

*TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY*

# **WATCH**

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لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ



لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

# RAGE AGAINST THE REGIME



## COMMENTARY

## RAGE AGAINST THE REGIME



by Mark Armstrong

This time may be different, according to the mainstream press we've learned not to trust. You may remember the last uprising in 2009, called the Green Revolution. President Obama was more interested in making a nuclear deal with the mullahs, and did nothing to support those who at the time thought they had a real chance of overthrowing the Islamic regime. The regime won out, arresting the leaders of the uprising and quashing the movement.

It is different this time in one respect. The regime has never gone on a killing spree the way it has in recent days. The Iranian military reportedly chased some two hundred protesters into a swampy area where they tried to evade capture. But they weren't captured. They were shot dead. The mullahs won't even say how many have been arrested, but you can guess that they are being treated with monstrous brutality. The damage done in the uprising so far involves 731 banks, 183 police cars, 1,076 motorcycles,

34 ambulances and 70 gas stations. That's according to the *New York Times*.

Not since the Islamic Revolution has Iran seen anything like the recent uprising. That is when the "demonstrators" successfully overthrew the Shah, and the American President (Jimmy Carter) turned his back while preaching "human rights."

In the intervening forty years, Iran has been a hotbed of hatred toward Israel and the United States. Carter obviously didn't realize that beyond the hostage crisis that was set off, there would be forty years of Islamic terror to follow. Iran has been instrumental in starting wars, like the one still going on in Yemen, and has infiltrated Iraq, Syria,



**Ayatollah Khomeini greeted by crowds in April, 1979, after returning from exile to establish the Islamic Republic of Iran.**



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**What began mid-November as civil protests against the sudden and drastic increase in fuel prices quickly became a series of destructive riots aimed at an oppressive regime. The Iranian government has since killed several hundreds of protestors in an effort to suppress dissent.**





# Christmas... the Untold Story

*by Garner Ted Armstrong*

Anyone can discover the truth about the pagan origins of Christmas, simply by looking up the word, along with all its accouterments and symbols in the major encyclopedias and history books. With the development of the Internet, it is even easier for those who possess PCs, and have access to the Worldwide Web. However, very few ever bother to do so. What about you? Have you ever really wondered about some of the customs we take casually for granted? Ever wanted to know the real TRUTH about the symbolism of “the mass of Christ,” or “Christmas?”

From time to time, I will see an article entitled “Put Christ back in Christmas,” or words to that effect. But it is impossible to “put Christ back in Christmas,” since He was never in Christmas in the first place! None of the apostles of Christ ever heard of the term; not one of them ever celebrated Christ’s birthday. The words Christmas, holly wreath,

mistletoe, Rudolph, Santa Claus and Christmas tree do not appear anywhere in the Bible.

The early true church never heard of Christmas. Centuries passed before the large, apostate church ever so gradually began adapting purely pagan practices and mythology to a time they originally called “the epiphany” (relating to Christ’s baptism, which they erroneously believed occurred early in January). Later, some writers began urging a celebration at the same time as the pagan winter solstice observances. This was done for the simple reason that so many pagans were already accustomed to “joyous,” sometimes “riotous” orgies of feasting at the time of the winter solstice.

Each year, articles appear in thousands of publications at Christmas time, cheerfully admitting that the true origins of the celebration are wholly pagan, not Christian. Such articles admit that Christ was probably born several

months earlier than December 25th; admit the pagan origin of the Christmas tree, “Santa Claus,” mistletoe, holly wreaths, yule logs, and the exchanging of gifts.

But most then go on to explain that the so-called “Christian” celebration “replaced” the pagan celebrations, and are therefore perfectly acceptable customs for Christians. Is this true? Does it make any difference to God? Why did not the apostles of Christ celebrate Christmas, instead of doggedly clinging to the Passover? Why did not the early church, for many, many centuries, not celebrate it? Why was it banned in early colonial America?

Did you ever really wonder WHY we do the things we do? WHY do we just take for granted such things as Hallowe’en, Christmas, New Year’s Eve, Groundhog’s Day and April Fool’s Day? How many have ever really researched the origins of these and other practices, and pondered whether they are

Christian or pagan?

You and I were born into a “ready-made” world. We had no part in customizing it to suit our own tastes—there it was, laid out for us, replete with holidays and customs we were taught as children (most of us). What was YOUR childhood response when you discovered there is no Santa Claus? Or did you cling to the myth of “Santa,” without thinking your parents had fibbed to you? Years ago, I heard of one young lad who, upon finding out there was no Santa Claus, said, “Well, maybe I had better look into this Jesus Christ business, too!”

I certainly never did look up any information about Christmas until I was well into my twenties, and already married. I did so, not so much to prove it was alright to celebrate Christmas, but to try to determine if my father who claimed it was pagan, and preached vigorously against it was right or wrong. That left me the “odd man out” in my neighborhood and in my school when it came time for carol singing and tree decorating. How desperately I wanted to conform to all that was in place around me. Christmas looked like so much FUN, after all.

As a boy, I deeply envied my neighborhood friends and school chums. They all gaily entered into the “Christmas spirit.” My parents didn’t observe Christmas. I never remember a time when we had a Christmas tree, or when any members of our family exchanged presents, or

sang Christmas carols. My father, who was a preacher, claimed he had found historical and biblical proof that the whole thing was “pagan to the core,” as he invariably put it.

Therefore, from a family perspective, I dreaded Christmas.

But in school, and among my friends along the block, I loved it. I so wanted to be a part of it; to share in the “Yuletide,” and, especially, to find my stocking

all apprehensive, excited, expectant about what I would find on my desk when we had our classroom “Christmas party,” only to discover a tiny handkerchief—well, that was disappointment in capital letters!

I used to “play Christmas” out of sight of my parents, in our garage. But I couldn’t play my game until AFTER Christmas, because only then could I sneak out into the neighborhood, re-

*How many have ever really researched the origins of these practices and pondered whether they are Christian or pagan?*

filled with wonderful goodies, or to mimic the scenes of kids around the Christmas tree, joyfully opening up gaily-colored boxes, or spending the first few hours on their new bicycles, or in their little red wagons.

To a limited extent, my mother allowed me to participate. We would draw each other’s names out of a box in our grade school classrooms, and each pupil was encouraged to buy a gift for the one whose name was drawn. But this was during the Great Depression, and folks didn’t have much money. Ten cents was a lot to spend on a gift. Keen frustrations occurred, when my Mom would take me down to the five and dime, and help me buy a tiny vial of perfume for a nickel, and wrap it up to give to the girl whose name I had drawn;

retrieve a little tree someone had thrown away, delighted to find a few scraps of tinsel still on it, and spirit it away, and into our garage. I would find brightly-colored wrappings people had discarded, take them out of the garbage cans, and then wrap them around little blocks of wood, like chunks of 2×4’s we sometimes used for kindling. Then, I would arrange them under my pitiful little tree, and pretend they were gifts!

My pretended Christmas was even more frustrating than exchanging gifts in class! For one thing, it was all out of sync, and for another, I was terrified I would be caught.

I learned to lie about Christmas. When the kids would be out riding their new bikes, or waltzing by on a pair of roller skates, or pulling one another in

their new red wagon, and asked me, “Teddy, what did you get for Christmas?” I would tell them socks, or underwear. After all, who was going to check up—and how could they prove it one way

or another?

Why am I telling you this? Because I want you to understand, before you read the rest of this book, that I desperately wanted to conform to the world

*My parents told me  
where Christmas really  
comes from!*



around me. I deeply resented the fact that my parents didn’t “keep Christmas.” Later, as a man, I would have dearly loved to be able to justify Christmas from the Bible—not only justify keeping it, but being able to PROVE that I should! If I could do that—if I could prove that Christ was really born on the 25th of December, and that He wants me to celebrate His birthday by making out a Christmas shopping list, and entering into the “Christmas spirit,” then I assure you I would have the most beautiful tree in the neighborhood; would have my shrubs and roof all lit up, and would sneak down and fill my grandkids stockings with goodies, and blame it all on Santa Claus.

But, alas. I looked into the history books and encyclopedias—and the Bible.

I was as astonished at what I found as you will be! □

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***Christmas...***

***The Untold Story***

by Garner Ted Armstrong

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# Italy: Mass Legalization of Migrants is Suicidal

by Giulio Meotti, Gatestone Institute

Describing Italy, Gerard Baker, former editor in chief of the *Wall Street Journal*, recently wrote:

“In much of the country... depopulation is advancing. Moving into the empty spaces have been waves of immigrants, many from North Africa and the Middle East. The migrants have filled vital gaps in the labor force, but the transformation of Italian towns has left increasing numbers of citizens resentful, fearful for their identity.”

He went on to call this transformation, “a kind of pioneer of Western decline.” Already, the effects of mass migration are becoming dramatically visible in many of Italy’s elementary schools. In just the last few days, examples from two large cities have surfaced.

The first was in Turin, Italy’s fourth largest city, where there are now elementary school classes with not even one Italian child: “In all classes, school principal Aurelia Provenza explained, the percentage of foreigners is very high, equal to 60% of the total number of pupils.”

The second example comes from Bologna. “In my son’s kindergarten there is a serious inte-

gration problem, I have to take him away,” says Mohamed, a 34-year-old of Moroccan origin who arrived in Italy when he was 4 years old.

“I don’t want to be seen as a racist myself as I am Moroccan, but the municipality must know that there is no integration by putting more than 20 foreign children into classes.”

At the time of enrollment, Mohamed explained, they had seen drawings with flags of all nationalities in the school, but, “when we arrived at school the first day, we found ourselves in a class with all foreign children. The teachers are even struggling to pronounce the children’s names.”

We have now reached a paradox: immigrants are taking their children out from classes where, under multiculturalism, segregation is surging. “School performance falls when classes exceed 30% foreigners; it is a crucial threshold that should be avoided or otherwise monitored,” said Costanzo Ranci, professor of Economic Sociology, and author of a recent report.

