the margins of society are these benefits scarce. And haven't we '*forgotten the LORD our God*'?

The Pay-off

But are not such benefits the product of our ingenuity, our relentless effort, our industry? Hear the Creator: "*Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth'. You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth*" (v. 18). We don't remember Him. We have forgotten. We neglect the spirit.

That's why the economy bumps along. Why nationally and as families and individuals our resources are '*...he that earns wages puts it into a bag with holes*' (Haggai 1:6). Why hard cash is poured by the billion into public services only to dissipate without effect. Half the year, near enough, we work to pay our burden of taxation.

Individually, we waste resources on unnecessary possessions, time-wasting entertainment. Billions poured away into often useless public service 'jobs', into the deep trough of self indulgence, into a perverted justice system, into the destruction of national sovereignty. *That's* what keeps the economy afloat. But it floats on a candy-floss foundation. The world's economies balance on a knife-edge.

First Cause

At the mere mention of 'God', of course, the scoffers swarm in droves. We have, in government and in our personal lives, long forsaken Him.

The clear logic of a super-intelligent

Babylon...cont'd from p.4

Will you be deceived into his worship? Will you believe the great signs and wonders he - and his ministers - will use to gain your allegiance? Virtually every person on earth will believe them, will literally begin to worship the Devil. Only God's elect will not be taken in—if they tremble at God's Word, stand in awe of Him and submit to His revelation in the Scriptures.

You can resist the wiles of Satan - *if you learn to love the truth.*

Love the Truth!

The Bible - the written Word of God - has been delivered to us across a sea of the blood of those who preserved it, translated it, published it, defended it. It represents 'the faith once delivered to the saints' (Jude 3). It contains the divine truth.

First Cause is ignored along with the knowledge that He remains sovereign—and intimately interested in His *kosmos*, His creation.

It's '*the foolish person*' who has said in his heart '*there is no God*' (Psalm 14:1). The lesson of history is that nations rise—and catastrophically fall. *Here's why:*

And it shall be that if you do forget the LORD your God and walk after other gods and serve them and worship them I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish, as the nations which the LORD destroyed before your face [and we have the histories!] because you would not be obedient to the voice of the LORD your God

Deuteronomy 8:19-20

That voice is a clarion call from the pages of the Scriptures, from the Eternal God.

Is it already too late? Can government, can individuals, acknowledge the real source of prosperity? That it is the sovereign Creator who gives

The Scriptures teach that many who become Christian will indeed be deceived. For '*God will send them strong delusion that they will believe that lie*' (II Thessalonians 2:11). And why will they be so deluded? '*Because - v.10 - they received not a love of the truth*'.

Every truly converted man or woman will longingly desire to seek out the truths of the Bible. They will, as Jesus himself

said and did, want to live "*by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God*" (Matt 4:4). They will diligently pore over God's Word to confirm what their preacher tells them (Acts 17:11)! And they will refuse to believe what they cannot find there.

It is *urgent* that all of who desire to faithfully serve the Creator God disentangle themselves from the web of Satan's insidious lies. **Ω**

Request the companion articles:

When Someone Dies The Faith Once Delivered

The Biblical Festivals

ETE Eternity - the closing of Man's Day after the Millennium?
FOT The Festival of Tabernacles
God's plan for the ages of man
OTC The Origins of the Calendar which festival calendar?
PAS Passover and Unleavened Bread—how to observe these days?
PDC Passover - A Double Celebration
Passover/Lord's Supper
RHD Religious Holidays - or Holy Days? which do you observe?
SIP The Sabbath
a Prophecy of Eternal Life
TAB Tabernacles - mankind in the flesh
a panorama of human history

available on-line or in print

Festivals 2016

Lord's Supper	April 21: Thurs evg
Unleavened Bread	April 23-29
Pentecost	June 12
Trumpets	October 3
Atonement	October 12
Tabernacles	October 17-23
Eighth Day	October 24

us wealth-giving power? That if He is to install that programme He requires obedience—submission to His revealed plan for all mankind? That any other 'programme' we run will cause our 'system' to crash? It's *not* the economy. *It's us.* **Ω**

Globalism - is it a threat, or a promise of a better world?

