

LAMPLIGHTER

"Prophécy is like a lamp shining in a dark place." - II Peter 1:19

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"Christ in
Prophecy"



**LAMB
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MINISTRIES**

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The Lamplighter is free of charge to anyone requesting it. Lamb & Lion Ministries is a non-denominational ministry whose purpose is to proclaim to as many people as possible as quickly as possible that Jesus is returning soon.

Observations by the Editor

A Challenging Project

In the early part of the 1980's I spent almost five years researching the Messianic prophecies of the Bible, both those pertaining to the Lord's First Coming and His promised return.

This intense research project culminated in 1987 with the publication of *The Christ in Prophecy Study Guide*. The Guide was large in size (8½ x 11) and was spiral bound for easy access. It provided an analytical outline of all the Messianic prophecies in the Bible. The Guide proved to be a great success. We were flooded with testimonies about how much the Guide blessed the study of both individuals and groups.

In the early '90's — about 1992 — we exhausted our supply of the Guide. I decided that I would completely revise it before we reprinted it. My intentions were good, but they kept getting lost in the rush of things. Over the years I was continually reminded of the need to complete the revision because people who had been blessed by the first edition continued to call about the second, revised edition.

Completing the Task

In 1999 I finally decided to get the revision done. It proved to be a challenging, almost formidable, task. I ended up revising every aspect of the Guide and adding material to it. The part that proved to be tedious beyond imagination resulted from my decision to add two detailed indexes to the Guide. One is a topical index and the other is a Scripture index. I am convinced that these will prove extremely valuable to the user, but they almost "did me in!"

It is a joy to get the Study Guide back into print. I hope we can do regular updates of it in the future and manage to keep it continually in print. I would appreciate your feedback about the Guide, including any ideas you might have for improving it.

New Books & Videos

My new book on Revelation is supposed to be published in September. It is tentatively titled *Wrath & Glory: The*



Dr. David Reagan

Meaning of Revelation. We will provide an update on it in the next issue of this magazine.

I have decided to prepare a revised and expanded edition of our basic book on Bible prophecy, *The Master Plan*. I hope to have it ready for the publisher by the end of this year. The tentative new title will be *God's Plan for the Ages: The Meaning of Bible Prophecy*.

Meanwhile, we continue to make plans for a number of video projects that we hope to complete before the end of this year. One will be called *What Happens When You Die?* The other will be a one hour overview of the book of Revelation. I also hope to produce a video version of the information we published in the last issue of this magazine about the European Union.

Website

I have also been doing a lot of work recently on our website. It has been completely redesigned. All the articles have been reorganized. Interactive tests about various aspects of Bible prophecy have been added, and more will be added later. Recent issues of this magazine are now available in full color, using the Acrobat format. We have also added a new feature called "Prophecy Question of the Month."

Check it out at www.lamblion.com, and give us your feedback. ✚



Christ in Prophecy

Does prophecy validate Jesus to be God in the flesh?

Did Jesus really fulfill the prophecies in the Bible?

Did Jesus really promise to return to this earth to reign?

The Old Testament contains more than 300 prophecies concerning the First Coming of Jesus. Some of these are repetitious, but when the repetition is accounted for, we are still left with at least 108 separate and distinct prophecies. These prophecies are spelled out in detail in a unique format in our new *Prophecy Study Guide* (see page 4).

In addition to these specific texts, there are many more symbolic prophecies, or prophecies in type, which point to various aspects of the First Coming.

Symbolic Prophecy

Take the book of Ruth for an example. It does not contain any specific Messianic prophecies. Yet, the book's story contains a beautiful prophetic type of Jesus. One of the central

characters, Boaz, is a kinsman-redeemer who takes a Gentile bride — just as Jesus came as a redeemer to His people, the Jews, and is now taking a Gentile bride, the Church.

The lives of Joshua, Jeremiah and Daniel all give us insights about the faith, courage, and righteousness of the Messiah. Joshua and Jesus even had the same name, Yeshua, meaning “the salvation of God.” The reason the names appear differently is because Joshua is the English rendering from the Hebrew language, and Jesus is the English transliteration from the Greek.

The life of Moses is a preview of many aspects of the life of Jesus. Moses tried to deliver his people from captivity and was rejected. In like manner, Jesus came to deliver His people from their spiritual bondage and was rejected by them. After his rejection, Moses took a Gentile bride. He then returned and was received by his people as a deliverer. Jesus is now taking a Gentile bride, the Church, and when He has completed that

A sample segment from *The Christ in Prophecy Study Guide*.

From the section about the First Coming Prophecies and their fulfillment.

C. THE MESSIAH'S LIFE AND MINISTRY

Old Testament Source	Prophecy	New Testament Fulfillment
<p>“A voice is calling, ‘Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness; make smooth in the desert a high-way for our God.’” — Isaiah 40:3 (Malachi 3:1)</p>	<p>1) Preceded by a prophet who would prepare His way</p>	<p>“Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ For this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet . . .” — Matthew 3:1-3 (Matthew 11:7-14)</p>
<p>“Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him . . .” — Isaiah 42:1 (Isaiah 11:2)</p>	<p>2) Receive a special anointing by the Spirit</p>	<p>“ . . . and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him [Jesus] in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, ‘You are My beloved Son . . .’” — Luke 3:22</p>
<p>“And I will put enmity between you [Satan] and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you [Satan] on the head, and you shall bruise Him [the Messiah] on the heel.” — Genesis 3:15</p>	<p>3) Do battle with Satan</p>	<p>“Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.” — Matthew 4:1 (Matthew 4:1-11)</p>
<p>“For He will give His angels charge concerning you, to guard you in all your ways.” — Psalm 91:11</p>	<p>4) Receive the ministry of angels</p>	<p>“Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.” — Matthew 4:11 (Matthew 26:53 and Luke 22:43)</p>
<p>“ . . . in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make it glorious, by way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.” — Isaiah 9:1</p>	<p>5) Ministry centered in Galilee</p>	<p>“ . . . and leaving Nazareth, He [Jesus] came and settled in Capernaum which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali.” — Matthew 4:13 (Matthew 4:12-16)</p>

A sample segment from *The Christ in Prophecy Study Guide*.

From the section about the Second Coming Prophecies in the Psalms.

III. The Return of Jesus

A. The Nature of His Return

1) He returns in wrath.