Both of the above cases have been the subject of much public debate. In Italy, last month,

the number of migrants arriving from Africa surged, after having declined for most of the last two years. The migrant reception center on the island of Lampedusa, the front line of Italy’s migration crisis, is now in a state of “collapse” due to the rapidly rising number of arrivals. The entire south of Italy is now trying to deal with migrants.

According to projections from the UN Population Division, the population of sub-Saharan Africa will double in 30 years, adding an additional 1 billion people and accounting for more than half the global population growth between now and 2050. Italy, which already has the third-largest population of migrants in Europe, is undergoing an “unbearable” crisis, and now faces the real risk of an “Africanisation,” as Stephen Smith called it in his book, *The Scramble for Europe*.

There are many voices of concern. Cardinal Robert Sarah, author of a new book, *The Day Is Now Far Spent*, about the crisis of the West, compares the current influx of migrants to the invasions of barbarians that brought down the Roman Empire. If Europe’s policies toward migrants do not change, Sarah warns, Europe will

*Continued next page*

be “invaded by foreigners, just as Rome was invaded by barbarians.”

“If Europe disappears, and with it the priceless values of the Old Continent, Islam will invade the world and we will completely change our culture, anthropology and moral vision.”

An Italian think-tank, Fondazione Fare Futuro, also just predicted that due to mass migration and the different birthrates of Christians and Muslims, by the end of the century half of the population of Italy could be Muslim. In just ten years, the number of migrants in Italy has surged by 419%.

The native Italian population is already shrinking rapidly. Without the foreigners, every year native Italians would die (615,000) at twice the rate of

births (380,000). Eurostat, the European official statistics office, calculates that by 2080, one-fifth of Italians will come from migration background (11 million of Italy’s 53 million).

A recent report by the Italian national statistics office noted that the country is in a “demographic recession” not seen since World War I, and 250,000 young Italians have fled the country. “Italy exports young graduates and imports migrants”, wrote *Il Giornale*. Italy is expected to lose 17% of its population by 2050, and -- even without immigration -- half by the end of the century.

A Caritas-Migrantes report recently documented that since 2014, the decrease in the number of Italians is equivalent to the population of a large Italian city,

say, Palermo (677,000). The dramatic decrease, however, has so far been offset by migrants.

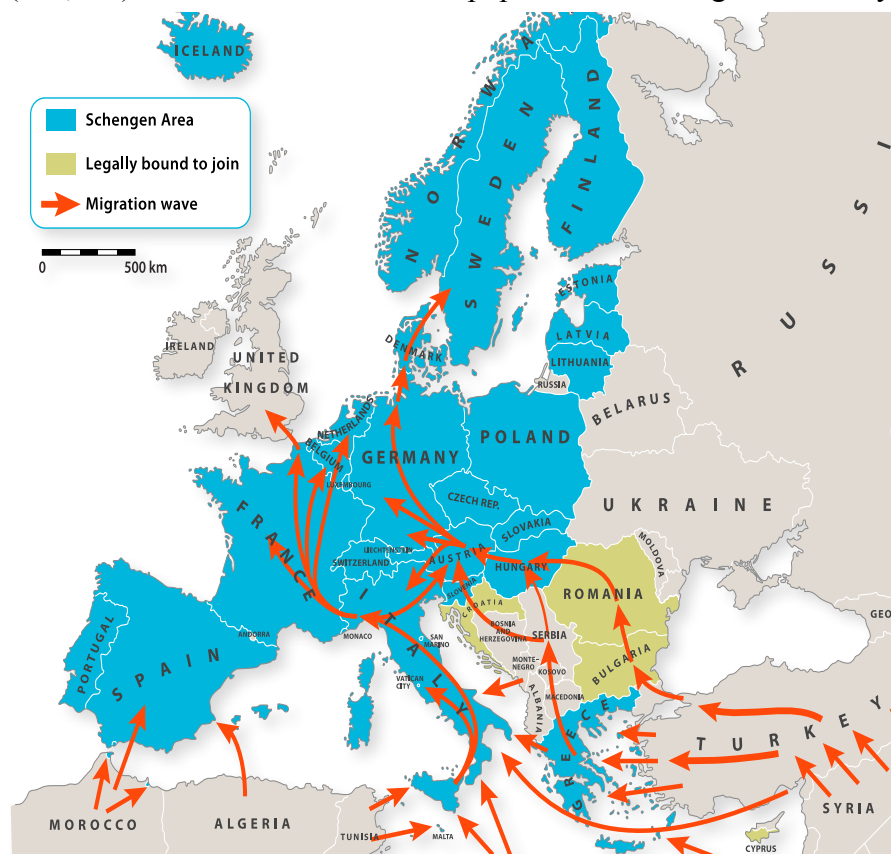
Immigration is once again becoming a political question. Just weeks after forming a government with the Five Star Movement, the Democratic Party is advancing the so-called “birthright citizenship” -- a pledge to reverse the stringent migration policy of former Interior Minister Matteo Salvini. In Latin this right to citizenship is called *ius culturae*. The new law would allow foreign minors under the age of 12 to become citizens after just five years at school in Italy. The bill is being advanced by Laura Boldrini, a former president of Italy’s Parliament, who famously said: “The lifestyle of the migrants will be ours.” Will Italians, as in those elementary schools, integrate into the new culture of the migrants?

The current government knows perfectly well what is at stake. “From now to 2050 and 2060, we will have to face an epochal question from 50 to 60 million people who will arrive in the Mediterranean world,” Nicola Morra, MP in the governmental majority, recently said.

The government is literally gambling with Italy’s future.

Italy is the European country most exposed to migration pressure from Africa. With a native population already shrinking, if Italy is open to the mass legalization of migrants, we should at least be aware that it will be culturally suicidal. ■

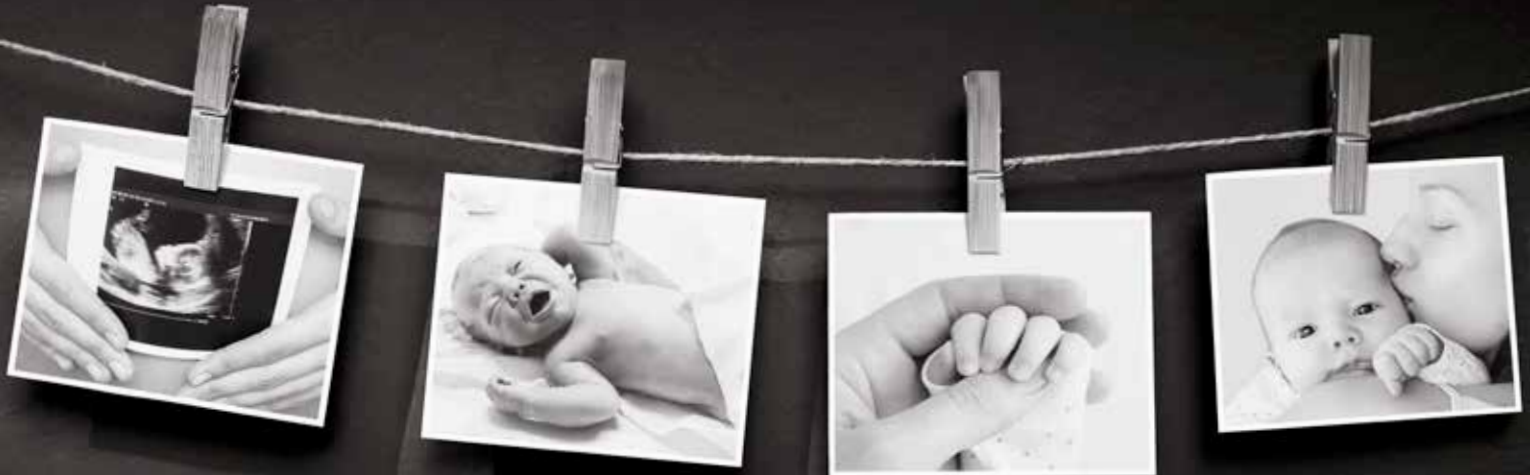
*Giulio Meotti, Cultural Editor for Il Foglio, is an Italian journalist and author.*



The “Schengen Area” is where passports and other types of border control have been abolished between member countries.



# Abortions Drop 25% in the U.S. Since 2007 as More Babies Saved From Death



by Michael New, PH.D., *LifeNews.com*

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has released abortion data for 2016, indicating that the U.S. abortion rate has continued to decline, a trend that began in 1980.

Between 2015 and 2016, both the number of abortions and the abortion rate (the number of abortions per 1,000 U.S. women of childbearing age) decreased by about 2 percent. The decline was fairly consistent, as 33 of the 46 states that reported abortion data saw their numbers decline. This is good news for pro-lifers, and for anyone who wants to see the incidence of abortion decrease.

While much of the analysis of new abortion data typically focuses on short-term trends, the long-term decline in the U.S. abortion rate is even more impressive.

According to the CDC, the abortion rate has fallen by more than 25 percent between 2007 and 2016 among the 47 states that reported abortion data consistently during that timespan (excluding California, Maryland, and New Hampshire, which did not report abortion numbers). The data also indicate that the abortion rate has fallen by approximately 50 percent since 1980. The abortion trends reported by the CDC are similar to those shown by estimates from the Guttmacher Institute, which in September released its estimates for U.S. abortion data for 2017.

Most of the media coverage of declining abortion numbers typically credits increased contraception use. But commentators often overlook a key factor

in the long-term abortion-rate decline: the fact that a higher percentage of women with unintended pregnancies carry them to term. Data from Guttmacher show that between 1981 and 2011, the percentage of unintended pregnancies that resulted in an abortion fell from approximately 54 percent to 42 percent.

