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**About the Author:** Dr. Renald E. Showers is widely recognized as one of the most distinguished theologians in America today. A graduate of Philadelphia Biblical University, he holds a B.A. in history from Wheaton College, a Th.M. in church history from Dallas Theological Seminary, and a Th.D. in theology from Grace Theological Seminary. He is an international conference speaker for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc., and a contributing editor for *Israel My Glory* magazine. Dr. Showers will also be speaking at the TBC 2012 conference (see page 16).

## ABOUT THE BEREAN CALL

Seven years after publication of the controversial ground-breaking bestseller *The Seduction of Christianity* in 1985, its authors, Dave Hunt and T. A. McMahon, joined forces on another front. They began a ministry for the purpose of encouraging spiritual discernment among those who regarded themselves not just as "evangelicals" but as *biblical* Christians. The primary vehicle for this endeavor was through the publication of the newsletter *The Berean Call*. The ministry and newsletter name is taken from Acts 17:11, in which the writer of Acts commended those in the synagogue of the Greek city of Berea for being more fair minded than those in Thessalonica—because not only were they eager to receive the Word, but the *Bereans* also checked it against what the Apostle Paul taught them in order to see if his teaching was according to the Scriptures. Through the publishing and multimedia efforts of The Berean Call (TBC) believers are exhorted to get back into the Word of God instead of being "carried about by every wind of doctrine," and are equipped with materials to help them walk in the truth. TBC's stated mission is to:

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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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## **Chrislam? Christian Palestinianism??**

*T. A. McMahon*

Whenever we, as biblical Christians, think that things couldn't possibly become more preposterous in Christendom, we need to call to mind the Scriptures that tell us that the time will come when *Christians* will not endure sound doctrine, and many will corrupt the Word of God (2 Timothy 4:3; 2 Corinthians 2:17; 2 Peter 3:16). The Apostle Paul further declares to Timothy that those who bring such doctrines shall turn people away from the truth to fables, that is, myths, of their own invention (2 Timothy 4:4; Titus 1:14). Today, such teachings and practices are increasing at a staggering rate—practices that range from the patently absurd to the insidious, even menacingly dangerous, both spiritually and physically.

*Chrislam?* That attempt to combine Christianity and Islam in a common worship service would be a bad joke if it were a joking matter, but it's far from it. As I understand it, this teaching began as a way to help stop the genocide and bring peace between Muslims and Christians in Africa. Sincere in its concern, no doubt, yet sincerely wrong. Muslims who truly follow the Qur'an, and Christians who believe what the Bible presents, regard Chrislam as a blasphemous contradiction of their beliefs.

Why? The differences, which are very apparent, *cannot* be reconciled. Allah is a false god of man's making and is nothing like the God of the Bible, who sent His Son, Jesus, to pay the full penalty for the sins of the world (John 3:16). Allah has no son and condemns all those who believe that he does (Surah 18:4-6; 23:91). Allah is a singular entity (Surah 4:171); the God of the Bible is a Triune God: one God—three Persons. Isa (Jesus) of the Qur'an is not God; he is simply a prophet of Allah (4:171). The biblical Jesus is God who became a Man (John 1:1-4; John 10:33). Allah denigrates Jews (Surah 5:59-60); God refers to the children of Israel as the "apple of his eye" (Deuteronomy 32:9-10). The Hadith (the sayings of Muhammad allegedly received from Allah) declares that the Judgment Day of Allah won't come until the rocks and trees cry out to Muslims to kill the Jews that are hiding behind them (Sahih Muslim Book 041, Number 6981-4). That is anti-Semitism at its worst.

The fundamental teachings of Islam and Christianity allow no compromise. Anyone can certainly believe or make up whatever he wants to about Islam or Christianity, but no one can make them compatible with each other on the basis of either one's sacred texts. Nevertheless, that obstacle is not holding back the multitudes who are letting their desires rush ahead of reason. Furthermore, such irrationality is being exploited by those who have as their agenda: "Faith Shared."

It seems that the apostasy (the undermining of biblical faith to prepare the way for the religion of the Antichrist) is developing at an exponential rate, and contributions are being made through a diversity of unbiblical agendas (see *TBC* 4/86, 5/90, 8/90, 1/95, 2/00, 2/05, 3/05, 9/08, 4/09, 2/08, 3/10). One that is particularly aggressive as well as vicious in its attack on biblical Christianity is referred to as "Christian Palestinianism" (CP). The term was coined by Paul Wilkinson in his book, *For Zion's Sake* (see *TBC* resources), which presents the biblical reasons why Christians need to support the restoration of the modern state of Israel, an endeavor known as "Christian Zionism." The enemy of that effort is Christian Palestinianism, which includes far more than a concern over the plight of the so-called Palestinian people (see Dave Hunt, *Judgment Day*, Resource Pages).

Here are quotes from three *anti-Christian Zionism* sources that characterize the movement:

It is...a total misunderstanding of the story of salvation and a perversion of God's plan for a Christian to want to re-establish a Jewish nation as a political entity....The Christian conscience should always discern what is the authentic vocation of the Jewish people and what is the other side of the coin, that is, the racist State of Israel. (The Institute for Palestine Studies, 1970)

We categorically reject Christian Zionist doctrines as a false teaching that corrupts the biblical message of love, justice and reconciliation....With urgency we warn that Christian Zionism and its alliances are justifying colonization, apartheid and empire-building. ("The Jewish Declaration on Christian Zionism," 2006)

The Christian Zionist worldview has cataclysmic consequences for a religiously integrated and lasting peace in Palestine/Israel." (General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 2007)

"Now, alas, we see apartheid in Israel." This last quote in support of the Palestinian cause is from Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who likens the condition to regimes of "Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Pinochet, Milosevic, and Idi Amin..." (Tutu, Foreword, *Speaking the Truth*, Michael Prior, ed., 2005).

In a booklet we offer titled *Prophets Who Prophecy Lies in My Name—Christian Palestinianism and the Anti-Israel Crusade*, Paul Wilkinson begins by quoting what the Lord spoke to Jeremiah regarding those who prophesied that which was contrary to His Word: "Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Harken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the LORD....I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.... Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies" (Jeremiah 23:16-32).

The most shocking aspect of what Wilkinson writes is not just the fact that these modern-day "prophets" are teaching "that God has rejected Israel and replaced her with the Church" or that they are attempting to marshal forces through the church against Israel politically, economically, and theologically; it is that many are highly esteemed Christian leaders who profess to be evangelicals, i.e., Bible-believing Christians!

For the most part, these false "prophets" present a veneer of biblical teachings but are rarely challenged when they go off track because today's evangelical Christianity has been nearly stripped of biblical discernment, thanks (or rather, no thanks) to decades of conditioning through seeker-sensitive, church-growth marketing tactics. That approach to drawing the "unchurched" and the unsaved into the church moved Bible teaching to the back burner, if it was implemented at all. Conviction of sin and other biblical teachings that might put off the new attendees was replaced with "positive messages" and entertainment for young and old alike. The pervasive dumbing down of biblical discernment was the result, and the body of Christ is reaping the tragic consequences today.

For example, Wilkinson presents a litany of biblical errors taught by those promoting Christian Palestinianism that should be recognized easily and rejected by all believers: "All the basic elements of a Christian Zionist

eschatology are reversed, so that the Bible is seen to be Christian, not Jewish, the land of the Bible is Palestine not Israel, the Son of God is a Palestinian not a Jew, the Holocaust is resented not remembered, 1948 is a catastrophe not a miracle, the Jewish people are illegal occupiers not rightful owners, and Biblical prophecy is a moral manifesto and not a signpost to the Second Coming" (Wilkinson, *Prophets*, p. 51).

