



AS THE HEAVENS  
ARE HIGHER THAN THE EARTH . . .

SO ARE MY WAYS HIGHER THAN  
YOUR WAYS, AND MY THOUGHTS  
THAN YOUR THOUGHTS.

—Isaiah 55:9

**The**  
**Berean**  
**Call**

FEBRUARY 2009

*DIVINE OPPORTUNITIES*

by T. A. MCMAHON

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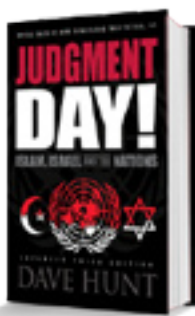
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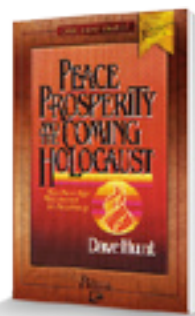
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# THE BEREAN CALL

“[The Bereans] . . . searched the scriptures daily, [to see] whether those things were so.”—Acts 17:11

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## Divine Opportunities

T. A. McMahon

I consider any opportunity to be willingly used of the Lord to be a foretaste of heaven. But that didn't come to mind as I stared at the hospital room ceiling, taking stock of my situation following surgery. I was thinking more about all the plastic tubes and bags attached to different points of my body, as well as the twenty-or-so staples holding part of me together. I was also wondering why the Lord allowed this to happen to me. Surely He knew that in my present condition I couldn't fulfill the ministry to which He had called me. Furthermore, my friend Dave Hunt had just been diagnosed with prostate cancer while he was struggling to recover from a replacement of an artificial hip that deteriorated after a decade of use. Why would God allow us both to be afflicted? Truthfully, compared to what I knew others were suffering, I'm embarrassed to use the term “afflicted,” but thinking of others occupied little, if any, of my thoughts at the time. My primary focus was my own condition.

Great news from my surgeon was soon disturbed by an incidental complication. The technique used in the successful removal of a portion of my colon along with a large tumor (that against all odds proved to be cancer free!) had resulted in nerve damage to my bladder. It had stopped functioning. My thankfulness for God's mercy in my not having to deal with cancer quickly got lost in a host of unsuccessful catheter trials, which led to months of self-catheterizations. The only Scripture verse I could think of when informed that I would have to undergo the latter procedures three to four times a day, perhaps indefinitely, was Job 3:25: “For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me. . . .” True, but not exactly comforting.

Another Bible verse came to mind many times during my ordeal—one that I had previously preached, taught, encouraged others by, wrestled over, and ministered with, over the years: “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28). That familiar verse came home to roost as I lay on my hospital bed. What possible “good” could come of this experience?

Not much, I thought—given I couldn't see beyond my discomfort, occasional pain, fear, worry, anxiety, and my worst-case-scenario-stimulated imagination.

Before I completely buried myself in the pit of self-preoccupation, however, the Lord got my attention. It must have been a thought from Him because I certainly wasn't on that page: “Why don't you shift your focus from yourself so you can see some of what I'm doing in all of this?” Conviction pierced my heart immediately. There was no follow-up “why?” or “yes, but”—it was simply “yes, Lord,” from a guilty party blinded by himself. Nothing has impacted my life like that in recent years.

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FOR MY THOUGHTS ARE NOT YOUR THOUGHTS, NEITHER ARE YOUR WAYS MY WAYS, SAITH THE LORD. FOR AS THE HEAVENS ARE HIGHER THAN THE EARTH, SO ARE MY WAYS HIGHER THAN YOUR WAYS, AND MY THOUGHTS THAN YOUR THOUGHTS.

—ISAIAH 55:8-9

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What followed from that point had a transforming effect on me. I began to see and learn things that I knew of from Scripture but that were rarely a part of my practical experience. I believe I grew more in the Lord in the last nine months than I had in many years prior. I had a taste of the Lord's superintending of my life when I was helpless (I'm sure He does a great deal more of the same even when I think I'm able!). Let me share some of what He taught me, especially with those of you who, like me, are among the first wave of baby boomers dealing with the destructive consequences of our aging bodies.

A friend gave me a Scripture verse (in jest, I thought) that captured what the Lord was doing (I believe) through my physical and spiritual trials: “He maketh me to lie down. . . .” (Psalm 23:2). That described my condition perfectly, and I wasn't thrilled about it, but here is one of the first things I learned. One of my daily prayers is that the Lord will provide opportunities for me to be used of Him. I couldn't see that happening in my condition, flat on my back, with bags and tubes sticking out of my body.

