



*Then sings my soul,
my Savior God to Thee. . .*

HOW GREAT THOU ART!

The
Berean
Call

JANUARY 2010

COSMOS, CREATOR AND HUMAN DESTINY—PART 1

by DAVE HUNT

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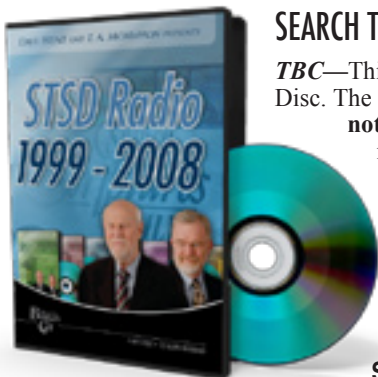


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THE BEREAN CALL

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

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Cosmos, Creator, and Human Destiny (Part 1)

Dave Hunt

Despite all our failures to bring peace and good will on Earth, America can at least boast of her much-vaunted space program. Our astronauts have walked on the moon. Our astronomers have searched the far reaches of the universe with their telescopes and have uncovered much of its mystery. But wait. Let us face some realities.

Cosmos, Creator, and Human Destiny, my newest book, begins with a brief look at the vastness of the universe. Even if we could build space vehicles that might travel at the speed of light, it would take 100,000 years to cross The Milky Way, our relatively small galaxy, and billions of years to reach the trillions of galaxies beyond. These facts show how foolish is man’s dream of “space exploration.” Each time I board a passenger jet and glance into the cockpit at the incredibly complex instrument panel, I think of the Arctic tern. This bird breeds in the tundra of the far north, then flies for eight months across thousands of miles of trackless ocean to reach its destination near the edge of the Antarctic ice pack, only to return to its breeding grounds. It will cover more than twenty thousand miles in its lifetime. Its instrument panel is in its tiny brain and its guidance system is instinct, a capability that no evolutionary process could develop nor any man explain.

Atheism, partnering with Darwinism, is the fastest growing non-political movement in the world today. It is Satan’s master weapon in his battle with God. The world’s leading atheist, Richard Dawkins, a former Oxford University professor, is atheism’s loudest mouthpiece. His books regularly appear on the *New York Times* bestseller list. Becoming convinced of Darwinism at the age of fifteen turned him from a nominal Anglican into a fervent atheist. He has declared that “A belief in God is not only stupid but wicked.”

The same transformation occurred in Charles Templeton’s life. He was at one time the preaching partner of Billy Graham. Darwinism turned him into an atheist. In his book, *Farewell to God*, he tells of writing to Billy:

Billy, it’s simply not possible any longer to believe, for instance, the biblical account

of creation. The world wasn’t created over a period of days a few thousand years ago; it has evolved over millions of years. It’s not a matter of speculation; it’s demonstrable fact.

Templeton was wrong, tragically so. Darwinism continues today to turn multitudes into atheists. Many authors have argued both sides of the creationism vs. evolutionism dispute. It is really theism vs. atheism, God vs. Satan. This ancient conflict is soon to come to its dramatic conclusion. That is what *Cosmos, Creator, and Human Destiny* is all about.

We boast of the great cities we’ve built and keep track of our highly praised athletic records: how fast we can run, how high or far we can jump, etc. As we have seen with the arctic tern, insects and animals outdo us in every physical feat. It is astonishing, however, that almost no one on either side of this debate ever mentions the one key factor that separates man from all lower creatures: man’s ability to form conceptual ideas and to express them in words and music and art! We are made in the image of God our Creator and the lover of our souls. The same cannot be said of any other living creature.

This simple fact reveals the futility of searching the world of fossils to find a “missing link” between man and lower creatures of any kind. It is equally futile to search the DNA of man and animals for a missing link. Neither the skeletal structure nor the DNA has anything to do with who the person really is. The DNA of a chimpanzee is 96 percent like that of humans. This does not indicate any evolutionary connection between man and chimps as Francis Collins, a professing Christian recently appointed to head the National Institutes of Health, suggests. Even if the complete skeletons and DNA of Albert Einstein, Charles Dickens, and Ludwig van Beethoven could be discovered, would they hold the key to the genius of these men? Of course not! The real person is a nonphysical being living inside the physical body. This fact is indisputable.