Not every one of the Christian leaders who supports Christian Palestinianism would hold to all the beliefs mentioned above, but they all promote it in general and in opposition to what the Bible declares prophetically. The unofficial ringleader in this movement is an Anglican priest named Stephen Sizer, whose church is a member of the Evangelical Alliance and the Willow Creek Association of Churches (Lynne Hybels, the wife of Willow Creek Community Church's pastor, is a supporter of Sizer. She rejects the modern state of Israel as a fulfillment of prophecy). Sizer's first book, *Christian Zionism: Road-map to Armageddon?*, received numerous endorsements from evangelical leaders. Wilkinson notes that reviewers praised it as the "most important and most comprehensive on the subject to date," and the "scholarly treatment to counteract the *rabid prophecy pack*" (italics added), condemning Christian Zionism as "pernicious," a "totally unbiblical menace," "a powerful force that encourages the destruction of millions of people," and "one of the most dangerous and heretical movements in the world which fuels the Arab-Israeli conflict" (*Prophets*, p. 10).

Sizer summarizes his beliefs presented in *Christian Zionism*: "There has only ever been one people of God through history—the Church"; All biblical covenants are subsumed under one covenant of grace; The Jewish people, as an ethnic nation, have fulfilled their role in history, which was to prepare the way for the Church/Christianity; The Church is the new Israel, enlarged through Christ to embrace all peoples." Sizer's second book, *Zion's Christian Soldiers?*, contains a sermon by evangelical scholar John Stott, who characterizes Christian Zionism as "biblically anathema to the Christian faith."

Although Sizer's books are just a few among the proliferating titles that are in opposition to Israel, Zionism, and Christian Zionism, they are a signpost revealing the beliefs of those highly influential evangelicals who have endorsed his position and his writings. Who might they be? Hank Hanegraaff is known to thousands of evangelicals as the head of the biblical apologetics ministry Christian Research Institute and host of the national radio program, the *Bible*

*Answer Man*. He writes, "Sizer's Christian Zionism dramatically demonstrates how a politicized religious movement with a dubious pedigree is a prescription for disaster. From caricaturing Arabs to catalyzing Armageddon, Christian Zionist beliefs and behaviors are the antithesis of biblical Christianity" (*Prophets*, p. 11).

Hanegraaff's perspective is hardly recent. He formerly was associated with D. James Kennedy at Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church. Its seminary's eschatology was clearly showing in 2002 when the faculty, along with its founder, chancellor, president, and Professor of Evangelism (Kennedy), issued "An Open Letter to Evangelicals and Other Interested Parties: The People of God, the Land of Israel, and the Impartiality of the Gospel." This statement denied that the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (i.e., the Jews) have any special blessings or place in prophecy, much less any claim upon the land of Israel. It was initially signed by 71 evangelical leaders, among them R. C. Sproul and Michael S. Horton. This document declares:

*Section VI:* The inheritance promises that God gave Abraham...do not apply to any particular ethnic group, but to the church of Jesus Christ, the true Israel....*Section IX:* The entitlement of any one ethnic or religious group to territory in the Middle East called the "Holy Land" cannot be supported by Scripture. In fact, the land promises specific to Israel [meaning the Church] in the Old Testament were fulfilled under Joshua.

Gilbert Bilezikian was one of the founders (with Bill Hybels) of Willow Creek Community Church. This is his endorsement of Sizer's book: "Some theologies, that make Israel central to the purposes of God and to the processes of history, reduce the Church to the status of concubine while Israel becomes the Bride. Sizer's work provides a timely reminder that, according to the New Testament, God's people is to be identified on the basis of grace, not of race" (*Prophets*, p.11).

Tony Campolo is a well-known Baptist pastor, evangelical youth conference speaker, and sociology professor at Eastern University in Pennsylvania. He lauds Sizer's book as "A comprehensive survey describing how Christians have embraced a theological perspective that has encouraged justice for Jews but has also led to the oppression of Palestinian people and extreme hostility between Christians and Muslims worldwide" (*Prophets*, p. 11). In another place, he writes, "The most serious threats to the well-being of the Palestinians in general, and to the Christian Palestinians in particular, come not from the Jews, but

from *Christian Zionists* here in the United States. With this theology, called 'Dispensationalism,' they argue that according to their interpretation of Genesis 15:18-21, the Holy Land should belong *exclusively* to the Jews. They contend that *all* of this land is what was promised to the seed of Abraham...."

Brian McLaren, the most influential writer of the Emerging Church Movement, whose background is Plymouth Brethren, has obviously abandoned the faith of his early days, as he declares "the need to confront the terrible, deadly, distorted, yet popular theologies associated with Christian Zionism and deterministic dispensationalism," which "use a bogus end-of-the-world scenario to create a kind of death-wish for World War III, which—unless it is confronted more robustly by the rest of us—could too easily create a self-fulfilling prophecy" (*Prophets*, p. 42).

Former president Jimmy Carter may seem out of place among the evangelical theologians presented here who support Christian Palestinianism, but that's not the case. His book, *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*, embodies all that the others mentioned above stand for in their opposition to Israel and the Word of God—and then some. Furthermore, he will have the opportunity to spread his spurious beliefs among even more evangelicals, since he recently signed a three-book deal with the evangelical publisher Zondervan.

These false teachings are neither obscure nor new. Men such as Augustine (AD 354-430), Martin Luther (1483-1546), and John Calvin (1509-1564) have made substantial contributions to such unbiblical beliefs. What is new is the incredible rate at which they are being received. When Jesus was asked by His disciples about the days prior to His return, He characterized it as a time of great deception (Matthew 24). We are seeing just that in our day, and we therefore need to heed His words. Paul's warning to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:28-31) also applies: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." The chief preventive measure against being caught up in the increasing deception of our day is a disciplined life of studying and living out the Word of God. Lord, help us to that end.

TBC



## Quotable .....

F. B. Meyer tells of hearing Hudson Taylor preach from Mark 11:22, translating it thus: "Reckon on God's faithfulness." Today, whatever may be your situation, count on God's faithfulness. Assume God will be faithful to walk through the hours ahead with you. God guarantees He will be faithful—so we must act on that fact, going forward, putting all our confidence and leaning all our weight on the towering faithfulness of God (Psalm 36:5).

M. MacMullen, Choice Gleanings 2011

## Q&A .....

**QUESTION:** In a previous TBC newsletter, you wrote about a book titled *Heaven Is For Real*. You introduced the article as an "exercise in discernment." I was recently sent a book that rather shocked me. Its title is *Have Heart: Bridging the Gulf Between Heaven and Earth*. It seems to do what you objected to in *Heaven Is For Real*—that is, supply information about heaven that is not taught in Scripture. Actually, it goes well beyond that problem by seeming to promote things prohibited in God's Word. The most disturbing aspect of the book for me, however, was that two of the endorsers are men for whom I have great respect: Greg Laurie and Chuck Missler. What is your discernment regarding *Have Heart*?

**RESPONSE:** *Have Heart* was written by Steve and Sarah Berger, a couple who suffered the tragic loss of their 19-year-old son, Josiah. Their stated objective is to use what God showed them through their experience surrounding his auto accident in 2009 and beyond that event to comfort and help others who have had a similar loss of a loved one.