To me, “opportunities” meant being able to minister to someone. What I learned is

that the Lord has another way to use us. He allowed me to become the opportunity for *someone else* to minister. That disturbed my attitude of self-sufficiency. I was also humbled by the fact that this revelation wasn't exactly new to me. Some years ago, I ran that possibility by a very elderly man who couldn't understand why the Lord saw fit to sustain his wife, who couldn't even feed herself—a task that had fallen on him in the weeks prior to our conversation. Would this man consider that the Lord was using his believing wife, who loved him dearly, to help him to grow in things like compassion, helps, service, and love, and to draw him closer to Himself? He tearfully realized that this was indeed taking place, and we wept together as we were overwhelmed by God's gracious hand upon both of them.

I knew that their experience was true to the Word and to the character of God, but it was not *my* experience—until last year, that is. After the first of my four surgeries, I began to see the doctors and nurses as those whom the Lord had provided to minister to me. I was their opportunity. Those who were believers (a number were) were fulfilling their ministries. Seeing myself as their God-appointed opportunity, my thinking shifted to “How can I contribute to helping them fulfill their ministry?” Those who were not Christians were no less appreciative of my attitude of cooperation. Still, I wondered what someone in my condition could do that might be helpful. My agenda began with a “thank you,” a smile, a kind word, remembering their names, and showing real interest in them.

Opportunities, I soon discovered, beget opportunities. After a few days, I could see the Lord creating occasions for me to minister to them. My favorite decree for every doctor and nurse ministering to me was boldly declaring “my two rules”: 1) Trust in the Lord, and 2) Do what the doctors and nurses tell me. That always received either a hearty “amen” or a thankful smile.

Living up to my own rules, however, wasn't as easy as I thought. When I was given instructions to get up a certain number of times for walks, or to continually use the lung-strengthening apparatus (neither of my favorite things), it initially took God's grace and enablement to meet the minimum goals. Soon, however, I was breaking my own records. The nurses quickly got the

idea that I was there to *help them help me*, and my room became a place for some of them to hang out on their breaks and just chat. The conversations usually picked up where something briefly discussed during their rounds left off. Much of it was about the Lord and the Bible.

I was always looking for ways to talk about Jesus and His Word without “preaching” to my ministers. One day I noticed that the sign on the mirror over the sink was a directive for the nurses to wash their hands. As mundane as that was, it provided a wonderful opportunity for me to talk about the Bible. As each nurse stood at the sink I would ask her if she ever heard of a doctor named Ignaz Semmelweis. Some said the name sounded familiar. I would then explain that he introduced the practice of hand washing at his Viennese hospital in the mid-1800s as a method of preventing disease, particularly that which caused the deaths of newborn babies.

He observed that doctors and medical students often went directly from working on cadavers to assisting with childbirths, sometimes using the same medical instruments. The death rate of newborns in his hospital was close to 30 percent. After directing his staff members to wash their hands and instruments in a solution of water and chlorine, the death rate dropped below 2 percent.

Such a hygienic procedure preceded the discovery of germs as transmitters of diseases by a few decades, yet it was indicated in the Scriptures 3,000 years before this Jewish doctor instituted the hand-washing practice. Semmelweis believed what Moses had to say on the subject although, tragically, the medical profession did not believe Semmelweis. He was driven from his hospital, the high death rate among newborns returned, and Semmelweis was committed to an insane asylum where he died. He could not fathom his profession’s rejection of his simple plan for saving babies. Sad as that story is, it provided a few opportunities to bring up the Good News of the Bible, the simple truth of God’s plan for saving souls.

I love what I do at The Berean Call, and my calling in that ministry has primarily been to help Dave do what God has put on his heart to do. I’ve been privileged to work with him in different ways over the past 30 years. Last year, however, I was fearful at times that I couldn’t fulfill that calling, especially in light of the fact that Dave was suffering from a number of quite debilitating ailments. Again I questioned the Lord: “How can I contribute to TBC

when I’m here in the hospital?” I’m not in the habit of questioning the Lord, but sometimes circumstances have driven me to it. Or, I should say, my flesh drove me to it. The answer that nearly always floods my heart is, “Trust and obey Me, Tom.” I did, and what followed was both amazing to me, and a true adventure.