- a) “Your hand will find out all your enemies;
Your right hand will find out those who hate you.
You will make them as a fiery oven in the time of
your anger;
The Lord will swallow them up in His wrath,
And fire will devour them.” (vs. 8-9) Psalm 21
- b) “Then the earth shook and quaked;
And the foundations of the mountains were trembling
And were shaken, because He was angry.
Smoke went up out of His nostrils,
And fire from His mouth devoured;
Coals were kindled by it.
He bowed the heavens also, and came down
With thick darkness under His feet.” (vs. 7-9. See also
Psalm 76:3-9) Psalm 18
- c) “Upon the wicked He will rain snares;
Fire and brimstone and burning wind will be the portion
of their cup.” (vs. 6) Psalm 11

task, He will return and be received as Messiah by His own people, the Jews (Zechariah 12:10).

Prophetic Detail

Our new *Christ in Prophecy Study Guide* clearly shows that every aspect of the life of Jesus was prophesied hundreds of years before He was born — the nature and place of His birth, the nature and scope of His ministry, the nature of His death, and the triumph of His resurrection.

For example, King David of Israel prophesied in Psalm 22 that the Messiah would have his hands and feet pierced (verse 16). This prediction was written 1,000 years before Jesus was born and 700 years before the Romans refined crucifixion as a means of execution.

The very first prophecy in the Bible, spoken by God at the dawn of creation, predicts that the Messiah will be born to a virgin. In Genesis 3:15 God says that the seed of the serpent, Satan, will be defeated by the “seed of the woman.”

And Micah, writing 700 years before the birth of Jesus, prophesied that He would be born in “Bethlehem Ephrathah” (Micah 5:2). Notice how precise this prophecy is. At the time Micah wrote, there were two towns in Israel by the name of Bethlehem, one in the Galilee and the other just south of Jerusalem. To pinpoint which Bethlehem he was speaking

about, Micah stated specifically that it was the one in the area called Ephrathah, the area on the outskirts of Jerusalem.

Genealogy in Prophecy

The entire lineage of the Messiah is prophesied in the Hebrew Scriptures. The prophets said the Savior would be born of the descendants of Abraham (Genesis 12:3), the heritage of Isaac (Genesis 17: 21), the children of Jacob (Genesis 28:14), the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:8), the family of Jesse (Isaiah 11:1), and the house of David (Jeremiah 23:5).

That’s why the gospel of Matthew begins with such a long listing of Jesus’ family tree. Matthew is trying to show His Jewish readers that the lineage of Jesus fulfills the predictions of the prophets.

Prophecy or Coincidence?

Some people shrug their shoulders at all these prophecies and say, “It’s all a coincidence.” Coincidence? The fulfillment of more than 100 prophecies?

“Well, He purposefully fulfilled them,” says another. It is true that Jesus could have consciously fulfilled some of the prophecies about the Messiah. In fact, on one occasion it appears that Jesus did just that when He requested a donkey for His final ride into Jerusalem. Matthew says this was done to fulfill Zechariah’s prophecy that the Messiah would come

humbly, riding a donkey (Matthew 21:1-7).

But can a man purposefully fulfill prophecies concerning both his birth and death?

If Jesus was only a man, there is no way He could have arranged to be born of a virgin in Bethlehem of the lineage of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David. Nor could He have arranged for his parents to take Him to Egypt as a baby in order to fulfill the prophecy of Hosea that He would come out of Egypt (Hosea 11:1).

Jesus was betrayed for 30 pieces of silver. The prophet Zechariah made that precise prophecy 500 years before Jesus was born! (See Zechariah 11:12.) Zechariah also prophesied that the Messiah would be crucified (13:6), that His disciples would desert Him (13:7), and that the betrayal money would be given to a potter (11:13). The latter prophecy was fulfilled when the priests used the 30 pieces of silver to buy a field from a potter to use for Jesus' burial.

How could Jesus fulfill these prophecies purposefully? And could their fulfillment be just a "coincidence?"

Prophecy & Mathematics

Peter Stoner in his book, *Science Speaks* (Moody Press, 1963), has calculated the odds that just eight of the prophecies concerning Jesus could have been fulfilled accidentally in the life of one man. The odds are one in ten to the seventeenth power! That's the number 10 with 17 zeros after it!

To illustrate these mathematical odds, Stoner asks us to

imagine filling the State of Texas knee-deep with silver dollars. A plane flies over and one silver dollar is dropped with a black checkmark on it. Bulldozers move in and mix the silver dollars thoroughly for a couple of years. A man is then blindfolded and turned loose in this sea of silver dollars.

The odds that he would reach down and pick up the marked silver dollar on the first draw are the same as eight of the Bible's prophecies about the Messiah being fulfilled in the life of one man accidentally. You might as well argue that a Boeing 747 could be the accidental product of a tornado blowing through a junk yard!

Prophecy as Proof

The powerful testimony of fulfilled prophecy in the life of Jesus is the reason that the gospel writers constantly appeal to it in their writings to prove that Jesus was the promised Messiah. It is the reason Jesus appealed to it in His teachings to the masses (Matthew 5:17-18). It's also the reason Jesus emphasized it in His post-resurrection teachings to His disciples (Luke 24:25ff).

Likewise, the apostles constantly cited prophetic fulfillment in their sermons to verify the identity of Jesus. On the Day of Pentecost, Peter focused his remarks in that first gospel sermon on the prophecies of David which Jesus had fulfilled (Acts 2:24-36). Peter utilized prophecy again in his second sermon at the Temple (Acts 3:12-26) and in his sermon to Cornelius and his household (Acts 10).

In his first epistle, Peter refers to three cardinal evidences

A sample segment from *The Christ in Prophecy Study Guide*.

From the section about the Second Coming Prophecies in the Old Testament .

IV. The Return of Jesus

A. The Circumstances: Israel under Attack

Isaiah 29:5-8; Isaiah 31:4-5; and Zechariah 14:1-2.

B. The Nature of the Return

1) The Lord's return is certain.

Habakkuk 2:2-4. (See Hebrews 10:36-38.)

2) The Lord's return will be visible.

Isaiah 30:19-20; Isaiah 35:2; Isaiah 60:2; and Zechariah 12:10.

3) The "Holy Ones" (the Redeemed) will come with the Lord.

Zechariah 14:5.

4) The Lord returns in glory.

Isaiah 63:1 and Habakkuk 3:3-4.

5) The Lord returns in wrath.