Since the early 1990s, pro-lifers have made gains in public opinion, enacted a higher number of pro-life laws, and established more pregnancy-help centers. The declining abortion numbers, and the fact that more unintended pregnancies are being carried to term, is nice evidence that these pro-life efforts have been effective. Hopefully, the new CDC data will encourage pro-lifers and inspire them to continue their lifesaving efforts. ■

# Don't Delay

by Michael Armstrong



When Jesus began to preach, He said, “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” This is a very familiar message to most of western society. The need for man to repent is perhaps the most basic tenant of Christianity. It has been promoted and expounded upon by 2,000 years of evangelism. Even the most diametrically opposed sects, loathe to agree on anything, concur on the necessity of repentance. Exactly what the “kingdom of heaven” may be and just how “at hand” it is may immediately divide them like so many breeds of sheep and goats, but the forgiveness aspect at least is fairly well settled.

Likewise, any honest Christian (that endangered creature) must admit a certain obligation to the words of the savior Himself. Fortunately we have been blessed with no fewer than four separate accounts of His life, deeds, and sayings. The gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke all document His call to repentance. Matthew and Mark both relate the beginning of His ministry with words identical in substance and meaning if not verbiage.

Matthew 4:17, also excerpted at the beginning of this article, records, “From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, ‘Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’” The gospel of Mark reads, “Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.’” These accounts also agree chronologically, placing their statements immediately after Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness, at the beginning of His ministry.

The gospel of Luke summarizes the period when these statements would have been made in a few verses. After recording the temptation, Luke 4:14 goes on to say, “And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of Him through all the region round about. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.” There can be little doubt about what He preached.

The next chapter records His

answer to those detractors who criticized Him for consorting with the “wrong” kind of people. “And Jesus answering said unto them, ‘They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.’” (Luke 5:31-32)

It is generally agreed that the gospel of John was written quite a few years after the other three accounts. The close personal relationship that John had with the Lord makes it an invaluable addition to Holy scripture. It supplements and clarifies many important points in the life of Jesus and particularly stresses that He was doing the will of His Father. It clarifies the process somewhat, illuminating the relationship between Jesus and the Father and how we can be forgiven. More on that later.

The first lengthy quotation from Jesus contained in the Gospel of John is His discourse with Nicodemus in chapter three and deals with man entering the kingdom of God. Verses 14 through 17 state, “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the



wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.”

From these few verses, from the words with which Jesus began His teaching, we gather a great deal and that of the utmost importance. We *must* repent; the kingdom of God *will* be here soon (at the end of our lives if not sooner); that it is sin that needs to be repented of; and that your belief is an essential part of your forgiveness and entrance into the kingdom of God. In that way it is like many of the other miracles Jesus performed, where the recipient’s faith is stated as the necessary catalyst for the healing to occur! The inverse is also true as attested to by Matthew 13:58: “And He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.”

The fact that we can be reconciled to God is truly a miracle. How long has He suffered with disobedient, willfully rebellious mankind? It is astounding, but not more so than the fact that He would call us! We tend to be only too familiar with our own shortcomings and it drives home the point that Christ made, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” He didn’t reach the whole world during His

physical life. Many have lived and died without an inkling of the truth of God. But if you hear His words, if you understand His message, if you know why you need salvation, then you must heed His warning. “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

There is an immediacy to what Christ is asking of you. When He said “repent,” He didn’t mean later. It was something He

it. She didn’t keel over and expire as if from poison. She took the fruit and gave some to Adam. Everyone is familiar with the story, their lives continued. But the serpent lied. From the moment they disobeyed the Lord they were under a penalty far worse than an abrupt ending to this brief physical life and it is the same penalty we all incur when we transgress God’s law.

### ***Repent: (verb)***

***1: to turn from sin and dedicate oneself to the amendment of one’s life***

***2: to feel regret or contrition***

***3: to change one’s mind***

was asking of His listeners right then, at that moment. How could it be otherwise? The realization of your own guilt, your own personal, willful sin is an awful, staggering moment. But it is a necessary part of a truly wonderful process. In repentance you must acknowledge that you have transgressed the very law of God, admitting even that it is your own fault. The penalty? Death, of course. Not immediate, physical death (though much of the Law is meant to protect and enrich your physical life) but ultimate spiritual death.

The serpent said to Eve, “ye shall not surely die” when encouraging her to eat of the forbidden fruit. God had said, “thou shall not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” Eve ate

In many ways people are still deceived by the serpent’s lie. Maybe they steal but they don’t get caught—where are the repercussions? Maybe it’s lying; nobody gets hurt, right? How about coveting or lust, blasphemy or honoring your parents? It’s obvious that God is not enforcing His law, at least not spectacularly, immediately, and observably in a manner that would discourage those who tread upon it. The justly deserved lightning bolts rarely fall and the wicked may feel safe in the assumption that this will always be the case. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

We would do well to remember that we have life on a limited time, trial basis, so to speak. Those who want to believe that this existence is a mere accident, that there is no God, and

that physical death is final, may receive the perpetual extinction they expect, and so will all those who do not or will not repent. But it does not have to be that way.

Through Jesus Christ we have a way out from under the penalty we have incurred. As Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, full of the power of the Holy Spirit, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Maybe some have wondered why or how the sacrifice of Jesus Christ can cover the sins of all mankind. Read the beginning of the gospel of John. Read the beginning of the book of Hebrews. Remember that in Genesis it says, "Let US make man in OUR image." Jesus said, "Before Abraham was I AM."

He also said of God the Father, "Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape," yet how many times is it recorded that God spoke to someone? *God*

ate with Abraham, *God* wrestled with Jacob. Ezekiel saw Him on His throne. The Bible is neither lies nor fables. The Creator, who visited the patriarchs and inspired the prophets, willingly suffered humiliation, torture, and death that we might be reconciled to Him. His life is worth infinitely more than all of ours combined and He risked it for us.

Could He have sinned during His human life? Certainly, but He didn't. Hebrews 4:15 says He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." With the Holy Spirit, the power of God, the force behind miracles and even creation, the flesh can be overcome. It's telling in a way, that man requires a weapon of that magnitude (the "sword of the spirit" as it is called) to conquer our own flesh and the temptations that are in the world, but conquer we must.

You will not get away with sin. No one will. We must repent

of it, abstain from it, eschew it and when we find ourselves in it, as we inevitably do even after conversion, we must repent again! Think of it like the corrosive life-taking scourge that it is. If you noticed a poisonous spider on your arm would you ignore it? Would you welcome a venomous serpent into your home? How much more cautious should we be with something infinitely more deadly and in a "forever" kind of way?

Make no mistake, it is a life or death struggle. If you see the path to salvation you must take it. If you hear the words of Jesus Christ you must heed them. Maybe it seems easier to put it off, ignore it, excuse it, to just not think about it. Don't play with fire, don't tempt almighty God who has put up with you for this long already. A way out has been made for you, take it. Christ said repent and He meant right now. Don't Delay! ☐

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# IGNORANCE IS NOT BLISS

*by Victor Sharpe, Buffalo Gap Round-Up*

There is ignorance as to when the war by Islamists against America began. Many think it first occurred on 9/11/2001. But it began much, much earlier.

Let us go back to the Iran hostage crisis in 1979. That outrage was followed by the Lebanon barracks massacre of American soldiers in 1983 followed by the Pan Am Lockerbie atrocity in 1988. Then came the first New York World Trade Center bombing in 1993; the Khyber Towers massacre of U.S. personnel in Dharan in 1996; the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, the attack on the U.S. Cole in Yemen in 2000 and the worst Islamist crime of all in the U.S. in 2001 when the World Trade Center was destroyed and the Pentagon badly damaged.

Till the present day there have been thousands of Islamist acts of blood soaked aggression in the name of Allah throughout Europe, the United Kingdom, Israel and elsewhere with thousands upon thousands of innocent

civilians murdered.

This abiding horror is primarily funded by the Iranian regime—the same Islamists to whom Barack Obama gave \$150 Billion. Ostensibly it was to help the Iranian people, but predictably it has been used to spread terror throughout much of the world, while the mad mullahs continue to feverishly build atomic weapons and the ICBMs to deliver them.

The jihadist adventurism by

the Iranian regime is nothing new. Indeed, it has been at the heart of Iranian foreign policy since the Shah was overthrown during the presidency of Jimmy Carter, whose own misguided policies led to the Shah's downfall and to the rise of Ayatollah Khomeini in his place.

Immediately Khomeini proclaimed that, “We shall export our revolution to the whole world until the cry ‘there is no god but Allah’ resounds over the whole



*Continued next page*

world.” True to Khomeini’s words, for forty years the mullahs have shed the blood of Americans and others with impunity.

In my first paragraph, I noted that the Islamist war against America began much earlier than September 11th, 2001. It, of course, began around the time of America’s Declaration of Independence in 1776.

In his recent Ettinger Report, Mr. Ettinger wrote: “Islamic terrorism has been an integral feature of U.S. history as represented by the following U.S. personalities, who were unrestrained by our foolish 2019 political correctness.” He wrote the following: “In 1786, Presidents-to-be John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, then US Ambassadors to Britain and France, reported to Congress a message from the representative of the Tripoli Barbary Muslim pirates, which articulated the

reason for Muslim hostility towards the U.S.

“Islam was founded on the laws of the Prophet, as written in the Quran. All nations, which have not acknowledged Islam’s authority, are sinners. It is the Muslims’ right and duty to make war upon them wherever they can be found, and to enslave them.

“Every Muslim slain in battle is sure to go to Paradise.”

A bribe was demanded by the pirates with the claim that such payment would secure only some temporary lenience and during 1801-1805, President Jefferson would have no more of it. He deployed the U.S. Navy and Marines to Tripoli, defeating the Muslim pirates and freeing all U.S. slaves.

In 1916, President Teddy Roosevelt wrote: “Wherever the Mohammedans have had complete sway and wherever the Christians have been unable to re-

sist them by the sword, Christianity has ultimately disappeared... If the people of Europe had not possessed a military equality with, and gradually a growing superiority, over the Mohammedans who invaded Europe, Europe would be at this moment Mohammedan, and the Christian religion would be exterminated...”

