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January - March 2025

BIBLE NEWS PROPHECY



25 Things to Watch in 2025

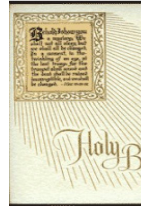
Don't Let Doubt, Despondency
and Discouragement Ruin
Your Life!

Really Have Faith

BIBLE NEWS PROPHECY



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About the Front Cover: Artwork developed for the Continuing Church of God.

Bible News Prophecy magazine is published by the Continuing Church of God, 1036 W. Grand Avenue, Grover Beach, CA, 93433. www.ccog.org

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Bible News Prophecy-SUPPORTED BY YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

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Editor in Chief: Bob Thiel; Copy/Proofing Editor: Joyce Thiel; Proofreader: Jaison Curtis; SBC Course Assister: Shirley Gestro. Words added in the following { } were added by the editor. Photos: All photos come from the Thiel family or public domain sources such as Wikipedia, Public Domain Photos, Unsplash, and Pixabay or certain governments (unless attribution is given) or (like book covers) were developed for the Continuing Church of God.



25 Things to Watch in 2025

Jesus said:

33 Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is. 34 It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch. 35 Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming -- in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning -- 36 lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. 37 And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!" (Mark 13:32-37)

Jesus said to "Watch," and He meant to watch events that were consistent with what He pointed to earlier in that chapter.

Here are 25 things to watch in 2025 during this time, and prior to the start of the Great Tribulation:

1. Scoffing in the Last Days
2. Immorality Prophecies Being Fulfilled
3. Media, Internet, and Other Censorship
4. Weather Sorrows and Troubles
5. Earthquakes and Volcanoes
6. The White Horse of the Apocalypse
7. Strife and the Red Horse of War
8. Trade Issues
9. The Deal of Daniel 9:27
10. Knowledge Increasing
11. Debt
12. US Dollar Dominance will Decrease
13. CBDC and 666
14. Gold
15. Unrest, Terror, and the Dividing of the USA
16. Europe Will Work to Reorganize
17. Europe Will Have a Great Army and Many Ships
18. Steps Towards the Formation of the King of the South
19. The Time of the Gentiles will Lead to Armageddon

20. Jews Ready to Sacrifice

21. Inventions of evil things

22. The Incoming US Presidential Administration

23. Totalitarian Steps

24. Preparation for the Short Work

25. Fulfillment of Matthew 24:14 and 28:19-20

For item 22, watch how Europe reacts to the new US Presidential Administration. For the other 24 items, we saw steps being taken to partially fulfill them in 2024 — and we expect additional movement and/or information on them in 2025.

Jesus also said:

34 "But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. 35 For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36 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 21:34-36)

Anyway, in our video and radio programs, as well as at COGwriter.com, we often highlight news items to watch.

But as Jesus said, we also are to do more than JUST watch and not be caught up with the ways of the world. We are also to pray — and we all should strive to improve so that we will be counted worthy to escape what is going to happen.

According to other words of Jesus (cf. Revelation 3), not all Christians will be accounted worthy (see also Revelation 12:14-17). But, if you at least watch and pray, and take proper action, and gather together early enough (cf. Zephaniah 2:1-3) with the Philadelphian remnant, you may be protected from the hour of trial that will affect the whole earth (Revelation 3:7-10).

Don't Let Doubt, Despondency and Discouragement Ruin Your Life!



By Garner Ted Armstrong

The following article was written by the late Garner Ted Armstrong of the old Radio Church of God in October of 1963 (and hence is in the public domain and can be used in this magazine). Though some things he mentions are dated, the idea that Christians should have faith and confidence in God is an unchanging truth.

EVERYONE wants to be happy. And life was meant to be happy filled with thrills, joy, pleasures, and rewarding experiences!

Why is it, then, so very FEW seem to really enjoy life?

Discouragement, despondency and frustration are not limited to the poverty-stricken and the shut-ins alone! This universal disease of inferiority, timidity and doubt afflicts people in ALL walks of life—every income bracket!

Whether through failure in business, the loss of a loved one, disappointment at unachieved goals, or severe discouragement through handicapping accident — the result is the same — terrible unhappiness, and a “what’s the use” attitude. But whatever the apparent cause, the one ROOT cause is always the same! That one root cause is simply not knowing WHY YOU WERE BORN, in the first place!

Not one person on earth, once he understands the TRUE PURPOSE in human life, the great and awesome DESTINY of every human being — the

tremendous POTENTIAL of each of us, {should} suffer from these terrible feelings of inner doubt, inferiority and frustration {for long}.

So, whatever your status, whether wealthy businessman, elderly pensioner, partially disabled shut-in, or young American housewife, you need to understand the REAL CURE for your doubts and discouragement!

The Psychologists’ “Cure”

But can you “kid” yourself out of your troubles? Can any of you who are confined to your beds “delude” yourselves into thinking you are not in bed? Can a person who has recently lost a husband or a wife “talk himself” out of his despondency? Modern psychologists advance empty theories of SELF-confidence — trying to show people how to overcome their feelings of insecurity, timidity, or despondency.

But these very “cures” of the modern psychologists oftentimes are not the CURE — but the real CAUSE of much of this despondency. My father has told me

about a book he read in his late teens, titled, He Can Who Thinks He Can. It was one of the “inspiration” books published in those years—several by this same author, Orison Swett Marden.

These books had a profound influence on my father. He has told me how, as a boy, he was always a follower instead of a leader, filled with a feeling of inferiority. Then, at age 16, away from home for the first time on a summer vacation job, his employer continually expressed confidence in him — told him he was destined to make a big success in life — fired him with ambition and zeal.

For the first time he began to believe in himself. Confidence skyrocketed. These “inspiration” or “pep” books implanted the idea he could accomplish anything if he only thought he could, prepared diligently for it, worked hard and energetically at it, and stuck with it through thick and thin. Perhaps you’ve heard him explain, in his broadcasts, how he studied intensively, “burned the midnight oil,” adopted a rapid, “hustler” walking gait, generated boundless energy commensurate with a belief in himself that displayed intense “cockiness,” and simply “oozed” self-confidence and conceit.

But because he studied incessantly, thought intensively about what he was doing, and worked industriously, he was becoming successful — unusually successful, in his field, for a young man his age. He had gone, as the few who leap out of the inferiority rut usually do, over to the opposite extreme. That’s human nature. But he has also told you, over the air, how terribly he had to suffer, later, to have this cancerous disease of belief in himself cut out, and replaced with THE ONLY RIGHT KIND OF CONFIDENCE!

More of that, later.

My father had adopted the psychologists’ cure for inferiority. And then he had, in turn, to be cured of that cure! It’s human nature to go from one wrong extreme to the other. Instead of finding the REAL CAUSE of his troubles, man has tried to deal with the effect. Many popular modern writers and philosophers have written books and articles telling

people how to overcome this timidity and inferior feeling.

“Self-Confidence”?

The methods usually recommended for developing confidence include positive thinking, the desire to reach others and the expression of SELF. The doubts and fears will flee, they say, with faith in yourself. To cultivate this faith, you must free yourself from hesitancy and anxiety by “kidding” yourself into believing you really have the assurance you lack. This means flattery of the self, careful coddling and pampering of the self. Among businessmen’s groups, speakers’ clubs, lodges, and women’s clubs, these practices are followed. There is the usual insincere flattery, on-the-surface discussions, empty, useless and profitless conversation.

The real objective behind this practice is what other people think of you.

The only goal set forth for gaining self-assurance is that of gaining more friends, having people “think well of you,” and the acquiring of material possessions. By telling yourself “I’m pretty good” or, “I’ll make it all right, I don’t need anybody else,” the “moderns” assure their eager followers they may have plenty of self-confidence.

The ways of this modern society, of flattery, back-slapping and handshaking each other into believing in themselves, lead to the false values and the synthetic foundation for REAL CONFIDENCE. The flattery will begin to take effect. The one being flattered begins to really believe in himself. He begins to think these things are really true about him, and perhaps he is the best speaker, the most personality-filled and competent man in the group after all.

What a let-down it is, what a disheartening SHOCK it is, when this individual finds all the pseudo-confidence has fled, that he cannot meet a difficult situation, and all his ego and trust in SELF is shattered! Then, after being swept to the heights of SELF-confidence and trust in the SELF, he is dashed

to the gutter of despair and hopelessness — feeling himself to be a complete FAILURE.

For this is exactly what happened to my father.

God was calling him for a very special mission. So, God took away his business — his success — shattered his self-confidence — plummeted him from the heights of egotistic conceit all the way down to the deepest chasm of despair, disillusionment, and feeling of utter failure.

Then God was able to reveal to him the only REAL confidence, and start him toward REAL success!

The Right Kind of Confidence

What does God say about the way to confidence? WHY, THE EXACT OPPOSITE from the psychologists, OF COURSE! God said through the prophet Isaiah that the wicked man must forsake HIS WAY! God tells us to THROW SELF AWAY — not to pamper and fondle it. God says to GET RID of self — man says to FLATTER self. Man talks about “positive thinking,” and God says to forsake even your own thoughts! (Isaiah 55:6-9). The wisest man who ever lived, under the inspiration of God, wrote many scriptures concerning the differences between those following the customary way of this world and those who were willing to listen to the instructions of God.

Solomon knew the difference between confidence in the SELF and the right kind of confidence. He called the person who trusts in his OWN heart a fool! (Proverbs 28:26). Jesus Christ directed one of His parables toward those who TRUST IN THEMSELVES. Christ said those who exalt themselves shall be abased; and those who humble themselves shall be exalted (Luke 18:9-14).

Too Many GIVE UP!

The real test of one who has the RIGHT KIND of confidence comes when the “chips are down.” The man who sets his jaw and says: “I will NOT quit!” despite all the handicaps and apparent obstacles, is the one who has the quality for success.

Solomon wrote, “If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small” (Proverbs 24: 10).

What a great principle — and how FEW really follow it!

So many simply lie down and quit when some terrible disaster strikes in their personal lives.

Perhaps it is because it is so RARE when a person who is severely physically handicapped truly SUCCEEDS in life that it is usually so widely publicized.

Think of the examples you have known of persons injured in accidents, or afflicted through sudden strokes or other diseases. Even though partially handicapped, or confined to bed, have they CONTINUED to be their usually cheery selves? Do they strive (if their minds have not been afflicted) to keep mentally alert and growing? Do they enter even the simplest tasks with real ENTHUSIASM, and a WILL to overcome?

Usually not.

Most shut-ins, it seems, fall into the depths of despondency, feeling sorry for themselves — blaming the set of “circumstances” which conspired to bring this terrible affliction upon them. They have the attitude of Job. They know God is good, and that they are “righteous,” and cannot honestly understand WHY such a terrible thing should have befallen them — knowing it must ONLY be in the “province of God” and not anything THEY have done!