My wife and I (T. A.) recently experienced the loss of her mom, who lived with us for the last three years. Yet, as difficult as that was, I can't imagine such a heart-rending event as losing one of our five children. For those who have had such an experience, the first part of the Bergers' book fulfills much of their goal: they do give wonderful comfort and some sound biblical counsel. For example, they write, "From the beginning of our pain, we asked the Lord for only His truth. We didn't want to be comforted by a lie or counterfeit sympathies. We wanted God and His truth.... The Holy Spirit also convicts believers of what is true and what is not. He is the ultimate Teacher and Comforter. In His

comforting, He brings not only the truth, but He also proves God's Word time and time again in our hearts.... We need to be rooted and grounded in this truth so that no matter how hard the wind [of brokenheartedness] blows, we'll stand.... Our words need to match biblical truth" (pp. 32-33, 36, 60). This concern for God's truth is repeated throughout the book.

Sadly, however, midway through *Take Heart*, the Bergers take leave of their statements regarding the objective Word of God and begin introducing their subjective experiences involving their deceased son, Josiah. Dreams become a vehicle of communication between Josiah and his family and friends: "And then one night, Josiah showed up in a dream" (p. 69). In that episode, Josiah cryptically communicated that he was "pickled," i.e., his term for his life being preserved in heaven. "He [God] used a dream in my life to further unfold the greatness of Heaven, to reinforce the supernatural preservation of my son..." (p. 71).

Communication through dreams featuring a deceased loved one quickly led to direct communication: "Only two weeks after Josiah went to Heaven, I (Sarah) made it a habit to talk to Josiah... I would then be in instant conversation with Jesus and Siah [Josiah]" (p. 82).

Sarah declared to her son that she needed "to be involved with your life even now... and I want to be involved in what you are doing" (p. 82). She then pleads with God to allow that to take place. Supposedly, God answered Sarah through the dream of an unbeliever, a Muslim friend of the family. Others supplied details of Josiah's "job" in heaven through their own dreams.

The authors introduce many things that are allegedly taking place in heaven that are not specifically taught in the Bible. "Are our loved ones in Heaven able to occasionally see things that are happening on earth?... Do the saints intercede for people who are going through hard times? Yes—they know what is happening, as much as God allows, and they are praying for us!" (p. 76). Although the authors intend to comfort people with their insights, they don't seem to be thinking the process through. Knowing what loved ones are doing on earth—perhaps in rebellion and sin—would certainly bring grief to those in heaven, a place of consummate joy. They seem to recognize that problem yet address it with another extra-biblical assessment: "It's not all the time; they don't get to see everything. But every once in a while the Lord grants them permission to look on this earth, and based on what they see, they intercede on our behalf." Where is that found in Scripture?

The authors note the biblical prohibition of contacting the dead in Deuteronomy 18:10-12 but then issue a qualification presumably for believers: "We need to understand that God has the power to temporarily lift the veil between Heaven and earth at any time according to His good pleasure" (p. 95). They offer support for the legitimacy of their view experientially by adding that "Several people in our family and inner circle of friends have experienced similar meetings with Josiah..." including their pastor. The latter declares, "The next thing I knew, Josiah came into [the church] sanctuary... and he got down on one knee and bent to speak into my ear... I stood up and went over to my wife and told her, 'Josiah was just here'" (pp. 99-100). The gist of Josiah's communication was an encouragement regarding what his pastor had gone through during Josiah's hospital stay.

The Bergers claim that such events surrounding their deceased son are proofs of biblical truths: "This visit *proves* that our loved ones in Heaven are spiritually active and that they care—they are aware of the times that we need special encouragement.... God granted Josiah permission to make an appearance... it serves as *proof* that our son is not dead and gone, but merely moved to a different place to do other things for God. It *shows* he is happy there, and it demonstrates his continued presence in not only our lives but in the lives of his friends as well" (p. 100; italics added).

Although perhaps well meaning in their attempt to uphold the faith by "proofs," the Bergers are nevertheless undermining biblical faith. Jesus gave the example of Abraham speaking to the rich man who wanted Lazarus to appear to his five brothers, saying that if they hear not Moses and the prophets, i.e., the Scriptures, they wouldn't believe someone returning from the dead. Furthermore, Jesus chided Thomas for not believing that He had resurrected from the dead without physical proof, adding, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29).

Experiences never trump faith that is based upon the Word of God. Peter had an incredible experience on the Mount of Transfiguration when he saw Jesus glorified and in the presence of Moses and Elijah. Yet Peter declares that even better than that, we have "a more sure word of prophecy" and exhorts believers to "take heed" to the written Word (2 Pt 1:19).

In further attempting to legitimize their experiences (in view of Scriptural prohibitions), they appeal to the "spontaneity" of the "visitations" as the difference between

that which is “condemned by God” and that which is “orchestrated by God” (p. 102). This is wishful thinking on their part, not Scripture’s truth.

In fact, much of what the Bergers hold for their hope in heaven is not stated in the Bible. They say that loved ones in heaven are “enjoying some pretty rockin’ new bodies,” whereas Scripture indicates that a deceased believer will receive his immortal body not right after death but when Christ returns for His church at the Rapture (1 Cor 15:52). They transfer things they love about their temporal life into the eternal realm, particularly their family relationships, and they see that relationship continuing with their deceased son: “We want all of us to continue to have relationship with Siah right up until the day that we are face-to-face in Heaven with him” (p. 103).

Just because someone wants it doesn’t make it so. We know that our relationships with *unbelieving* family members will not continue in heaven. How joyful, then, would a family unit be there with perhaps multiple missing members? Will there be family relationships in heaven? No matter what our rationale, Scripture simply does not tell us. We do know that there is neither marrying nor those given in marriage in heaven (Mt 22:30). Furthermore, all that the Bergers describe seems to lose sight of, even diminish, the extraordinary relationship every believer will have with Jesus Christ.

One of the dangers of this book for a person who doesn’t study the Word of God for himself (which is epidemic today) is that he is disarmed by the multiple claims of biblical veracity, which give way to human speculations—which are then accepted as biblical truth. With no scriptural support, the Bergers write, “We know that [Josiah] can see us, hear us, and even be involved, not only in our lives but also in the lives of his friends. We are continually hearing of Siah coming to friends in dreams.... The dreams are incredibly profound and always prove God’s Word, point to the glory of God, and compel us to get closer to Jesus” (p. 104). They add, “We mean no disrespect to the prophets, but the idea of Siah being able to observe the choices we make here on earth is *way more motivating* as we seek to live for God moment-by-moment. The cloud of witnesses [of “Christian loved ones in Heaven”] is personal, and we believe it is part of their work in the spiritual realm to cheer on their loved ones still on earth...” (p. 107; italics added).

In their attempt to comfort those who have also lost loved ones to death, the Bergers fail to give the biblical warnings of spiritual deception, especially since their grieving state may make them terribly vulnerable to

Satan’s ploys, such as transforming himself “into an angel of light” (2 Cor 11:14-15).

In our day, when biblical discernment is practically nonexistent among most who call themselves Christians, to emphasize the experiential, as the Bergers do throughout their book, is playing right into the hands of the Adversary. Tragically, they call such supernatural experiences with their deceased son “God Nods” and encourage their readers to seek their own: “Be on the lookout for God Nods in your own life” (p. 104). They give examples of Josiah kissing his sister after his death (p. 115), and his dad crying out to God for a sign: “I was begging God for a sign, a sign...out of the ordinary...that my Josiah was all right.... I was asking God to give me something I could behold with my physical eyes” (p. 118). Scripture, however, warns that “An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign” (Mt 12:39).