Mr. Ettinger summarized the vulnerability of present day Western misunderstanding of the 7th century mentality that still drives Islam. It is an ideology, which can be summed up by its followers as follows:

“Islam is the only legitimate religion, divinely-ordained to rule;

“The abode of the ‘infidels’ must submit itself to the abode of the believers unconditionally, peacefully or militarily;

“*Jihad* (holy war) must be conducted on behalf of Islam;

“Terrorism aims to terrify ‘infidel’ civilians;

“Agreements with ‘infidels’ constitute non-binding, temporary ceasefires and truces (*Sulh, Hudna*)—not the end of conflicts—to be abrogated once the Muslim believers regain sufficient fire-power.

“Double-speak and dissimulation (*Taqiyyah*) are legitimate tactics aimed at misleading and defeating the infidel.”

Unless we wake up, the West’s adoption of “political correctness,” “diversity,” and “multiculturalism” may well be the self-imposed idiocy which assists Islam to more easily defeat us. Ignorance is not bliss. □



***Decatur Boarding the Tripolitan Gunboat* by Dennis Carter depicts one of the many naval conflicts between the United States and Muslim pirates during the Barbary Wars between 1801-1815.**





# WORLD NEWS BRIEF

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

### CONTINUING TRAGEDY

Who can forget the sickening, heart breaking videos that exposed the unimaginably evil practices of Planned Parenthood? The series detailed their gruesome business model, including the dismemberment of viable babies for profit and many potentially criminal acts. Now Planned Parenthood has sued David Daleiden and other members of the Center for Medical Progress responsible for making and releasing the undercover videos. They have been ordered to pay Planned Parenthood \$870,000 for causing “substantial harm” to their “abortion business.”

This may be a new low, even for California. Daleiden and the rest are expected to appeal the verdict, but they are also facing criminal charges filed by former California Attorney General Kamala Harris that include conspiracy, breach of confidentiality, wire tapping, and trespassing. Their videos did prompt investigation into Planned Parenthood on the Federal level and the Department of Justice is currently investigating. If there is any justice left in the Department, or the United States, surely these heinous practices will not be allowed to continue.

### FLOODING VENICE

While famous for its canals, Venice has been wetter than usual recently. Exceptionally high tides have inundated the city. Many historic buildings have been damaged, perhaps irreparably, and the Mayor has estimated the repair bill will run into the hundreds of millions. Though catastrophic, this is not the first time the lagoon city has flooded.

The highest tide on record actually dates back to 1966. The government immediately commis-

sioned plans to be drawn up for a barrier to protect the city. Forty-seven years later, in 2003 construction began! (The Italian government is not known for its efficiency.) Completion was scheduled for 2011 but has now tentatively been pushed back to the end of 2021. The cost is now estimated to be 5.5 billion euros, up from the initial projection of 1.6 billion. Maintenance costs will be about 100 million euros a year.

The “cutting edge” system involves 78 movable barriers, submerged in the sea, that will rise when activated, theoretically protecting the Venetian lagoon from exceptionally high tides. Alas, though not yet operational much of the infrastructure has already begun to rust. Adding insult to injury, experts are clamoring that the barrier may be obsolete in a few decades. It will be no match for the even higher tides sure to be brought about by climate change! Ironically, the system is named “Modulo Sperimentale Elettromeccanico” the acronym being “Mose,” an intentional reference to Moses and the parting of the Red Sea.

### JUDICIAL CONSERVATISM

In spite of all the impeachment hullabaloo, Donald Trump has been busily fulfilling one of his campaign promises. While the nation has been focused on testimony in the House of Representatives, the Senate has confirmed the appointment of Barbara Lagoa to the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals. This is just the latest achievement in Trump’s efforts to shift the Federal Judiciary to the right (pun intended). In addition to two Supreme Court Justices, Trump has appointed 48 appeals court judges

*Continued next page*

and 112 district court judges. Filling lower court vacancies may not generate many sensational headlines but it will have a definite and lasting effect on our country.

### POINTLESS

The United Kingdom now takes weapons control to an absurd level. Anyone carrying a blade more than three inches long “without good reason” could be on the wrong side of the law. The upsurge of fatal stabbings in recent years has led to more strict enforcement, though the root cause may lie somewhere other than the knife itself. Moreover, many of the confiscations and apprehensions seem more like Monty Python than the work of serious law enforcement. The definition of “blade” has been somewhat loose. A man was charged in 2018, facing up to four years imprisonment, for having “an article which had a blade or which was sharply pointed, namely a potato peeler.” What’s next, a man armed with a banana?



These items were found during a [#weaponSweep](#) near [#MackworthHouse](#) [#AugustasSt](#) during [#OpSceptre](#). Safely disposed and taken off the streets



8:57 AM · Mar 16, 2018 · Twitter for iPhone

1.7K Retweets · 1.9K Likes

### 5G IS COMING

Widespread implementation of new “5th Generation” cellular internet technology is underway by all four major U.S. carriers. While full scale, stand alone 5G coverage is likely still years away, companies are racing to provide even limited access for large cities. Most commonly this is through “millimeter wave” broadcasting towers. Transmission is “line of sight” and requires a station to be built every few hundred yards, sparking health concerns due to radiation and worries about interference with weather radar. While current 4G networks support over 100,000 devices per square mile, 5G will be able to handle over 1 million. Speed and reliability will also be greatly increased. This will allow the so-called “internet of things” (refrigerators, medical devices, your dog’s collar) to grow exponentially and many predict it will begin to make autonomous vehicles, whole new weapons systems, and a hitherto unimaginable level of surveillance possible.

### ISRAEL’S DEEP STATE GOES AFTER NETANYAHU

It appears that Benjamin Netanyahu is in a similar situation to President Trump. Israel has its liberal media that hates Netanyahu and wants him deposed permanently. The most recent election results have been inconclusive, with neither Netanyahu nor his rival Benny Gantz able to form the required coalition. So the thing remains in limbo, with Netanyahu apparently still carrying out the duties of Prime Minister. Meanwhile, he’s under criminal indictment. Something about cigars and champagne from a visiting potentate, years ago. They’ve accused PM Netanyahu of “bribery, fraud and breach of trust.” That sounds mighty familiar, doesn’t it? May he do to his accusers what Trump does to his. They are close friends by all accounts, and it seems that they have much in common. Either way, Israel looks to be facing another national election in three months. And you thought we have troubles!

### NO PEACE FOR IRAQ

Turmoil in Iraq is so commonplace that perhaps if there were peace it would be more noteworthy. Iraq has gone from war with Iran to war with



the United States. They've been cruelly oppressed by Saddam Hussein, overrun by ISIS, interspersed with periods of sectarian violence. The demonstrations currently underway are the largest since Saddam's downfall in 2003. At this writing 325 people have been killed since the demonstrations began in October. Protesters have surrounded the Green Zone in Baghdad and still control three important bridges. Government forces have used live ammunition on the crowds, injuring thousands in addition to those killed. Many deaths have also resulted from tear gas canisters aimed intentionally at protesters' heads. The current unrest is generally attributed to widespread poverty, lack of services and employment opportunity as well as rampant government corruption and unfulfilled promises.

#### **HERE'S WHAT THEY CAN DO WITH THAT CHIP!**

For a couple of years now, people at certain companies and institutions have lined up to have tiny microchips implanted in their right hands, between the thumb and forefinger. Ah, the convenience of it all. They can just pass their hand over a scanner, and presto, they've paid for their vending machine choices. Door scanners recognize them immediately and unlock automatically. The little chip is no larger than a grain of rice, and employees who opted in at Three Square Market in Wisconsin got a free T-shirt announcing to the world, "I Got Chipped." It's probably more of a status symbol than having the latest iPhone.


The chip was invented and manufactured in Sweden, where proponents expect to make the whole country "cashless" within a few years. Unlike simple chips that go on a dog collar and help locate lost pets, programmers have been able to adapt the technology to automatically make phone calls and somehow even access the Internet. These technology geniuses have exulted that it's like having your body online! Oh, they're "super excited," because this technology can be "bio-enabled" to monitor every aspect of internal health: heartbeat, blood oxygen levels, temperature and breathing patterns. Who would have guessed that this is where technology would take us.

Those who worry (and there are many) that

this sounds eerily similar to Mark of the Beast prophecies in the Bible are dismissed as hopelessly behind the times. But then that goes for nearly every other aspect of societal demands. You must accept all the new norms of the mainstream, many of which contradict belief in God and go in direct contravention of His Laws, or be ridiculed mercilessly by the mainstream media and be treated as if you don't exist by ALL large corporations. We've already given up nearly every aspect of privacy with the advent of smart-phones and all the conveniences they afford. How long before the world's populations get "chipped," and governments get the power described in the book of Revelation? At least smart phones can be disabled or left behind, and that's one luxury that would be lost should this "exciting" technology catch on.

#### **SHOPLIFTING PROTECTED IN SOCIALIST UTOPIA**

California's leadership is the author of many of the horrible problems driving thousands out of the former paradise. You don't need us to tell you of the rampant homeless situation that's been allowed to spread out of control. Not only do they have bums living in filth all up and down the streets, they've created a crime wave that's killing businesses. It seems that theft and shoplifting is way down the list of law enforcement priorities, so they've reduced the penalty for any theft under the amount of \$950 to a misdemeanor. So now, the "homeless" can steal whatever they want, run out the door and sell it for half the price, then go back and steal some more to support their homeless habits. Reports say it's become brazen and takes place often in broad daylight. Nothing will be done about petty theft, so it's become a way of life for the down and out all across the state, spreading from San Francisco.

And as goes California, we've learned the hard way, so goes the nation. These types of policies are already in effect nationwide, where an employee is not even allowed to make contact with a thief carrying stolen goods from a store, under penalty of being fired. So that means a petty thief can shoplift at will, as long as he doesn't go over the amount deemed a felony. It's another milestone on the road to communist Utopia. 