1 Samuel 2:10; 2 Samuel 22:8-16; Isaiah 13:9-13; Isaiah 26:20-21; Isaiah 30:27-28; Isaiah 34:1-4; Isaiah 59:15b-19; Isaiah 61:2b; Isaiah 63:1-6; Isaiah 66:15-16; Jeremiah 23:19-20; Jeremiah 25:30-31; Jeremiah 30:23-24; Amos 5:18-20; Nahum 1:2-3, 6; Habakkuk 3:6-15; and Zephaniah 1:14-18.

of the deity of Jesus. He first mentions that he was an “eyewitness of His majesty” — a reference to the Transfiguration. Then he mentions that he heard an “utterance from Heaven” in which God the Father proclaimed Jesus as His “beloved Son.” Finally, he appeals to the testimony of prophecy, pointing to its fulfillment in the life of Jesus (2 Peter 1:16-19).

Philip used a prophecy from Isaiah to convert the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8). Paul also referred constantly to fulfilled prophecy in his preaching of the gospel (Acts 17:2-3). In fact, when Paul wrote his famous definition of the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15, he stressed that all the major events in the life of Jesus had happened “according to the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:4).

Some Questions

How do you feel about the evidence of Bible prophecy? Are you going to try to explain it away? Are you going to flippantly write it off to “coincidence”? Are you simply going to ignore it?

God is not calling you to a blind faith that is based upon no evidence. Prophecy is evidence. It is evidence that demands a verdict. What is your verdict?

The Last Prophecy

I believe fulfilled prophecy proves that Jesus was who He said He was.

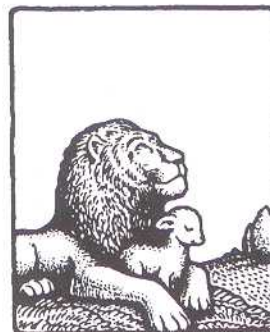
Fulfilled prophecy also proves that prophecy means what it says. Prophecy should not be abused by spiritualizing it.

- Just as the First Coming prophecies meant what they said, the Second Coming prophecies mean what they say.
- Just as Jesus came humbly to Jerusalem the first time riding a donkey, He is going to return on a white horse, the symbol of a victorious warrior.
- Just as Jesus ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives, He is going to return to the same spot and reign over all the world from Jerusalem.
- Just as Jesus came as a suffering lamb to die for our sins, He is going to return as a conquering lion to pour out the wrath of God on those who have rejected God’s gift of grace and mercy in Him.

When Jesus promised He would return (Revelation 22:20), He meant it.

Are you ready? There is not one prophecy that has to be fulfilled for Jesus to return for His Church. He could return any moment. The signs of the times point to the fact that we are living on the threshold of the Tribulation. That means the Rapture is going to occur any moment.

Maranatha! ✚



A sample segment from *The Christ in Prophecy Study Guide*.

From the section about the Second Coming Prophecies in the New Testament.

VIII. The Millennium

A. The Purposes of the Millennium

- 1) To fulfill prophecy.
Luke 24:44 and Acts 3:20-21.
- 2) To fulfill God’s promise that Jesus will manifest His glory in a world-wide reign.
Luke 1:32-33; 2 Thessalonians 1:10; and Revelation 5:9-13.
- 3) To fulfill God’s promise that the Saints will be blessed by ruling with Jesus over the world. 2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 2:26-27; Revelation 3:21; Revelation 5:9-10; and Revelation 20:4.
- 4) To fulfill God’s earthly promises to the Jews (specifically to a believing Remnant).
Romans 3:1-4; Romans 4:13; Romans 9:1-5, 27; and Romans 11:1-6, 25-32.
- 5) To fulfill God’s promise to restore His creation.
Acts 3:19-21 and Romans 8:18-23.
- 6) To prove that evil is rooted within Man and not society (for after 1,000 years of peace, righteousness and justice, Man will still revolt against God). Mark 7:20-22 and Revelation 20:7-10.
- 7) To consummate the destruction of all the enemies of Jesus.

Revised Study Guide Ready for Distribution

It took two years of hard work, but Dr. Reagan's revision of his popular guide to Messianic prophecy has finally been completed, and the finished product is ready for distribution. The revision process was extremely tedious, but it has proved to be worth the effort. All Scripture references have been checked for accuracy, and Scripture quotations have been updated to the New American Standard revised edition of 1995.

Charts and diagrams have been added. There are also two new indexes — a topical index and an index of Scriptures cited and quoted. A whole new analytical section has been added which outlines the prophecies in the New Testament about the Messiah's First Coming.

Here is an outline of the contents of the book:

Part One

The First Advent of Jesus in Bible Prophecy

- A. Old Testament Prophecies
- B. New Testament Prophecies

Part Two

The Second Advent of Jesus in Old Testament Prophecy

- A. The Law
- B. The Prophets
- C. The Psalms

Part Three

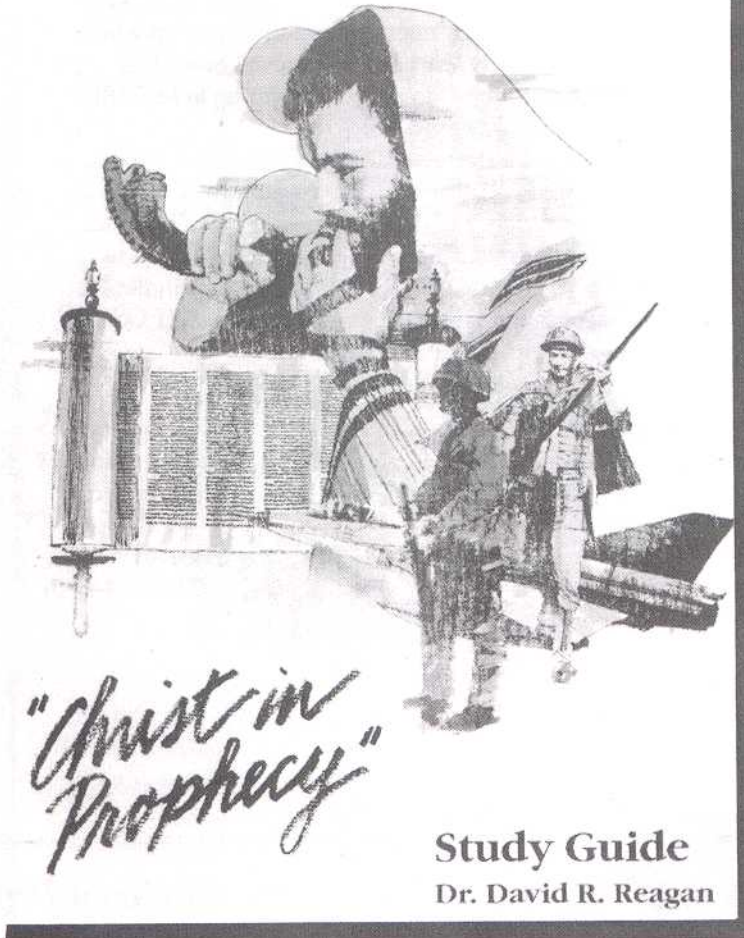
The Second Advent of Jesus in New Testament Prophecy

- A. Second Advent Prophecies in the New Testament
- B. Epilogue: How Prophecy Relates to Holiness

Part Four

Indexes of Prophecies

- A. Topical Index
- B. Scripture Index



The Guide is spiral bound so that it will lay flat when opened. It is printed in a large format (8½ x 11 inches). There is adequate room on each page for writing notes. It runs 150 pages in length. The front and back covers are printed on heavy, durable card stock.