As for your brain, it does not originate your thoughts. You are the thinker who will live on endlessly after the body lies rotting in the grave. Souls and spirits are not subject to the laws of physics and chemistry that govern our bodies. These facts bear serious consequences for each of us. What happens to the soul and spirit after death?

Hebrews 9:27 states, “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” You can laugh your way into hell, but you can’t laugh your way out.

Nevertheless, the rebellion against God that Adam began has been carried on ever since with determination. Undeniably, the major goal of today’s scientific endeavor is to prove that God does not exist.

The purpose of space probes, for example, is to find signs of water that might indicate how life could have had its inception somewhere outside of earth and then evolved. The goal, of course, is to show that man is not a unique creation but that there are similar intelligent beings scattered everywhere throughout the universe—and thus there is no need of a “god” to explain anything. Such speculation flies in the face of the law of biogenesis, which states that life only comes from life.

Atheists want to avoid the question of origins. They talk about a sudden burst of energy that one critic named the “Big Bang,” but they cannot tell us what energy is, where or why it was hiding, or why it suddenly showed itself in a cosmic explosion. Nor can they explain how life could spring forth from a universe that had experienced temperatures hotter than the interior of the hottest star. They can’t tell us what life is or how it could be imparted to lifeless chemicals that the body comprises. Isn’t it dishonest to talk about evolution without first of all facing certain foundational questions?

What is behind the diligent search for fossils all over the globe? What else than to find some evolutionary chain from microbes to man that would eliminate God? So it is with the exhaustive search through the human genome—to find an evolutionary link from lower creatures to man. We’ve already proven that man is more than his physical body, but that fact is avoided by atheists because it points to God.

Atheists are materialists. For them nothing exists except matter. Allegedly, man is no more than his physical body. The materialist thesis is easily disproved. Thoughts are not physical nor are ideas. Dictionaries and encyclopedias are filled with words for which there are no physical descriptions. What is the color of ethical? What does stupendous smell like? How much does remarkable weigh? Materialism is a stupid as well as a wicked philosophy. What is the texture of stupid, the sound of wicked, or the taste of philosophy, etc.?

The truth cannot be avoided, and honestly facing it must not be delayed! Twice the Bible declares, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Ps 14:1, 53:1). Atheism is the religion of fools.

The story is told of a man preaching on Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park in London, England, who in his sermon said that anyone who didn't believe in God was a fool. A man in the crowd of listeners shouted out, "I'm an atheist. If you can't prove that I'm a fool, I'll publish it in the papers and we'll run you out of town!"

"You really don't believe in God?"

"You bet I don't! I've been fighting against God all my life!"

"Tell me," replied the preacher, "if a man who spends his life fighting against someone who doesn't exist isn't a fool, then who is?"

Representations of the terrifying scene of man standing before God's throne have been attempted by poets, artists, and authors, but our imagination could lead us astray. The Judgment Seat of Christ is where the Christian receives rewards or suffers loss for "the things done in his body" (2 Cor 5:10). At that awesome event we will each face Christ whose "eyes [are] like a flame of fire" (Rv 1:14; 2:18).

On the other hand, those who have rejected Christ and laughed at God's offer of salvation will stand before the Great White Throne and confront the One sitting upon it from whose face "the earth and heaven [will flee] away" (Rv 20:11). Those who have scoffed at God's offer of forgiveness will be tormented eternally with the haunting memory of their evil thoughts, words, and deeds, with the realization that all this didn't have to be. It was their rejection of the forgiveness God offered them through Jesus that sealed their doom. At last it will become clear what David confessed to God: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight" (Ps 51:4). When remorse overtakes us and we repent of any sin we've committed, we must not forget to include David's brief statement that was at the heart of his confession. All sin is rebellion against God.

For the unbeliever, the fires of hell are the burning torment of one's God-given conscience that Solomon describes so vividly:

Because I have called, and ye refused: I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh...as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind: when distress and anguish cometh upon you.

Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: they would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices." (Prv 1:24-31)

Until we, even as Christians, realize the seriousness of what we might dismiss from our minds as hardly worth mentioning, we haven't even begun to repent. Any sin, no matter how seemingly trivial, must be recognized as grand larceny and treason against God. Grand larceny? We have robbed God, in small or large measure, of the life He entrusted to us, a life to be lived to His glory, and instead have lived for ourselves. Treason? In our hearts we have launched an insurrection against the Lord of the universe.