So, instead of finding the true source of real CONFIDENCE, and surging ahead, even in the face of great adversity — they simply QUIT! But remember, God says, “If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small! “

How can YOU have strength and confidence? Confidence in others? In this modern age of pact-making and peace parleys, you are constantly seeing men putting their confidence in one another. Nations place trust and confidence in allies, who,

perhaps a few short years later, become their bitter enemies. Strange though it may seem, this, too, is another extreme. Because of the wide-spread lack of confidence in SELF, people begin placing their confidence in other people! At this moment, the United States is putting her confidence and trust in many foreign nations, three of which were our hated enemies a few short years ago.

What is the reason? IT IS BECAUSE THIS NATION HAS FORGOTTEN ITS GOD!

God shows that putting confidence and trust in another man is also an evil — and commands man NOT to put his trust in a fellow human like himself! “Put NOT your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish” (Psalm 146:3-4). David wrote that it is better to trust in The Eternal than to put confidence in man! (Psalm 118:8-9).

Christ, An Example of Confidence

Today, you hear a good deal about Jesus Christ. You are constantly told what a great man He was — what a great PERSONALITY He had. But few have heard very much about the MESSAGE CHRIST BROUGHT! Jesus plainly said He came as a messenger into this world, bringing a message directly from God the Father to mankind! (John 8: 38, 42).

But Christ also said that He COULD DO ABSOLUTELY NOTHING BY HIMSELF! “The Father that dwelleth in me, HE doeth the works,” He said. Christ said it was the WORKS He did that bore witness of Him (John 14:10), but that He, Himself, could accomplish NOTHING by Himself!

THINK OF IT!

The very Son of God, for all His personality and energy, said He could do NOTHING by Himself! CHRIST had absolutely NO self-confidence.’ How much less, then, can you and I accomplish by trusting in ourselves? (John 5: 19, 30). Yet Jesus Christ had MORE CONFIDENCE than any man who

ever lived!

Where Did Christ’s Confidence Come From?

What was this source of dynamic CONFIDENCE exhibited by Christ?

Let’s not assume.

Let’s ask Jesus Christ Himself!

He said it was the FATHER DWELLING IN HIM that did the works! (John 14: 10). THERE was the source of the absolute CONFIDENCE of Jesus Christ! It was faith in God! The FATHER who lived in Jesus through the power of His Holy Spirit did the mighty works which Christ performed. Christ did not have one iota of self-confidence — but He had ALL confidence in God! Notice the complete confidence that was in Jesus Christ. Confidence such as NO OTHER MAN has ever possessed — because it was not confidence in Himself — but confidence in the Almighty God!

When Jesus was called to the tomb of Lazarus, He demonstrated the constant attitude of mind that gave Him this great confidence. Christ did not have to “beg” or “plead” with God to raise Lazarus from the dead, but was in the attitude of SUCH CONSTANT CLOSENESS and ONENESS with God that He simply “lifted up His eyes, and said, Father, I thank you that you have heard me. And I know that you hear me always, but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that you have sent me” (John 11 :41- 42). Christ thanked the Father for having already heard Him before He prayed aloud.

This complete and total confidence in God gave Christ the assurance and faith to call out “LAZARUS! COME FORTH!” And a man who had been dead four days was brought back to life, and walked away from his tomb!

We, too, may have this same kind of confidence! “For the LORD shall be your confidence, and shall keep your foot from being taken” (Proverbs 3:26). Jesus Christ said: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he

do also; and GREATER works than these shall he do; because I go unto my FATHER” (John 14:12).

Confidence with Obedience

Confidence, faith, trust; all these are closely linked to and are inseparable from obedience. Without obedience, you cannot have confidence! Abraham, called the father of the faithful, had the kind of obedience that God wanted. It was this obedience that gave Abraham the complete CONFIDENCE he needed! God said it was BECAUSE of Abraham’s obedience that He would make the promise given to Abraham of inheriting this earth UNCONDITIONAL! (Genesis 26:4-5). Abraham met one of the greatest tests ever placed on a human being. God told Abraham to take Isaac, the son for which he had waited so long, and to go to a certain place to kill him. (Genesis, the 22nd chapter). Abraham did not question God’s command! He didn’t ask WHY — he did not try to remind God this was the son God had given him, after waiting for so many long years — he simply OBEYED! WHY? Because Abraham BELIEVED God! (James. 2:23).

Abraham had COMPLETE CONFIDENCE-NOT IN SELF-but in God!

God had PROMISED to give Abraham many multiple thousands and thousands of sons. Abraham knew immediately that God could either raise Isaac from the dead, or bless him with other sons according to His promises. Abraham was FULLY PERSUADED that, whatever God had promised, He was ABLE TO PERFORM! (Romans 4:21). What a sad lack of that kind of confidence today!

People do not believe God WILL keep His word!

People do not FEAR God — neither do they want to OBEY Him! But to those who WILL OBEY, who WILL believe His word and DO those things God shows them they must do — God says “BLESSED are they that keep His testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart” (Psalms 119:2).

How YOU May Have Confidence

How can YOU come to have the real ASSURANCE and KNOWLEDGE that you need in making decisions in this life? How can YOU overcome boredom, discouragement or disheartenment as a result of an accident or sickness? How can YOU regain real confidence and a sense of positive assurance even in the face of the death of a loved one, or terrible financial hardship?

The Apostle Paul gives us the first step toward the only real confidence, in Romans the 12th chapter and the first two verses: “I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a LIVING SACRIFICE, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And BE NOT CONFORMED to this world, but be you TRANSFORMED by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

God’s way to find confidence is the DIRECT OPPOSITE from the false ways of this world! God’s way is the way of GETTING RID OF ALL SELF, of throwing away the rebellious, cast-iron human WILL that is contrary to God — of CRUCIFYING THE OLD SELF with Christ! Paul explained in Galatians 2: 20 that He was crucified with Christ, but that he still lived by the FAITH of the Son of God! The only worthwhile confidence is the knowledge that you have actually given your very SELF — your will, your desires and your complete MIND — into God’s hands.

If you have real confidence, you’ll be saying with Christ, “Not my will, but YOUR will be done, Father.” God inspired John to write, “And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He shall appear, we may have CONFIDENCE, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming” (1 John 2: 28).

The one most central reason for the FALSE confidence on the EXTERIOR that people have today is because they are much more CONCERNED about what people will say, what people will think — the impressions they are making on other people, than they are about WHAT THE ALMIGHTY God THINKS OF THEM!

Jesus Christ did not fear what man thought of Him! Rather, He had the Spirit of the FEAR OF God! (Isaiah 11: 2). And Christ was HEARD of God — because He feared! (Hebrews 5:7). His fear was not terror, but the kind of awe that comes with a full realization of the tremendous power of God — an awareness of His GREATNESS! If you really FEAR God — you will want to obey Him!

The WAY to real confidence is through unquestioning obedience! God tells us through John, “Beloved, if our heart condemns us not, then we have CONFIDENCE toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in HIS (not our friends’ and relatives’) sight!” (1 John 3: 21-22).

Do YOU want this kind of confidence?

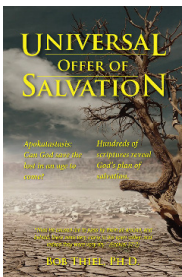
Or do you, like most “moderns” of today, want God to “keep His nose out of your business?” Admit it or not — most of you truly WANT more confidence! You deeply desire to have that PEACE OF MIND, that positive sense of assurance, that sense of knowing that everything is going to work out all right! You would like to have NO FEARS about the future.

You would like to be alert, able to make wise and far-reaching decisions, able to be cheerful and happy even in the face of terrible adversity or personal disaster! If you would truly WANT these things — then God says it is yours for the asking!

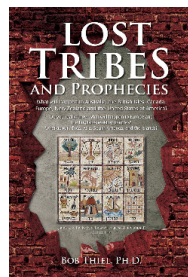
God says, “See? I HAVE SET BEFORE YOU THIS DAY LIFE ... AND DEATH ... CHOOSE LIFE!” (Deuteronomy 30:15-19). God offers life on the one hand — eternal life and rulership with Christ, and death on the other.

God commands you to MAKE YOUR DECISION which one you will take. He will not make that decision for you. God grant that you will make your decision with CONFIDENCE!

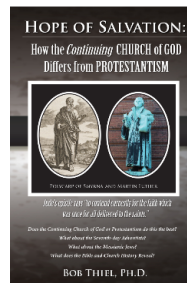
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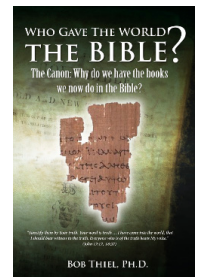
Universal Offer of Salvation



Lost Tribes and Prophecies



HOPE OF SALVATION:



Who Gave The World The Bible?

Really Have Faith

By Bob Thiel



(Source: Pixabay)

After reading the preceding article by Garner Ted Armstrong in this edition of the magazine, it seemed like a good time to add some additional information.

The Bible shows that Jesus taught and warned the following:

31 ... "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" (Matthew 14:31)

21 ... have faith and do not doubt (Matthew 21:21)

6 If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you. (Luke 17:6)

8 ... when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth? (Luke 18:8)

Yes, most Christians do lack faith. Many have improper doubts.

A scripture I commonly read is the following:

5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Yes, we are to trust God.

Yet, instead we have a tendency to be wise in our own eyes, which is warned against:

7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and depart from evil. (Proverbs 3:7)

There is often a lack of real faith, because of things like doubts.

You can and should trust God and His word. The prophet Isaiah wrote:

8 "Remember this, and show yourselves men; Recall to mind, O you transgressors. 9 Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'

11 Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man who executes My counsel, from a far country. Indeed I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it. (Isaiah 46:8-11)

Yes, we can rely on God's word. God promises to bring about what He says.

We are to put our confidence in God, and definitely not political leaders as the psalmist wrote:

8 It is better to trust in the Lord Than to put confidence in man.

9 It is better to trust in the Lord Than to put confidence in princes. (Psalm

118:8-9)

The Bible also warns:

19 Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble
Is like a bad tooth and a foot out of joint.
(Proverbs 25:19)

But have you ever considered that YOU might be the unfaithful one you put your confidence in?

That said, the Apostle Paul wrote that we should have confidence in our obedience to God:

21 Having confidence in your obedience
(Philemon 21)

He also wrote to have confidence in Jesus:

6 but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end
(Hebrews 3:6)

14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, 15 while it is said:

“Today, if you will hear His voice,
Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”
(Hebrews 3:14-15)

Yet many rebel and do harden their hearts. And normally, they do not realize that they have done so. Hopefully, you have not hardened your heart to accept some fault or disobedience you have in your own life.

Jesus and the Apostle Paul taught that we are to endure and not give up to receive the promises to God’s people.