Ever so slowly, but with seeming inevitability, our world creeps toward 'global solutions for global problems'. For some this is a move towards a world without conflict, a world of equality and a world of utopian perfection. Others fear globalism will lead to totalitarianism, the subjection of mankind to an elite cabal of dictatorial tyrants.

There can be little doubt that the pooling of resources can work material benefit for our world. As 'many run to and fro' - easy travel, access to information at the touch of a button (sometimes!), imports of the rich variety of goods produced from earth's bounty - all combine to add 'spice' and variety to our lives. But there's a downside.

Technology blurs boundaries between sovereign nations. Missiles can at the touch of a button be despatched thousands of miles with pinpoint accuracy. Nuclear explosions - remember Chernobyl - provoke mayhem and long-term suffering across continents. Industrial and domestic pollutants from around the globe affect all of us in our own back yards. Outbreaks of deadly disease are scattered worldwide by our fast-moving transport networks. And let's not forget the worldwide internet - a tool that scatters ideologies, and tutors and facilitates terrorists.

Not unrelated to technology is the upsurge in *terrorism*. Suicide murderers emerge from nowhere (but usually from Islam) to cause mayhem, to scatter innocent body parts around hotels, tower blocks, trains and cafes.

Then there's the *economy*. Vast trading blocs exert economic pressure on weak nations. World trade organizations impose tariffs affecting the daily life of all of us worldwide. Big Business dominates, absorbing smaller enterprises.

On the *political front* the United Nations Organization (it is not a government) stealthily extends its influence

towards one-world government. A move is afoot to impose a UN levy on every barrel of oil, thus for the first time introducing a *world tax* on all who are dependent on the oil economy - pretty well all of us. Power blocs - such as the European Union - seek to amass political, economic and military authority over hundreds of millions.

Let's not forget, too, the attempts to introduce *religious unity*. Near enough two-thirds of mankind - Protestants and Catholics - are about ready to join forces under the auspices of the Roman Church. Efforts are exerted to fudge the boundaries between Christianity and Islam. A billion of Hindu belief worship 'gods many'. While *multi-culturalism* is promoted as the saviour - but a false saviour - of racial harmony. Even the supposedly Christian festival of Christmas - celebrating, in fact, the 'birth' of the sun god - is becoming universally observed.

The Reason Why

All such factors conspire to give an invisible push towards one world with a single global government. Given the problems that face us on a global scale it offers the most likely solution. It takes on an air of inevitability.

Of late, terrorism occupies the energies of our Western democratic governments. Control is presented as the only reasonable solution, a necessity.

In the UK, for example, Government is urgent to introduce universal identity cards. The British Prime Minister sought - forcefully but unsuccessfully - to legalize a ninety day detainment without trial. The ancestral right of *habeas corpus* is, in Britain and in the United States (Guantanamo), trodden underfoot - presented as an anti-terrorist necessity. Britain has more CCTV surveillance than any other nation. 'The Englishman's home is his castle' summarized our right to privacy. Now the UK Government proposes to demand we 'pull up the drawbridge' to admit inspectors into

ONE WORLD...

our homes to assess our tax liability. Even freedom of expression is threatened.

Power and authority, increasingly, is removed from personal responsibility into Politbureau-style State control.

Pitfalls

We need, however, to embark on such practices with eyes wide open and with caution. ID cards would, states the London *Times* newspaper, 'create one of the most far-reaching systems of government surveillance in the world'. And, says The Guardian, 'it will become impossible to make the smallest transaction without revealing your identity. The innocent, however, have much to hide; it is called a private life'.

Consider the words of the great British statesman, William Pitt: "*Necessity is the plea for every infringement of human freedom. It is the argument of tyrants. It is the creed of slaves*". It has been suggested that all revolutions end in reinforcement of the State. (Rather, in the hands of those who control the State.)

