

LAMPLIGHTER

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

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The Importance of Bible Prophecy



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Observations by the Editor

Thanks!

I ended the year of 2011 in the hospital suffering from complications from knee replacement surgery. Take my word for it, Christmas in the hospital is no fun!

Yet, despite all the medical problems, my heart was full of thanks and rejoicing as the new year began. I was thanking God for my wife, children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. And I was praising God for entrusting this ministry to me over 30 years ago and for His faithfulness in sustaining it over all these years. I am thankful to God also for the great trustees of the ministry and all our wonderful staff members.

My heart is also full of thanks to you, our supporters. Your prayers, words of encouragement, and generous donations have blessed all of us here at Lamb & Lion. God working through you is what makes it possible for us to reach out to people all over the world with the message of the Lord's soon return.

Over the years I have found that a thankful heart and an attitude of gratitude are the best antidotes to self-pity and depression. I often just sit down and start listing in my prayer journal all the things I can think of that I am thankful for. It is time well spent, and I highly recommend it to you.

When you do it, be sure to remember the manifold blessings that we, as Americans, tend to take for granted — things that two-thirds of the people on this earth do not have. I have in mind things like pure water, electricity and air conditioning. And let's not forget the economic, political and spiritual freedoms we enjoy — freedoms that are completely alien to most societies in the world.

Once again, I shout thanks to the Lord for all His blessings. Illness is certainly no pleasure, but it reminds us of one of the most important things that we should be thankful for — the thing that we perhaps take most for granted — and that, of course, is good health.

May this new year be one of great blessings to you, and may you respond to those blessings by showing an attitude of gratitude each day. ✚

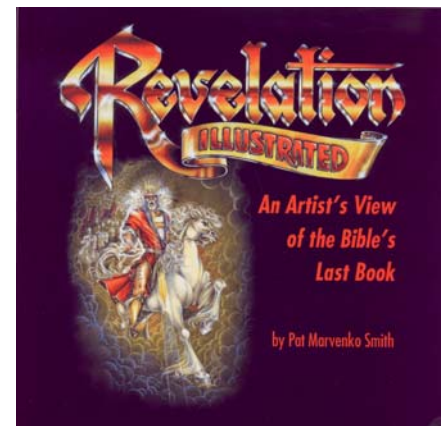


Dr. David R. Reagan

Great New Book!

No artist has been able to capture the essence of the book of Revelation as accurately as Pat Marvenko Smith. She has produced illustrations of every aspect of it from start to finish.

We have used many of her paintings to illustrate our articles and videos. We have also produced an entire television program about her art.



Now, all her marvelous pictures are available in a new book titled, *Revelation Illustrated: An Artist's View of the Bible's Last Book*. The book contains all 41 of her paintings together with the entire KJV text of the book of Revelation. It also contains an introduction by the artist in which she tells the fascinating story of how she came to paint the pictures.

The book is 8½" by 8½" in size, and it runs 69 pages in length. It is printed in full color. It retails for \$24.95. You can order a copy from the author by calling 800-327-7330. Or you can order through her website at www.revelationillustrated.com. ✚

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The Importance of Bible Prophecy

Is it a playground for fanatics or green pastures for disciples?

Dr. David R. Reagan

Although prophecy constitutes almost one-third of the Bible, its importance is constantly downplayed by those who dismiss it as having no practical significance or by those who object to it on the grounds that it is a “fad” that takes people’s eyes off Jesus.

A good example of what I’m talking about can be found in the immensely popular best-selling book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, by Rick Warren.¹ He mocks Bible prophecy when he writes, “If you want Jesus to come back sooner, focus on fulfilling your mission, not figuring out prophecy.” He then goes on to characterize prophecy as a “distraction” and says that anyone who lets himself get involved in distractions like studying prophecy “is not fit for the kingdom of God.”