## BIBLE STUDY

*by Dr. James & Natalie Ricks*

# The Next Generation

## THE APPEAL OF WORLDLINESS

One of the most frightening prophecies of the Bible is that each new generation would almost invariably go into paganism; that they would wish to be like the pagan nations around them. They would reject the true God for the failed ways of the world. The Bible makes clear this dangerous and negative tendency of human nature. While Moses was still alive he barely restrained the peoples' hunger for paganism by his strength of leadership.

Deuteronomy 31:27, "For I know your rebellion and your stiff neck. If today, while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the LORD, then how much more after my death?" (NKJV).

The pattern of the history of God's people, Israel, reveals that without strong Godly leadership the next generation would fall into apostasy and paganism. Moses prophesied this fate for Israel and he was totally correct.

Deuteronomy 29:26-28, "For they went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods that they did not know and that He had not given to them.

"Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against this land, to bring on it every curse that is written in this book.

"And the LORD uprooted them from their land in anger, in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast

them into another land, as it is this day."

Moses warned that other nations would say that Israel was overthrown because they forsook the God that rescued them from Egypt. Moses knew that this would happen! What did Moses want the Israelites to do about this danger?

## KNOWLEDGE OF GOD MUST BE SHARED WITH OUR CHILDREN

Deuteronomy 29:29, "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law."

Moses is saying those Godly teachings which are revealed to us must be shared with our children forever. The history of Israel and the Laws given by God to Israel should be passed on by each generation to the next. They belong to the young and are an important part of their heritage.

Deuteronomy 4:8-9, "And what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law which I set before you this day?

"Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And teach them to your children and your grandchildren."

Moses warned them to not forget the true God



## BIBLE STUDY

and all His wonders, but to teach all this to both their children and their grandchildren. This apostasy of the next generation, without strong and directly commissioned leadership, continued on in the history of the nation.

Judges 2:7-12, "So the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD which He had done for Israel.

"Now Joshua...died...

"When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD nor the work which He had done for Israel.

"Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals;

"and they forsook the LORD God of their fathers,...they followed other gods from among the gods of the people who were all around them, and they bowed down to them; and they provoked the LORD to anger."

This pattern of the next generation being ignorant of the things of God and how historically He had blessed Israel happens repeatedly until their exile. People are naturally attracted to paganism and worldly things even when they include sacrificing babies to idols for false blessings. Jesus believed in teaching children because they are like empty vessels eager to have something put into them. They also are humble and open to teaching.

Luke 18:15-16, "Then they also brought infants to Him that He might touch them; but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

"But Jesus called them to Him and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God."

Children need their parents and grandparents the most in the early, formative years. We set about, whether we know it or not, teaching what a real family is like. We communicate how to be like Mom or Dad by our actions.

Proverbs 19:18-19, "Chasten your son while there is hope, And do not set your heart on his destruction."

We must think of what is best for our children in the long run when we discipline them.

Ephesians 6:4, "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord."

It is not easy to transmit our values to the next generation. We can all see the difficulties of this historically.

1 Samuel 2:12, "Now the sons of Eli were corrupt; they did not know the LORD."

Remarkably, both the High Priest Eli and Samuel the Prophet had sons that proved to be totally corrupt. Even though they grew up in the priestly world of the Bible, they turned to evil as adults. Younger people have their own free moral agency, so even with exposure to Godly truth, you cannot predict their future actions.

Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

We must train our children and grandchildren as best we can, no matter all the worldly pressures they are under. Parents need to help develop discipline and character in children to help them resist the downward pull of human nature. Great parents can have evil offspring and bad parents can produce responsible children. But all parents and grandparents need to do our best to pass along Godly values in this increasingly secular society. This gives us the best odds of producing Godly offspring. Encourage them when they are doing good things and they will learn to appreciate good behavior.

## THE DANGERS WE NOW FACE

We face today some of the same difficulties that ancient Israel struggled with. Passing on good values and Godly knowledge to the next generation is harder in these end times than ever before in human history. Moses recognized that in the end times it would be even harder and even more vital to the people to retain the knowledge of God.

Deuteronomy 31:29, "For I know that after

*Continued next page*

## BIBLE STUDY

my death you will become utterly corrupt, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days, because you will do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands.”

It is painfully obvious that our youth have lost basic American and Christian values. Academia has now completely removed any awareness of the influence of religion and God in our nation’s history. A large number of young adults are unpatriotic and half of all millennials distrust capitalism. Seventy percent of young voters recently said they would vote socialist. In a few voting cycles this nation as we know it could be destroyed.

Why will the end time generations be so easily deceived by the Beast? Because they have not been taught the truth. The younger generation has not been taught to love or value the truth. They have been taught to blindly love only politically correct propaganda.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 warns, “Let no one deceive you by any means; for that day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,

“Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”

Verse 7 continues, “For the mystery of law-

lessness is already at work;”

Verses 9-10, “The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,

“And with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.”

The last generation in the West will be full of people who do not love the truth and can be easily led to oppose God and His Laws and ways. Many churches are drifting away from Biblical values. How can we protect ourselves and our kids from deception? Learn the Bible! Really learn the Bible and the true history of our primarily Bible oriented nation. Read the *Mayflower Compact* and see the prominence of the Bible in the founding of the United States of America.

2 Timothy 2:14-16, “Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers.

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

“But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.”

Teach our kids and ourselves the basics of the Bible. We must stay with basic core doctrines and don’t let someone lead us or our kids astray over petty word issues. □

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## Rage Against the Regime

*Continued from page 2*

Lebanon and Gaza, and most recently attacked Saudi Arabia. The Islamic regime, headed by the Ayatollah Khomeini who succeeded the original Khomeini, is widely reported to be the world's foremost sponsor of terrorism.

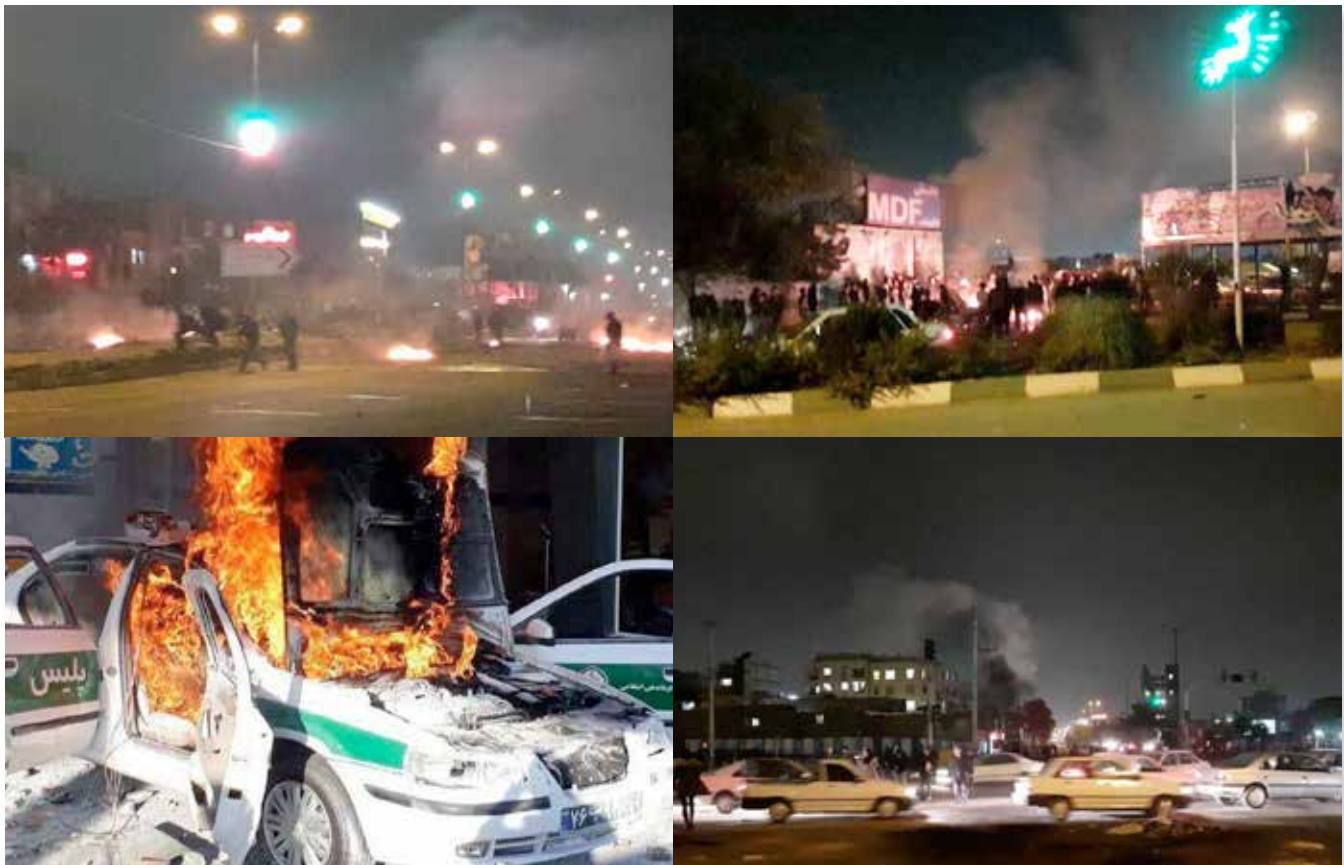
The regime is openly hostile to the United States, threatening our destruction as recently as last week. They routinely mount "death to Israel, death to the United States" chants and seem to revel in them. Now they have their hands full. After ruinous sanctions, sponsored by the U. S. and enforced upon European businesses, Iran's leaders saw fit to increase fuel

prices by 50% overnight. It hasn't gone over well among the middle class and "working poor," as the mainstream is reporting. Rowdy demonstrations broke out across the country, with people lighting fire to every symbol of the regime. Not only that, they are openly calling for an end to Islamic theocracy.