First of all, I learned that every waking moment is an opportunity to be used of the Lord in ministry, inside or outside of TBC—whether talking to Him in prayer, meditating upon His Word, or doing whatever He wants wherever He wants. I’ve learned that He allows conditions to take place and then uses them for His glory and for beneficial results. We need only to follow His lead as He prayed to His Father in the Garden of Gethsemane: “...not what I will, but what thou wilt”(Mark 14:36).

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SHOW ME THY WAYS, O LORD;  
TEACH ME THY PATHS. LEAD ME  
IN THY TRUTH, AND TEACH ME:  
FOR THOU ART THE GOD OF MY  
SALVATION; ON THEE DO I WAIT ALL  
THE DAY.

—PSALM 25:4-5

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What brings me great joy as I look back is seeing that each hospital experience following my surgeries was wonderfully fruitful as a time of ministering and being ministered to. No dramatic healing took place. In fact, there were complications and setbacks. Nevertheless, I was released earlier than expected following each surgery and back to work within a couple of days (or sooner) after each hospital stay.

What about the adventure? That came, in part, from learning to function (at work and traveling to speaking engagements across the country) with catheter and ileostomy bags! They became temporary parts of my body for a number of months, followed by additional months of self-catheterization. When fear overcame me in anticipation of not being able to function ministry-wise because of my new devices and procedures, the Lord arranged an unexpected divine appointment with a brother-in-Christ whose condition involved the same apparatus—yet on a permanent basis.

He was incredibly encouraging as a “been there, done that” resource of what I could be facing. That’s when my mind shifted from dread to “I know the Lord can help me through this.” Moreover, I knew He could give me a new attitude about it all that would be a blessing to those ministering to

me. That began with the restoration of my sense of humor, which had dried up for a while and which I would need for some of the adventures (or mis-adventures!) ahead. Did you know that an ileostomy bag will explode right off one’s body after dining on spicy chili? I didn’t, but I do now. Or that same bag will inflate like a life-preserver as one drives over a very high-altitude mountain pass? Self-catheterization (the anticipation of which was my worst nightmare) was, to my surprise, a practice that I got used to after about a week. Never fun, but then again I’m still laughing about attempting the procedure during some of the worst turbulence I’ve ever experienced on an airplane!

The hundreds of letters and emails I’ve received from saints all over the world telling me they were continually praying for Dave and me were a comfort beyond description, and that became especially meaningful when the Lord opened my eyes to what He was accomplishing. His ways and means were not mine; they were *exceedingly beyond* what I could have imagined or even hoped for. Best of all was how He made His Word absolutely real to me as it spoke to my heart more during that time than ever before in my life in Christ.

Here are two of the many verses that greatly encouraged me:

For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many rebound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” (2 Corinthians 4:15-18)

For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard. (Psalm 22:24)

Because of His Son, He not only hears us, but He allows us to experience that which “worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

All of my surgeries were completely successful (no more bags of any kind!), but the experience for which I will be eternally thankful is the Lord’s graciousness in enabling me to see the things to which I was previously blinded, and for His unseen renewing of my inward man. **TBC**

## Quotable .....

It is a happy way of soothing sorrow when we can feel—"HE careth for me." Christian! do not dishonor religion by always wearing a brow of care; come, cast your burden upon your Lord. You are staggering beneath a weight which your Father would not feel. What seems to you a crushing burden, would be to him but as the small dust of the balance.

O child of suffering, be thou patient; God has not passed thee over in His providence. He who is the feeder of sparrows, will also furnish you with what you need. Sit not down in despair; hope on, hope ever. Take up the arms of faith against a sea of trouble, and your opposition shall yet end your distresses. There is One who careth for you. His eye is fixed on you, His heart beats with pity for your woe, and His hand omnipotent shall yet bring you the needed help. The darkest cloud shall scatter itself in showers of mercy. The blackest gloom shall give place to the morning. He, if thou art one of His family, will bind up thy wounds, and heal thy broken heart. Doubt not His grace because of thy tribulation, but believe that He loveth thee as much in seasons of trouble as in times of happiness.

What a serene and quiet life might you lead if you would leave providing to the God of providence! With a little oil in the cruse, and a handful of meal in the barrel, Elijah outlived the famine, and you will do the same. If God cares for you, why need you care too? Can you trust Him for your soul, and not for your body? He has never refused to bear your burdens, He has never fainted under their weight. Come, then, soul! have done with fretful care, and leave all thy concerns in the hand of a gracious God.