In contradiction to the biblical counsel the authors give at the beginning of their book, in the end they not only capitulate to a view that disagrees with the Bible but they promote it enthusiastically: “Our loved ones may show up in dreams or visits or other ways (who can limit God’s imagination?), but the fact is that we’re connected.... There is a thin veil, and we’re connected to them, forever, in Christ” (p. 110). They conclude, “You don’t father or mother a child for nineteen years and then hear God say, ‘Oh, now you can’t talk to him. You no longer have a relationship with him until you see him face to face in Heaven....’ We still talk to Josiah, and it’s going to be so great when we’re together again” (p. 125).

In our view, *Have Heart* is an example of how a tragic event in the lives of believers can lead many into an even more tragic misunderstanding of God’s Word.

**QUESTION: The NewsWatch article about Governor Perry’s prayer meeting with two pastors in the August 2011 TBC reminded me of Luke 9:49-50: A man was casting out demons in the name of Jesus, and He said, “do not forbid him, for he who is not against us is on our side.” [By the same token] Governor Perry stated that the main purpose of the prayer gathering was to turn to God/Jesus (yes, he did “name the name of Jesus”). God’s Word says that this type of prayer is pleasing and glorifying to Him. Shouldn’t that give us all reason for joy?**

**RESPONSE:** We have the word of Jesus that the man in Luke’s account was “not against us,” and we can conclude that this man was truly casting out demons in the name of the true “Jesus.”

Scripture, however, warns us: “For if he that comes preaches another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him” (2 Cor 11:4). We do not have the testimony of Jesus concerning the two pastors who came to pray with Governor Perry. Indeed, what we do have is “a prophetic message from Chuck Pierce, an influential prophet (son-in-law and heir to C. Peter Wagner’s Latter-Rain legacy) from Denton, Texas.” God had supposedly commanded some of Pierce’s followers to “pray by lifting the hand of the one I show you that is in the place of civil rule”—and the claim is that Rick Perry was the one.

We have addressed the false teaching and prophecies of the Latter Rain movement and in particular those of Chuck Pierce (see *TBC*, 12/11) in past newsletters. How can one have any assurance that the “Jesus” spoken of in this political gathering was the Jesus of the Bible? The Latter Rain movement and its offspring in the New Apostolic Reformation speak of visions, prophecies, and great spiritual experiences and sometimes interactions with angels. Nevertheless, we are expressly warned in Galatians 1:8, “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”

God commands the church to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thes 5:17) and He certainly answers prayer. Of course, we do not receive Christ just so we can get our prayers answered; nevertheless it’s a wonderful blessing and even a promise to believers. Certainly we should pray and certainly we should gather with others for prayer.

But consider the instruction of the Lord concerning prayer. The Lord will not “hear” when we have sin in our lives: “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me” (Ps 66:18). Can the Lord respect the prayers of those who teach and prophesy falsely in His name? Indeed, we are exhorted to “prove all things, hold fast that which is good” (1 Thes 5:21).

We’re told in the Gospel of John that God desires that those who worship Him “must worship Him in spirit and in truth” (Jn 4:23-24). Since gathering together in prayer is a form of worship, the same condition of “spirit and truth” applies to prayer. Therefore, discernment is required before believers join in prayer with others. Would Governor Perry’s joining in prayer with Mormons or Roman Catholics (who have another Jesus and a false gospel of works) be “pleasing and glorifying” to God and a “reason for joy”? No. The same applies to all of those who do not abide in the teachings of Christ (2 Jn 1:9-11).



## TBC NewsWatch

### HOME BIBLE STUDY?

**ONE NEWS NOW, 11/29/2011: HOME BIBLE STUDIES IN THE CLEAR**—A legal analyst says it was “wise” for a California city to drop a citation filed against a couple for hosting a home Bible study.

The city of San Juan Capistrano dismissed its citation against a local couple who held a growing Bible study in their home. Because of complaints from the neighbors, the city initially fined Chuck and Stephanie Fromm \$300 for holding the session. Officials had also noted that the couple needed a conditional use permit to hold the gatherings, and they threatened to fine the Fromms \$500 per meeting if they continued. So, the pair filed a lawsuit against San Juan Capistrano following an appeal to the city, which was rejected.

Ken Klukowski, fellow and senior legal analyst with The American Civil Rights Union (ACRU), believes the city ultimately made the right decision.

“The city was wise to rescind that citation because otherwise it would have gone to court, and the city would have been beaten badly in court,” he suggests. The Associated Press reports that the city is currently reviewing how its land-use codes apply to churches, but Klukowski tells One-NewsNow the latest move sets an example for future incidents. “I think it is certainly a political precedent on behalf of the public officials leading the city, that they understand that pursuing families for having a Bible study in their own home is not very wise policy,” the attorney concludes.

**[TBC: Chuck Fromm is the publisher and editor of Worship Leader Magazine and a chief advocate of Robert Webber and the Emerging Church movement. See TBC’s “Ancient-Future Heresies” 02/2008.]**

### MUSLIMS DENOUNCE YASMIN CHURCH

**JAKARTA [INDONESIA] GLOBE, 11/28/2011: HUNDREDS TURN OUT FOR BOGOR RALLY TO DENOUNCE BESIEGED YASMIN CHURCH**—Hundreds of hard-line Muslims rallied outside the Bogor City Hall on Sunday to decry the “arrogance” of a beleaguered church in the city that remains shuttered by authorities despite a Supreme Court order to open it.

The protesters, from Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia and the Indonesian Muslim Communication Forum (Forkami), said they wanted to show that all Muslims were united in opposition to the presence of the GKI Yasmin Church in the city.

“We’re here to refute the arrogance of the church, which continues to insist on setting up in the Taman Yasmin [housing complex],” said Achmad Imam, the Forkami head in Bogor.

The Bogor administration issued a building permit for the church in 2006, but it revoked it two years later, alleging the church had falsified the signatures required to obtain it.

The Supreme Court ruled in December 2010 that the closure was unlawful and ordered its reopening, but the city administration continues to ignore the ruling. Mayor Diani Budiarto has used several excuses to keep the church closed, most recently saying there should not be a Christian church on a street with an Islamic name. Church members have been forced to hold services on the sidewalk.

Imam said the mayor had the full support of the local Muslim community in facing down the “lies and tricks of the church members and their supporters, who are trying to pit Muslims against one another through this issue.”

At the sealed-off church, meanwhile, the congregation was prevented from holding services for another week when a group of motorcycle taxi (*ojek*) drivers blocked off the sidewalk. The *ojek* drivers claimed that because the Yasmin congregation had been praying on the sidewalk, they were left with nowhere to park and were thus losing business.

### ARK OPPORTUNIST?

**RANDALL PRICE, THE SENIOR ARCHAEOLOGIST FOR THE ARK SEARCH LLC EXPEDITION TEAM RECENTLY RELEASED THIS STATEMENT TO THE PRESS:** “You may have heard or been part of promoting a recent story about a discovery of Noah’s Ark made in a press conference or on a website by Mr. Daniel McGivern. The claim was made erroneously about our team’s site with old data that does not give an accurate account of the evidence.

“Our team leader, Dr. Richard (Dick) Bright, did not authorize the release of information or condone in any way this press conference or website. Mr. McGivern is NOT a part of the Ark Search LLC team that has been conducting expeditions and research on Mt. Ararat since 2009. Mr. McGivern used partial data from a one day (2010) GPR scan of one part of an anomaly to draw his conclusion. Our team is demanding the website be closed down and for the removal of all data online. Dr. Bright’s official statement is as follows: ‘I want that website pulled, and if that doesn’t happen, the pictures—all of them—must be removed. His announcement was based

on information that is not entirely accurate, and the conference was not authorized by Ark Search LLC. He is not a member of the team.’”