Only when we see sin in this light, have we begun to repent. Most of the old hymns of the faith reflected the solemnity with which worshippers ought to enter God's holy presence. Sadly, these former favorites have been set aside to make way for today's "contemporary music," with lyrics that lower God from Lord of the universe—a God whose majesty causes us to fall on our faces in holy reverence—to a buddy.

In many of today's so-called evangelical churches there is little fear of God, which Solomon said was "the beginning of wisdom" (Ps 111:10, Prv 1:7; 9:10). The Lord's lament as He wept over Israel must surely be His cry as he looks at the church today: "A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? And if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?" (Mal 1:6)

I speak to my own heart. How many of us live as though we really believe the time is short and that Jesus could come at any moment? We need to pause and ponder this question very seriously. We need a heart renewal, a fresh realization of the awesomeness of God. I often tell the Lord that I tremble to think of standing before Him. I know that I am redeemed and secure in His love, but when I think of how great He is and what a pitiful nothing I am, it seems presumptuous to dare to say, "I love you, Lord."

The Scriptures speak with awesome solemnity to those who reject God as Creator and Savior. No, we did not evolve. That theory was one of Satan's cleverest lies. In one stroke he lowered man to an animal and at the same time catered to his

pride by making him believe that he could understand how he came into existence without God and thus remain free from accountability to any authority higher than himself. What a grand delusion for paving the broad road to destruction!

How could one put such vital truth into a book containing a scientific discussion about man's origin and the purpose of his existence? That is what has been attempted in *Cosmos, Creator, and Human Destiny** in order to awaken readers to the wonder of God's love and the glorious destiny He has planned for those who will open their hearts to Him. How true are the words of the hymn "How Great Thou Art":

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds thy hands have made:
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed!
.....
When through the woods and forest glades I wander
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees,
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze,
.....
And when I think that God, His Son not sparing,
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in—
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,
He bled and died to take away my sin!
.....
When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration
And there proclaim, my God, how great thou art!
.....
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee:
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!

TBC

*COSMOS praise and production update: Dave has completed writing—all 608 pages—and at press time the book is now in the final stages of editorial, indexing, and design/production (about 8 to 12 weeks). We'll give you another report in February when we present Part 2 of this series by Dave. Thanks for your prayers!

Quotable

[Let us] turn from our limitations to God, who has none. Eternal years lie in His heart. For Him time does not pass, it remains; and those who are in Christ share with Him all the riches of limitless time and endless years. God never hurries. There are no deadlines against which He must work. Only to know this is to quiet our spirits and hearts.

A. W. Tozer

[TBC: This sounds like a good Rx for the coming year, and we wish it in glorious measure for all of our readers.]

Q&A

QUESTION: I have a friend who keeps insisting that it is necessary for me to keep the Old Testament feasts of the Jews. They also keep the Saturday Sabbath. It is said that the early church kept the Sabbath, Gentiles and Jews together. Many times we read that Paul wanted to return to Jerusalem to keep the feasts. In the Millennium, Zechariah 14 verses 16-21 says that any nation that does not keep the Feast of Tabernacles will be punished and not receive rain. If all these things are merely meanings and symbols, why does the Lord then re-institute them at the end of time?

RESPONSE: We have addressed the issue of the Sabbath for believers in past issues of the newsletter. Several seminar ministries make a point of offering a large sum of money for one verse in the New Testament stating that Sunday worship was exchanged for the Sabbath. They might as well offer the same sum of money for one verse proving that Gentile believers are required to keep the Sabbath and Jewish feasts. Both positions are equally secure. In contrast, during what some have called the first church council, the question came up as to whether or not Gentile believers should keep the law: "Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment..." (Acts 15:24). This same thought is in Acts 21:24-25.

Further, we need to realize that we are Abraham's seed. That is the point, as the Law was not given to Abraham, something the book of Galatians makes quite clear. The law was given 430 years after Abraham. The Law was temporary (Gal 3:24-25), the promise to Abraham was eternal: "And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was

four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise" (Gal 3:17-18).