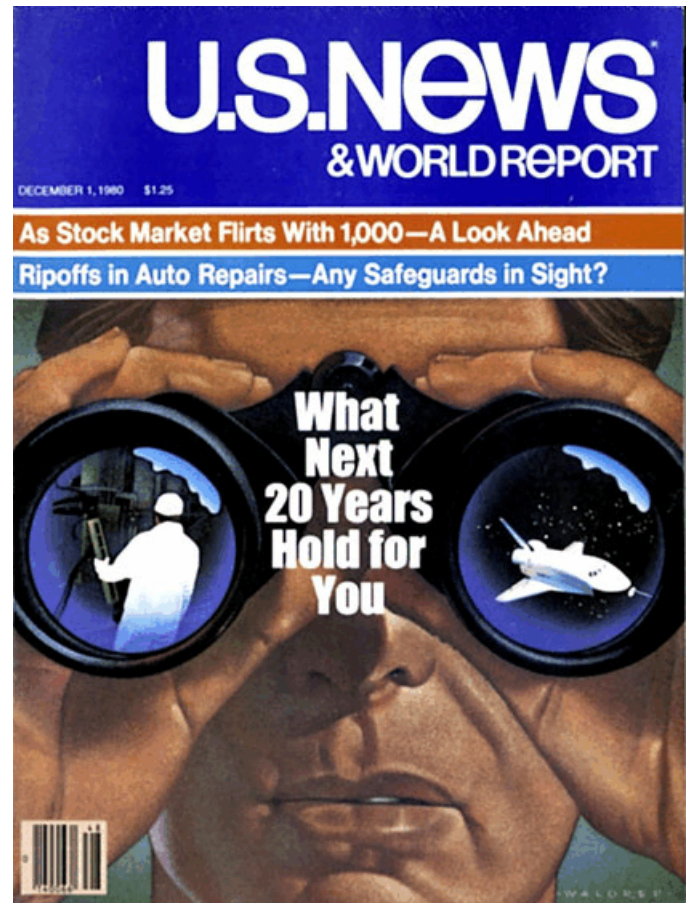
Such cavalier dismissals of Bible prophecy fly in the face of scriptures like Revelation 19:10 which says that “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” Thus, if prophecy is properly taught, there is no reason for it to divert anyone’s attention away from Jesus. In fact, it should serve to emphasize the centrality of Jesus.

Is prophecy practical? Consider that all the New Testament writers testify to the fact that living with the anticipation of the Lord’s return will motivate holy living. What could be more practical than that? Here are some examples:

The Apostle Paul: “The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts” — Romans 13:12-14.

The Apostle Peter: “The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer. Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaint. As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God . . . so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen” — 1 Peter 4:7-11.

The Apostle John: “Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure” — 1 John 3:2-3.



People are very interested in the future, but they would rather rely on the foolish speculations of men rather than the absolutely reliable prophecies in the Bible.

Prophecy does not have to be either faddish, other-worldly, or impractical if taught properly. Nor does it have to be a playground for fanatics. It can and should be green pastures for disciples.

Reasons for Study

There are many reasons why all believers should be interested in studying Bible prophecy. Some of the more important ones are listed below:

1 The Quantity — One-fourth to one-third of the Bible is prophetic in nature. In the Old Testament, this includes the Psalms, the Major and Minor Prophets, and many passages in the historical books. In the New Testament, entire books like 1 & 2 Thessalonians and Revelation are devoted to prophecy, as are major passages like Matthew 24 and 1 Peter 3. To ignore Bible prophecy is to ignore a significant portion of God’s Word, and we are told in 2 Timothy 3:16 that “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness” — and that certainly includes Bible prophecy.

2 The Uniqueness — No other book in the world contains fulfilled prophecies. This includes the sayings of Buddha and Confucius, the Koran, the Hindu Vedras, and the Book of Mormon. And it certainly includes the ridiculous nonsensical quatrains of Nostradamus.² In contrast, the Bible contains hundreds of specific prophecies that have already been fulfilled — prophecies about towns, cities, nations, empires, and political leaders, as well as prophecies about the Messiah. Consider, for example, the prophecy in the book of Isaiah that a man named Cyrus would be the one who would release the children of Israel from Babylonian captivity (Isaiah 44:28). And that is exactly what happened 142 years later (Ezra 1:1-3).

3 Validator of Scripture — Fulfilled prophecy is one of the best evidences I know of that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. As I stated above, the Bible contains hundreds of fulfilled secular prophecies pertaining to cities, nations, empires, and individuals. Isaiah prophesied that Babylon would fall to the Medes and Persians (Isaiah 13:17-20). Jeremiah predicted the Babylonian captivity of the Jews would last 70 years (Jeremiah 25:11-12). Daniel outlined in advance the precise order of four great Gentile empires (Daniel 2 and 7). The destruction of both Judah and Israel was foretold by Moses (Deuteronomy 28 and 29). In the New Testament, Jesus predicted the complete destruction of Jerusalem 40 years before it actually occurred (Luke 21:6).