### DIGITAL NARCOTICS MAY BE THE FUTURE OF DRUGS

**WIRED UK, 11/29/2011: DIGITAL NARCOTICS MAY BE THE FUTURE OF DRUGS**—Technologists will become the next drug dealers, administering narcotics through brain stimulation, according to Rohit Talwar, the founder of Fast Future Research, speaking at Intelligence Squared’s If conference.

Talwar was charged by the government to investigate the drugs landscape over the next 20 years, exploring scenarios going beyond the traditional model of gangs producing and shipping drugs around the world.

He described how the world of genomic sequencing and services such as 23 and Me open up possibilities for tailoring drugs to the individual, delivering effects based on your physiology—which could apply just as effectively to narcotics as it could medicines....When combined with transcranial magnetic stimulation—which has been used to inhibit brain functions such as the ability to speak or remember—it opens up the possibility of electronically delivering targeted highs.

He said: “You could also visualize the experience and then tailor the effect to what you want. This nano-bio-info-cogno convergence gets us into some very interesting spheres.” One scenario he imagines would make use of biological proteins manufactured with information-processing technology to deliver effects that could be triggered by electromagnetic stimulation. He imagined that they could be used in a club environment where the DJ would release nanoparticles that the audience could ingest. These could then be used to trigger the desired state at a particular point during his or her set using an electrical stimulus (from a headset) into the crowd’s brains.

“The more we can understand the brain, the more we can deliver positive effects such as improved memory function. Do you want to get high? Mellow? Actually I want to live my life in my head as half-human half-cat,” he joked.

This sort of situation would mean that regulation of these “drugs” would move from trying to stop people from producing them to quality control. This sort of future could eliminate the cartels that control the drugs trade at the moment, because pharmaceutical companies might be able to corner the market and guarantee the quality of the experiences.

## T. A.'s Speaking Schedule

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Feb 12</b><br>(a.m.)      | <b>Agape Christian Ministries</b><br>Rothsay Bay/Auckland<br>(09) 534 8294  |
| <b>Feb 12</b><br>(p.m.)      | <b>Manurewa Fellowship</b><br>South Auckland<br>(09) 534 8294   |
| <b>Feb 13</b>                | <b>Calvary Chapel Hamilton</b><br>(07) 839 4145<br>www.calvaryhamilton.co.nz  |
| <b>Feb 14</b>                | <b>Emmanuel Congregational Church</b><br>Palmerston North<br>(06) 376 5950  |
| <b>Feb 15</b>                | <b>Calvary Chapel Wellington</b><br>(04) 938 1881<br>www.calvarywellington.org.nz   |
| <b>Feb 16</b>                | <b>Upper Riccarton</b><br>Christchurch<br>(021) 178 28 98   |
| <b>Feb 17</b>                | <b>Queenstown Bible Chapel</b><br>Queenstown<br>(03) 472 8887   |
| <b>Feb 19</b><br>(a.m./p.m.) | <b>Cornerstone City Church</b><br>Dunedin<br>(03) 472 8887<br>www.cornerstonecity.org.nz                                    |
| <b>Feb 23</b>                | <b>Clayton Assembly of God</b><br>Melbourne, Vic<br>(03) 9544 3252  |
| <b>Feb 25</b>                | <b>Calvary Chapel Melbourne</b><br>Endeavour Hills, Vic<br>www.calvarymelbourne.com.au                                      |
| <b>Feb 26</b><br>(a.m.)      | <b>Kingsway Christian Fellowship</b><br>Glen Waverley, Vic<br>+61 3 9727 4098   |
| <b>Feb 28</b>                | <b>NarreHills Family Church</b><br>Narren Warren Nth, Vic<br>+61 3 9707 5975  |
| <b>Mar 2</b>                 | <b>Finnish Pentecostal Church</b><br>Mt. Gravatt, Qld<br>+61 7 3849 6331  |
| <b>Mar 3-4</b>               | <b>Christian Witness Ministries</b><br>Eight Mile Plains, Qld<br>+61 7 4669 8438<br>www.cwm.org.au<br>www.cwmfellowship.org |
| <b>Mar 31-<br/>Apr 1</b>     | <b>Calgary Prophecy Conference</b><br>Calgary, AB<br>(403) 345-5183<br>www.cibpc.ca   |
| <b>Apr 19-21</b>             | <b>St. Louis Conf. on Bib. Discernmt.</b><br>St Charles, MO<br>(314) 921-9800<br>www.pfo.org/2012-cbd.htm                   |
| <b>Apr 22</b>                | <b>Calvary Chapel St. Louis County</b><br>Maryland Heights, MO<br>(314) 344-8581  |
| <b>Aug 10-11</b>             | <b>TBC Conference</b><br>Bend, OR<br>(800) 937-6638   |

## Letters .....

### Brother Dave, Ruth, and all the family at TBC,

We love you so much! Thank you for your steadfast faithfulness, your love, your life given as a living sacrifice to the service of the Lord. Only in Glory will you know the countless [souls] you have "saved by pulling them out of the fire," and I am one of them. There is so much I want to tell you—the fruit of your labors...someday we will talk it over. We will muse in awe on the great and wonderful things our God has done—and then resign them as we greet over again the living Presence of Him Who is altogether lovely. JB (OR)

### Dear Dave Hunt,

I...am three-fourths through your book *A Woman Rides the Beast!* What an eye-opener! I do know from history...that [many] of the popes were corrupt....I remember my late grandfather and father used to take me to the RC cathedral...when I was very young....[At age] 13, as I sat and prayed with a Rosary, I suddenly decided to stop—it was all a load of rubbish. To cut a long story short, I got saved [at age] 28....My mother got saved before she died. Praise the LORD!

[Recently], I've been going to [a] Christian bookshop [where I] meet a lot interesting Christians. [The workers] seem to know what books I need at the right time and I am amazed at what I've learned—stuff churches are not telling us about....Along with my Bible, I feel I'm now onto the meat....You find if you try and talk to other Christians about it all...they label you as "over the top." Well, I'd rather be O.T.T. than left behind and in the dark! JH (United Kingdom)

### Mr. McMahon,

The September *Berean Call* showed an unhealthy bias against the doctrines of Calvinism. You incorrectly create the impression of a three-fold salvation of Reformed Theology and miss the point—essentially, that God gives us the faith to be saved. The other option is that something good in man exists that we use to find God. I have believed both views and [have] concluded the Calvinist view to be the most accurate, simply based on the depravity of man.