Tehran is a beautiful city with a touch of dignity. That's because it was built by the British. Not much has been accomplished in the way of modernity since the Islamic revolution resulted in the madmen taking power. They do have their religious enforcers in the city streets, making sure women are scarved and appropriately draped in Islamic garb. They've shut down

the internet which means that people cannot communicate as usual, and that is only fueling anger in the streets.

One explanation for Russia's easy annexing of Crimea is that Obama needed the Russians to support the Iran deal, and therefore allowed them to take Crimea from the Ukraine with nary a whimper. You surely haven't forgotten the pallets of shrink-wrapped currency secretly flown in by the Obama administration. But those days are over. President Trump has been overtly aggressive toward Iran, canceled the Iranian "nuclear deal," and imposed a litany of sanctions against Russia. Where things are going this time is anybody's guess. □



**Amid an internet blackout in Iran, images of the protests are few and far between. Social media has been the only outlet for clandestine photos of the riots and subsequent government crackdown.**



# POWER OF THE PEOPLE

*by Michael Armstrong*

Has the world gone mad? People fill the streets in capitols and important cities across the globe, marching, chanting, and holding up signs for this and against that. The streets are paralyzed, businesses closed. Law enforcement calls up the reserves to protect private property, or the protesters from themselves or counter-protesters, and the apparently legal right of individuals to hold society hostage provided the group is large enough and they notify the police in advance.

Typically it is a sadly muddled affair, rarely running its course in peace and civility. The anonymity of a large crowd provides opportunity for more nefarious pursuits like looting, burning, and flipping over cars. Even a noble cause can provide cover for those who only desire to throw rocks and steal.

Turning the streets to a sea of humanity and paralyzing industry is not a new tactic. A mass of people represents power. The more people, the more power, and the more likely the demands of said masses will be met. Whether the

underlying motivation is just and righteous or evil and selfish is beside the point when considering the effectiveness of mass demonstrations. The same tactic has been used for both noble and disreputable ends. What is surprising is how frequently it is being employed and to what divergent ends.

Both ancient and recent history provide us with a number of interesting examples. Possibly the most ancient is preserved for us in the pages of the Bible and is commonly called “the rebellion of Korah.” The account is in Numbers chapter 16: “Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men: And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown: And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing

all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?”

If civil government had been at stake they may very well have carried the day. It is written that Israel was organized into “captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds,” etc. How many people did the “two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly” represent? Not that all the people shared in their guilt, but it adds to the enormity of what Moses and Aaron were confronted with.

Korah, Dathan, Abiram and their cohorts chose a poor time in history to act on their vain and self-important notions; one of the few times in which the Lord was actively intervening to accomplish an integral part of His plan. Consequently, “the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they



perished from among the congregation. And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also. And there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.” Not the outcome they were hoping for, but spectacular nonetheless. Safety in numbers does not apply when attempting to subvert the will of God.

A notable series of ancient protests occurred around 500 B.C. in the early history of the Roman Republic known as the Secession of the Plebians. Debt was at the heart of the first secession. Most of the population and military were Plebians, or commoners, but wealth and government were concentrated in the hands of the aristocratic Patricians. (Apparently history *does* repeat itself.) Taxation forced many Plebians to take out loans at exorbitant rates of interest, though they were not represented in the Senate. Debtors were frequently deprived of their property, beaten, and imprisoned when they could not pay. All of that and more had happened to a well known, elderly army officer who told his tale and displayed his scars, both from battle and the whips of his creditors.

In the outrage that ensued, many other debtors took to the streets, begging for relief. The issue dragged on for over a year with concessions both granted and retracted and sporadic interruptions by war. The levies, much like a military draft, were used by

the Senate to get many of the men out of Rome, intentionally delaying and distracting from the issue. Finally, the Plebians withdrew to Mons Sacer (the sacred mountain) en masse. Since they were the majority of the population it effectively shut the city down.

The Senate became afraid and sent one of their most respected and eloquent members to make an attempt at reconciliation. He prevailed with an analogy of the Republic as a body where all the parts must necessarily work together to be prosperous and safe. Much debt was also forgiven and the office of Tribune was created to represent Plebian interests.

Taxation without representation is a sympathetic grievance and one of the roots of our own American Republic. Many an angry crowd gathered in the lead up to the revolution. Who can forget such iconic moments as the Boston Massacre or Tea Party? Massachusetts was actually the

only colony where the Governor was bold enough to try to land the tea, probably because two of his sons were involved in its distribution. The other colonies mounted such resistance that most of the ships returned to England with the tea and without the tax.

Perhaps Britain should have reflected upon its own civil war, little more than 100 years past. London effectively refused King Charles I entrance to the city and his assertion of the divine right of Kings eventually cost him his head. The intervening Commonwealth and the Protectorate of the infamous Cromwell did not last however, as little more than a decade passed before the restoration of Charles II. These events were extremely shocking to contemporary European monarchs but do not hold a candle to the bloody, mob-driven slaughter of the then future French Revolution.

With industrialization came the organization of labor and the



**The Secession of the People to the Mons Sacer, engraving by B. Barloccini, 1849.**



**Photograph of the Great Chartist Meeting on Kennington Common, London in 1848 by William Edward Kilburn.**

more frequent application of pressure through mass demonstration and strike. In Britain the general strike of 1842 spanned many different types of businesses. Cities and towns were forcibly shut down. The people's charter, a series of petitions from these years, received millions of signatures. Chief among their six demands were universal male suffrage and secret ballots. Historians estimate that over 150,000 people gathered in Kennington Common on April 10, 1848, marching on parliament to present the third of these petitions. An additional 100,000 constables had been recruited in case of trouble but the procession proved peaceful.

The *Communist Manifesto* was also first published in 1848, a year which saw an explosion of unrest and revolution across Europe. France had a second revolution, again trading monarchy for the second republic. (Which was later seized by a second dictator and turned into a

second empire.) Germany, Italy, and Sweden were shaken, just to name a few. More than 50 countries were affected.

The 20th century had no shortage of notable and influential protests. Gandhi's activities in South Africa and India. The Civil Rights movement in the United States. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union. The people who risked life and limb to participate in these sympathetic causes tend to have our respect and admiration. The western world grieved for those massacred in Tiananmen Square just as it empathizes with the people of Hong Kong today. We cheer the current resistance to the brutally repressive Iranian regime in equal measure to our incredulity at their welcoming the Ayatollah to take over in the first place. Recent years have given us such miseries as Occupy Wall Street and the Arab Spring.

Whether a meek display of solidarity or a violent mob take-

over, protest has power. It is currently being employed all over the world. Iran and Hong Kong have already been mentioned. Iraq is in turmoil and hundreds have died. Venezuela has been pushed to the brink time and time again. Lebanon is in physical and political gridlock. France has been dealing with the yellow vests for over a year. Bolivia has just ousted their president. These are instances where the demonstrations seek radical governmental overhaul. It would be impossible to document the myriad peripheral issues for which people have taken to the streets.

The world is seemingly on the brink and when change comes it may come quickly. Conflict rages between what is termed "progress" and traditional ideas. Incompatible modes of government compete for supremacy. The wealth of available, accessible information has resulted in an abundance of conflicting opinions. Nations are crippled with debt. Many of the ongoing protests mentioned are fueled by anger at attempted austerity measures, by cuts in subsidies and benefits. They want more, yet their demonstrations grind business to a halt and cripple industry. Political margins are razor thin—many major nations struggle to form cohesive governments. Are their leaders deaf to the demands of a mob? Is there anything to stop a self-interested politician from promising the world for a vote? The people indeed have a great deal of power, let us hope they use it wisely. □





# BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

## LESSON TWO: THE BIBLE

*The Bible is the divinely-inspired Word of God, the repository of His plan of salvation and the record of His participation in history. The Bible is God's revelation of knowledge that man cannot discover for himself. It is the foundation of knowledge and the guidebook to life. The Old and New Testament comprise God's written Word which forms the basis of Christianity as taught by the Church and as practiced by the individual Christian.*

### DOCTRINAL OVERVIEW:

The Bible is God's written revelation to mankind. It contains God's instructions to man and the record of God's interaction with mankind. The Bible provides the answers to mankind's fundamental questions of life. It is the revelation of an omniscient, omnipotent and loving God; it reveals who God is, and what His plan and purpose for human beings is.

The Bible exists to provide man with essential knowledge which he could not learn apart from divine revelation. Thus, the Bible includes the fundamental principles of how man should live, how he should govern his own life to generate success and happiness, and how to work with his fellow man to achieve peace and harmony. But at its foundational core, the Bible provides the indispensable knowledge of how man may gain salvation and eternal life, knowledge which he is incapable of discovering for himself (I Cor. 2:7-11). As the repository of this vital information, the Bible is God's basic handbook for mankind.

The Church of God believes the Bible to be divinely inspired (II Tim. 3:16), the revelation of the missing dimension in man's knowledge, by the Supreme Authority of the universe. The Church regards the Holy Bible as the receptacle of God's essential theological knowledge, basic, accurate, and

complete in its original form. Of course, there are no original manuscripts extant today. Few are from close to the time of authorship and even age does not always assure accuracy and fidelity. Whatever shortcomings therefore may be present in contemporary biblical manuscripts—because human instruments were writers and copyists, because some translators lacked knowledge of the original languages, or because of the complexities and vagaries implicit in the transmission of the various texts—all together have not substantially concealed the intent nor overshadowed the direct inspiration of the basic biblical message as we have it today.

What part did God allow human fallibility to play in the transmission of the many original biblical texts? This is a real question considering the fact, for example, that there are three Hebrew versions for parts of the Old Testament, all of which are pre-Christian in origin and which New Testament writers used and quoted as recent research has shown. Furthermore, the analysis of large numbers of ancient New Testament texts with their numerous textual variations have not yielded obvious or conclusive results for many scriptures, though the most meticulous and highly sophisticated techniques have been employed.