12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. 13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved. (Matthew 24:12-13)

35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

37 “For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry.

38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone

draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.”

39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul. (Hebrews 10:35-39)

You need to endure and have confidence that God hears your prayers:

14 Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. 15 And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.
(1 John 5:14-15)

Now, while God does hear our prayers, the Bible says that they are to be answered according to His will. So, sometimes, that might not be until the resurrection.

Thus, we realize that we can experience suffering, delays, and even persecution from family, employers, government officials, etc.

Jesus said:

20 Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

21 But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. 22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. (John 15:20-22)

The Apostle James wrote to also expect other trials:

2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. (James 1:2-8)

Notice that James warned against being double-minded. We are to really have faith!

Remember we are to, “walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7).

If Jesus came so that we could have life “more abundantly” (John 10:10), why does God allow suffering?

Is there a purpose for it?

Yes.

31 For the Lord will not cast off forever. 32 Though He causes grief, Yet He will show compassion According to the multitude of His mercies. 33 For He does not afflict willingly, Nor grieve the children of men. (Lamentations 3:31-33)

Notice that God does not willingly afflict nor grieve us. He wants us to do well (cf. 3 John 2).

Seemingly bad things happen to decent people.

Jesus never sinned (Hebrews 4:15), but suffered for us (1 Peter 2:21). And “though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered” (Hebrews 5:8).

Why does God allow humans to suffer?

There are a couple of reasons. One is as punishment for/result of our sins to encourage us to not sin and to turn back to God (Lamentations 3:39-40; Leviticus 26:18). And, we should understand that the Bible teaches that God punishes us less than our iniquities deserve (cf. Ezra 9:13; Job 11:6). Now, even people who believe at least those parts of the Bible, realize that.

Sometimes a trial continues or repeats because you have not examined yourself enough to see what you are doing that could result in this repeating or continuing. You might be holding on to some sin of commission or even omission, and think, well that is

not related to my problem. Yet, perhaps if you deal with that sin, then God may intervene and solve your other trial.

The Apostles James and Paul wrote:

17 Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin. (James 4:17)

7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. 9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:7-10)

God wants all, including His people, to repent.

But there is another, more complicated, reason for suffering.

The Apostle Paul tells us that “the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope” (Romans 8:20). He also wrote:

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

People are in the process of being refined — which includes grief and affliction — yet there is hope. Those not called in this age are refined one way (Isaiah 48:10; Jeremiah 9:7), whereas those called are to be refined and purified more like silver and/or gold (Zechariah 13:9; Psalm 66:10; Daniel 11:35, 12:10; 1 Peter 1:7; cf. Revelation 3:18). Hence there are “fiery” trials in this age (1 Peter 1:7; 4:12).

There is a hope for what will be better:

9 But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. 10 For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. 11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. (Hebrews 6:9-12)

Thus, we are to be patient and confident that God's ways will result in "better things."

Patiently enduring suffering is a sign of love:

4 Love is long-suffering, it is kind, love does not envy, love does not vaunt itself, is not puffed up, 5 does not act unseemly, does not seek its own things, is not provoked, does not impute evil, 6 [does] not rejoice over unrighteousness, and rejoices with the truth; it bears all things, 7 it believes all, it hopes all, it endures all. 8 Love never fails; (1 Corinthians 13:4-8, Literal Standard Version)

The Greek word translated as love is transliterated as 'agape'— and this type of love rejoices in the truth and will bear all things. A mystery of real love is that suffering can be involved in the development of love. Real love will not fail.

Sometimes people suffer for doing good:

17 For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. (1 Peter 3:17)

Note that the above does NOT SAY it is the will of God to inflict suffering on ourselves so that we would be miserable. God's ways are higher than our ways (Isaiah 55:8-9) and aspects of love are a mystery in God's plan (cf. Ephesians 5:25-32).

Now, the Bible is clear that there are benefits that will arise from the suffering that afflicts us:

3 Sorrow is better than laughter, For by a sad

countenance the heart is made better. 4 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, But the heart of fools is in the house of mirth. (Ecclesiastes 7:3-4)

16 The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, testifying that we are the children of God. 17 Now if we are children, we are also heirs — truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ — if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him. (Romans 8:16-17, AFV)

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. (Romans 8:18)

12 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; 13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. (1 Peter 4:12-13)

11 My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor detest His correction; 12 For whom the Lord loves He corrects, Just as a father the son in whom he delights. (Proverbs 3:11-12)

5 And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives."

7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? 8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. 9 Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? 10 For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. 11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. (Hebrews 12:5-11)

Suffering is allowed so that people will be corrected, be trained, build character, and be better from it (see also Romans 5:3-4, 8:17; 2 Thessalonians 1:3-5; James 1:2-4; 2 Peter 1:5-8; Revelation 21:7-8). Trials and problems help build faith, teach humility, teach us lessons, and can help us draw closer to God.

If we have faith, we really believe the following that God inspired to also write:

13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28)

One of the newest biblical translations of value is the Literal Standard Version. Here is how it translates something that the Apostle Paul wrote:

21 prove all things; hold fast [to] that which is good; (1 Thessalonians 5:21)

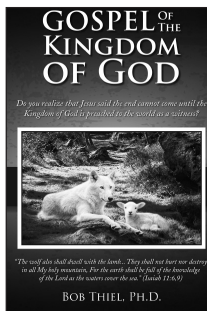
The word of God commands YOU to prove all things.

Perhaps it should be pointed out that sometimes people think they have proven some pet doctrine that no one else (or perhaps some) accept and then this excuses them from accepting proper Philadelphian hierarchical governance and supporting true gospel proclamation (Matthew 24:14) — such people often have strained a gnat and swallowed the proverbial camel (cf. Matthew 23:24) and fail to see the plank in their own eyes (cf. Matthew 7:3).

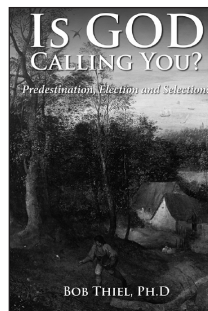
If you have truly proven things related to God, His Son, His word, and His church, you should have a lot of faith and should not be double-minded.

We have many free books, online at ccog.org, to help you “prove all things”:

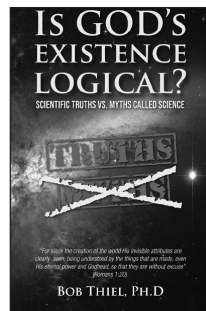
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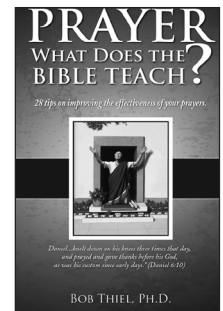
The Gospel of the Kingdom of God



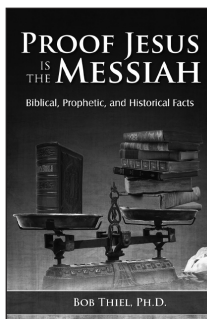
Is God Calling You?



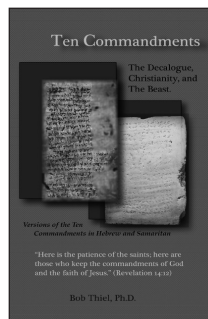
Is God's Existence Logical?



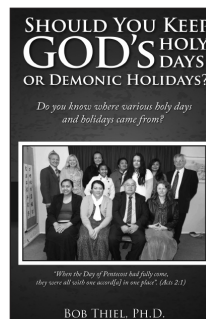
Prayer: What Does the Bible Teach?



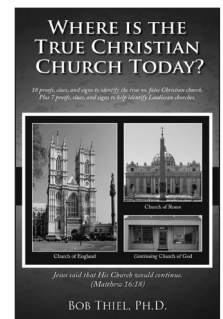
Proof Jesus is the Messiah



The Decalogue, Christianity, and the Beast

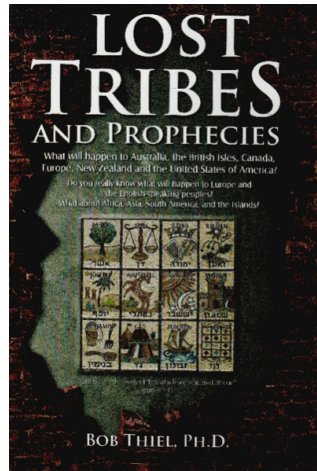


Should You Keep God's Holy Days or Demonic Holidays?



Where Is The True Christian Church Today?

Prophecies for 2 Tribes, Part 3



By Bob Thiel

This is the third part of what is now a three-part series covering prophecies related to 2 of the 13 tribes of Israel. The first two parts are in previous editions of this magazine as well as in the book above.

Fraternal Relationship

As sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh were related as brothers.

Interestingly, even though the current Royals do not publicly embrace that Ephraim represents the British-descended peoples, we still see aspects of the special relationship between the USA and Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom.

Back in 1946, Britain's Winston Churchill spoke of "the fraternal association of the English-speaking peoples. He meant a special relationship between the then British Commonwealth and Empire and the United States" (Churchill W. "Iron Curtain Speech," March 5, 1946. Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri).

In 2011, although he likely had no biblical understanding of the matter, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau referred to the U.S.A. and Canada as "siblings" (Justin Trudeau: Canadian PM toasts 'sibling' Barack Obama. BBS, March 11, 2016).

In 2021, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States announced a new military alliance

called AUKUS. This offended the Chinese as well as officials in the European Union who called it "a stab in the back" (Europe needs to start thinking more like the U.S. on security, former German vice chancellor says. CNBC, October 1, 2021). In 2022, it announced joint production of hypersonic weapons, which China quickly objected to (JCO. China lashes out at AUKUS after deal to develop hypersonic weapons. La Prensa Latina, April 6, 2022).

That being said, the U.S.A., Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom still do have a special relationship, as well as a biblically fraternal one.

British-Israelism Noted in the 19th Century

It was not until the 19th century that it became clear that Britain was a multitude of nations. Nor did the U.S.A. truly look to be a great nation until sometime that century, after the Civil War.

Notice what a writer (A.B. Robertson) who believed that Ephraim was England reported about the expansion of the British Empire:

Let us look further at the wide world scope of this Colonisation. It embraces Four Great

Groups, which already together dominate no inconsiderable share of the earth's surface — 1st, the North American; 2nd, the Australian; 3rd, the West Indian; and 4th, the South African ...