The cost is \$15 plus \$3 for mailing, making a total of \$18. To order, send a check to Lamb & Lion Ministries at P.O. Box 919, McKinney, TX 75070, or call 1-800-705-8316. If you decide to place your order by telephone, please call between 8am and 5pm, Central time, Monday through Friday. In most cases, your order will be shipped the day we receive it.

This is a great study guide for either individual study or group sessions. ✚

Dry Bones



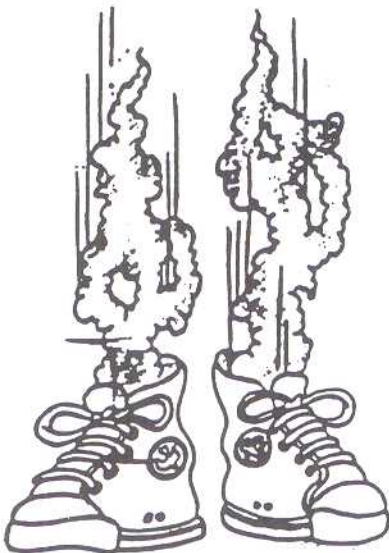
Events That Must Take Place on the Earth

Before the Rapture of the Church

Before the Second Coming of Jesus

1) Nothing.

- 1) A war in the Middle East will result in the Arabs calling for Russia's help. The Russians will invade Israel, but they will be supernaturally destroyed by God.
- 2) The ensuing world-wide panic will prompt the revelation of a charismatic, dynamic political leader, the Antichrist, who will seem to have all the answers to the world's problems. He will arise out of the European Union.
- 3) The Antichrist will broker a treaty that will guarantee peace for Israel and enable the Jews to rebuild their Temple.
- 4) Two witnesses of God will suddenly appear in Jerusalem and start calling the world to repentance.
- 5) 144,000 Jews who have been deeply touched by God's destruction of the Russians will respond to the messages of the two witnesses by accepting Yeshua as their Messiah. They will be servants of God who will be protected throughout the Tribulation.
- 6) The Antichrist will launch a military campaign to conquer the world, and he will succeed. The Antichrist's war will result in a period of unparalleled tribulation during which one-half of humanity will die.
- 7) The Antichrist will require everyone to take a special mark to buy or sell. All true believers who have accepted Jesus since the Rapture will refuse, and most will be martyred.
- 8) The Antichrist will promote a one world religion in which people will be required to worship him as their messiah.
- 9) The Antichrist will kill the two witnesses of God.
- 10) The whole world will rejoice over the death of the two witnesses, exchanging gifts in celebration of a Satanic Christmas.
- 11) The Antichrist will enter the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem and declare himself to be God.
- 12) The Jews will reject the Antichrist as their Messiah, and he will turn on them and try to annihilate them.
- 13) Many Jews in Israel will flee into the area of modern day Jordan where they will be supernaturally protected by God.
- 14) The Antichrist will succeed in killing two-thirds of the Jews world-wide.
- 15) The Gospel will be proclaimed to all the world by an angel, giving Mankind one last opportunity to repent.
- 16) The empire of the Antichrist will be totally destroyed by God.



The Rapture can occur any moment. Are you ready?

If you are not ready for the Rapture, you will be left behind to face the events described above.

Meet Our Staff Members



George Collich, Jr.

Birth Place & Date: Bronx, New York in 1954.
Wife's Name & Years Married: Deborah, 19 years.
Names & Ages of Children: Trey (16), Preston (14), Christina (12), and Zachery (7).
Education: B.S. in Marketing, University of Connecticut (1977).
Lamb & Lion Position: Executive Minister.
Duties: Management of the ministry and its finances.
Number of Years on Staff: 11.
Previous Employment: Stock Broker.
Number of Years a Christian: 14.
Church Membership: Fellowship Bible Church North, Plano, Texas.
Church Activities: Mini-church member.
Spiritual Gifts: Administration, mercy, and helps.
Favorite Scriptures: Psalm 103 and Romans 5.
Favorite Bible Character: Apostle John.
Favorite Christian Book: *Dispensational Truth* by Clarence Larkin.
Favorite Christian Hymn: "Be Thou My Vision."
Favorite Contemporary Christian Song: "Jesus Freak."
Favorite Christian Group: DC Talk.
Favorite Bible Version: New American Standard.
Favorite Pastimes: Youth baseball coach and all sports, particularly golf.

Meet Our Trustees



Wayne Gaylord

Birth Place & Date: Dallas, Texas in 1934.
Wife's Name & Years Married: Arlene, 47 years.
Number of Children: 2 daughters.
Number of Grandchildren: 2.
Education: B.A. from Wheaton College and graduate from the Southwestern Graduate School of Banking at SMU.
Occupation: Retired Investment Banker.
Number of Years a Christian: 57.
Years on Lamb & Lion Board: 8.
Church Membership: First Baptist Church in Forney, Texas.
Spiritual Gifts: Teaching, helps, and administration.
Church Activities: Associate teacher for adults, orchestra, tape ministry, and various church committees.
Favorite Scriptures: Daniel 3:17-18 and Psalm 48:14 in the OT. Romans 8:19-23 and Hebrews 12:1-2 in the NT.
Favorite Bible Character: Daniel.
Favorite Christian Books: *Basis of Christian Faith* by Floyd E. Hamilton and *Shall Never Perish* by J. F. Strombeck.
Favorite Christian Hymn: "Great is Thy Faithfulness."
Favorite Contemporary Christian Song: "Don't be Afraid" by Roger Bennett.
Favorite Christian Singer & Group: Janet Paschal and Greater Vision.
Favorite Bible Versions: The NASB & The New Living.
Favorite Pastimes: Reading, chess, table games, and watching ice hockey.