*C. H. Spurgeon, Morning & Evening*

## Q&A .....

**QUESTION: How do you pray to Jesus without seeing an image of Him?**

**RESPONSE:** I never see an image of Jesus when I pray. From my background as a Roman Catholic and one having a degree in fine arts, I've seen a lot of images of Jesus that men have painted, drawn, or sculpted—but none were true images. They were depictions of what artists have in their minds regarding what they think Jesus looked like. No matter how impressive any image may have been, it was nevertheless a false image.

I've been told by some Christians that having an image of Jesus in their mind helps them with their prayer life. It may seem to

help, and I'm sure they are sincere, but their practice is neither practical nor biblical.

It's impractical because the person is not praying to Jesus but rather to a false image of Him. It would be like having an artist draw a picture of someone I have phone conversations with—someone neither the artist nor I have ever seen. Yet I declare that when I stare at the picture during my phone conversations, it makes me feel good about the person to whom I'm talking. That's not only a delusion, it's idolatry.

Conjuring up an image of Jesus in my mind—that is, a depiction of what He looked like, although I've never seen Him—is a form of idolatry. It is idolatry because Jesus Christ, the God Man, is being fashioned according to the mind of a fallen, finite human being. The result, no matter how helpful it may seem, would be both demeaning and degrading in comparison to the true, godly image of Christ.

For those who, when they pray, are bothered by man's images of Jesus (seen in movies, paintings, statues, icons, etc.), I recommend meditating on verses that so glorify Jesus that one's fleshly imagination will be put to shame and be delivered from such a distraction. For example: "[Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell" (Colossians 1:15-19). Any image of Jesus that falls short of those characteristics (which they all do to the extreme!) is "another Jesus," a "false Christ," of which Jesus declared there would be many in the last days.

**QUESTION: Does the Bible allow for defending oneself or one's family?**

**RESPONSE:** There is no teaching in Scripture that forbids self-protection. There are, however, special conditions in which such an effort may not be what God desires. The Old Testament abounds with examples of armies and individuals raised up for the defense of Israel. David, as a young man, took on the Philistine giant Goliath for the glory of God and the protection of Israel. Gideon and Deborah, among other judges, were also used of God for the protection of Israel. Yet many of the prophets of Jehovah were martyred for speaking what He told them to say.

In the New Testament, we're told that governments restrain harm against their people by bearing arms "to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Romans 13:4). Soldiers were exhorted by John the Baptist to repent of intimidating and extorting people; they weren't told to leave their occupation. Jesus commended the Roman centurion for his faith, with no indication that his profession was unbiblical. Paul used military analogies throughout his Holy Spirit inspired writings. There are far too many scriptures that cannot be reconciled with pacifism.

Other than fashioning a whip and chasing the moneychangers from the Temple, Jesus never acted in an aggressive militant way. Neither did He defend Himself beyond eluding those who wanted to destroy Him prior to His going to the Cross. His mission at His first coming was as the meek and lowly Lamb of God, who came to sacrifice Himself to pay for the sins of humanity. On the other hand, at His second coming He will protect Israel as He rescues her by destroying the armies of the nations that have gathered to destroy her. "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him [Jesus] that sat on the horse, and against his army....And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh" (Revelation 19:19, 21).

When Jesus was physically with His disciples, He kept them out of harm's way. Just as when He sent out the twelve apostles and the seventy disciples and empowered them, He would miraculously be their provider and protector. His disciples were never told to form themselves into an army for their own or His protection, or to take over Israel and the world for Christ. However, just before Jesus went to the Cross, He indicated that His followers would need to do some things in His physical absence. "And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough" (Luke 22:35-38). Peter missed the point on two counts: first, the necessity of what Jesus must suffer when he tried to hold back the mob coming to take Jesus by force, and second, that they should be reasonably armed and only when conditions warranted it.



Some Christians believe that it shows a lack of faith to arm oneself even in the face of imminent danger. To be armed is to not trust God as one's protector, or so I'm told. I certainly trust God as my protector. I also trust God as my provider, yet I work. I trust God as my healer, yet I go to the doctor. The same holds true for protection. I look to the Lord ultimately to protect me and my family, yet there may be a time when arming myself for their protection is the prudent thing to do. It may be a matter of simply deterring wickedness, or more actively preventing the rape or murder of one's loved ones.

There also may be a time for a believer to give up his life for the testimony of the gospel and for Christ, just as Stephen, all the apostles except John, and the martyrs who are cited in Hebrews 11. How do we know when to defend ourselves and when not to? "The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17). It's a matter of scriptural conviction and being led of the Lord.