Will new discoveries, investigation and

*Continued next page*

scholarship generate yet new questions or uncertainties about certain passages? It doesn't matter, because the Bible's primary objectives have never been, and can never be, perverted or corrupted. The sum total of all textual variations do not alter the essential communicative function of the Bible. Its fundamental intent is fully maintained: all the basic doctrines of God's Church, to a greater or lesser degree, are discernible from any textual version or translation of the Bible.

The Church accepts the books of the Old Testament as found in the canon of the Hebrew Bible and the books of the New Testament as found in the canon of the Greek New Testament. These have been sometimes called the "Protestant canon." This same context has been accepted for most of Christianity for 1500 years (The apocryphal books are thus rejected as noncanonical.) The Church has accepted this canon largely on the basis of internal biblical evidence (such as Luke 24:44, etc.), informed faith and tradition (Jesus' reference to "the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms" [or writings] gives credence to ordering the Old Testament to end with 2 Chronicles [as in the "Jewish Bible"] instead of Malachi [as in the "Christian Bible"]).

Essential to the teaching of the Church is the fact that the Bible can be proved to be the written Word of God. The foremost proof that God's Word is precisely what it claims to be is that it works in one's life. The proof of obedience is the Bible's best stamp of divine authorship. Adherence to its principles, laws and concepts bring about success and happiness in one's own life, which is ultimately the most critical ratification of its divine inspiration. Only one who sincerely seeks to apply the biblical way to his own life will eventually learn that the practical instructions, timeless wisdom, spiritual depth and living laws come from a Supreme Being, and not merely from fallible, mortal men. Once a person has accepted the concept of the Bible containing the inspired word of God, he is able, by appreciating the intricate yet harmonious interaction of all parts of the Bible, to conclude in faith that the whole Bible, all scripture, is precisely what it claims to be—"inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (II Tim. 3:16). The Christian

will also conclude that even those parts of the Bible which are by their very nature unable to be "proven" in a mathematical or scientific sense (e.g., as yet unfulfilled prophecies or historical points which are unable to be substantiated by secular references) are indeed part of the Bible, form part of the vehicle of its message, and are accurate in their proper context. In this logical "jump"—this leap across undocumented gaps—one cannot discount the importance of faith.

The Church, of course, acknowledges that the Bible does not claim to be a textbook of comprehensive world history, science and technology, medicine or any other non-theological discipline. Nonetheless, the Bible is the Word of God, and as such, is the foundation of all knowledge, as well as being the storehouse of salvation.

Fulfilled prophecy is likewise an important aspect of God's Holy Word. Only God can predict and bring to pass events of the future (Isa. 41:21-24). Only the Creator God could predict the name and actions of Cyrus long before his birth (Isa. 44-45). Only He could tell the intricate and accurate events outlined in Daniel 11 or foretell in detail about the coming of His Son as Savior of the world. While faith plays a role in assessing the significance of already fulfilled prophecy in proving the Bible, there can be absolutely no doubt regarding as yet unfulfilled prophecy. When the complex sequence of events culminating in the triumphant return of Jesus Christ to earth occurs, there will be no question whatsoever that the God who foretold it all in biblical prophecy far ahead of time is the same being who inspired the entirety of the Bible.

The Bible alone claims absolute preeminence over all other books esteemed by mankind and challenges all mankind by its claims of purity (Ps. 12:6; Prov. 30:5), scope and completeness (Rev. 22:18-19). The challenges of the God of the Bible (Isa. 41:21-23) are powerful and direct. Its prophecies for the future return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of the world-ruling Kingdom of God are straightforward and unmistakable.

In addition to being the written record of the essential theological knowledge for mankind, the Bible is also great literature, with many literary forms and devices—poetry, prose, allegory, epic, parable,



history, even humor. It is often open and frank, and yet at other times it is discreet and obscure. The Bible exposes the weaknesses of its heroes, but calls them the friends of God. It shows the glory and power of the Creator through His many miracles but it shows Him to be intimately concerned with the smallest details of human lives. It holds out the answers to the riddles of life, yet hides enough of God's nature and the universe to tantalize us and draw us further along in a profound growth process.

We see through the pages of the Bible the lessons of human experience. We read of men and women like us, those who share problems common to all—with the same pulls and passions, hopes and dreams, fears and frustrations. The Bible not only shows the common heritage of human nature, but enables us to understand the process whereby we may overcome the destructive elements within us and attain our God-given potential.

The Bible is many books yet one, a superlative example of *e pluribus unum* ("one composed of many"). This remarkable unity of design is one of the unique characteristics of the Bible. Another is its internal consistency in its diversity, combining to form a coherent composite. The mark of one author, for those who have eyes to see, is startlingly apparent.

The authors of the various biblical books came from differing backgrounds, lived in disparate environments and were diverse in their personalities, education and professions. They wrote in different styles, from different standpoints, to different audiences and at different times. Yet the continuing themes God inspired are the same. God used all their various and contrasting perspectives to shape and to emphasize the same basic truth. From Genesis to Revelation we read of the same God, the same massive plan being unfolded and developed, with each book augmenting, supporting and complementing that which has gone before. This unitary focus is due to the God who initiated, organized and inspired the entire Holy Scriptures. Although many different men played their part as they were moved by His Spirit (II Pet. 1:20), the Bible is in reality God's Word and not man's.

This is the only factor which could explain the uniqueness and remarkable coherence of the

Bible. Dozens of writers spanning a period of over 1,500 years from Moses to John of such dissimilar traits and characteristics could never have achieved that unity as a result of human effort alone. Yet the unity is there, not as the product of numerous human minds, but of one mind—the mind of God—interacting with, and directing, the grand sweep of biblical authors in many unlikely forms, but always in such a way that their own personal emotions, feelings, personality and individual writing styles were employed. God inspired the message, but it was conveyed through language and vocabulary that was peculiar and natural to each man. The Bible is thus a human vehicle through which God has chosen to convey His revelation to mankind.

The Bible and the physical universe were designed in a similar fashion: they both work as the products of enormously complex interactions resulting in a wondrously purposeful product. The similarity between the Bible and the universe is, of course, to be expected since the same creator designed them both. The Bible is thus not a simplistic, deterministic catechism of childish declarative statements. Rather it is a living record of complex interactions, actions and reactions, stimuli and responses, mistakes and miracles, successes and failures.

There is a paradox in true biblical understanding. In order to properly understand any specific biblical doctrine, it is first necessary to comprehend the entirety of all biblical doctrines; and, of course, it is impossible to comprehend the entirety of all biblical doctrines until one understands all the specific biblical doctrines separately. Seldom can one biblical teaching be fully understood in isolation. There is an essential interdependence between nearly all biblical doctrines. Each must be understood in light of all the others. The reason for this is the inherent unity of the biblical focus and the coherent thread of its message. Proper biblical understanding must be achieved by visualizing and comprehending the full sweeping scope of its message that only the whole Bible can project.

In this regard, the Bible functions more like a living brain than a computer. In a computer, each "bit" of data is stored in only one location, while in a brain, the same "bit" is usually stored in numerous different locations, though in slightly differing

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forms and associations. In the Bible (like the brain), all teachings on any individual subject—for example, honesty, marital fidelity, salvation, the Sabbath, the millennium—are not limited to just one location and not discussed in any other location. Just the opposite is in fact true: The Bible discusses many subjects within the same chapters and even within the same verses, while each subject may be discussed throughout numerous books and dozens of verses. So here again is the paradox: How can we comprehend the Bible if we must understand all the doctrines before we can understand any one, and we cannot understand all the doctrines until we understand the sum total of each individual one? The only solution to the paradox is through the leading of God's Holy Spirit and by diligent, dedicated Bible study. The Bible is indeed the full expression of God's mind and purpose for humanity.

One of the ways to begin to comprehend the unifying flow of the whole Bible is to follow its primary themes all the way through. Of all these, surely the most consistent, decisive and relevant is Jesus Christ. He, in essence, is the focal point of the entire Bible. He is the personality around whom everything revolves. Jesus Christ was the Creator of all things (Col. 1:16); the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; the Rock of Israel as Messiah (Gen. 31:53; 2 Sam. 23:3) and Lawgiver (Isa. 33:22), and exemplified throughout the New Testament as Savior and King. He is the Redeemer of all mankind, the supreme Lawgiver and consummate Teacher. He was the firstborn from the dead and is the Captain of our salvation, our constant intercessor and merciful High Priest. Jesus Christ is now the active head of God's Church and is prophesied throughout the entire Bible to return to earth as King of kings and Lord of lords to set up the Kingdom of God for all eternity.

Perhaps one of the most basic statements of how God has revealed Himself to man is found in Hebrews 1:1-2: "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days He has spoken to us by a Son."

This passage evinces several important things about God's communication to man. First, God's message comes in many various forms. Second, that message is also mediated by human beings.

This means that the divine Word comes to us in a human vehicle. Even Jesus Christ, the divine Son, was Himself in the flesh when He gave many of His teachings; furthermore, those teachings were not written down by Him but by His human followers.

Some further points are important to understand in setting the stage for proper biblical understanding. Third, no human vehicle is fully adequate to convey the fullness of God's message. Human language is inadequate to express what can be discerned in its complete spiritual sense only by means of the Holy Spirit. There is also the problem of transmission of the text; this is done by human beings and subject to human error. The problem of understanding ancient languages which have changed structure and meaning through the ages or have even ceased to be used as a living form of communication adds a further difficulty.