WORLD OF THE BIBLE MINISTRIES, INC.

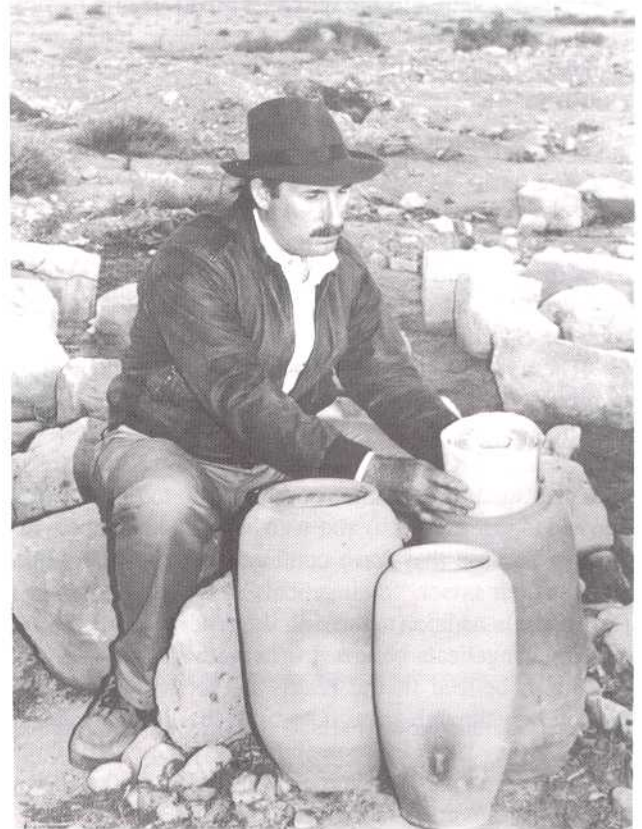
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A Biblical Research Ministry Worthy of Your Support

Dr. J. Randall Price is founder of *World of the Bible Ministries*, a Christian ministry specializing in research and communication of information about the past, present and prophetic world of the Bible. Through conferences around the world, he challenges his audiences to study the Scriptures in order to better understand current events in light of the future promises of God.

Dr. Price has led over 50 tours to the Holy Land and is a certified Christian tour guide in Israel. He has authored a number of books about Bible prophecy, Jerusalem, the Jewish temple, archaeology, and the Dead Sea scrolls. A complete listing of his books can be found at his website (www.worldofthebible.com). One of his most outstanding books, which Dr. Reagan highly recommends, is *The Stones Cry Out: What Archaeology Reveals about the Truth of the Bible* (Harvest House, 1996).

Dr. Price received his master's degree (Th.M.) from Dallas Theological Seminary in Old Testament and Semitic Languages and his doctorate



Dr. Price demonstrates how the Dead Sea Scrolls were stored in clay jars at Qumran.

(Ph.D.) from the University of Texas at Austin in Middle Eastern Studies with a concentration in Hebrew and Archaeology. He has also done graduate work at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He has taught at the U. of Texas, the International School of Theology, Faith Theological Seminary, and Trinity Southwest Seminary.

He has also served in pastorates in Texas for 25 years and currently serves as associate pastor of Grace Bible Church in San Marcos, Texas, where he and his family live.

He and his wife Beverlee have been married for 25 years and have four daughters and one son.

His ministry publishes a bi-monthly newsletter that you can subscribe to free of charge. You can contact the ministry through its website, or by email (wbmrandl@itouch.net), or by calling 512/396-3799. ❖



Barna research reveals that America is spiritually stagnant.

The Barna Research Group of Ventura, California has just released the results of its latest comprehensive poll of American religious beliefs. The poll was taken in March of this year. The Barna Group is the nation's foremost polling organization concerning religious beliefs.

They concluded that America is "spiritually stagnant." Here's how they put it: "While Americans remain interested in faith and consider themselves to be religious people, little has changed in relation to the religious practices of Americans in recent years." Those practices include such things as church attendance, Bible reading, witnessing one's faith, and praying regularly.

Definitions

A large percentage of Americans continue to consider themselves to be Christians — a total of 85% (up from 82% in 1991). Of this number, the Barna Group classified only 41% to be "born again Christians." Carrying the analysis even farther, they decided that only 7% of those claiming to be Christians could be classified as "evangelical Christians."

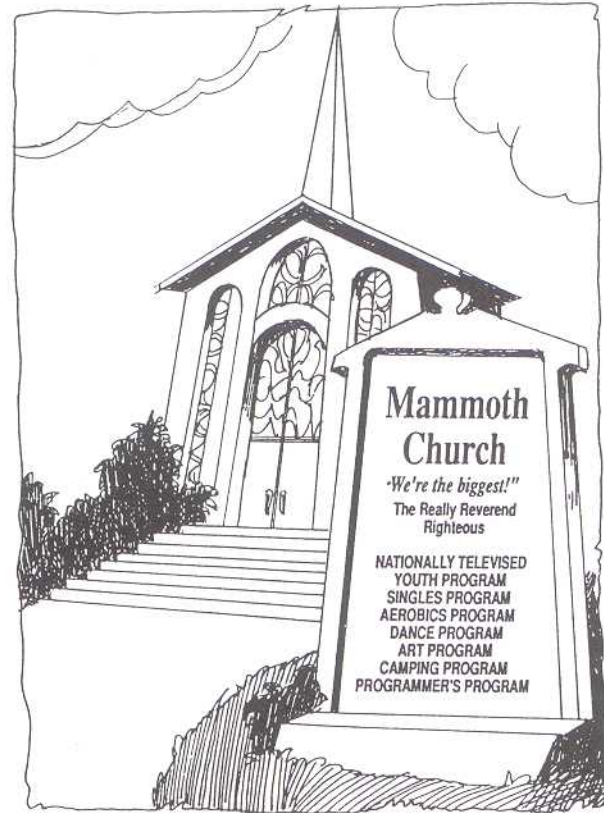
These refinements are not based on asking the respondents to classify themselves. Rather, they are based on answers to specific questions.

The Barna Group defines a "born again Christian" as one who has made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ (as opposed to just a church) and who believes he or she will go to Heaven because they have confessed their sins and accepted Jesus as their savior. "Evangelicals" are a subset of born again Christians. In addition to meeting the criteria for the born again group, evangelicals believe in the authority of God's Word. They also believe in the reality of Satan; that salvation is possible only through grace, not works; that Jesus lived a sinless life; that they have a responsibility to witness their faith; and that God is an all-knowing, all-powerful, perfect deity who created the universe and still rules today.