**QUESTION: I'm a parent of children who are a few years away from becoming teenagers. We live in an area of a city in which personal safety is a real issue. My husband and I have had numerous discussions about this particular concern for our children and we both want to do that which is consistent with the Word of God. We've considered enrolling our son and daughter in a martial arts class, but I understand some classes involve occult practices.**

**RESPONSE:** My views are based upon my experiences as well as my understanding of the Scriptures, so they are simply offered as a perspective that you need to consider as a Berean. In other words, you need to check out what I write, first and foremost, to see if it rings true to the Word of God. Then you need to do your own research regarding any class or program in which you have your children participate.

I practiced Judo and Aikido while in college and beyond, the former for eight years, the latter for about six months. Judo is a sport that was derived from Jujitso, a self-defense practice. Its techniques are purely physical, that is, a player of the sport utilizes athletic abilities such as quickness, strength, agility, and leverage in attempting to throw an opponent to the mat, the primary method of winning a contest. Matches can also be won by grappling techniques. It's similar in many ways to wrestling. In my experience, there were no mystical or occult methods involved in the sport.

Aikido, on the other hand, is a self-defense practice that has as its foundation what is alleged to be a spiritual energy known as

"ki." Supposedly ki is a nonphysical energy that flows through all things. It is claimed that humans have it within themselves and have the ability to connect with "ki" in others and beyond themselves in the cosmos.

Common demonstrations of "ki" that I witnessed are "unbendable arm" and "unliftable body." An instructor would have students try to bend his arm or lift his body off the ground. It made no difference how many students attempted to bend the sensei's arm or lift him, my class was never successful at it. However, there is no physical explanation for how it works.

The idea of a spiritual energy or power is central to Eastern religions such as ki in Japanese Buddhism and Shintoism, prana and kundalini in Hinduism and its practice of yoga, and chi or qi in Taoism and Chinese Buddhism. Those religions espouse an impersonal god or Life Force that permeates everything. That belief is contrary to the biblical God, who is personal, transcendent, and not part of creation.

Any Christian who participates in a martial arts practice (or healing program such as reiki, or exercise program such as yoga) that involves a spiritual energy (ki, chi, qi, prana, etc.) is engaging in a belief system that cannot be reconciled with the Word of God, that fosters a false view of God, and that offers powers that are very likely supplied by the Adversary of God and his demonic spirits. The Bible gives many examples of demonic powers, from Satan afflicting Job and others to the superhuman strength of a demon-possessed man who couldn't be restrained by chains. Scripture indicates that Satan will use such deception to keep people from receiving the gospel ("...after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved"—2 Thessalonians 2:9-10).

Obviously, a Christian needs to steer clear of anything that promotes "spiritual energy." Even martial arts programs that avoid such practices need to be closely scrutinized by parents who are considering enrolling their children. More important, parents need to question the value for each child. For some, it may be detrimental, while for others worthwhile. Yet the bottom line is, will the activity be consistent with their godly obligation to raise their child in the fear and admonition of the Lord? Again, this is a faith decision that needs to be submitted to the Lord and supported in prayer.

**QUESTION: Didn't Jesus' teaching that we are to turn the other cheek when physically assaulted instruct Christians to not**

**defend themselves? That's my view as a pacifist.**

**RESPONSE:** My understanding of Matthew 5:39 and Luke 6:29 is that they have to do with retaliation regarding an insult or litigation pertaining to one's personal goods. To apply the verse to a life-threatening assault is to dismiss the context, as well as contradict the many other verses and examples throughout the Bible that would deny pacifism.

## News Alert.....

**Religion News Service, 1/13/2009:** Josh Spavin knows the stereotypes about evangelical Christians: judgmental, sanctimonious, narrow-minded. He may not buy into the image, but at the same time, he knows how real—and damaging—it can be.

So that's why Spavin, a recent graduate of the University of Central Florida and an intern with the UCF chapter of Campus Crusade for Christ International, wants to launch an HIV/AIDS outreach with a campus gay-lesbian group.

"Young evangelicals in particular are very conscious about poverty and the environment, and they tend to be more tolerant on issues such as gay rights and homosexuality," said John Turner, assistant professor of history at the University of South Alabama and author of the new book, *Bill Bright and Campus Crusade for Christ: The Renewal of Evangelicalism in Postwar America*. "Evangelicals and evangelical organizations, they do have a big public relations problem of being known for intolerance or homophobia or not being concerned enough about social issues, and I think their desire is to correct that image," he said.