Whether from good intentions, or from blind ignorance or from evil intent such measures move us step-by-step towards a totalitarian State. The drive for efficient government tends towards dictatorship. Notes one author: "*Lenin, Stalin, Mao...knew that when all power is vested in the State, and when those controlling the State can claim to act in the name of historical inevitability, then you have the recipe for totalitarianism*" (Daily Mail).

The erosion of national sovereignty and the lust for power that dwells in unscrupulous leaders tends towards multi-national governments and ultimately to world government. How long before the 'United Nations' - now an assembly of sovereign states - becomes a 'World Government'?

The Predicted Outcome

It is alleged - by 'conspiracy theorists' - that there are dark and unseen forces patiently driving the momentum towards world government. The Bildeberger group, the CFR, the promoters of a 'United States of Europe', the New World Order, the Illuminati - such secretive bodies are, supposedly, manipulating national leaders and world events to that end.

Conspiracy or not, the outcome of such human plans are in the unseen hands of one who will ensure all 'goes to plan'. That outcome has been predicted millennia ago. And it is not pretty!

In the hands of man, government has failed abysmally. Mankind, throughout six thousand years of recorded civilisation, has striven for a Utopian dream. But apart from a few intermittent decades of relative peace the dream has been a nightmare. It simply isn't within the ability of the human mind to sustain peace and prosperity - even within a single nation never mind a host of nations or the entire world of disunited nations.

That 'unseen hand' - the all-powerful Creator God - has given us a 'week' of millennia - six thousand years - to prove our willingness - and our ability - to rule by His perfect revealed Law. We have failed. Looking down the centuries He foresaw the inevitable end product of human government. Rather than rule *His* way - of harmonious co-operation - successive governments have perversely and bloodily competed, raped Earth's resources, greedily amassed personal wealth and trodden down and massacred the 'little people'.

One World

Man's week is about over. But there's one more 'hour': the final roll of the dice is universal control of the world. That's where human leadership is heading. Democracy has failed to bring it to fruition, and wily politicians work subtly behind closed doors to introduce their nefarious dream of control.

The apostle John in vision witnessed

a final attempt at world domination. Earth.

Swiftly on the world scene will arise an awe-inspiring atheistic military power that will gain authority over every race, every nation, every creed. It will be revered by all mankind. All who cling to a pure faith in the Creator, in Jesus Christ, will be subdued.

Itself anti-God, this entity will, however, be supported by a miracle-working universal religious power, resistance to its diktats being rewarded with death.

But the entire Satan-inspired system will exercise its power only for a brief three and a half years. The 'Babylonian' destructive dictatorship will be crushed - by the return of the LORD, Jesus the Messiah.

New World Order

Human ineptitude will bring our planet to the brink of extinction. Divine intervention alone can save us. Only the application to government of divine wisdom can usher in the Utopia for which man cries out. Jesus will implement such a government - right here, on Planet

At his coming, those in whom dwells the Spirit of God will rise from the grave to reign with him over 'earth's huddled masses'. The sad remnant of men and women who survive the coming chaos will be nourished back to sanity.

They and their children will, under divine rule, learn the true principles that promote a productive and happy life. Successive generations will learn God's ways - and be prepared to live eternally.

Notice that all those who rule alongside Jesus in that thousand-year Kingdom have the Spirit of God dwelling in them in this life—through repentance, baptism and a life of spiritual growth. When Jesus reigns, all mankind will be freed from the restraining influence of the spiritual forces that now blind us to the way of peace. That Spirit will then indwell mankind freely.

There will be one King, one government, one faith - one world shepherded back towards perfection. Ω

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An Image

Whether or not the return of our Saviour is imminent, it is clear that we are on the verge of troubling times. The economy of major nations is about to implode despite man's efforts. The very elements of our planet are volatile. Disease stalks our world. Social norms break down. But '*...be ready also, for the Son of Man comes at an hour when you think not*' (Luke 12:40).

Before He comes it is perhaps worth our attention to consider one who will precede the return of Jesus—described in the Scriptures as 'the Beast' and 'the man of sin'. Even if Jesus doesn't come until half a century from now this being will already walk in our midst. What will he be like?