The following list shows at a glance the truth and importance of this 19th century expansion, ... and the phenomenal increase of our population: Malta acquired by conquest ... 1800

Tasmania (Van Diemen's Land) organised ... 1803

Cape of Good Hope taken from the Dutch ...1806
Ceylon acquired ... 1815

West Australia formed into a province ... 1829

South Australia formed into a province ... 1834

Hong Kong taken from the Chinese ... 1841

New Zealand made a separate colony ... 1841

The Punjab formally annexed ... 1849

Victoria formed into a province ... 1850

Second Burmese War: Pegu annexed ... 1852-53

Oude annexed ... 1856

India transferred to the Crown ... 1858

Queensland formed into a province ... 1859

Queen publicly proclaimed Empress of India ... 1876

Cyprus taken possession of ... 1878

New Guinea annexed by Queensland ... 1883

Upper Burmah annexed ... 1886

(Robertson AB. Ephraim-England: the sixth century revelation of the fruits of history. James Nisbet, 1886, pp. 17-18)

So, there was a lot of territorial expansion of the British Empire in the 19th century. So much so, it was said that "the sun never set" on it.

Why did this expansion begin then?

Here is an explanation from the late Dr. Herman Hoeh related to covenant prophecies in the 26th chapter of Leviticus:

Times of Israel's Punishment a Key to Understanding

Israel was promised great national blessings, including national greatness if they would obey God. But God also promised that if they obstinately refused to obey Him, if they refused

to follow His laws and let Him rule their lives, then He would punish them for a period called seven times (Lev. 26).

The Bible itself defines this period of seven times for us. If you turn to Revelation the twelfth chapter and compare verses 6 and 14 you will see that the word time in prophecy simply means a year, hence seven times would be seven years or 2520 days.

Now let's notice another key. In Numbers 14:34, God said Israel would bear their iniquities in the wilderness after the number of days they searched the land of Canaan, forty days, each day for a year.

Then seven times or 2520 prophetic days would equal 2520 literal years! This period of seven times or 2520 years punishment did come upon Israel because they went their own ways and would not submit to the rule of God. Israel went into captivity about 721 B.C. and did not become a great people again until their times of punishment ceased about 1800 A.D. At that time the descendants of the ancient House of Israel — America and Britain and the democratic peoples of the world — began to rise to such wealth and power as the world has never enjoyed before all because of the promises made to Abraham. (Hoeh H. What are the Times of the Gentiles? Plain Truth, September 1955)

Although the birthright was originally Reuben's, he lost it, and it went to Ephraim (1 Chronicles 5:1-2). As mentioned earlier, when it comes to wealth and territory, Reuben — France — sold off much territory (828,000 square miles) in the form of the Louisiana Purchase to the then rising U.S.A. in 1803.

From the 19th century to present, the U.S.A. and United Kingdom have dominated the world (though this will be lost later in the 21st century). They have received the blessings that God promised them through Jacob.

Notice something that was told to the wife of Isaac:

60 "Our sister, may you become The mother

of thousands of ten thousands; And may your descendants possess The gates of those who hate them.” (Genesis 24:60)

We do not see in history that the Jews possessed the gates of those who hate them. Yet, in the 19th and/or 20th centuries, many of the major sea gates of the world were possessed/controlled by the United States (Panama Canal and several locations in the Pacific Ocean) and the British Empire (Straits of Malacca, Singapore, Suez Canal, Bab el Mandeb, Strait of Hormuz, Hong Kong, Simon’s Town/Cape of Good Hope, etc).. And while that is no longer the case for many of them, they seem to have been prophesied to be taken away for disobedience as well:

58 “If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD, 59 then the Lord will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary plagues — great and prolonged plagues — and serious and prolonged sicknesses. ... 63 And it shall be, that just as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess. (Deuteronomy 28:58-59,63)

Certainly, these nations have disobeyed the God of Abraham. It appears that the remaining “sea gates” that the UK has such as Gibraltar and the Falkland Islands will be separated from UK control.

Partially related to the prophecy about Joseph’s bow being strong in Genesis 49:22-26, the Jews have a tradition that the descendants of Joseph would reign over the ten tribes in a military way:

The Malibim (1809-1879) on Masiach ben Yosef

#Our Sacred Sages had a tradition in the beginning

[of the End Times] there would arise a Messiah [i.e. Anointed Savior] from the House of Joseph, who will reign over the Ten Tribes. He will wage war and all of Israel will be gathered under his banner. (Davidiy, p. 205)

While the U.K. and later the U.S.A. did not

necessarily officially rule over the other ten tribes and no one Messiah came up from them, they led the allied fight in World War II and had support from descendants from almost all the tribes of Israel. The U.S.A. and U.K. have ruled the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) which directly includes the descendants of most (and in a way, all) of the tribes, and plus the U.S.A. and U.K. have also provided some type of protection to all the other tribes.

That being said, the Bible warns about trusting in Mount Samaria (prophetically, the U.S.A). in the end times (Amos 6:1) — which Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the UK do militarily.

Here is a bit more from a Jewish source:

The Malbim {Meir Leibush ben Yehiel Michel Wisser} interprets the blessing of Jacob (Genesis 48) to Ephraim would become great before Manasseh. Ephraim would become great through his own merits and self-assertion almost from the beginning. Manasseh would wait until the vast numbers of his population and the weight of his blessing would of itself result in greatness. We identify Ephraim with the British and Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the whites of South Africa. The USA is Manasseh. The interpretation of the Malbim concerning Ephraim and Manasseh fits historic reality. (Davidiy, p. 384)

And Ephraim did arise first, followed by Manasseh’s rise.

As far as being helpful to understand end time prophecy goes, COG leaders taught decades ago that the United Kingdom would not be part of the final European power. Notice something from Raymond McNair in 1970:

Britain ... if she does enter the European Economic Community (EEC), will she remain in this union? ... Bible prophecy clearly shows that Britain will not be one of the ... NATIONS comprising the final United States of Europe. (McNair R. A Strong United Europe. Tomorrow’s World, February 1970, p. 17)

Back in the early 1990s, when I was vice president

of an irrigation equipment manufacturer and the EU was still called the European Economic Community, I told our British sales representative, who was visiting the factory in California, that one day the UK would separate from Europe. He flat out told me that could not possibly happen. And he gave his reasons, but they were not biblical ones — I told him he was in error. With Brexit (the BRITISH EXIT from the European Union) this century, that understanding was confirmed.

More prophetic understandings will be confirmed as well, including the fact that the “fortress also will cease from Ephraim” (Isaiah 17:3) and the coming European Beast “shall destroy many in their prosperity” (Daniel 8:25).

Samaria

Some Christians have taught that:

The peoples of the United States and Britain are actually descended from the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, which were part of the kingdom of Israel. The United States and Britain are often referred to in biblical prophecy as the “house of Israel,” “all Israel,” “Jacob,” “Ephraim,” “Samaria” and “Isaac.” (THE MINOR PROPHETS SPEAK TO US! Youth Bible Lessons, Level 7, Lesson 9, 1986, p. 2)

As far as the U.S.A. goes, some may wonder about its high degree of ethnic diversity.

By Jesus’ time, the Samaritans were only partially, Israelites — even though they claimed to be from the tribe of Joseph (“Samaritans” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 1972, Volume 14, col. 727, as cited in Louvish M. *Religious life and communities*. Keter Books, 1974, p. 61). The Bible shows that they were highly ethnically mixed (2 Kings 17:24). Apparently, though, those of Samaritan cities were not considered Israelitish by Jesus (cf. Matthew 10:5). Yet, Peter, Philip, and John later did preach to people in a Samaritan city (Acts 8:5,14).

As it turns out, some of the prophecies related to Manasseh instead refer to it as Samaria:

8 The Lord sent a word against Jacob, And it has fallen on Israel. 9 All the people will know — Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria ... 21 Manasseh shall devour Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh; Together they shall be against Judah. (Isaiah 9:8-9,21)

1 “When I would have healed Israel, Then the iniquity of Ephraim was uncovered, And the wickedness of Samaria. (Hosea 7:1)

So, we see that Ephraim and Samaria are separate and at the end Ephraim and Manasseh (who was referred to as Samaria by Isaiah and Hosea) are separate. Hence, while Ephraim is not Samaria, sometimes it appears that Manasseh is (cf. Hosea 7:1). Isaiah 9 seems to suggest that some of peoples who are alluded to in Psalm 83 (discussed later) will also harass Ephraim and Manasseh after they have suffered. Isaiah 9 ties the identity of Manasseh in with prophetic Samaria — Amos 6:1, Jeremiah 31:5-6, and Obadiah 19 seem too as well.

In addition to the intermingling that occurred in ancient Samaria, Samaria was part of the old territory of Manasseh:

The hill of Samaria was in the tribal territory of Manasseh, but apparently was not significantly inhabited until the time of King Omri (Ahab’s father). For the next 160 years, the city was the capital of the northern kingdom, apparently reaching a size of 150 acres (as large as Jerusalem in Hezekiah’s time). Samaria is well situated with steep slopes on all sides. (Samaria (Sebaste) <http://www.bibleplaces.com/samaria.htm> viewed 02/19/14)

23 Omri became king over Israel, and reigned twelve years. Six years he reigned in Tirzah. 24 And he bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver; then he built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, Samaria, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill. (1 Kings 16:23-24)

Northern Samaria is often referred to by its biblical tribal designation: Manasseh. (Killebrew A. *Biblical peoples and ethnicity: an archaeological study of Egyptians, Canaanites,*

Philistines, and early Israel, 1300–1100 B.C.E.
Society of Biblical Lit, 2005, p. 159)

Jewish scholars have, also, long recognized that the Samaritans were of mixed Israelite and non-Israelite heritage (Jacobs J, Raison J. Samaritans, Jewish Encyclopedia of 1906, Volume 10, pp. 669-681). Scripture shows that some of the poorer Israelites were allowed to remain as laborers and not be taken away by the Babylonians (2 Kings 25:12), hence they apparently interbred with the peoples the Assyrians brought to their ancestral land (2 Kings 17:24).

Scripturally, some have pointed to 2 Chronicles 34:9 as further proof that there were descendants of Manasseh and Ephraim that remained in Samaria (or perhaps returned there). Furthermore, since Herodotus reported that Scythian armies entered Palestine (Herodotus, pp. 133-137) in what is considered to be the Samaritan region, some may have sired children and/or stayed there.

That said, the 16th century Jewish sage Isaac Arbarbanel equated prophecies of Samaria to being the tribe of Manasseh (Isaac Arbarbanel Commentary on Obadiah 19. Sefaria.org accessed 11/17/22).

It is interesting to note that while a mixture of peoples, those identifying themselves as Samaritans have claimed to be from the tribe of Joseph.

A Midrash from 300-500 A.D. (Genesis Rabbah Sect. 94,) relates about an encounter between a Jewish rabbi and a Samaritan and includes the following dialogue:

R. Meir asks the Samaritan: What tribe are you from?

The Samaritan answers: From Joseph.