Save the ink for non-Christians in error such as Roman Catholics, and alert others to wolves such as Rick Warren, but don't attack Christians...when we're on the same side, or I am afraid the unity Christ prayed for is being hindered by your writing. SF (IN)

### Dear T. A.,

We have been most blessed through our associations with your work since we first

heard Dave speak...in Lincoln, Nebraska, twenty-two years ago. We have been receiving *The Berean Call* newsletter for the past twenty-one years, and it has been a privilege to read the articles, news synopses, letters, and inquiries each month. My family and I have been equally blessed by purchasing and reading many of the books, tapes, and DVDs you offer, such as *In Defense of the Faith*, which we have...given as gifts to others who are looking for biblical answers to their own personal questions....We praise God for your firm foundation on the Word of God. We encourage you to continue in truth about the deeply rooted and worldly false doctrines that lure others away from God's truth. God bless all those affiliated with your ministry as you search the Scriptures daily for truth. Thank you for your continued diligence and vigilance on behalf of the true church of Jesus Christ. T&BS (NE)

### Dear Mr. Hunt,

Words cannot express how deeply your book *When Will Jesus Come?* moved me. It has inspired me to get more serious about my relationship with Jesus. I've been laboring for the Lord for four years, and as one would imagine, in prison the harvest truly is plenteous! Satan has firmly entrenched himself into the psyche of many of the prisoners here, and they don't receive the gospel very well...but your book has armed me with indisputable facts and has helped me to present Christ's case compellingly. Thank you! RK (CA, prisoner)

### Dear Dave, T. A., et al.,

Thank you for your faithfulness and for continuing to send us *The Berean Call*. For over 25 years you have alerted us to the deceptions confronting the Bride of Christ in these last days. Since our first reading of *Seduction [of Christianity]* in the middle 80s thru the [current] issue of *The Berean Call*, we are reminded of the great impact your ministry has had on our lives. We pray that God will continue to strengthen and enable you until we all meet again in Glory! G&KL (MN)

### Dear Dave,

I understand that it [was] your 85th birthday. Congratulations! It was in 1985 ...that I read *The Seduction of Christianity*. I was a relatively new believer, but in the short time that I had been a Christian, it had become obvious to me that Christendom was far from being Christ-like. Everywhere I looked I could see the world encroaching on what was ostensibly Christian. I didn't become disheartened, because the Bible prophesied that there would be a falling away, so I looked at the apostasy as a fulfillment of prophecy. I had the very good



fortune of having as a mentor in Christ an elderly Spirit-filled believer who had an eye to prophecy. He advised, "Have your Bible open when you read the newspaper and you will see prophecy being fulfilled before your eyes, and this has been the case during these last 30-odd years. This is the most exciting of times to be alive and you have been blessed to live during these times and to have had the Holy Spirit lead you. Our love and very best regards to you, your wife, your family, and your ministry. J&JM (WA)

**Dave,**

Thank you for providing...biblical and spiritual insight through [your] website. A friend in my...men's study group gave me the website address, and I have been soaking up everything available. Your articles and insights have increased my thirst for God's Word and [are] transforming me into a true Berean. All that I have read on your site so far completely agrees with (or enhances) my understanding of the Word of God—and it enhances my desire to read and study more each day so that I might "rightly divide the word of truth" and that I will always be ready to give an answer for the hope that lies within me.... JM (email)

**Dear Dave,**

The first time we heard you speak...was at Calvary Chapel in Pocatello, ID. I believe it was 1995....We signed up for your newsletter and have gratefully received it ever since....Thank you for keeping us on track.... Our God must smile every time He hears your name, for in this day and age it seems He doesn't have very many truly faithful servants. We just want to thank you and T. A. and everyone who serves at The Berean Call for doing a work that is invaluable to those of us who may have been led astray... by doctrines that "sound biblical" had you not been there to set us straight. You have made us Bereans, and we are ever so thankful to our LORD for bringing you and your ministry into our lives. May He bless you... as you continue fighting the good fight for Him. C&SL (ID)

**Dear Mr. Hunt,**

I just wanted to write to say a huge thank you for all your work over many years. My husband and I are currently working our way through your wonderful book *What Love Is This?* and using it to warn others of the errors of Calvinism. It seems to us that once a person puts on those "Calvinist glasses" it's very difficult for them to see straight, so we feel called to teach even young Christians about this before they come into contact with this awful teaching. Many thanks for equipping us to do this through your book. MD (email)

**Dear Dave,**

In the mid-nineties I was a fairly new Christian, and I got caught up in the Promise Keepers "craze."...As I started reading their books and literature, I became uneasy about their ministry. Also during that time, I was involved [on the board of another ministry]. While traveling to a board meeting with a pastor from another church, he asked me if I really understood all about PK. During that discussion he told me about your ministry and *The Berean Call*. Well, since that time we have been supporters of The Berean Call, have read most of your books, all of the newsletters, and attended your first two conferences. In addition, we have purchased many of your books in quantity and shared them with other pastors and friends. And, yes, I dropped PK and told others why. God has truly blessed you with wisdom and discernment and a love for those who are being misled. WP (WA)

**Dear Dave, Tom, and all at TBC,**

I received the October issue...this afternoon and have just finished reading it. May I express a heartfelt thank-you for all that you do to uphold the Word of God. I read each issue...and have a number of your books and CDs. Speaking of your CDs, when a copying error was discovered in CD128... you sent me a new set at your expense. This action tells me more of your integrity and stewardship than any written report.

Troubling, though, is the careless attitude of so many in area churches. It seems that many "Christians" do not believe the Bible, but rather what some—many of whom are less than honest—have told them the Bible says....There is no substitute for the thoughtful, contemplative, honest, Holy Spirit-led reading and study of the Word of God. It is at such times that our Lord speaks directly to each of us....Now, after more than 40 years of being a believer, I do not *think* it is the Word of God, I *know* it is the Word of the Living God!

In the early '70s...I was filled with wonder at the teaching of the Rapture and Dispensational Theology and amazed at how well ordered God's work is. Over the years He is making me what He wants me to be.... Seeing His hand in so many ways, I have been amazed at the depth of His word [and] cannot help but worship our wonderful, loving God....I thank God for this work that He has given you and that you do it so well and in such a fair and loving way.... CT (ND)

**Hi Dave and T. A.,**

Just wanted to let you know that I've been receiving your newsletter for years and have ordered your books, all of which are great. I've never written to you before to let you

know how much I appreciate your ministry and that you are in my prayers daily. I've just ordered your latest book today and am eagerly awaiting its arrival. Keep on preaching the truth of the Word of God. JL (OH)

## TBC Notes

### *A Heads-Up for the Year Ahead*

From my perspective, based on what I've observed throughout Christendom in 2011, believers are headed for some spiritually rough seas. The calls and letters we've received from those grieving over the false teachings and practices that have come into their fellowships have increased significantly over past years. Many are stunned, because their churches, for the most part, had been fundamentally sound. Even those whose fellowships have remained scripturally solid are nevertheless seeing many of their friends and relatives seduced by unbiblical teachings, trends, and agendas.

The problem is hardly complex and is presented prophetically in God's Word: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine..." (2 Timothy 4:3). The solution to the problem (that could infect any of us) is just as simple as the problem itself: "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:14-17).

The only prevention against being seduced by the increasing deception of our day is a disciplined study of the Word of God and a life that desires to reflect its truth. God will supply the grace to enable us to do both—if we will simply be willing.

T. A. McMAHON  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# FACING *the* FACTS

*Excerpts from Seeking and Finding God by Dave Hunt*

WITHOUT TAKING TIME to explain the many disagreements, it is undeniable that there are such great basic differences between the world's religions that it seems irrational to suggest that they are essentially in agreement and all lead to the same place. Nevertheless, in spite of these differences, there is evidence that those who follow world religions will indeed all end up in the same place—but not where they promise to take their followers.

All religions have in common a universal opposition to the God of the Bible and His gospel concerning salvation by grace and faith alone through Christ Jesus and His sacrifice on the Cross. This commonality places them all on one side—and Christianity on the other.

Indeed, so wide is the chasm between Christianity and all the world's religions that it seems equally clear that Christians will definitely arrive at a different eternal destiny from everyone else. Yes, the various religions differ in the details relevant to the appeasement of their particular god

or gods and the methods of attaining to *nirvana*, *moksha*, or whatever paradise they may offer. However, they all have in common the belief that their religious goals can somehow be achieved through their own good efforts and/or faithful participation in rituals and sacraments. Whether by yoga or paying off bad karma for the Hindu, or by good deeds for the Muslim (or dying in *jihad* [holy war] or on the *hajj* pilgrimage to Mecca), or through appeasing the spirits in African tribal religions and Shintoism, or by meditation techniques to escape desire and return to the void for the Buddhist, or by the sacraments of a supposed Christian church—it is all a matter of self-effort, which the God of the Bible firmly tells us He will not accept as even partial payment for having broken His laws.