A Disturbing Discovery

One of the most significant findings, based on these classifications, is that the Church itself is one of the greatest fields for evangelism. This was borne out by the fact that *in a typical week, 41% of the adults attending Christian churches are not born again!* The percentage is substantially higher among Catholics, but even among Protestants, one-third of churchgoers are not born again. These figures make it clear that many people have been attending church for years without ever coming to an understanding of the foundations of the Christian faith.

George Barna suggested that the nation seems mired in spiritual complacency. "America certainly did not experience the spiritual revival that many Christians hoped would emerge as the new millennium began. In fact, Americans seem to have become almost inoculated to spiritual events, outreach efforts, and the quest for personal spiritual development . . . overall, Christian ministry is stuck in a deep rut . . . Like the churches of Laodicea and Sardis, described in the Bible as distasteful to God because of their complacency and spiritual deadness, too



many Christians and churches in America have traded in spiritual passion for empty rituals, clever methods, and mindless practices."

A Summary of Findings

Other findings of the poll include the following:

- Protestants are significantly more likely than Catholics to read the Bible (47% vs. 25%), attend a Sunday school class (28% vs. 3%), participate in a small group (22% vs. 9%), have a quiet time with the Lord (58% vs. 46%), and volunteer at their church (25% vs. 15%).
- People's age is clearly related to their religious behavior. The younger a person is, the less likely he or she is to engage in religious activities.
- Blacks are much more likely than either Whites or Hispanics to read the Bible, pray to God, attend Sunday school, participate in a small group, and have a quiet time.
- Women are much more spiritually inclined than men, and men are much more likely to be unchurched.
- The southern Bible Belt continues to deserve the title. The level of spiritual commitment among its residents continues to be the strongest in the nation, despite the mobility of America's population and the common information sources that influence the nation. The Northeastern states ranked the lowest in spiritual commitment, followed by the West.

The surveys conducted by the Barna Group are available on the Internet at www.barna.org. ☩

What kind of Christian are you? Cultural? Born again? Evangelical?

The latest Barna research survey (see page 12) revealed that America's churches are full of cultural Christians. Such people have grown up in Christianity, they attend church regularly, and they profess to be Christians. What distinguishes them from other Christians is their lack of a personal relationship with Jesus. In short, they are Christians in name only because they have never been born again.

Former President Jimmy Carter was the one who made Americans conscious of the term "born again Christian." That is the label he applied to himself in 1976 when he was campaigning for the presidency. I remember how many Christian leaders rushed to the press to proclaim that they were not "one of those born again types." I found their protestations very interesting in view of the fact that Jesus Himself said that no one can enter Heaven unless they are born again (John 3:3).

The cultural Christian is just that — a person who considers himself to be a Christian because he has been raised in a Christian culture. Al Gore is a good example. He was raised in a Southern Baptist heritage, but during his presidential campaign, he made it clear that Christianity was only his "faith heritage" and nothing more. The cultural Christian, if he has any commitment at all, is committed to religion or a church, and not to Jesus as his personal Lord and Savior. Such a person is unsaved.

The Barna Group defines the next step up as the "born again Christian." These are people who have accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior and who believe that salvation is dependent upon their relationship with Jesus. These people are saved.

Barna defines the highest level of Christian commitment to be the "evangelical Christian." This is a born again person who strongly holds to certain fundamental biblical truths. Only 7% of Americans qualify as evangelicals, as opposed to 41% who could be classified as born again.

What are you? Could you qualify as an evangelical Christian? Below is the test that Barna gives. Take it by circling your answer for each question.

- | | | |
|---|------|-------|
| 1) The Bible is totally accurate in all of its teachings. | True | False |
| 2) You, personally, have a responsibility to tell other people your religious beliefs. | True | False |
| 3) The devil, or Satan, is not a living being but is a symbol of evil. | True | False |
| 4) If a people are generally good, or do enough good things for others, they will earn a place in Heaven. | True | False |
| 5) When He lived on earth, Jesus was human and committed sins. | True | False |
| 6) It doesn't matter what religious faith you follow because they all teach the same lessons. | True | False |

- | | | |
|--|------|-------|
| 7) The Holy Spirit is a symbol of God's presence or power but is not a living entity. | True | False |
| 8) After He was crucified and died, Jesus did not return to life physically. | True | False |
| 9) The Bible teaches that God helps those who help themselves. | True | False |
| 10) All people will experience the same outcome after death, regardless of their religious beliefs. | True | False |
| 11) There are some crimes, sins or other things which people might do which cannot be forgiven by God. | True | False |
| 12) Angels exist and influence people's lives. | True | False |
| 13) The universe was originally created by God. | True | False |
| 14) The whole idea of sin is outdated. | True | False |

The evangelical answers are as follows: 3 through 11 and 14 are false; 1, 2, 12 and 13 are true.

The good news is that Americans who were polled, whether Christian or not, strongly agreed on three biblical points. Almost 75% agreed that God created the universe — an incredible number when you consider all the evolutionist propaganda we are bombarded with daily. Almost 70% rejected the idea that sin is an outdated concept — another incredible response when you consider the "different strokes for different folks" mentality that seems to predominate today. Not surprisingly, 50% stated that they believed in the reality of angels and their influence (I guess we can thank "Touched by an Angel").

The bad news is that the number of born again adults who held views contrary to the Bible was astonishing. Almost 70% agreed that the Bible teaches that God helps those who help themselves. Fifty-three percent denied the existence of the Holy Spirit as a person! Forty-seven percent stated that they did not believe in the existence of Satan. Thirty-one percent said they felt a good person could earn his way into heaven; 30% denied the physical resurrection of Jesus; and 24% said they thought Jesus had committed sins!

Such an abysmal lack of biblical knowledge about the fundamentals of the faith points to a famine of Bible study and preaching in the churches of America. People are obviously hearing inspirational ditties or warmed over homilies from the *Reader's Digest*. We can be thankful that we are not saved by biblical knowledge but by a relationship with Jesus. But a lack of biblical knowledge stunts spiritual growth and opens people up to doctrinal heresies and cultic deception.

The churches of America need to stop focusing on entertaining people. They also need to stop tiptoeing through the tulips doctrinally for fear of being seeker insensitive. We need to get back to the Word of God, to the fundamentals of the faith, and we need to be willing to step on toes when necessary by confronting people with the truth of their sin and their need for repentance.