R. Meir: No! (RABIN MISHNAH STUDY GROUP Mishnah study in the religious climate of Masorti (Conservative) Judaism by Rabbi Simchah Roth. BET MIDRASH VIRTUALI of the Rabbinical Assembly in Israel. February 27th 2003 / I Adar 25th 5763 [Sotah 083] <http://www.bmv.org.il/shiurim/sotah/sot083.html> accessed 01/20/17)

The following from a Jewish source related to Obadiah:

[Obadiah 1:19] AND THEY OF THE SOUTH SHALL POSSESS THE MOUNT OF ESAU; AND THEY OF THE PLAIN THE PHILISTINES: AND THEY SHALL POSSESS THE FIELDS OF EPHRAIM, AND THE FIELDS OF SAMARIA: AND BENJAMIN SHALL POSSESS GILEAD.

Samaria means Menasseh (says Daat Sofrim) who according to Rashi shall possess the Gilead. (Davidiy Y. Commentary on the book of Obadiah. <http://britam.org/obadiah.html> accessed 11/17/22)

Yes, there are reasons to consider that Manasseh is prophetic Samaria.

As far as those calling themselves Samaritans in the Holy Land in the 21st century, the Israelite Samaritan Information Institute has claimed that there are Samaritan descendants of the houses of Manasseh and Ephraim there (Families. Israelite Samaritan Information Institute, <https://www.israelite-samaritans.com/about-israelite-samaritans/families/> accessed 07/25/22). Some believe that the Samaritans have forgotten their true ancestry (Govier G, ed. Samaritan Park ... Artifax, Volume 38 (3), Summer 2022, pp. 10-11).

That being said, the ethnic diversity of the population of the United States, with the majority seemingly not being Manassites, is consistent with it representing prophetic Samaria.

A 9/11 Prophecy? Foreign Policy?

It has been suggested that the following is a prophecy related to the terrorist attacks of 9/11/2001 ('The Isaiah 9:10 Judgment': U.S. in crosshairs. WND, February 20, 2012):

9 All the people will know — Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria — Who say in pride and arrogance of heart: 10 'The bricks have fallen down, But we will rebuild with hewn stones; The sycamores are cut down, But we will replace

them with cedars.” (Isaiah 9:9-10)

A few prophecy-watchers have stated that Isaiah 9:9-10 seems to be related to what happened in the U.S.A. because of the 9/11/2001 attacks.

Essentially the leaders of ancient Ephraim and Manasseh declared that they would rebuild. As one example, at a memorial ceremony for it, Joe Biden stated, “We come not to mourn but to remember and rebuild” (US Marks 9-11 Anniversary. Voice of America, September 10, 2010).

At least one prophecy-watcher has believed that American politicians making “rebuild statements” were taking defiance types of positions that Isaiah warned against (“The Isaiah 9:10 Judgment’: U.S. in crosshairs. WND, February 2012). Like ancient Ephraim and Manasseh, God was left out of the equation.

Since certain prophecies about Samaria appear to be directed towards the U.S.A. of the 21st century, this makes those ties to Isaiah 9 potentially stronger.

Presuming that end-time Samaria ties with Manasseh AND Isaiah 9:9-10 has an end-time fulfillment, then Joe Biden has been one of several leaders to at least partially fulfill this by pridefully boasting that a more majestic rebuilding will occur because of human effort.

If the following biblical prophecy has an end-time fulfillment, it seems to suggest that a male leader will be in charge when the U.S.A. falls:

7 As for Samaria, her king is cut off Like a twig on the water. 8 Also the high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, Shall be destroyed. The thorn and thistle shall grow on their altars; They shall say to the mountains, “Cover us!” And to the hills, “Fall on us!” ... 10 When it is My desire, I will chasten them. Peoples shall be gathered against them When I bind them for their two transgressions. (Hosea 10:7,8,10)

If Hosea 10:7-10 has end-time connotations (and part of it seems to, cf. Revelation 6:16), AND presuming that the Hebrew word translated as “king” literally

must mean a male, then it would seem that the last USA president would be male (though the expression “her king” might speculatively allow for the final leader to be female).

The Bible, KJV translation, predicts the end of “an hypocritical nation” (Isaiah 10:5-11).

Since, the end of the 6,000 years God has granted humanity to rule itself may be over within the next decade or so (some details are in Chapter 7), the end of the hypocritical nation will come relatively soon.

Immorality

In view of Big Tech and governmental censorship, as well as their pushing certain agendas this century, consider some of what the Bible says and teaches:

8 Now go, write it before them on a tablet, And note it on a scroll, That it may be for time to come, Forever and ever: 9 That this is a rebellious people, Lying children, Children who will not hear the law of the Lord; 10 Who say to the seers, “Do not see,” And to the prophets, “Do not prophesy to us right things; Speak to us smooth things, prophesy deceits. 11 Get out of the way, Turn aside from the path, Cause the Holy One of Israel To cease from before us.” (Isaiah 30:8-11) 20 Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! 21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight! (Isaiah 5:20-21) 1 Cry aloud, spare not; Lift up your voice like a trumpet; Tell My people their transgression, And the house of Jacob their sins. (Isaiah 58:1)

More and more people do not want to hear the truths related to the law of God or prophecies from His word

Consider also that if some say they are insulted because their sins are called out, at least some associated with European and North American governments want to make that a crime (e.g. see Freedom of Speech, 2nd edition. Christian Legal

Centre, 2018)! Teaching the truth about biblical prophecies can now often be falsely called “conspiracy theories” as many only want to hear “smooth things.”

Furthermore, various ones want to further stifle religious speech to the point of persecuting those who hold to aspects of biblical morality. The Bible warns of those “who suppress the truth in unrighteousness” (Romans 1:18).

Sadly, many are helping to fulfill the following prophecy for the “last days”:

1 But know this, that **in the last days** perilous times will come: 2 For **men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers**, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 unloving, unforgiving, **slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good**, 4 traitors, **headstrong, haughty**, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And **from such people turn away!** 6 For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, 7 **always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.** (2 Timothy 3:1-7)

Proud, boasters, lovers of themselves, and headstrong; if you do not believe these terms help describe people like some in various governments, consider that there are those that push “pride” events and have asserted that religious rights need to be scaled back.

Is that not headstrong and haughty?

With debt and rising public immorality, many have been setting the stage for the type of death/devastation that the Apostle Paul warned about:

22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, ...

26 For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 27 Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of

the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those **who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.** (Romans 1:22,26-32)

The above scriptures are clearly condemning covetousness, sexual immorality, and that even approving of them leads to death.

God’s righteous judgment is coming to the U.S.A. and its British-descended allies.

Notice also:

22 Therefore say to the house of Israel, “Thus says the Lord God: “I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name’s sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. 23 you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.” (Ezekiel 36:22-23)

With international promotion of immoral matters, the USA and its British-descended allies have been profane among the nations.

Furthermore, understand that the Bible specifically teaches that various forms of sexual immorality defile a nation:

22 You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination. 23 Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall

any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It is perversion.

24 'Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. 25 For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants. 26 You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations, either any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you 27 (for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who were before you, and thus the land is defiled), 28 lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you. 29 For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit them shall be cut off from among their people. (Leviticus 18:22-29)

5 For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. (Ephesians 5:5-6)

Some believe scripture, others will not.

Weather Prophecies

The Bible ties weather blessings in with morality:

3 'If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them, 4 then I will give you rain in its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. 5 Your threshing shall last till the time of vintage, and the vintage shall last till the time of sowing; you shall eat your bread to the full and dwell in your land safely. (Leviticus 26:3-5)

Yet, the promotion of more and more aspects of immorality will lead to the destruction of the U.S.A. and its British-descended allies (cf. Isaiah 1:28; Hosea 7:13), and also looks to include in the curse of severe

weather problems.

Notice some of how the Bible ties weather in with sins:

15 "But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: ... 22 The Lord will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever, with the sword, with scorching, and with mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish. 23 And your heavens which are over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you shall be iron. 24 The Lord will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed. (Deuteronomy 28:15,22-24)

1 The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah concerning the droughts. ... 7 O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, ... For our backslidings are many, We have sinned against You. (Jeremiah 14:1,7)

6 "Also I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities. And lack of bread in all your places; Yet you have not returned to Me, "Says the Lord. 7 I also withheld rain from you, When there were still three months to the harvest. I made it rain on one city, I withheld rain from another city. One part was rained upon, And where it did not rain the part withered. 8 So two or three cities wandered to another city to drink water, But they were not satisfied; Yet you have not returned to Me, "Says the Lord.

9 "I blasted you with blight and mildew. When your gardens increased, Your vineyards, Your fig trees, And your olive trees, The locust devoured them; Yet you have not returned to Me, "Says the Lord. ...

11 "I overthrew some of you, As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, And you were like a firebrand plucked from the burning; Yet you have not returned to Me, "Says the Lord.

12 “Therefore thus will I do to you, O Israel; Because I will do this to you, Prepare to meet your God, O Israel!” (cf. Amos 4:6-9, 11-12)

Many feel that weather is purely random, but the Bible teaches that God controls the weather (Psalm 148:8) and sometimes provides extreme weather because of human sins to encourage people to repent. Weather issues will contribute to pestilences (Amos 4:9; cf. Matthew 24:7).

Notice what is also prophesied to happen to end-time European Babylon:

38 A drought is against her waters, and they will be dried up. For it is the land of carved images, And they are insane with their idols. 39 “Therefore the wild desert beasts shall dwell there with the jackals, And the ostriches shall dwell in it. It shall be inhabited no more forever, Nor shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. 40 As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah And their neighbors,” says the Lord, “So no one shall reside there, Nor son of man dwell in it. (Jeremiah 50:38-40)

So, both Amos and Jeremiah tied the warning of a drought in with later being overthrown like Sodom and Gomorrah.

The Bible says that Sodom and Gomorrah were overthrown as examples for those who would go after “strange flesh” (Jude 7).

Related to end-time sorrows, the following was in a book I wrote and published back in 2009 (Thiel B. 2012 and the Rise of the Secret Sect. Nazarene Books, 2009):

Odd weather patterns result in food shortages and natural disasters.	Matthew 24:7
The world is actually in a berserk transition, as the real age of peace is not yet here. It may be a period of chaos. It is the beginning of sorrows.	Matthew 24:8

This has begun to happen. Record heat and odd weather have occurred (Clinch M. Heat Apocalypse. CNBC, July 19, 2022; Freedman A. Heat waves shattered records on 2 continents before summer began. Axios, June 21, 2022; Beradelli J. Wildfires and weather extremes: It’s not coincidence, it’s climate change. CBS, September 17, 2020).

These problems should serve as a wake-up call. Increased acceptance of immorality is associated with weather problems in the Bible in many places (e.g. Deuteronomy 28:15-24; Amos 4:6-12).

Expect that there will be more odd and berserk weather. Many blame it on “climate change” and “fossil fuels,” but the Bible promises climate blessings on obedience to Him (e.g. Leviticus 26:3-6) blames the opposite on disobeying God’s commands and not repenting (e.g. Amos 4:6-9; Haggai 2:17).