"Students today realize that connecting to other people, that just to tell the story or talk about Christianity doesn't seem to completely connect," said Chip Scivicque, a 30-year Campus Crusade veteran who's now based at Auburn University in Alabama. "There's this desire to live out the Christian life and live out gospel truth so that when those truths are explained they make more sense."

Paul Hardaloupas, a 25-year-old Michigan State graduate who's now on staff for Campus Crusade, is planning more events for the spring semester, including one focused on rape.

Last year at Michigan State University, Campus Crusade partnered with other organizations on several events to draw attention to the international sex slave trade. The biggest event drew about 1,000 for a mock "Price-is-Right"-themed game show in which contestants bid not on prizes but people.

## Speaking Schedule

<b>Feb 19-22</b> (TA)	<b>Truth 4 Youth Teaching Conference</b> Devon, United Kingdom 0127 189 0162
<b>Feb 25</b> (TA)	<b>Calvary Chapel Hastings</b> St Leonards, United Kingdom 0142 442 2770
<b>Feb 27</b> (TA)	<b>Hephzibah in Marlow</b> Marlow Bucks, United Kingdom 0149 476 4913
<b>Feb 28</b> (TA)	<b>Tongham Christian Fellowship</b> Surrey, United Kingdom 0148 383 1007
<b>Mar 1</b> (TA)	<b>The Bridge Christian Fellowship</b> London, United Kingdom 0208 445 1451
<b>Apr 1-3</b> (Dave)	<b>Tulsa International Prophecy Conf</b> Tulsa, OK (918) 835-6978

## Letters .....

### TBC,

I would just like to say thank you to Dave and Tom for all the great teachings. I've loved learning the Book of Acts MP3, and reading *A Woman Rides the Beast, A Cup of Trembling, The Seduction of Christianity, and Occult Invasion*....I felt so alone until God let me know that I had brothers who could also see through the multifaceted Apostate church. Thank you and bless you all at this ministry. You will remain in my prayers. AD (Australia)

### Dear Mr. Hunt,

I would like to just take this time to thank you and the ministry for the newsletters that I have been receiving over the years. I realize that ministry costs are high. I will gladly read them online from now on....I have always looked forward to reading each newsletter each month. Each one has ministered to me as I having been passing on each thing I have learned. The seed you sow has a far more reaching impact than you can ever know. People that don't subscribe or even want to subscribe to your newsletter still get truth revealed to them. People listen, but as you know, don't respond to God's calling. I have received my last printed newsletter and, as usual, it was a great blessing. T. A's article, "The Jesus the World Loves" really spoke to my heart. Thank you again for past newsletters. I will continue to read them online. TT (email)

### Dear Mr. Hunt,

We found your film *Israel, Islam, and Armageddon* on the Internet. Watching it made me wanna cry and made me want to start something (as an Israeli) in order to stop the hate for Jews...understanding that Christian and Jew should be the same in their belief in Jesus and united in front of the real

evil that's about to face all of us real soon—the Islamic terror and goal. MB (email)

### Dear Dave, Tom, and Friends,

After reading Ezekiel 2...you immediately came to mind. This chapter finds God sending Ezekiel to the nation of Israel, at least that part in exile with him, and specifically to a group that are "comprised of the most gifted, the most learned, the most noble, the most privileged." But by contrast, God pronounces them "obstinate and stubborn." This certainly sounds like many evangelical leaders who are slipping away in the emergent church movement. Ezekiel was obedient to pass on only that which the Sovereign Lord tells him to say, whether they listened or not—good counsel for us....As far as I'm concerned, you are the Ezekiel of our day, speaking God's word to churches in declension and a society in decline. I have received your newsletter for years and own many of your books. The Lord has used you all to keep me on a biblical track with teaching and counseling in the ministry which God has privileged me to serve. "Thank you" is scarcely sufficient to express my deep gratitude to God and to you for your obedient service. DC (CA)

### Dear Dave, Tom, and the Staff of TBC,

After listening to *Search the Scriptures Daily* on the radio for the past two years, and receiving *The Berean Call* newsletter for several months now, I finally had to drop you a note. Though I have been a Christian most of my life, my eyes were not really opened to the simple truth of the Gospel and its message of salvation until I began listening to your radio program and the...pastors on K-WVE, a local Christian radio station....I know you receive a lot of negative response to your work, but with the strength and guidance our Lord Jesus Christ provides you, I know you will continue to do your best to present the truth of the Bible. TC (CA)