Galatians itself was written by Paul to instruct us that the "law was our schoolmaster [or teacher] to bring us unto Christ..." (Gal 3:24) and that "after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster" (v. 25). Although given by God, in view of its temporary nature Paul said, "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" (Gal 4:9).

The Law, which the Lord calls "good," "holy," "just," "praiseworthy," and other positive adjectives, is also called "weak and beggarly." In Colossians 2, the law (including the Sabbath and the feasts), are said to be a "shadow." The Law is portrayed in a negative manner because Paul is making a comparison. The Law, with all its implications, types, shadows, and facets, was designed to bring us to Christ. Compared to the finished work of Christ, however, it is weak and beggarly. In Galatians, Paul compares Mt. Sinai (where the law was given) to Hagar, the concubine with whom Abraham had a child. This portrays the works of the flesh and "gendereth to bondage." But "Jerusalem which is above" (speaking of the finished work of Christ), "is free."

To insist on keeping the law is to be like someone with a photo of his fiancée, who only looks at the picture, when in fact she has arrived and is sitting there with him. To continue looking at the photograph instead of at the actual person is to turn aside to "weak and beggarly" elements.

It is disappointing to see unsupported generalizations: "many times Paul wanted to return to keep the feasts." According to Scripture, this is an exaggeration. There is no evidence that Paul (a Jew) urged Gentiles to keep the feasts. Paul had purposed to go to Jerusalem but not at the express leading of the Lord, for the disciples at Tyre (under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit), warned Paul not to go to Jerusalem (Acts 21:4).

The New Testament is full of euphemistic statements. We see this in Paul's use of "the letter" (which kills - 2 Cor 3:6) to describe those who take a legalistic approach to the Scriptures. We see this when the Apostle Paul exhorts us to "keep the feast" (1 Cor 5:8), which some have used as presumed support for keeping the Old Testament feasts. We have already noted the conclusion of Acts 15:24 and Acts 21:24-25.

QUESTION: In a future edition of the newsletter, I would like to see an evaluation

of Mr. Wiese's book, 23 Minutes In Hell. I have serious doubts that God selected this man to show us a glimpse of hell.

RESPONSE: As we have noted, there are any number of books, both secular and purportedly Christian, which deal with so-called eyewitness accounts of heaven and hell (as in the case of Bill Wiese). Along with near-death experiences and out-of-body experiences, we cannot recommend any of these books, videos, or audio presentations. Many introduce clearly extrabiblical ideas and the accounts demonstrably contain narrative contradictions.

In the case of Mr. Wiese, he has highlighted his live presentations with clips from Hollywood productions, where all sorts of imagery are said to greatly resemble what he saw during his "23 minutes in hell." These demons are actively engaged in tormenting individuals in ways that seem to be intensified versions of torments found on earth.

While acknowledging that Satan and demons will be consigned to the Lake of Fire, he then goes on to say, "However, I believe Scripture indicates that currently in hell (Sheol or Hades), God does allow the demons to torment lost souls..." and admits, "This may not be absolutely conclusive in Scripture, and some theologians may disagree; however, I believe there are enough verses to consider this torment to be more than conjecture. What Scripture says is all that matters, not what I have to say. I am simply reporting the events" (p. 130-31).

Wiese may be merely "reporting" the events, but the imagery he has used in his presentations is certainly not faithful to Scripture. He writes, "...truth is found in the pages of the Bible. But there are many who do not want to recognize God's Word as truth because of the light it sheds on our sin" (p. 84). The Word also sheds light on whether any experience we have is biblical and therefore from God. Consequently, though Wiese quotes numerous Scriptures, they have little to do with his supposed revelations.

For example, he quotes Deuteronomy 32:22-24: "For a fire is kindled in mine anger, And shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them. They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat and bitter destruction: I will also send against them the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust." Wiese then concludes that in hell "...there are teeth of beasts upon you." Then are we also to believe that there are archers in hell? One

can see how careless usage of Scripture opens the door for a number of problems.

QUESTION: Can you give your thoughts on such scriptures as Revelation 1:3, Revelation 22:6,7, and verses 12 and 20? All of them state that the Lord's coming is very near. Yet, it's been nearly 2,000 years since those verses were first written by John under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16).