Dealing with “fossil fuels,” without dealing with sins will not stop a coming massive heat — particularly the one that happens after the U.S.A. and its British-descended allies are no more (Revelation 16:9).

Debt Disaster Coming

The U.S.A. and U.K. have greatly increased their debts this century.

The Bible warns that debt, and having to borrow from foreigners, is a curse that would hit those who received various biblical blessings as they became more disobedient (Deuteronomy 28:15,43-46).

Debt is dangerous.

Let us also consider that there is a prophecy in Habakkuk, written about 2600 years ago, about debt which is preceded by the following:

2 Then the Lord answered me and said:
Write the vision And make it plain on tablets,
That he may run who reads it. (Habakkuk 2:2)

The Bible says that the ‘debt prophecy’ to be revealed later in Habakkuk 2 is so significant that those who read it should run — essentially that they should take steps because the results will be horrific.

The Bible warns about something that will happen to a heavily indebted nation. Notice what the Hebrew seer Habakkuk wrote over 2,600 years ago:

3 For the vision is yet for an **appointed time**;
But at the end it will speak, and it will not

lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because **it will surely come**, It will not tarry ... 5 Indeed, because he transgresses by wine, He is a proud man ... 6 “Will not all these take up a proverb against him, And a taunting riddle against him, and say, ‘Woe to him who increases What is not his — how long? And to him who loads himself with many pledges’? 7 **Will not your creditors rise up suddenly?** Will they not awaken who oppress you? **And you will become their booty.** 8 Because you have plundered many nations, **All the remnant of the people shall plunder you ...** (Habakkuk 2:2-3,5-8)

Notice that what is to happen is so bad, that people who read the prophecy should run, when it is time for it to be fulfilled. Since that prophecy is to be fulfilled at the appointed time of the end, it is still for the future, but perhaps not too far distant in the future. No nation has seemingly ever been in as much total debt as the U.S.A. (official federal debt over \$35 trillion, plus unfunded liabilities, plus other government debt, plus corporate debt, and personal debt) and on a per capita basis Australia, Canada, and the U.K. are almost as bad. This is also consistent with the understanding that the U.S.A. and its British-descended allies will be hit during the time of Jacob’s trouble (Jeremiah 30:7). It should also be noted that creditors, plural, are mentioned. For this reason, we may see actions by the oil-rich Arab nations, China, and Japan, and not just Europe, in opposing the USA as they are all significant holders of USA debt.

The Bible warns about silver becoming “dross” (Isaiah 1:22; Ezekiel 22:18-22) and says to reverse it once it happens (Proverbs 25:4a; Isaiah 1:25). But the Anglo-American nations have not done that, their old silver coins are now dross (made/filled with cheaper materials) and their massive debts have made dross out of their fiat currencies (currencies that are not tied to gold or some other hard asset).

Furthermore, the “U.S. is highly vulnerable to loss of confidence by foreign creditors” (Rickards J. Axis of Gold. The Daily Reckoning, December 20, 2016). U.S. government debt is “extremely vulnerable to foreign attack because of the high percentage of foreign ownership — almost 40% of the market” (Ibid).

Interestingly, in the past, one foreign creditor, China, has raised concerns about the U.S. debt that are so serious, that its potential dumping of that debt has been called China’s “nuclear option” (Gertz B, China Debt Threat. Washington Times, March 2, 2011) against the U.S.A. — an option that involves no military intervention, but that could greatly harm the U.S.A.

Many have complained about the U.S.A. “weaponizing” its dollar through sanctions, bank restrictions, and other means (Jayakumar V. The weaponization of finance threatens the future of the dollar standard. The Hill, March 1, 2022). By doing so, the U.S.A. has inadvertently been building up a coalition to push aside the dollar — and this will happen when the timing is considered to be better. European leaders have been working for years to establish a new reserve currency for the world, partially with the intent to remove the U.S. dollar from its position as the world’s primary reserve currency. The fact that Europe would develop its own currency, as well as for that purpose, was predicted by Church of God writers no later than 1971 (Hogberg G. Rising World Colossus. Plain Truth magazine, May 1971) — which is over two decades before the euro was officially agreed to.

Those in Iran and some of the Arab lands, along with nations such as Brazil, China, and India have discussed plans for the removal of the dominance of the U.S.A. in global trade as well. The former (again current) President of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, even claimed that eliminating the U.S. dollar’s reserve currency status was one of the reasons that the BRICS alliance (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) was formed in the first place (Escobar P. BRICS was created as a tool of attack: Lula. Asia Times, August 28, 2019). Others have noted that bypassing the USA dollar is still an object of BRICS — and officially BRICS nations “are currently working on setting up a new global reserve currency” (BRICS developing new global reserve currency – Putin. RT, June 22, 2022), which may have gold-backing (Helms K. Economists Discuss Russia, China Potentially Developing Gold-Backed Currency. BRICS Information Portal, November 11, 2022). The expansion of BRICS (which is in progress

— US Responds to Massive BRICS Expansion Effort As Nations Push to Launch Global Currency, Ditch Dollar. Daily Hodl, May 5, 2023) may ultimately even hurt Australian trade as well as “severely weaken primacy of the US Dollar as an international currency” (Hunter M. BRICS Is Becoming The Big Kid On The Block: Implications For Australia – Analysis. Eurasia Review, November 1, 2022).

The Bible clearly warns against cheapening the money supply and encourages having money hold its value (Proverbs 25:4 Isaiah 1:25, Ezekiel 22:18-22). Debt is also warned against (Habakkuk 2:6-8). Yet policies enacted under the Obama, Trump, and Biden Administrations, following certain other administrations, have ignored these warnings.

Destruction is coming.

However, the relationship between debt accumulation and prophesied destruction remains unapparent to many. Because there is a time lag, many ignore that there will be real consequences (cf. Ecclesiastes 8:11; Habakkuk 2:3,6-8). Yet, massive increases of debt are utterly dangerous.

When the time comes that the Federal Reserve is no longer able to keep interest rates low enough, the U.S.A. will continue past the point of no return. That will become one of the final factors that will cause creditors to rise up and destroy the U.S.A.

The Economy

While pushing biblically immoral ideas and massively accumulating debt are bad for the real economy, it should be noted that economies vary. A modern reality is that being the world’s de facto reserve currency has helped prolong the U.S.A.’s dominance.

When the U.S. dollar is no longer the world’s reserve currency, this will hurt the U.S.A. financially. Increasing debt, including “quantitative easing,” is a form of dishonest profits that is not something that God approves of and will correctively punish the U.S.A. for (cf. Ezekiel 22:13-16).

Inflation will eventually hit the U.S.A. extremely hard. As the world becomes less attached to the American dollar, many financial jobs and opportunities will be in places other than the U.S.A. Eventually, but not yet, the U.S.A. dollar will become worthless (worth no more than the scrap or sentimental value of the cotton-paper it is printed on). The same will basically happen to the British pound, as well as the Australian, Canadian, and New Zealand dollars.

Will it always be straight downhill for the economy of the U.S.A. or its British-descended allies?

No.

There are some reasons to have some temporary optimism. The U.S.A. has a wide diversity of agricultural, manufacturing, extraction (mining/pumping) and other industries as do its British-descended allies. In addition, technological and other developments may temporarily support the U.S. economy — as can reductions of regulatory burdens.

As far as delays to the end of the U.S.A. and its British-descended allies go, consider something that was told to a king who was prophesied to lose his kingdom:

27 Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity. (Daniel 4:27)

Repentance can prolong prosperity, but promotion of sin leads to destruction. However, it is not expected top U.S.A. leaders nor those of its British-descended allies will push for scriptural national repentance.

The Bottom Line

Like many politicians, many American and British-descended ones do not meet the following leadership criteria:

21 Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; (Exodus 18:21)

3 The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spoke to me: 'He who rules over men must be just, Ruling in the fear of God. (2 Samuel 23:3)

This does not bode well for the U.S.A. nor its British-descended allies.

Furthermore, the Bible warns against the type of moral decline that is occurring in those nations:

12 Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel: "Because you despise this word, And trust in oppression and perversity, And rely on them, 13 Therefore this iniquity shall be to you Like a breach ready to fall, A bulge in a high wall, Whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant. (Isaiah 30:12-13)

But how can this happen to the U.S.A. and its British-descended allies? It will likely happen with a combination of events.

Notice:

5 "Moreover the multitude of your foes Shall be like fine dust, And the multitude of the terrible ones Like chaff that passes away; Yes, it shall be in an instant, suddenly. 6 You will be punished by the Lord of hosts with thunder and earthquake and great noise, With storm and tempest and the flame of devouring fire. (Isaiah 29:5-6)

Disaster will come suddenly, as in an instant.

The debt situation of the U.S.A. is putting it at risk of being unable to recover should it be hit by weather problems, terrorist acts, war, riots, solar flares, severe earthquakes, civil unrest, "terror within" (Deuteronomy 32:25), devastation of their genetically-modified food supplies, food shortages, and/or various pestilences — an intensity of "sorrows" such as Jesus discussed in Matthew 24:4-8 leading up to the time of the Great Tribulation. Political issues, climate change, trade policies, communication's deals, and other events are pushing the U.S.A. to a position that will encourage

its takeover someday.

The Bible warns that God will "hurl disasters" against some descended from Israel (Deuteronomy 32:23, NJB) who "provoke" God (Deuteronomy 32:21-22, NKJV). Disasters, especially if there is an Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP) attack, a severe solar flare storm, a devastating hurricane or something like a massive volcanic eruption and/or massive earthquake could be part of a so-called "perfect storm" of events that could set up the U.S.A. for destruction.

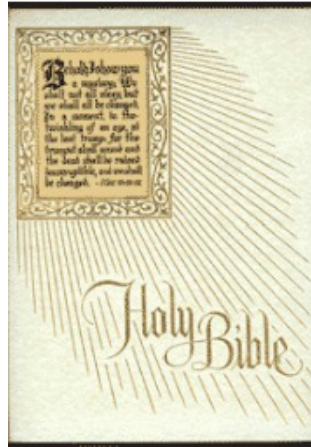
Consider the devastation of New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina. Multiply that by other disasters. The U.S.A. is at risk. Notice, also, the following related to Dr. Michio Kaku's assessment of Yellowstone:

Scientists assure us that one day the absolutely massive Yellowstone super volcano will once again experience a Category 8 eruption, and if it happened today it would "literally tear the guts out of the United States of America" ... "Instead of having 50 states of the Union, we would have 30 states of the Union." (Snyder M. As Yellowstone Awakens, Dr. Michio Kaku Warns That It Could "Literally Tear The Guts Out Of The United States Of America". Economic Collapse Blog, February 2019)

Even something lessor than that at Yellowstone or the Cascades or elsewhere could have devastating consequences. A 'perfect storm' of disasters, internal strife, and misplaced confidences will help make the U.S.A. a nation that can be defeated. Without the U.S.A., its British-descended allies simply do not have the military ability to hold off major military powers. Many sorrows that the U.S.A. and its British-descended allies will face, like severe weather problems, diseases and earthquakes, will worsen in the future (Amos 4:7-10; Luke 21:11). The political leadership in those lands looks to hasten the day of destruction.