Undoubtedly he will already be busy 'networking', mixing among 'the great

and the good [so-called]' and at the world's 'top table'. A man of substance, too, having amassed great wealth. Intelligent, and a skilled and cunning and ruthless leader. But a deceitful liar with Messianic aspirations. To gain access to high places he will present himself as a man of peace, and a peace-maker. In his guise of gaining influence he will ingratiate himself with unsavoury, corrupt and dictatorial leaders around the world.

To enhance his work alongside the 'false prophet'—as predicted in the Scriptures—he will in the beginning of his master plan assume the mantle of religion to the extent of changing the world through thinly-veiled religious wars.

This is the template for the coming 'man of sin'. Be on the look-out for him. Ω

MiniStudy

Confess Your Sin!

'He that covers his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesses and forsakes them shall have mercy' (Proverbs 28:13)

We all have a good idea of what ails us. But we tend to keep it hidden, to suppress it, don't we—*unless* we have got used to a particular pattern of our negative behaviour ('sin', a 'seared conscience'). King Solomon (see above) well understood this relationship between what we do and think, and our health and prosperity, as do many Bible writers, and the importance of 'confession'.

- We humans are a complex mix of the 'physical' and what could be termed the 'spiritual'. And both states interact. What we do and indeed what we think is ultimately reflected in our physical—and spiritual—well-being. Note how the angry person becomes red in the face, the heart beating furiously! Understanding this interaction is a key to our spiritual growth in Christ and to physical health
- Writes the aged apostle John '*...dear friend, I pray that all goes well for you. I hope that you are as strong in body, as I know you are in spirit*' (III John 2 CEV). A key to achieving that is—*confession*. Everyone at some time has confessed '*Oops—I shouldn't have done that!*'. Whether or not we recognize it, '*...all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*' (Romans 3:23) and the result is a 'slow death' (*ch* 5:12) as the effects eat away at our physical and mental wellbeing
- *Sin*, however, isn't merely the occasional swear word or angry outburst but is clearly defined in the Christian Scriptures—and indeed is understood by every faith. It is 'the violation of the law of our being'. In Bible terms it is 'lawlessness' (Gk *anomia*), as summarized by the 'Ten Commandments'. Mankind at our creation was endowed with a 'spirit' which is created to optimally function in accordance with physical and spiritual 'laws', the flouting of which has inevitable adverse consequences for health and well-being
- Whether or not we are conscious of our transgressions of that law they have a cumulative physical and mental affect. This 'guilt' (whether or not recognized as such) manifests in ill-health, depression *etc.* As King David records: '*...When I did not confess my sins, I was worn out from crying all day long*' (Psalm 32:3), adding: '*...Because of your anger, I am in great pain; my whole body is diseased because of my sins. I am drowning in the flood of my sins; they are a burden too heavy to bear*' (38:3-4). 'God's anger' is the natural consequence of our lawlessness
- We must, then, 'get it off our chest'—that is, *confess!* That poor health, those troubling thoughts may well be the effects of our (perhaps unrecognized) guilty conscience. As said Solomon: '*...whoso confesses and forsakes them [our sins] shall have mercy*' (Proverbs 28:13). But that means we have identified the sin in our lives, that some introspection is required—as writes Paul in the context of the annual Lord's Supper: '*...let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and let him drink of the cup; for he eating and drinking unworthily eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord. For this reason many among you are weak and feeble, and many sleep [ie are dead] For if we discerned ourselves, we would not be judged*' (I Corinthians 11:28-31)
- The New Testament word for 'confess' signifies '*to profess from the heart*'. Not just an acknowledgment that '*I did ...*' but a true change of heart and behaviour, with a recognition that, as said King David, '*...I have sinned and done evil in your sight*'. Sin, surely is against God, but if a third person (s) is involved we are to '*...confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous person accomplishes much*' (James 5:16). Allowing a dispute to fester is bad for the health!
- Ultimately, of course, we confess to God, for it is only through His grace and the sacrifice and shed blood of Jesus Christ our Saviour that the burden of sin can be lifted, that peace of mind and body is restored: '*...Against You, You only, I have sinned, and done evil in Your eyes*' (Psalm 51:4) **Ω**

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