The Bible clearly states: “But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Romans 4:5). Jesus said, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Mark 2:17). Paul emphasized that point: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1 Timothy 1:15). The world's religions, along with the false Christianity that trusts in works and sacramentalism, attempt to make a person righteous enough for heaven. In contrast, the Bible says that everyone, by very nature, sins, must confess it, and must believe the gospel to receive forgiveness of sins and thereby be admitted eternally into the true God's presence.

Biblical salvation is by faith, and faith necessarily involves that which is unseen. It is not faith to believe in that which is present in visible form. Faith reaches out to the unseen world of the spirit and the eternal. And right here we encounter a major problem with ritual and sacraments: they attempt a moral

rescue of the unseen and nonphysical spirit and soul of man with physical and visible ceremony. That won't work.

This grave error of sacramentalism persists even among a majority of those who call themselves Christians. They imagine that through participation in the visible, and thus temporal, sacrament, they receive invisible and eternal spiritual benefits. Clearly, this is impossible. The Bible declares, “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). Salvation, because it necessarily involves the eternal and invisible, not that which is seen and is therefore temporal, must be by faith, not by physical works or ritual.

Furthermore, ritual and sacraments have nothing to do with

either justice or punishment and therefore cannot possibly pay for sin. One might as well imagine that some ritual could satisfy a court of law in paying the penalty prescribed for a major crime as imagine that God would accept sacraments in payment of the infinite penalty He has prescribed for breaking His law.

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*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.*

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— PSALM 14:1; 53:1

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The Bible gives two sacraments for the Christian: baptism and communion (also called the Lord's supper). Both are symbolic reminders of a spiritual and eternal transaction that has already taken place: Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, and our identification with Him by faith in His full payment of the penalty for our sins.

Neither baptism nor communion is efficacious. To imagine that they are—and therefore to rely upon either or both of them to effect, even partially, one's salvation—is to reject the salvation God offers in grace to those who believe His promise.

In none of the world's religions is there any concept of God's perfect justice having to be satisfied for the sinner to be forgiven. Instead, works and rituals and mystical experiences are offered to appease God and/or to earn one's salvation. The Bible, however, finds all the world guilty of rebellion against God and insists that human guilt can be forgiven only on a righteous basis. The penalty that God decreed must be paid in full.

No one can pay for his own sins, either by sacrifice (even of himself in death) or by good works. Only Christ, who is God and man in one person and who lived without any sin, could pay for the sins of the world. Nor can we merit, earn, or purchase from God—who is perfectly holy and just—the benefit of Christ's sacrifice in forgiveness of our sins. If we are to receive the pardon that Christ has earned, we must receive it by faith as those unworthy of it—the gift of God's grace.

The purpose of the Ten Commandments was not to offer salvation to those who could keep them (no one has ever done so except Christ), but to show us our guilt so that we would accept Christ's payment that satisfied God's justice on our behalf.



Wherefore, the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (Galatians 3:24)

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin...that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.... For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 3:19-20; 11:32; 6:23)

The attempt to offer works or rituals in payment for salvation is true even of some groups who claim to be Christian but who set up their own rules for gaining heaven in opposition to the biblical gospel of salvation by faith and grace alone without works. The Bible clearly says, "...that whosoever believeth in him [Christ] *should not perish, but have everlasting life*" (John 3:16). "*For by grace are ye saved through faith...not of works, lest any man should boast*" (Ephesians 2:8-9); "*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us...that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life*" (Titus 3:5-7). Any attempt to make even a partial payment for God's gift by His grace is a rejection of that gift.

That good deeds cannot pay for sins is not only biblical but logical. Even a traffic ticket cannot be paid on that basis. It will not avail to ask the judge to dismiss the charge for speeding because the guilty party has driven more often within the speed limit than he has exceeding it. Nor would the judge waive the payment of any crime in response to the defendant's promise never, ever to break the law again. The judge would simply say, "If you never break the law again you are only doing what the law requires. You receive no extra credit by which to pay for having broken the law in the past. That penalty is a separate issue and must be paid as prescribed."

The Bible further asserts that God's justice is infinite and that man, being finite, could never pay the infinite penalty it demands. We would be separated from God forever if we tried to work off the debt owed to His justice. God, being infinite, could pay that infinite penalty, but it wouldn't be just, because He is not one of us. Therefore, God became a man through the virgin birth in order to take upon Himself, in our place, the judgment we deserve. And it is only on the basis of that penalty having been paid in full that God can justly offer forgiveness.

How amazing that religions that rely upon good works and rituals are considered to be "faiths." Faith can only engage the unseen and eternal and, therefore, does not mix with works and ritual. In search of a valid faith, it is folly to look at that which is visible. Even to look to a visible cross or crucifix is of no merit. What occurred on the cross for our salvation was invisible and must be accepted by faith.

The visible torture men inflicted upon Christ, the scourging, mocking, and nailing to the cross, is not the basis of our

salvation—though that was the message of the popular film *The Passion of the Christ*. There is no virtue in making the "sign of the cross" or waving a cross or crucifix to ward off Satan or evil. It was the judgment Christ endured at the hands of God in payment of the penalty for our sins that makes it possible for God to offer salvation. That suffering, endured by Christ, was totally invisible to man and must ever be. It is by faith alone that we believe Christ paid the penalty and by which we receive the eternal salvation He offers.

The Bible speaks of "the faith which was once [for all time] delivered unto the saints" and declares that we must "earnestly contend" for this unchangeable truth because there are false teachers even inside the church who will seek through subterfuge to oppose it (Jude 3-4). Jude is not referring to faith in the sense of believing that a prayer will be answered or an event will occur. "The faith" is the body of truth that must be believed for one to be a Christian.

The Bible allows for no compromise, no discussion, no dialogue with the world's religions (remember, Christianity is not a religion but distinct from all of them) in search for common ground. There is no common ground as far as God, Jesus Christ, and salvation are concerned. The very suggestion that dialogue may be appropriate denies that "the faith" has unique

doctrinal content as a definitive body of truth for which we must earnestly contend, and opens the door to compromise in the interest of public relations.

Jesus didn't say, "Go into all the world and dialogue about faith." He said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel" (Mark 16:15). Paul didn't dialogue with the rabbis and philosophers and pagan priests. He "disputed in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily" (Acts 17:17). Was it because he was angry and argumentative? No, it was because the eternal destiny of his hearers depended upon whether they believed or rejected the gospel.

A reasonable and genuine faith must take very seriously what Jesus said—not what somebody says about what Jesus said, but His very words as recorded in the Bible. And we must face this truth for ourselves, not look to someone else to interpret it for us, no matter what credentials that person or church or institution might claim qualifies them to think for us. We must arrive at this serious faith personally, for true faith is between each individual and God.

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***Except ye repent, ye shall  
all likewise perish.***

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— LUKE 13:3,5

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## Seeking and Finding God

**Hunt**—Readers of Dave's book, *An Urgent Call to A Serious Faith*, will recognize and appreciate that this handy volume includes revised versions of the first eight chapters of that powerful work, plus an entirely new chapter, which together serve to make this a powerful tool for evangelism and discipleship. Convenient to carry and inexpensive to give away, TBC is also making this available in case quantities for personal evangelism or ministry use. The Berean Call, 159 pp.