RESPONSE: Scripture must be understood in the entirety of its context (i.e., the entire Bible). We should not make a few verses our focus without seeking to "rightly divide" (2 Tm 2:15). To "rightly divide" means to handle correctly. Each Scripture has a place in the whole. Therefore, they are rightly divided and placed in their correct context.

When Satan tempted the Lord in the wilderness, he quoted Scripture daring him to jump from the pinnacle of the temple, "For it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone" (Mt 4:6). Satan was quoting out of context, ignoring the remainder of Scripture. Jesus rebuked him, saying, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Mt 4:7).

The Lord Jesus said in the last chapter of Revelation, "Behold, I come quickly..." (Rv 22:12). Although it may seem like a long time, Peter reminds us that from the Lord's perspective it is but a few days (2 Pt 3:8-12).

In verse 9, Peter reminds us, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Jesus also stated very plainly in Matthew 24:14, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Prior to ascending to heaven, the Lord gave what is called The Great Commission: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Mt 28:19, see also Mk 16:15, Lk 24:47, Jn 20:21, Acts 1:8). We conclude very properly then, that the proclamation of the gospel to all nations will take time.

Nevertheless, the coming of the Lord is consistently spoken of as "soon." A. W. Tozer once wrote an essay entitled "The Decline of Apocalyptic Expectation." He began with an overview of Christianity at the end of the nineteenth century. The various "advent" movements were strong and there was an increased sense of expectation that this would indeed be the last generation. This led to excesses, causing problems with

some of those involved with these movements. As he looked at the good things that emerged from these movements, however, he concluded that the average Christian needs a strong sense of expectation as an incentive towards more holy living.

QUESTION: I was asked this question by a new Christian: Why did God allow people in the Old Testament to marry multiple wives?

RESPONSE: In Matthew 19:4-5, the Lord Jesus states, "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain [two] shall be one flesh?" Not "they three, or four, or five, etc.," but "they two." Jesus is reiterating the intent of God. Our Creator designed marriage to be between one man and one woman for life. The first disagreement to this intent came from Lamech (Gn. 4:19), who had two wives. Lamech was of the cursed line of Cain, which all perished in the flood.

Speaking of the kings of Israel, the Lord God commanded, "Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away..." (Dt 17:17). Those that have authority have high standards. As such, we are not surprised to see that regarding church leadership, Paul wrote that "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach" (1 Tm 3:2).

Yes, David and Solomon had many wives. Do we envy the disaster this brought? The envies, murders, and hatred in David's family is hardly an endorsement for polygamy. Speaking of Solomon, the Scriptures note: "And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart" (1 Ki 11:3).

No one can produce one Scripture purporting to indicate that the Lord approved of polygamy. Much like divorce, it was "tolerated" but never "approved." Of divorce, the Lord Jesus noted, "He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so" (Mt 19:8). Again, what is in focus is "in the beginning." What did God intend? The biblical focus is never what man has made of the Lord's original intent.

In conclusion, any usage of biblical texts to support polygamy must of necessity fly in the face of Scripture, a process the apostle addressed in 2 Peter 3:16 where "they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."

News Alert.....

USA TODAY, 12/09/09 [Excerpts]: Going to church this Sunday? Look around. The chances are that one in five of the people there find "spiritual energy" in mountains or trees, and one in six believe in the "evil eye," that certain people can cast curses with a look — beliefs your Christian pastor doesn't preach. In a Catholic church? Chances are that one in five members believe in reincarnation in a way never taught in catechism class — that you'll be reborn in this world again and again.

Elements of Eastern faiths and New Age thinking have been widely adopted by 65% of U.S. adults, including many who call themselves Protestants and Catholics, according to a survey by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life released Wednesday.

Syncretism — mashing up contradictory beliefs like Catholic rocker Madonna's devotion to a Kabbalah-light version of Jewish mysticism—appears on the rise. And, according to the survey's other major finding, devotion to one clear faith is fading.

Of the 72% of Americans who attend religious services at least once a year (excluding holidays, weddings and funerals), 35% say they attend in multiple places, often hop-scotching across denominations. They are like President Obama, who currently has no home church. He has worshiped at a Baptist church, an Episcopal one, and the non-denominational chapel at Camp David. "Mixing and matching practices and beliefs is as much the norm as it is the exception," Pew's Alan Cooperman says.