### Dear Brother Dave Hunt,

Your video *Israel, Islam, and Armageddon* has literally renewed my life this last day of 2008. I wish I could meet you to thank you in person. God bless you so much. LS (Brazil)

### Dear Fellow Bereans,

Another new year is upon us and we wait eagerly, vigilantly, for the Lord's return to inaugurate His visible, literal reign over all the world, from the kingdom in Israel, from Jerusalem, upon the throne of His father David. In the meanwhile, may I encourage you to press onward, not looking back but forward toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus! As often as I am confronted by the allegorical symbolization of Scripture, I'm still shocked by those who

would deny the clear literal teachings of Scripture. I'm currently reading through the section of L. S. Chafer's *Systematic Theology* on Christology, specifically the literal Millennial Reign of Christ, and it's refreshing to see the Truth extolled. It is no less refreshing to see the Truth heralded boldly by those at TBC. The Lord bless you all! JF (AZ)

## TBC Notes

### More Divine Opportunities

We don't know what the year 2009 holds for us, and given some of the grim economic forecasts, we can do without the speculative details. Worry over what's ahead isn't something the Lord wants us to do. In fact, it's both fruitless and faithless. Jesus would have us take heed to His words, which though heaven and earth pass away, will not:

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Which of you by taking thought [worry!] can add one cubit unto his stature? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matthew 6:25, 27, 31-33)

The Lord will cover us, yet He wants to do it through His followers, just as the Apostle Paul became the opportunity for the believers at Philippi to minister to him. Although he was in need and appreciated their support, Paul was even more thankful that they could have the experience of being used of the Lord, the bearing "fruit [that would] abound to your account [their eternal treasury]" (Philippians 4:10-19).

I pray that the saints, whether they become the opportunity for others or see others as their opportunity to be the Lord's instruments of blessing, will take advantage of whatever lies ahead, knowing that however we are involved, our participation "worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Corinthians 4:17).

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

T.A. McMAHON

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# JUDGMENT DAY: ISLAM, ISRAEL & THE NATIONS

EXCERPTS FROM CHAPTER 4: PALESTINE? • BY DAVE HUNT

**U**nder the assertion that they are descended from the “original Palestinians” who lived in the land of “Palestine” before the Israelites...invaded and conquered it, the Arab refugees claim the entire land as theirs. The Jews, they insist, are unlawfully occupying their hereditary land and must leave....

On October 11, 1949, Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Muhammad Saleh el-Din, declared that “the Arabs intend that they [refugees] shall return as masters.... The Arab people will not be embarrassed to declare: ‘We shall not be satisfied except by the final obliteration of Israel.’”...And the world blames Israel for not making peace with such enemies!...

[T]he land into which God brought Abraham some 4,000 years ago, which He promised by everlasting covenant to him and to his heirs, and in which he and his descendants through Isaac and Jacob lived for centuries, was not a nonexistent place called “Palestine.” It was the historic land of Canaan (1 Chr 9:15-18)....

Around A.D. 132, the Romans, who had decimated Jerusalem in A.D. 70, began to rebuild it for Roman Emperor Hadrian.... They started construction of a temple to Jupiter on Temple Mount at the site of the ancient Jewish temples. Understandably, there was an uprising of the Jews to prevent such desecration. It was led by Simon Bar Kochba, whom many at that time considered to be the Messiah.

At first the revolt was remarkably successful, but...the Romans eventually destroyed nearly 1,000 villages, killed about 500,000 Jews, and sold thousands into slavery. When the revolt was finally crushed in A.D. 135, the Roman conquerors angrily renamed the land of Israel, *Provincia Syria-Palestina*, after Israel’s ancient enemies, the Philistines. From that time forward, all those living there were known as “Palestinians.”

Who lived in the newly designated Palestine and were thus known as “Palestinians”? Jews, of course! Chase them out and they return to the land God gave to their forebears. At that time, Arabs hadn’t even dreamed that “Palestine” was their land. That ambition would not take hold for another 500 years until the advent of Islam—and even then Arabs would not call themselves Palestinians.

In World War II, Britain had a volunteer brigade known as “The Palestinian Brigade.” It was made up entirely of Jews. The Arabs were fighting on Hitler’s side.... There was the Palestinian Symphony Orchestra (a Jewish orchestra) and the *Palestinian Post* (a Jewish newspaper). As late as the 1950s, Arabs refused to be called Palestinians and declared that if there were such a people, they were Jews.