The end of the Anglo-American dominated world order of the past two or so centuries is coming to an end.

STUDY THE BIBLE COURSE



Lessons 21 – 24

Lesson 25: Baptism, Part I

Bob Thiel, Editor-in-Chief

Published 2024 by the *Continuing Church of God*

Preface: This course is highly based upon the personal correspondence course developed in 1954 that began under the direction of the late C. Paul Meredith in the old Radio Church of God. Various portions have been updated for the 21st century (though much of the original writing has been retained). It also has more scriptural references, as well as information and questions not in the original course. Unless otherwise noted, scriptural references are to the NKJV, copyright Thomas Nelson Publishing, used by permission. The KJV, sometimes referred to as the Authorized Version is also often used. Additionally, Roman Catholic-approved translations such as the New Jerusalem Bible (NJB) are sometimes used as are other translations.

MOST professing Christians have never PROVED to themselves whether or not God really exists. They lack FAITH in the realization that God is right now sitting at the CONTROLS of this entire universe.

But for many of you students, this Bible Study Course, THE BIBLE NEWS PROPHECY magazine and THE BIBLE NEWS PROPHECY PROGRAM broadcast have helped provide the TOOLS, the PROD and the INSPIRATION to do this. You have now proved that THE GOD OF THE BIBLE IS a REAL God. And you have come to understand that God is working out a supreme PURPOSE here below — dealing DIRECTLY with nations and with individuals.

But many of you have gone about as far as you can go in receiving NEW spiritual understanding, WITHOUT BEING BAPTIZED! The true God will continue to give you more light only as long as YOU WALK IN the light you have already received. You

have YOUR PART TO DO in this process! And you definitely need God's Holy Spirit to help you.

In this age above all others, you need to check up and be SURE that you have truly been CONVERTED, that you have been PROPERLY BAPTIZED, and that you have God's SPIRIT to guide, bless and protect you. You need to be sure about these most important of all matters!

The religious ideas and teachings of people are varied and confused. Even the large denominations have repeatedly changed their basic doctrines from time to time. But the teachings of the Bible are CONSISTENT and UNCHANGING.

“Your word is truth,” Jesus said (John 17:17). And again, He said, “the scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35). GOD DOES NOT CONTRADICT HIMSELF IN HIS INSPIRED WORD! We should always bear this

in mind when studying the Bible.

Jesus continued to teach the same truths all through His ministry, and the apostles preached the same Gospel. The true servants of God in all ages have written and taught the same basic WAY OF OBEDIENCE to God.

A young man once asked Jesus, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” Jesus answered, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS.” (Matthew 19:16-17).

This is the WAY Jesus taught would lead to eternal life. He taught that if He is to be your Lord you have to OBEY Him (see also Hebrews 5:9).

Did Jesus know what He was talking about?

Many organizations of men seem to think that He didn't, for they have substituted a dead faith and belief in His PERSON and/or certain changed “sacraments,” and deny the WAY of salvation which He taught!

The apostles of Christ continued preaching the SAME message Jesus did. Before His ascension to heaven, He commanded them to go forth and instruct all nations, “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20).

The Apostle Paul taught the same way of life that Jesus did, and he recognized that way as being what “Christianity” is! He speaks of having formerly persecuted the Christians: “I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women “ (Acts 22:4).

In Paul's day, Christianity was recognized as a way of life. Exactly what does this way of life consist of?

The Apostle Peter answers: “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, LEAVING US AN EXAMPLE, THAT YE SHOULD FOLLOW HIS STEPS: Who did no sin, neither was

guile found in his mouth” (1 Peter 2:21-22, KJV). Jesus gave up His own will and suffered for us. He did not sin. He set us an EXAMPLE that we should follow His steps. This, Peter says, is our “calling.”

In Galatians 2:20, KJV, Paul explains this even further: “I am crucified with Christ,” he writes, “nevertheless I live; yet not I, but CHRIST LIVETH IN ME: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

Could anything be plainer?

Paul wrote that he had crucified his own will, and that CHRIST was living in him — directing his life. He was not only living by faith IN, but by the very faith OF, the Son of God!

But no human being can naturally and normally yield himself to obey God in his/her own strength. Paul explains why this is impossible:

“Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.” (Romans 8:7-9)

Spirit of Christ, he is not His.” (Romans 8:7-9)

We must have Christ's Spirit within us — guiding our thoughts and actions — to be recognized as His. But how may we receive God's Spirit?

When God's Church first began on the Day of Pentecost, Peter gave the answer to this question.

“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38)

We have to realize our own ways are wrong — that they have brought on the war, the suffering, and all the human woe and misery we see in this world — and we must be willing to repent of and completely

TURN AWAY from our former ideas and way of life, letting God actually rule and control our daily lives. Then we should BE BAPTIZED, which Paul explains in Romans 6:1-6 is the outward sign of our willingness to completely BURY our old self in a watery grave. Then we are to come up and walk in NEWNESS OF LIFE — following Jesus' example.

When we do this, we are promised the "gift" of God's Holy Spirit to guide us in following and obeying Jesus Christ — our real Lord and Master whom we are to serve and obey in actual fact!

God's Spirit is a part of His very CHARACTER placed within us to enable us to live as we are commanded in the Bible. Paul explains that "the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us." (Romans 5:5).

There are many human ideas about how we should express this love every Christian must have. Many professing Christians seem to think that it is a sentimental emotion about the person of Christ, or a sanctimonious attitude with lots of religious-sounding talk in front of our fellowmen.

But, in His inspired Word, God tells us what this divine love really is:

"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome." (1 John 5:3)

Yes, God's love will always lead us to obey Him, to follow Jesus' literal example, and thus to be a real Christian.

Perhaps one of the best definitions of a "Christian" contained in any single verse of the Bible is found in 1 John 2:6. The Weymouth Translation makes the intended meaning clearer than the older King James wording. It reads: "He who says that he abides in him is bound to live as He lived."

6 The man who professes to be continuing in Him is himself also bound to live as He lived. (1 John 2:6)

How many of today's professing "Christians" feel

bound to live exactly as Jesus Christ did — to literally KEEP THE TEN COMMANDMENTS as He did, to refrain from killing, stealing, lying and to KEEP HOLY the same days that Jesus did — and, through the Holy Spirit, to literally let Him live His life all over in them?

The complete, UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER of oneself to God and to Christ as Savior and Master is the key to real conversion.

If you would really be a Christian — examine yourself. Have you come to the place where you really BELIEVE in the Creator God and in the Bible as His Word — His inspired revelation to man? Are you willing to totally SURRENDER your will to OBEY His Word — to STUDY it HONESTLY, ZEALOUSLY, and to LIVE BY IT?

Are you ready to actually GIVE your life to Christ — yielding COMPLETELY, WILLINGLY, so that He may LIVE His life in you through the Holy Spirit? Are you willing to let God FASHION AND MOLD YOU after His own divine character — that He may give you eternal life in the resurrection and a position of rulership over cities and nations under Jesus Christ in the world tomorrow?

Are you willing to quit arguing and reasoning with your Maker and say, "Yes, Lord, YOUR WILL BE DONE"?

If you sincerely feel this way, you should be baptized — immersed in water — as an outward sign of your willingness to completely bury the old self in full surrender to Christ. "Sprinkling" or "pouring" do not picture this burial. Christ taught WATER BAPTISM and so did all the apostles in the inspired New Testament Church (read more in our free book, available online at ccog.org, titled: About Baptism).

To really be "Christians," we need to study the Bible, noticing especially the example and teaching of Christ. We need to REPENT of our ways and surrender our lives to God in BAPTISM that we may receive His Spirit to guide us in following His way as revealed in His Word.

The UNDERSTANDING of God's Truth is — in a sense — DANGEROUS KNOWLEDGE! For this knowledge carries with it great responsibility. May God grant you the HONESTY and COURAGE to ACT on what you know!

WHY WATER BAPTISM?

WHY be baptized? What is baptism? Is it a religious "rite" — an INITIATION into some church? Should a person be sprinkled, poured upon, or immersed? What is a valid baptism in God's sight?

Utter Confusion

"Repent!" screamed a panting, perspiring evangelist to a crowd of avid followers in Brooklyn, New York.

It was a hot, steamy, sweltering day. The heat assailed them in waves from the blistering pavement under their feet. Finally, a plea for REPENTANCE was made. Dozens of people stepped forward, tears streaming down their faces.

Having secured permission from the city fire department, the evangelist hooked a hose to a fire hydrant and SPRAYED the whole crowd with water — "baptizing" them!

Was this baptism valid?

In another ceremony down the street, inside a church building, a pastor graciously SPRINKLED a few drops of water over the head of an infant. Meanwhile, in another church across town, a minister and two candidates for baptism stepped down into a tank of water. The minister then proceeded to completely IMMERSE them under the water.

Were either of these other methods of "baptism" VALID in God's sight?

Why such CONFUSION about baptism in the churches today? What IS water baptism all about? And is it really necessary for salvation?

Many Deceived!

Many today are worshipping Jesus Christ IN VAIN! Do you believe this astounding statement? Jesus said: "in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." (Mark 7:7)

Yes, MANY have been deceived and misled into thinking they are "saved" when they're not! Most professing Christians have been taught that "Christ completed the plan of salvation on the cross" — that all they must do is just accept and believe on the NAME of Jesus Christ and they will be saved.

What a lack of Bible understanding!

Just "accepting" Christ and "believing on Him" is NOT ENOUGH — not according to your own Bible! Which will you believe — the doctrines and traditions of MEN? Or the very Word of the Creator GOD Himself?

The Bible clearly teaches that God COMMANDS water baptism! Let's begin to understand how vitally important water baptism really is in God's Plan of salvation for mankind.

Baptism a Required Step

Notice the very beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Mark 1:14-15). Jesus proclaimed: "REPENT, and BELIEVE in the gospel." Here Jesus commanded two prior conditions to becoming a Christian — repentance and faith.

Repentance is toward God. We know sin is the transgression of God's Spiritual Law (1 John 3:4, KJV). Repentance means to QUIT SINNING and begin living according to God's Commandments. Faith is toward Christ. It is our FIRM BELIEF in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our past sins. It is our BELIEF in Him as our personal Savior and coming King.

Jesus also said "believe the GOSPEL" (Mark 1:15, KJV). The Gospel is the Good News of the coming Kingdom of God, which is the GOVERNMENT of God.