Among the findings:

- 26% ...who attend religious services say they do so at more than one place occasionally, and...9% roam regularly from their home church for services.
- 28% ...who attend church...weekly say they visit multiple churches outside their own tradition.
- 59% of less frequent church attendees say they attend worship at multiple places.

The survey of 2,003 adults Aug. 11-27 ...measures Protestants, Catholics and the unaffiliated....Pew says two in three adults believe in or cite an experience with at least one supernatural phenomenon, including: "spiritual energy" in physical things, astrology, reincarnation, yoga as a "spiritual practice."

[TBC: This trend reflects what the Scripture prophesies regarding the spiritual condition of the church in the Last Days: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Timothy 4:3-4).]

Speaking Schedule

Jan 21-22 (TA)	Calvary Chapel of the Finger Lakes Farmington, NY (585) 398-3550
Jan 31-Feb 5 (TA)	Jonquiere Christian Assembly Jonquiere, QC (418) 542-5075
Apr 16-17 (TA)	Calvary Chapel of Lima Lima, OH (419) 222-6100
Jun 6 (TA)	Candlelight Fellowship Coeur d'Alene, ID (208) 772-7755
Jul 9-11	TBC Conference Bend, OR (800) 937-6638
Aug 28-31 (TA)	Truth 4 Youth Teaching Conference Devon, United Kingdom 44 1494 764913

Letters

Dear T. A., Dave, and Berean Family,

Each month *The Berean Call* points us to the only compass for this journey, and that is Jesus Christ and His Word (Num 6:24-26).

I have been unemployed for seven months now, yet I see it as a chance to grow deeper in the Word and closer to the Lord Jesus.... Another co-worker got laid-off the same day as I did, and the events in her life really were more tragic than mine. However, when things were at their lowest, she...asked me what was the thing that made my life different. After several meetings, she accepted the Lord as Savior and our friendship has developed in His Name. I say that to give Him the Praise! This seems to have opened a door to witness to others....I am not worried about the job outlook—He will provide. MU (PA)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Thank you for the books. I just want you to know the Holy Spirit was right on time. I [had] asked for information on the Faith Movement...but, Praise God...you sent [instead] the books and information I needed to help a fellow Christian....Thank you! JS (prisoner, AR)

Dave,

Regarding your "Jesus Prayer" broadcast and your distaste for Greek monks, one thing you will find on Mount Athos is Christians living their faith 24 hours a day (not making a commodity of it). AK (email)

Dear Brother Dave,

I owe you an apology. [A while ago] I asked, "What are you for—not *against*?" before I even really read much of the book, *Occult Invasion*. I [had] glanced at a few pages and it seemed to be accusatory....

But, that "still small voice" said "check it out," and I was very surprised that you are a "bold-as-a-lion" believer and very, very courageous to put in print all such material. What a mass of info you have there! Please do send the newsletter. I'd be honored to receive it. Really sorry, I feel lower than a snake. In the future I won't be so hasty to make a judgment about something: lesson learned! DK (VT)

Dear Friends,

The Lord has used your articles to help my wife and me to rightly discern the Christ-like position and call in these perilous days and times. Sometimes my emotions and anger well up in me as we see unrighteousness and wickedness abounding in these times of America's history....Please be encouraged to continue in the fight for God's truth in the midst of the darkness all around us! TM (CO)

Mr. Hunt,

Some years ago I had become so lost, and then I came across a book...called *The New Spirituality*....[I]t scared me so much because I had seen much of what it spoke of, if not in my own life then in the lives of others close to me. I knew that what you and Tom McMahon were saying was true! I... did not want to put the book down—it was bringing light and truth into my life—and hope. It was pointing me to God's Word and His way. Some time after this, I truly came back to the Lord Jesus....Thank you, Mr. Hunt, so much for your ministry. So often your books have shed light on issues I've had difficulty finding the answer to—*scriptural* answers. HW (Australia)

Dear Dave and T. A.,

Thank you for the knowledge you are sharing with us all. My friend turned me on to you guys in April. Since then I was reborn....I have been searching for a church...and it is very difficult.... I used to be a [SDA] and my friend was a Catholic. We are so thankful we know the Truth....[I]t changes your life forever!...After today I will have listened to and read the entire Bible! I am not stopping there because I have a lot to learn. I am so glad the Lord led me to you guys so that I would not be misinformed....NG (OR)

Dear Dave and Tom,

Thank you so much for your tireless work for God's Kingdom and strong and uncompromising stand on God's Word. [Y]our commentary on God's Word is both uplifting and encouraging in a time when God's church has become lukewarm and compliant to the world's ideology. I am trying to be vigilant and stand strong for the Lord in His church but I am often met with complacency and indifference. DB (MO)

TBC Notes

Forget The New "Year!"