Fourth, the message of the Bible must speak to all people in every age. Yet society changes, culture modifies, and each Christian finds himself living in a particular situation which does not exactly fit that of the original writers of the Bible. Christians do not live in the Old Testament theocracy of ancient Israel with autonomous control of a particular territory. Nor do they live in the New Testament world of Greco-Roman culture. Rather, Christians have lived in radically different environments down through the centuries, from Cologne in the Middle Ages to London in the 17th century to Los Angeles in the nuclear age. Therefore, there is always a certain "communication or generation gap" between the written word and the later reader.

Fifth, God has deliberately hidden much of His important truth from mankind so that the full progression, and eventually resolution, of human history would proceed according to God's timetable. As a result it is not man's fault that he doesn't understand the Bible. Even the prophets of old didn't always grasp the meaning of their own biblical statements (e.g. Dan. 12:8); and they surely didn't comprehend the fullness of the mystery of the purpose of human life (Matt. 13:17; Eph. 3:4-5). Jesus Himself spoke in parables so that the common people would not understand what He was saying (Matt. 13:10-11); He was teaching His disciples, not the masses (v. 10-17), since God's plan did not yet call for the

vast majority of people to be called and converted.

Once these five points are recognized, a specific progression of biblical logic must be followed and accepted unless one is to falsely assume that God has left man in the dark about His basic purpose for mankind and plan of salvation. This progression can be summarized as follows:

1. The essential truths God wishes to convey will be intelligible to any normal person with even below average intelligence and education (if God has chosen to open his mind). They can be discerned from any basic version or translation of the Bible which the reader understands. This must be true regardless of textual revision and/or poor translation.

2. God must open a person's mind in order for him or her to understand the fullness of His truth. It is, of course, possible for human beings to learn many aspects of the Bible on their own, utilizing the mechanisms of intellect and the tools of scholarship. Yet God has so designed the Bible and the human mind that even with the most intense effort men cannot fully grasp the profound spiritual depth of the scriptures without the active involvement of the Spirit of God. The mind of man cannot understand the things of God—the mysteries of God—without the supernatural help from the Spirit of God (I Cor. 2:7-11). Since human language is always inadequate to break through the boundaries of spiritual reality and truth, a perceptive spiritual understanding of the Bible requires the direct intervention and action of the Holy Spirit “bearing witness with our spirit” (Rom. 8:16), thereby effecting a change in the mind of the individual. Only God can make this decision to open our minds through His Spirit. It makes no difference how vehemently a human being desires to understand the Bible, nor how hard he studies it. Though such study will produce much knowledge, this knowledge will remain physically oriented and bound, forever missing the vital key of spiritual enlightenment; Paul wrote, “So it depends not upon man's will or exertion, but upon God's mercy” (Rom. 9:16); so it is with true biblical understanding. Faith, as well, is a critical factor in achieving the spiritual comprehension necessary to understand the Bible. One must be convinced beyond the scope of the experimentally controlled and repeatable data demanded by scientists as verified “proof,” that

God exists and that the Bible is His inspired Word. The faith for such an absolute belief can come only through God's Holy Spirit.

3. The message of the Bible is theological. The Bible is not a history or science text. Its purpose is not to dictate on matters of art, technology, personal taste or the vast world of knowledge which man is capable of discovering for himself via the precious gift of man's God-given mental capacities. The Bible rather gives those essential theological and religious truths which man could not find out for himself through the academic disciplines.

4. The Bible contains various types of literature, each of which must be understood on its own terms. It contains history, poetry, parable, metaphor and symbolic revelation. It is often a record of those things which it elsewhere condemns, such as false opinions, lies, misunderstandings, deceptions and heinous sins of every type. This leads to the next point.

5. The biblical message is gained from the Bible as a whole, not from reading a verse or two in isolation or otherwise “proof-texting.” What may seem to be a blanket statement in one passage can be greatly qualified elsewhere. The picture given by one book may be somewhat altered in the light of the teachings in another. One must perceive and comprehend the full spectrum of biblical doctrine in general in order to properly understand almost any specific element in particular.

6. The resources of modern scholarship, properly handled, can add insight, detail and historical color to the basic biblical message. God has designed the Bible so that the essential message of God must be clear to any Spirit-led person seeking humbly to learn the plan of salvation as expressed in His Word. Indeed an uneducated Christian reading an inadequate translation will be able to understand the fundamental doctrines necessary for salvation. Nonetheless, a technical understanding of ancient languages, literature, history, society and other information put at our disposal by contemporary scholarship will enhance a person's total understanding of the Bible. The various books of the Bible were not written in a vacuum. To achieve a deeper understanding of their teachings, one must strive to grow in the knowledge of the history and background of




the Bible, and the cultures in which they arose. Thus a Christian may add scholarly knowledge which can come only from God. This physical data will in turn embellish and enhance his spiritual understanding.

7. Because of changed situations and society, there has to be some institution to clarify the meaning of the Bible for the Christian in the particular age in which he lives (Acts 8:31). Recognizing this need, Jesus Christ established and sustains His Church, to which He has given the responsibility to determine how to apply the Bible in particular situations in which the various individual Christians would not necessarily be unified. Even though the Bible always stands at the foundation of Christian belief, the Church can still come to decisions under the guidance of the Holy Spirit which were not specified in the pages of the Bible itself. For example, just as Moses modified the statutes and judgments of Israel for use in an agrarian society and just as Paul made decisions that he did not learn from the Lord (e.g., I Cor. 7:12), so the Church today must render judgments based on biblical laws and principles in order to keep itself relevant and vital in our modern age.

The essential element here is unity of the believers and coherence of the Church. Members of the Church must have a common body of beliefs, traditions, customs, practices and procedures in order to remain united. And this unity is vital if a collective work is to be done. A Christian in isolation

will have to render his own judgments, and two such Christians will not always agree. But if we must have fellowship together (which God says we need for our spiritual development), if we must be in the same Church together (which God states is critical for our spiritual sustenance), and if we must accomplish a major work together (which is our collective, God-given commission), then God's government must be authorized to finalize doctrine, discern interpretations, administrate decisions, etc. And God's government can be established only by and through God's Church.

In summary, Christians should study the Bible diligently, respect it as the Word of God and seek its guidance through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 16:13) and the teachings of the Church. In order to become like God, we must seek to understand the Bible, which is the clearest expression of the mind of God. This we can only hope to achieve through profound and regular Bible study, and through the internalized implementation of its precepts and values.

Thus, God's Word is a totally unique collection of writings absolutely profound in every sense, making commonly available to all mankind the words of life—the hope for today and the promise of tomorrow. It is man's responsibility and privilege to seek out the incredible depths and riches of God's mind as revealed in His Word. 

**SUMMARY:** Read these scriptures in your own Bible:

- **2 Timothy 3:16-17** and **2 Peter 1:20-21**—The Bible is the inspired book of our maker.
- **1 Corinthians 2:7-11**—To fully understand the Word of God, one needs the Holy Spirit.
- **2 Timothy 3:16**—All scripture is given by the inspiration of God.
- **Psalms 12:6** and **Proverbs 30:5**—The words of God are pure words.
- **2 Peter 1:20**—No prophecy of scripture is of any private interpretation.
- **Daniel 11**—The historical accuracy of Daniel chapter 11 proves the inspiration of the Bible.
- **Job 26:7** and **Isaiah 40:22**—These verses prove scientifically the inspiration of the Bible. How could these men have known these scientific truths before telescopes?
- **Matthew 24:15** and **Acts 2:16**—The New Testament uses the Old Testament as authority sources in many verses.
- **Colossians 1:1-16**—It was Jesus Christ who created all things.
- **Hebrews 1:1-2**—Learn how it is God who communicates with us.
- **Romans 8:16**—The Spirit of God beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

**QUESTIONS (ANSWERS BELOW):**

1. The Bible is divinely inspired. True or False?
2. The Bible consists of both the \_\_\_\_ Testament and the \_\_\_\_ Testament.
3. The Bible contains the \_\_\_\_ of God [what?]
4. The Bible is the handbook for the Salvation Process. Yes or No?
5. The Bible contains information man could not find on his own. True or False?
6. The Church of God believes the Bible to be divinely inspired. True or False?
7. The New Testament gives credibility to the Old Testament. True or False?
8. Can the Bible be proved to be the Word of God? Yes or No?
9. The Bible is the foundation of all \_\_\_\_\_ [what?]
10. The Bible records fulfilled prophecy. True or False?
11. The Bible was written over a period of \_\_\_\_\_ years. [how many?]
12. The focal point of the whole Bible is \_\_\_\_\_ [who or what?]
13. The God of the Old Testament is actually \_\_\_\_\_ [whom?]
14. According to Hebrews 1, God spoke to man by His prophets. Today He speaks to us by His \_\_\_\_\_.  
[who or what?]
15. God must open one's mind in order for him to understand the fullness of His truth. True or False?
16. To truly know and understand the truth of God, one needs the \_\_\_\_\_ [what?-two words]
17. We cannot open our own minds. Only God can open the human mind to understand spiritual things. True or False?
18. Proof-texting is a good method of studying and understanding the Bible. True or False?
19. A Bible doctrine can easily be fully understood in isolation from the rest of the Bible?  
True or False?
20. In order to become like God, we must seek to understand the Bible. We can only hope to achieve  
this through \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ Bible study. [what?]

**LESSON ONE — ANSWERS:**

- |               |                    |                         |
|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. (True)     | 8. (Yes)           | 15. (True)              |
| 2. (Old, New) | 9. (Knowledge)     | 16. (Holy Spirit)       |
| 3. (Plan)     | 10. (True)         | 17. (True)              |
| 4. (Yes)      | 11. (1,500)        | 18. (False)             |
| 5. (True)     | 12. (Jesus Christ) | 19. (False)             |
| 6. (True)     | 13. (Jesus Christ) | 20. (Profound, Regular) |
| 7. (True)     | 14. (Son)          |                         |



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5	6	7	8	9 <sup>o</sup>	10	11
12	13	14	15	16 <sup>o</sup>	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 <sup>o</sup>	24	25
26 <sup>o</sup>	27	28	29	30	31	
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