To the British Peel Commission in 1937, a local Arab leader testified, “There is no such country as Palestine. ‘Palestine’ is a term the Zionists invented....” Professor Philip Hitti, Arab historian, testified to an Anglo-American Committee of inquiry in 1946, “There is no such thing as Palestine in history—absolutely not!” To the UN Security Council on May 31, 1956, Ahmed Shukairy declared, “It is common knowledge that Palestine is nothing but southern Syria.” Eight years later, in 1964, Shukairy became the founding chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization and coined the infamous slogan, “[W]e’ll drive the Jews into the sea.” And he wasn’t even a “Palestinian”! Like Arafat, he was born in Cairo. The Palestine Liberation Organization was not founded by Palestinians but has been used to exploit these abused people in Islam’s war against Israel.

Today’s Arab “Palestinians” are close relatives of the Arabs living in neighboring countries, from which most of them—or their immediate ancestors—came.... Arabs claim that they are descended from Ishmael,

Abraham’s first son, and that they are therefore the legitimate heirs to the land that God gave to Abraham. They do have much Ishmaelite blood in them, but there is no direct genealogy tracing today’s Arabs back to Ishmael. They are a mixed race.

We’ve already seen that Isaac was the son of promise. Even if the Arabs were 100 percent Ishmaelites, they would still not be descended from the land’s original inhabitants. God promised the land to Abraham before Ishmael was born. It already had many inhabitants. So how could Arab descendants of Ishmael (born to immigrants centuries after Canaan had been settled) be at the same time descendants of the “original inhabitants” of the Promised Land? Impossible!...

It would not be until the seventh century A.D., through the Islamic jihad invasions, that Arabs would come in any significant numbers into the land of Israel, which by that time was erroneously called Palestine....

Yet the world accepts these fantasies as the basis of a settlement they intend to impose upon Israel, whose legitimate ancestral claims to the land go back 4,000 years!

If “Palestine” is so important to the Arabs, why is it not mentioned *once* in their holy book, the Qur’an? The word is used four times in the Bible but never refers either to the land of Canaan or to Israel. The Hebrew word from which it is translated is *pelelsheth*. It referred to a small region also known as Philistia, the land of the *Pelishtee*, or Philistines. Philistia was in the same location but a bit larger than the Gaza Strip of today, named after the Philistine city of Gaza.... This is the true history, of which the Qur’an knows nothing.

The Philistines were not a Semitic people like the Arabs but had invaded Canaan by sea from across the Mediterranean and occupied that particular area before the Israelites arrived. They were not the “original inhabitants of the land” (as today’s “Palestinians” claim their ancestors were) but displaced certain Canaanites just as they were themselves eventually displaced by Israel. Arab “Palestinians” (who are Semites living there today) can claim neither ethnic, linguistic, nor historical relationship to the Philistines, nor can they justify...calling themselves Palestinians....

Jerusalem was established as the capital of Israel by King David 3,000 years ago. It is not mentioned once in the Qur’an. Even when Muslim empires controlled all of the Middle East, Jerusalem...was largely neglected. In the late 1800s, out of a population in Jerusalem of about 40,000, most were Jews, the rest Christians of various shades, and only a few were Arabs.

Nor is there any reference to Jerusalem in the Palestine National Covenant of 1964. It was a...complete turnabout when the Muslim world began to insist that the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and Jerusalem itself had always belonged to “Palestinians.”

The Islamic terrorist organization Hizbullah (Party of Allah), headquartered in Syria, displays the Dome of the Rock on its promotional materials to inflame its followers against Israel. Arafat declared that “Al-Quds [Jerusalem] is in the innermost of our feeling, the feeling of our people and the feeling of all Arabs, Muslims, and Christians in the world.” Not surprisingly, he left out the Jews, to whom Jerusalem means more than to anyone!...

The current Muslim attempt to claim Jerusalem as an Islamic holy city would shock Muslims from centuries past. It is simply one more lie and one more ploy in the propaganda campaign to oust Israel. Its remarkable success will continue until Israelis are desperate enough to cry out as one voice for the Messiah to rescue them—and He will do so.



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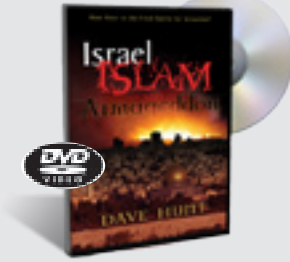
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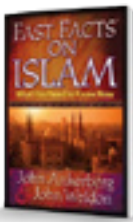


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