There's something that gets into our heads about beginning a new year with an activity or discipline that will improve our present condition. I don't know what it is, because the same thinking can be applied to a new month, or a new week, day, hour, or minute. I can certainly start exercising tomorrow, or in the next hour or so, rather than wait to start a personal program January 1. Perhaps there's more significance in at least thinking that I'm going to do something worthwhile for an entire year. My own New Year's resolutions rarely make it through the winter thaw, yet I persevere in these attempts because a few have actually become wonderful disciplines in my life.

After years of hopeful attempts, which soon dissipated or got displaced by "more pressing activities," prayer (especially for family members) and reading God's Word are now a very consistent part of my life. What was the "secret to my success"? Very simply, by God's grace and encouragement, I kept after it, oftentimes like a beaten-down boxer who keeps getting up off the canvas to have another go at his opponent (in my case, my undisciplined self). When the year's goal failed, I shifted to the month's goal, then to the week's goal, and from time-to-time I applied myself one day at a time. One of my favorite things about being a Christian is that I can repent in a moment and instantly start afresh with the Lord. While my somewhat sporadic efforts may spoil my year's end achievement record, I'll settle for the grace to persevere after missing the mark of my own making.

Praise Reports

Thank you for your prayers for Dave Hunt, who is recovering from spine surgery, and for Barbara Romine, TBC's managing editor, who is recovering from a mastectomy; those prayers have been graciously answered by the Lord. Dave was able to return to physical therapy recently and Barbara is back at work, thankful and thrilled that her doctor won't need to see her for six months.

Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 4:16-17: "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."

T. A. McMAHON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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MORNING AND EVENING *by C. H. Spurgeon*

“THEY DID EAT OF THE FRUIT OF THE LAND OF CANAAN THAT YEAR” —JOSHUA 5:12

*I*srael's weary wanderings were all over, and the promised rest was attained. No more moving tents, fiery serpents, fierce Amalekites, and howling wildernesses: they came to the land which flowed with milk and honey, and they ate the old corn of the land. Perhaps this year, beloved Christian reader, this may be thy case or mine. Joyful is the prospect, and if faith be in active exercise, it will yield unalloyed delight. To be with Jesus in the rest which remaineth for the people of God, is a cheering hope indeed, and to expect this glory so soon is a double bliss. Unbelief shudders at the Jordan which still rolls between us and the goodly land, but let us rest assured that we have already experienced more ills than death at its worst can cause us. Let us banish every fearful thought, and rejoice with exceeding great joy, in the prospect that this year we shall begin to be “for ever with the Lord.”

A part of the host will this year tarry on earth, to do service for their Lord. If this should fall to our lot, there is no reason why the New-year's text should not still be true. “We who have believed do enter into rest.” The Holy Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance; He gives us “glory begun below.” In heaven they are secure, and so are we preserved in Christ Jesus; there they triumph over their enemies, and we have victories too. Celestial spirits enjoy communion with their Lord, and this is not denied to us; they rest in His love, and we have perfect peace in Him: they hymn His praise, and it is our privilege to bless Him too. We will this year gather celestial fruits on earthly ground, where faith and hope have made the desert like the garden of the Lord. Man did eat angels' food of old, and why not now? O for grace to feed on Jesus, and so to eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan this year!