As Paul told Timothy, "**Preach the Word!**" (2 Timothy 4:2). ❖

You Can't Go Back

Dennis Pollock

Perry Como died recently at age 88. Most young people either never heard of him, or else know him as the guy who used to sing Christmas Carols on television.

Perry was from a different era. His songs were melodic, and the lyrics could be easily understood. His style was smooth and easy, and his manners impeccable. He stayed married to the same woman for over sixty years. Perry would never make it in today's music industry.

His passing saddened me, as I reflected on how far American society has come since the 40's and the 50's, mostly in the wrong direction. As I get older, I find myself looking back frequently, grieving for the way things used to be. I was transfixed by Tom Brokaw's excellent book, *The Greatest Generation*, which chronicles the lives of a number of men and women who sacrificed and struggled during the Second World War.

Things were so much more black and white in those days. The Nazis were evil and the Americans virtuous. Good girls wore their dresses and skirts well below the knees. Homosexuality was dirty and sick, and pregnant unmarried women would go off in hiding so as not to publicly display their sin. You could sit through a dozen movies and not hear one curse word, and the closest thing to a sex scene would be a lingering kiss with a fade to black. Divorce was rare, and considered a great moral failure when it did occur.

As I have read a number of books that deal with the life and times of the "Greatest Generation" it has affected the way I look at people who are in their seventies and eighties. Knowing what they have been through, the challenges they faced, and the resolute, uncomplaining way in which they met those challenges, I almost feel apologetic for the way that we, their children (the baby boomers) have squandered the freedom for which so many fought, sacrificed, and died.

Half of couples who marry now get divorced, with no stigma at all. Homosexuality has multiplied and today, instead of hiding their shame in the closets, gays march down the main streets of large cities, parading their sin proudly. Thirty-minute television comedies now contain more filth and lewdness than the most risqué movie Betty Grable ever dared make. Athletes like Joe DiMaggio and Ted Williams have been replaced with pampered superstars who choke their coaches and punch fans.

We can't go back, of course. It's fun to look back, and the tens of thousands of antique and nostalgia shops across our nation amply testify that many of us have an inner yearning for simpler, kinder, and gentler days.

It's not going to happen.

Our world is on a track it cannot get off. Its speed constantly increases, and there is no reverse gear. Two powerful forces are at work in the earth, forces that will soon bring the nations into a final cataclysmic conflagration of death and destruction, spoken of by Jesus and vividly described by John in the book of Revelation.

One of those forces is called the mystery of iniquity. The Scriptures tell us that a spirit of lawlessness is at work in our



world, which will continually rip and tear at the fabric of society until we ultimately come within a hair of destroying ourselves.

This spirit of lawlessness has a great variety of manifestations, from such simple things as lowered SAT scores to the tragedy at Columbine. We see this spirit in dirty little sit-coms that compete to outdo one another in sleaze, and in a steakhouse that proudly advertises its product with the slogan that the serpent himself once used with Eve: "No rules; just right."

There is another force in this world. Our Savior called it the Kingdom of God. Headed by the Lord Jesus Himself, fueled by the power of the Holy Spirit, and manifested through born again Christians in every part of the globe, this kingdom cannot be stopped.

The truth is that the evangelical church is growing stronger every day. In Africa there were ten million Christians in 1900; today there are over three hundred million. More Muslims have become Christians in the last twenty years than in the previous thousand years! And among the Jews, more are turning to Jesus than at any time since the days of the early church.

No, we are not going to "save the world." The gate to destruction is wide, and many will choose to take that way. We are not to expect some world revival that will turn every nation to Christ.

We can make a difference, though. I love the story of the man who was found on the beaches of Mexico, tossing dying starfish back into the ocean. Another man, seeing what he was doing, asked him, "Why are you bothering? There are hundreds of starfish all over this beach, and probably thousands more all up and down the coast beyond here. You can't possibly make a difference!"

The compassionate savior of the starfish calmly reached down, picked up another starfish, heaved it into the sea, and answered, "Made a difference to that one."

May the Lord find us so doing when He comes. ✠

TIMES and Seasons

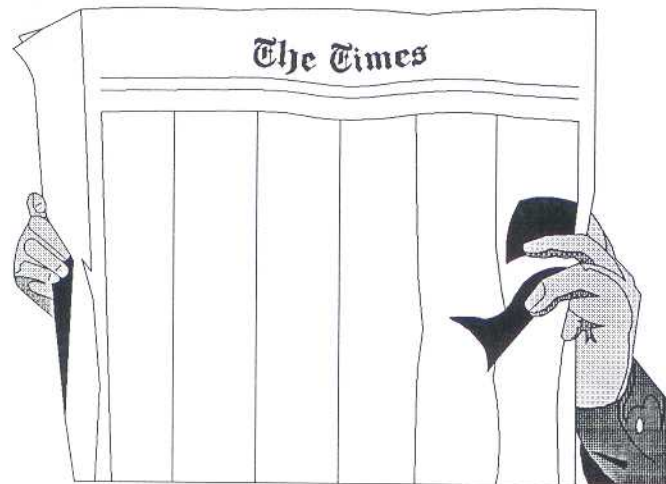
Banning of Parent Day Observances — In perhaps one of the most outrageous examples of “political correctness” to date, the *New York Post* reports that an upscale private school in Manhattan, the Rodeph Sholom Day School, has decided to ban the celebration of Mother’s Day and Father’s Day. The primary reason appears to be that school officials are worried about offending students raised by homosexual parents.

Cross-Dressing Edict — A public middle school located near Wilmington, Delaware recently asked its students to come to school cross-dressed. The edict coincided with “Gay Recognition Week.” The father of one 12-year-old boy was so shocked that he protested to the governor of the state and announced that he would withdraw his son from school and either home school him or send him to a private school.

Loss of Job — A Christian employee of Hewlett Packard’s plant in Boise, Idaho was recently terminated for posting three Bible verses on his cubicle that condemned homosexuality. He did so in response to his company’s “diversity campaign” which promoted homosexuality as an acceptable life style. The man, Richard Peterson, had worked for Hewlett Packard for 21 years. Peterson said he feels that too many Christians have become apathetic about confronting the dangerous homosexual lifestyle. He added, “I think Christians are being forced into the closet while the gays are coming out. We’re reaching the point of no return if things don’t turn around.”

Homosexuals Can Change — Dr. Robert L. Spitzer, a psychiatry professor at Columbia University has issued a scientific study that says homosexuals can turn straight. Dr. Spitzer said he began his study as a skeptic. In fact, he was the one who spearheaded the 1973 decision of the American Psychiatric Association to remove homosexuality from its list of mental disorders. The results of his study did not surprise Christians, especially those who have ministries to homosexuals. They have been providing examples for years of individuals who have left the homosexual lifestyle to become functioning heterosexuals. But the gay rights activists strongly attacked the study as being “biased.”