**B04425**

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# PROPHETS WHO PROPHECY LIES IN MY NAME

*Palestinianism and the anti-Israel Crusade* (EXCERPTS)

*"We have been taught for centuries that the Jews are the Chosen People. We do not believe anymore that they are the Chosen People of God, since now we have a new understanding of that Choseness."*

This quote was taken from Elias Chacour's article, "Reconciliation and Justice: Living with the Memory" in Naim Ateek and Michael Prior's book *Holy Land, Hollow Jubilee: God, Justice and the Palestinians* (London: Melisende, 1999, p. 112). It sums up how Christian Palestinianists misunderstand and misinterpret what the Bible so clearly teaches about God's prophetic purposes for Israel, and how they, in turn, misrepresent the Holy One of Israel as a covenant-breaking God.

Elias Chacour is the Vatican-approved Melkite Greek Catholic Archbishop of Israel and one of the most influential Arabs in Israel. He is greatly esteemed within the Christian Palestinianist camp. His first book, *Blood Brothers*, was published in 1983 and tells the story of his childhood in Upper Galilee before the establishment of the modern state of Israel in 1948. The influence of this book on Evangelicals in the West cannot be overstated. According to Donald Wagner, *Blood Brothers* "touched the hearts and opened the minds of thousands of evangelicals concerning Christians in the Holy Land."

In the same year that *Blood Brothers* appeared, Colin Chapman, a former lecturer in Islamic Studies at the Near East School of Theology in Beirut, published one of the most influential, and damaging, books on the subject of Israel, entitled *Whose Promised Land?* (1983). British journalist and author Melanie Philips has aptly described it as "a poisonous travesty that uses theology to delegitimise Israel." By contrast, Hank Hanegraaff is among the many Evangelical leaders indebted to Chapman, whose book he quotes extensively in *The Apocalypse Code*.

In more recent times, Christian Palestinianists have tried, and failed, to rebrand their "replacement theology" as "fulfillment theology." Their basic assertion is summed up in Colin Chapman's quote: "[The New Testament writers] ceased to look forward to a literal fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies of a return to the land and a restored Jewish state. The one and only fulfillment of all the promises and prophecies was already there before their eyes in the person of Jesus" (Colin Chapman, *Whose Promised Land?*, p. 189).

[Chapman claims that] Jesus fulfilled all the promises relating to the return of the Jewish people to the Land. By "fulfilled," Chapman means that everything spoken of by the Old Testament

prophets in relation to the land and people of Israel was *spiritually* fulfilled 2,000 years ago in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The nation of Israel thus holds no further prophetic significance, since the Church is "the new Israel."

In *Jesus and the Land* (2010), Gary Burge gives the following interpretation of Acts 1:6-8 and Galatians 6:16 respectively:

JESUS DOES NOT ENVISION a restoration of Israel per se but instead sees himself as embracing the drama of Jerusalem within his own life....In some manner, the initial restoration of Israel has already begun inasmuch as Christ, the new Temple, the New Israel, has been resurrected. (p. 60)

This is perhaps the apostle's most stark example of universalizing the new identity of the people of God. The apostle is redrawing the definitions for self-identity. (pp. 83-84)

Christian Palestinianists like Gary Burge look to the French Protestant Reformer, John Calvin, as one of their theological champions. In his commentary on Acts 1:6-8, Calvin asserted that there were "as many errors...as words" in the question which the Apostles asked the risen Lord concerning the restoration of the kingdom to Israel. This, he believed, proved "how bad scholars they were under so good a Master," and therefore "when he [Jesus] saith, *you shall receive power*, he admonisheth them of their imbecility." Calvin further claimed that Jesus was attempting to "lift up their minds" from "the common error" of the Jewish nation, which believed that the Messiah would "reign as a king in this world a thousand years." This interpretation, Calvin maintained, was the "folly" which had been adopted by the early Church premillennialists, who were known as "chiliasts."

...As the anti-Israel crusade gathers momentum, let us be in *no doubt* that the LORD our God will vindicate His Word, and let us pray more earnestly in line with the solemn words of Psalm 83:

KEEP NOT THOU SILENCE, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God. For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head. They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee....Fill their faces with shame; *that they may seek thy name, O LORD* [author's emphasis]...That men may know that thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the most high over all the earth. (Psalm 83:1-5,16,18)

— PAUL WILKINSON

See resource pages (at right) for *Christian Palestinianism* booklet and other Paul Wilkinson products.



# NEW! CHRISTIAN PALESTINIANISM BOOKLET AND DVD

**\*Christian Palestinianism Resource Pack includes *For Zion's Sake* — with FREE Booklet & DVD (\$20.98 extra value!)**



has been described by Hamas as “the greatest danger to world truth, justice, and peace,” and by some in the church as “a powerful force” that “fuels the Arab-Israeli conflict” and “encourages the destruction of millions of people” with its “Armageddon theology.” It has also been denounced as “pernicious,” “biblically untenable,” “anathema to the Christian faith,” and “one of the most dangerous and heretical movements in the world.”

How sustainable are these charges, and is there a case to answer? By locating Christian Zionism firmly within the evangelical tradition, Paul Wilkinson charts in detail its origins and historical development, demonstrating that Christian Zionism lays the biblical foundation for Israel’s restoration and the return of Christ. This groundbreaking book challenges decades of misrepresentation and scholarship, exploding the myth that John Nelson Darby stole the doctrine of the pre-tribulation rapture from his contemporaries. By revealing the man and his message, Paul Wilkinson vindicates Darby and spotlights the imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ as the centerpiece of his theology. Foreword by Thomas Ice. In order to make Paul Wilkinson’s DVD and Booklet available free of charge, they are included with the purchase of *For Zion’s Sake* paperback at the publisher’s full retail price of \$40.00.

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**Wilkinson**—Due to restrictions placed on the author for use of copyrighted material, TBC is not able to charge for these valuable resources. However, there are three ways to receive the DVD (\$12.99 retail) and booklet (\$7.99 value) FREE of charge: 1) Purchase Paul Wilkinson’s book package (see left); 2) Access the video online and download a color PDF of the booklet at our website; 3) Make a donation of any amount to TBC for physical copies of one or both of these valuable resources. Simply list the item code(s) below and choose your amount (limit one of each per order please):

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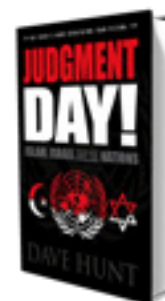


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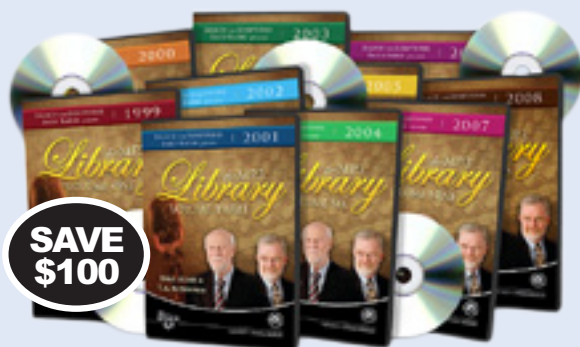
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JANUARY 2012

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— T. A. McMAHON

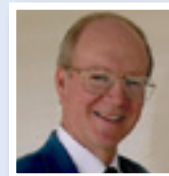
### KEYNOTE CONFERENCE SPEAKERS:



Mark Cahill



Paul Wilkinson



Jobe Martin



Renald Showers

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*More details for the TBC 2012 conference will follow in future newsletters.*

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