C. H. SPURGEON was to nineteenth-century England what D. L. Moody was to America. Although Spurgeon never attended theological school, by the age of twenty-one he was the most popular preacher in London. He preached to crowds of ten thousand at Exeter Hall and the Surrey Music Hall. Then when the Metropolitan Tabernacle

was built, thousands gathered every Sunday for over forty years to hear his lively sermons. In addition to his regular pastoral duties, he founded Sunday schools, churches, an orphanage, and the Pastor's College. He edited a monthly church magazine and promoted literature distribution. Sincerely and straightforwardly he denounced error both in the Church of England and among his own Baptists. An ardent evangelical, he deplored the trend of the day toward biblical criticism. (<http://www.spurgeon.org/misc/biopref.htm>)

January 1

Evening

'We will be glad and rejoice in Thee'
Song of Solomon 1:4

We will be glad and rejoice in Thee. We will not open the gates of the year to the dolorous notes of the sackbut, but to the sweet strains of the harp of joy, and the high sounding cymbals of gladness. 'O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise unto the rock of our salvation.' WE, the called and faithful and chosen, we will drive away our griefs, and set up our banners of confidence in the name of God. Let others lament over their troubles, we who have the sweetening tree to cast into Marah's bitter pool, with joy will magnify the Lord. Eternal Spirit, our effectual Comforter, we who are the temples in which Thou dwellest, will never cease from adoring and blessing the name of Jesus. **WE WILL**, we are resolved about it, Jesus must have the crown of our heart's delight; we will not dishonour our Bridegroom by mourning in His presence. We are ordained to be the minstrels of the skies, let us rehearse our everlasting anthem before we sing it in the halls of the New Jerusalem. **WE WILL BE GLAD AND REJOICE**; two words with one sense, double joy, blessedness upon blessedness. Need there be any limit to our rejoicing in the Lord even now? Do not men of grace find their Lord to be camphire and spikenard, calamus and cinnamon even now, and what better fragrance have they in heaven itself? **WE WILL BE GLAD AND REJOICE** in THEE. That last word is the meat in the dish, the kernel of the nut, the soul of the text. What heavens are laid up in Jesus! What rivers of infinite bliss have their source, ay, and every drop of their fulness in Him! Since, O sweet Lord Jesus, Thou art the present portion of Thy people, favour us this year with such a sense of Thy preciousness, that from its first to its last day we may be glad and rejoice in Thee. Let January open with joy in the Lord, and December close with gladness in Jesus!

(actual font size of devotion)



Morning and Evening

Meditating on two portions of Scripture each day with applications relevant for today's Christian, Spurgeon's characteristic comments hit home with a wit and elegance rarely found in other writings. This edition is featured in a high quality diary-style finish with a matte burgundy cover. (Looks and feels like leather, but is man-made). The gilded edges, with presentation page and bookmark, make this luxurious, unabridged edition perfect for gift giving or for your own personal devotion time.

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Ruth Hunt—“Only one who has felt the nearness of death can truly be grateful for each new day, no matter how much suffering it might bring.” Thus speaks Maria Linke, survivor of nine years’ imprisonment in the death camps and prisons of Stalin’s Russia following World War II.

There have been many “God is faithful amid the horrors of war” stories, and although *East Wind* fits this description, it is far more than just another war story. The unusual aspects of Maria’s life make this book so arrestingly different. The winsome portrait of a childhood lived on the banks of the Volga River as the daughter of a wealthy pre-Revolution German industrialist . . . The tragedy of banishment to Siberia and life among the nomadic tribes there . . . The flight from a burning Cossack village and escape to Germany during the Russian Revolution . . . Teen years in lively Berlin . . . World War II and her work as an interpreter in the labor camps of Germany . . . Her arrest as a spy by the advancing Russian armies . . . Miraculous escapes from death . . . Romance . . . The infamous Waldeheim trials . . . And transcending it all, the rare sense of humor that could find laughter in the most horrible of circumstances. *East Wind* is a powerful book. Historically, its scope is broad. Spiritually, its impact is tremendous. It will be a long time before you find another story that will move you as much as Maria’s.

Nine years in a Soviet prison camp would seem an eternity to most of us. For Maria, it was an investment in eternity. Hers is a miraculous story of survival and courage in the death camps of Stalin’s Gulag after World War II. But more than that, it is the story of how one woman turned her sorrow into an opportunity for growth, ministry, and a stronger commitment to Jesus Christ. In nine years, Maria moved through six different camps, including the infamous Buchenwald, which the Soviets had taken over from the Nazis after the war. In the process, Maria touched the lives of many people and helped them turn their own mourning into dancing. This book, which will remind many readers of the works of Corrie ten Boom and Alexander Solzhenitsyn, offers encouragement and hope to anyone who has ever wondered, “How would I react if my faith were really put to the test?”

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