And government involves obedience to LAWS, in this case God's Laws which express the will of God. It is to be government by the WILL OF GOD, no longer by human self-will, for Jesus will then be King of all the earth!

After Jesus had completed His earthly ministry, had paid the penalty for the sins of all mankind, had risen from the dead and ascended to heaven, the Holy Spirit was sent on the Day of Pentecost — just as Christ had promised.

Thousands were in Jerusalem for this festival. When the Spirit of God came upon — and INTO — the disciples that morning, the people came in awe and wonder to see what had occurred. Then Peter preached to the multitude gathered there. Thousands were convicted in their hearts. They realized their lost condition. They realized Christ was indeed the Messiah — their SAVIOR!

“What shall we do?” they cried out to Peter and the disciples (Acts 2:37).

Peter was now INSPIRED by the Holy Spirit. The answer came straight and clear.

“REPENT,” shouted Peter, “and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38)

This account recorded by Luke emphasized repentance as a condition to becoming a Christian.

But they also BELIEVED, since one cannot be baptized EXCEPT he believe in Christ (Acts 8:37). Baptism is a commanded ordinance symbolizing FAITH in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

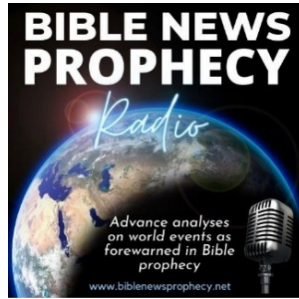
Water baptism is the ordinance ordained of Christ by which we express our FAITH in Christ as Saviour — our ACCEPTANCE of His death, burial, and resurrection for us, and our repentance of the old life and burial of it, rising to new and higher life henceforth. It is a beautiful ordinance, full of meaning!

Once the biblical conditions are complied with, God stands bound by His immutable PROMISE to put within the repentant believer HIS SPIRIT of love, faith, understanding, gentleness and goodness. It is the impregnation and begetting of ETERNAL life! And the Holy Spirit in one is the POWER that enables one to OVERCOME his human nature and OBEY God! “For the PROMISE is to you and to your children, ... as many as the Lord our God will call.” (Acts 2:39)

Water baptism, then, is a REQUIRED step in God's Plan of salvation!

In this extremely important and revealing lesson, we will come to fully understand exactly what God commands concerning water baptism. We'll learn, from the Bible, what baptism really MEANS to all who want to become true Christians and inheritors of the Kingdom of God. Are you ready? Do you have your Bible in front of you so you can read each scripture reference given in this lesson? Don't forget to ask God to help you grasp and THOROUGHLY COMPREHEND the vital truth you are about to study in the next edition of this magazine.

Continuing Church of God Radio Log



In addition to being online around the world in the English language at www.biblenewsprophecy.net, as well as in other languages at www.bnpi.net, there are numerous radio stations the Bible News Prophecy radio program is on.

Europe, Middle East, & North Africa: Via European Gospel Radio

KGMS AM 940 Tucson – Saturday 1:15 am

AM/MW 1323 kHz + streaming. This broadcast is also on shortwave at the 7295 kHz location from October through late March; from late March to late October, it is 7290 kHz.

KCNW AM 1380 & FM 96.1 Kansas City – Saturday 2:30 pm

KERI AM 1410 Bakersfield – Saturday 11:45 am

Far East and North America

WWNL AM 1080 & FM 103.9 Pittsburgh – Saturday 11:30 am

Radio Miami International, WRMI, SW 5850 kHz. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 0130 UTC

WSKY AM 1230 Asheville – Saturday 7:45 pm

Kenya Radio Milambo 103.8 FM, Migori – Friday 6:00 pm

WELP AM 1360 & FM 104.3 Greenville – Saturday 7:00 pm

Ghana

WNVY AM 1070 & FM 104.5 Pensacola – Saturday 7:15 pm

OTEC 102.9 FM, Kumasi – Sunday 7.00 am

USA Podcast

Sunsum 98.7 FM, Kumasi – Tuesday 6.00 am

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Philippines Dxms 107.3 FM All Star FM, Surigao City – Sunday 7:00 am

Video: <https://bbsradio.com/bbsradiotv/bbs-radio-tv-2.html>

USA

Audio: https://bbsradio.com/html5_player/

KKIM AM 1000 Albuquerque – Saturday 9:15 am

Questions and Answers



By Bob Thiel

Q: Since the Great Tribulation cannot happen yet, what are some specific events to look for which occur prior to the Great Tribulation?

A. Below is a list, but understand that the following order may not be completely fixed as the Bible is not clear about the sequence of all the events listed:

The basic sequence is that certain sorrows and troubles will continue:

5 And Jesus, answering them, began to say: "Take heed that no one deceives you. 6 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and will deceive many. 7 But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled; for such things must happen, but the end is not yet. 8 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles. These are the beginnings of sorrows. ... 37 And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!" (Mark 13:5-8, 37)

The sorrows are happening. What will happen next, for the next seals to be opened, is not laid out clearly enough.

But there are also other events that will build to fulfill many scriptures.

For example, some nation will become highly indebted before the Great Tribulation (Habakkuk 2:6) — this is happening to the USA (as well as the UK, though the total amount of indebtedness is less).

Damascus will be destroyed (Isaiah 17:1), and great military damage will hit Jerusalem (Isaiah 22:8-9). The timing of these two events possibly occurs before a prophesied peace deal.

One of the most important events to watch for is when the 'peace' deal of Daniel 9:27 is confirmed by a prince. Deals have been proposed, but the biblical one may not be known until after it happens, and even then, many will likely not accept it as the prophesied deal — yet its confirmation will be the "countdown" to the start of the Great Tribulation.

A King of the North (who was a 'prince' in Daniel 9:27) and a King of the South (Daniel 11:27) will arise and make a lying deal (Daniel 11:27). Europe will get a "great army" (Daniel 11:25) and "many ships" (Daniel 11:40). We are seeing the foundations for this now.

Animal sacrifices will begin (cf. Daniel 9:27). (Note: It is possible that the King of the South could rise up prior to Daniel 9:27 or even after the sacrifices resume as could the King of the North — and his army will be greater years after the deal of Daniel 9:27 is confirmed).

The Gospel of the Kingdom of God then will have been preached enough to the world as a witness for the end to come (Matthew 24:14) — steps related to this are in process (such as getting our The Gospel of the Kingdom of God booklet in closer to 2,000 languages/dialects thus far). This seems to be related to the 'short work' of Romans 9:28 — preparations for this are also occurring.

A naval encounter between the King of the North and the Anglo-Americans (could just be the Americans) will take place (Daniel 11:30) — this might mark the start of media attention and the short-work of Romans 9:28. It will mark the start of a time of pre-tribulation persecution per Daniel 11:30-35.

Jewish sacrifices will be stopped (Daniel 9:27, 11:31). Some Jews would like to start the sacrifices now (and did perform a trial event on December 10, 2018), but the Israeli government still has not been allowing the daily sacrifices that groups like the Temple Institute and Sanhedrin want.

Europe will reorganize into ten 'kingdoms' (not necessarily ten currently existing nations as some have improperly insisted upon and give power the Beast) — some of this could happen earlier — and reorganization has been proposed.

The abomination of desolation will then be set up (Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14) because of actions of the King of the North (Daniel 9:27; 11:31). The most faithful expect to continue to tell what is happening until they are somehow stopped (cf. Amos 8:11-12).

A decree is to be issued (Zephaniah 2:1-3) and then the most faithful Philadelphian Christians, most of which will have previously gathered together as Zephaniah points to, will 'fly' to the wilderness (Revelation 12:14-16) and those in Judea should flee per Jesus' statements in Matthew 24:15-19 and Mark 13:15-18. Several days prior to the time the Great Tribulation starts, the two witnesses will support the work, and they will get miraculous power from God to do their job (Revelation 11:3-15).

With the King of the North Beast, bolstered by the Antichrist, the Great Tribulation will begin (Matthew 24:21-22; Mark 13:19-20; Daniel 11:39, 12:1b; cf. Habakkuk 2:7-8). This will eliminate the USA and its Anglo-Saxon descended allies as nations (Daniel 11:39; Jeremiah 30:7; Habakkuk 2:7-8). The King of the South will shortly later push against the King of the North and get eliminated (Daniel 11:40-43) — those loyal to the King of the South will know tribulation (cf. Ezekiel 30:2-8).

About a month or so less than 2 ½ years after the Great Tribulation began, the sixth seal will be opened, there will be a 'blood moon' and a darkened sun (Revelation 6:12; Joel 2:30-31), then the 144,000 of Revelation 7:1-8 will be sealed.

Shortly thereafter, the seventh seal will be opened (Revelation 8:1-6) and the year long Day of the Lord (Isaiah 34:8) will begin with trumpet blasts, plagues, etc. (Revelation 8:7-13; 9:1-21; 11:13-14). Shortly thereafter, the seventh seal will be opened (Revelation 8:1-6) and the year long Day of the Lord (Isaiah 34:8) will begin with trumpet blasts, plagues, etc. (Revelation 8-7-13; 9:1-21; 11:13-14).

The crashing of Wormwood into the earth will occur with after third trumpet blast (Revelation 8:10-11). Some might call this Planet X hitting the earth.

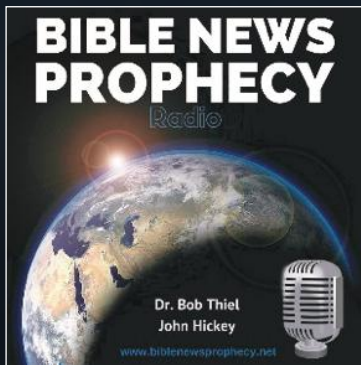
The gathering for Armageddon will begin related to the sixth trumpet blast (Revelation 8:13-19; 16:12-16).

It will get very bad, as Jesus said:

21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened. (Matthew 24:21-22)

Then at the seventh trumpet (Revelation 11:15) those days will be shortened, the saints will rise in the first resurrection, and Jesus will return to establish the millennial kingdom.

The Great Tribulation should begin about 3 1/2 years after the peace deal (Daniel 9:27) is confirmed, and right after the King of the North tries to proclaim peace and safety (1 Thessalonians 5:3) to throw people off (cf. Daniel 11:24) for his invasion plans. Plans, we in the Continuing Church of God are expected to point out (cf. Daniel 11:29-33).



Fulfilling Matthew 24:14 and Matthew 28:19-20



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BIBLENEWSPROPHECY.NET Radio messages of biblical and prophetic interest.

CCOG.ASIA This website is focused on Asia. It has articles in many Asian languages.

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CDLIDD.ES La Continuación de la Iglesia de Dios. This is the CCOG Spanish language website.

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The Continuing Church of God also uses books, personal visits, daily electronic newsletters, and weekly letters to the brethren to support Matthew 24:14, Romans 11:25, and Matthew 28:19-20.