Unarmed and Unsafe — For 170 years the British police functioned without carrying guns. That’s because the British public was armed. Now it is the other way around. In recent years Britain has enacted the most severe gun control laws of any democracy in the world. Not even members of the British Olympic shooting team are allowed to own pistols. The result is that the criminals have guns while the law-abiding public has been disarmed. In short, gun control has made home invasion safe for criminals. So, for the first time ever, British police are now carrying guns. The British experience has proved the validity of the slogan of the National Rifle Association: “When guns are outlawed, only outlaws will have guns.” ❖



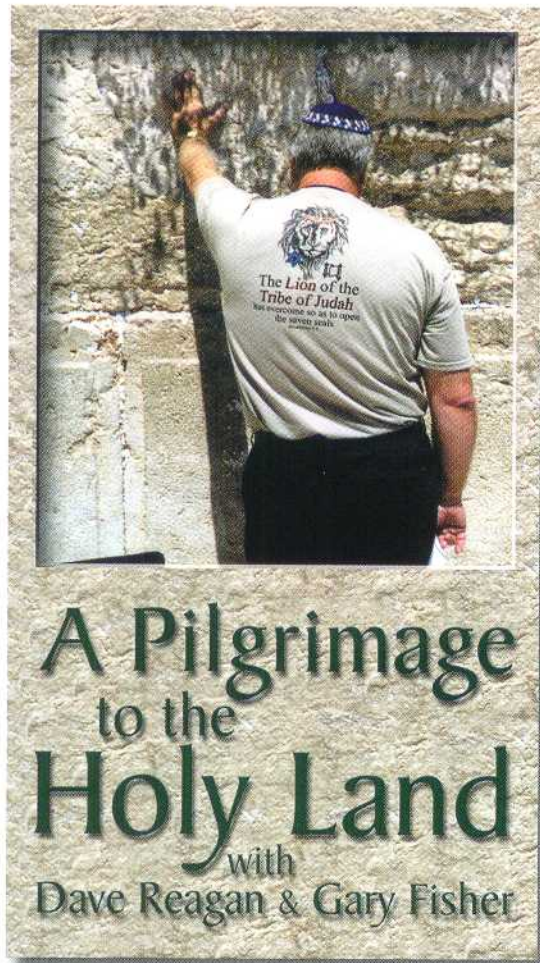
News & Notes

Website — We have recently redesigned our website. All the articles have been reorganized. The recent *Lamplighter* issues have been put on the site in full color, using the Acrobat format. There is a new feature called “Prophecy Question of the Month.” And we are in the process of adding a variety of interactive prophecy tests. The site continues to provide access to all our radio programs for the past years. Check it out at www.lamblion.com. One of the first responses we received after we had completed the redesign of the site was from a lady named Hilda Lewis: “WOW! Your website is VERY cool! I check it periodically as I have had it bookmarked for several years. You have made such improvements to it — it’s truly amazing.”

“Twenty-seven years ago, with the Holy Spirit as my guide, I entered at the portico of Genesis and went into the art galleries of the Old Testament. On the wall hung pictures of Enoch, Noah, Jacob, Abraham, and other famous patriarchs of old. Then I passed into the music room of Psalms where the Spirit swept the keyboard of my nature. Next, I stepped into the prophetic room and saw through the telescopes various stars, some pointing to far-off stars and others to nearby stars, but all concentrated upon the Bright and Morning Star. From there I went to the gospel stories of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and the letters of Paul, Peter, James and Jude. Then I passed last of all into the throne room of Revelation and saw the King sitting high upon His throne.” — Billy Sunday (1862 - 1935)

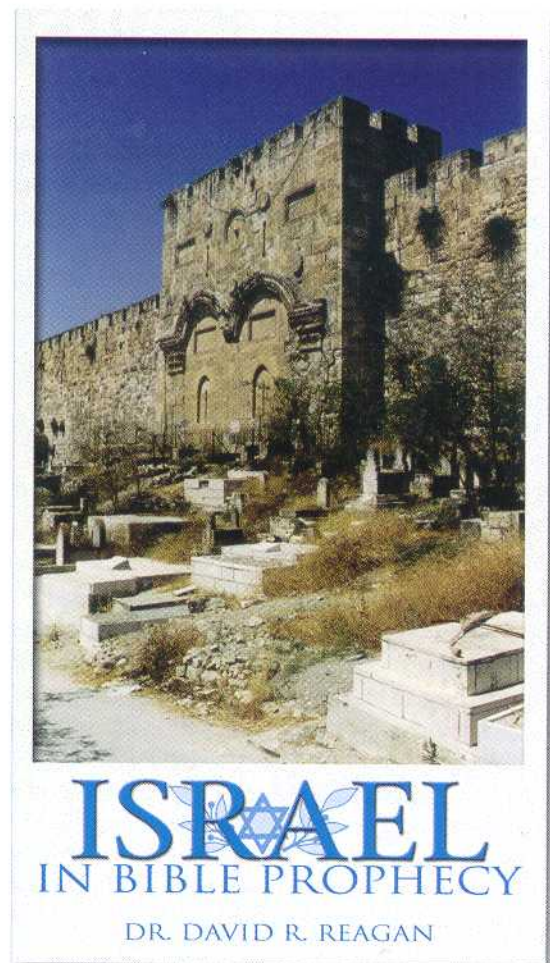
India — We need additional funds to cover the cost of Dennis Pollock’s upcoming missions trip to India in early September. He is scheduled to conduct prophecy conferences for pastors in two cities. ❖

Two Great New Videos About Israel



The Pilgrimage Video was shot in June of 2000 while Dave Reagan and Gary Fisher were leading a group of pilgrims through the Holy Land. It is a spontaneous, fast-moving day-by-day account of what is seen on a pilgrimage to Israel.

The running time is 75 minutes. The cost is \$18 plus \$2 for shipping.



The Israel in Bible Prophecy Video was shot in September of 2000, right before the outbreak of the Arab uprising. It is a remake of the ministry's very popular 1987 video by the same name. It covers seven prophecies being fulfilled in Israel today.

The running time is 65 minutes. The cost is \$18 plus \$2 for shipping.

Special Offer: Both videos for \$30 plus \$3 for shipping — a savings of \$7. To order, call 1-800-705-8316.



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