The prophet Daniel presents King Nebuchadnezzar with the prophetic meaning of his dream. (Internet picture, artist unknown.)

4 Validator of Jesus — The prophetic scriptures validate Jesus as who He said He was — namely, God in the flesh. The Bible contains more than 300 prophecies about the First Coming of Jesus, but some of these are repetitive. There are actually 109 separate and distinct prophecies concerning the First Coming, and all of them were literally fulfilled.³ Every aspect of the life of Jesus was prophesied — the place of His birth, the nature of His birth, the quality of His ministry, the purpose of His life, and the agony of His death. Consider, for example, the prophecy in Psalm 22:16 that the Messiah's hands and feet would be pierced. That prophecy was written by David about a thousand years before the birth of Jesus. It was written 700 years before the invention of crucifixion as a form of execution. The literal fulfillment of so many prophecies in the life of one individual transcends any mere coincidence and serves to validate that Jesus was who He said He was — the divine Son of God.

109 Prophecies

That's how many separate and distinct prophecies were fulfilled in the First Coming of Jesus. Accident? Coincidence? Hardly!

A science professor by the name of Peter Stoner calculated the odds of just seven of the prophecies being fulfilled accidentally in the life of one person. His calculations, which have never been challenged, produced the number of 1 in 10^{17} . That's the number one with 17 zeroes after it, or 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. Another way of putting it is one in one hundred quadrillion!

To say the least, that is beyond the realm of probability.

Stoner illustrated the probability by using the state of Texas. He said to imagine the state of Texas filled knee deep with silver dollars. A plane flies over and drops out one silver dollar with a black check mark on it. Then thousands of bulldozers spend several years mixing up the silver dollars. Finally, a man is blindfolded and turned loose in this sea of silver dollars. The odds that on his first draw, he will pick up the silver dollar with the black check mark is 1 in 10^{17} .

(For more information, see "Applying the Science of Probability to the Scriptures," by Dr. David R. Reagan (*Lamplighter* magazine, September - October 2006, pages 9-11.)

5 Revealer of the Future — Prophecy serves to tell us some things that God wants us to know about the future (Deuteronomy 29:29 and Amos 3:7). God does not want us to know everything about the future, but there are some things we must know if we are to have a dynamic hope. Thus, prophecy assures us that Jesus is coming back, that He will resurrect us, and that He will take us to live forever with Him and God the Father. In this regard, Peter likens prophecy to "a lamp shining in a dark place" (2 Peter 1:19). Paul makes the same point in 1 Corinthians, chapter 2. He begins by observing that "no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has the mind of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love Him." But in the next verse Paul says those things have been revealed to us by God through His Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:9-10).

6 Tool of Evangelism — Prophecy can be used as a very effective tool of evangelism, as illustrated in the story of Philip and the Eunuch (Acts 8:26ff). Philip used Isaiah's great suffering lamb passage (Isaiah 53) to teach that Jesus is the Lamb who was slain for the sins of the world. Matthew and Peter both used fulfilled prophecy in the life of Jesus as one of their basic evangelistic tools. In fact, Peter referred to prophecy con-

stantly in his first gospel sermon on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-39). He preached that Jesus had been crucified and resurrected in fulfillment of Hebrew prophecies. Later, Peter referred to fulfilled prophecy as one of the greatest evidences that Jesus was truly the Son of God (2 Peter 1:16-19).

7 Tool of Moral Teaching — People often overlook the fact that the Hebrew prophets were forthtellers as well as foretellers. In fact, the prophets spent most of their time using God's Word to spotlight societal problems. They called their listeners to repentance, true worship, social justice, and personal holiness. One of the great recurring themes of the prophets is that "obedience is better than sacrifice" (1 Samuel 15:22 and Hosea 6:6). That statement means that in God's eyes, obedience to His commands is more important than outward religious practices such as offering sacrifices. Prophecy is thus a great repository of moral teaching, and those moral principles are still relevant today. (See Amos 5:21-24; Micah 6:8; and Isaiah 58:3-9.)

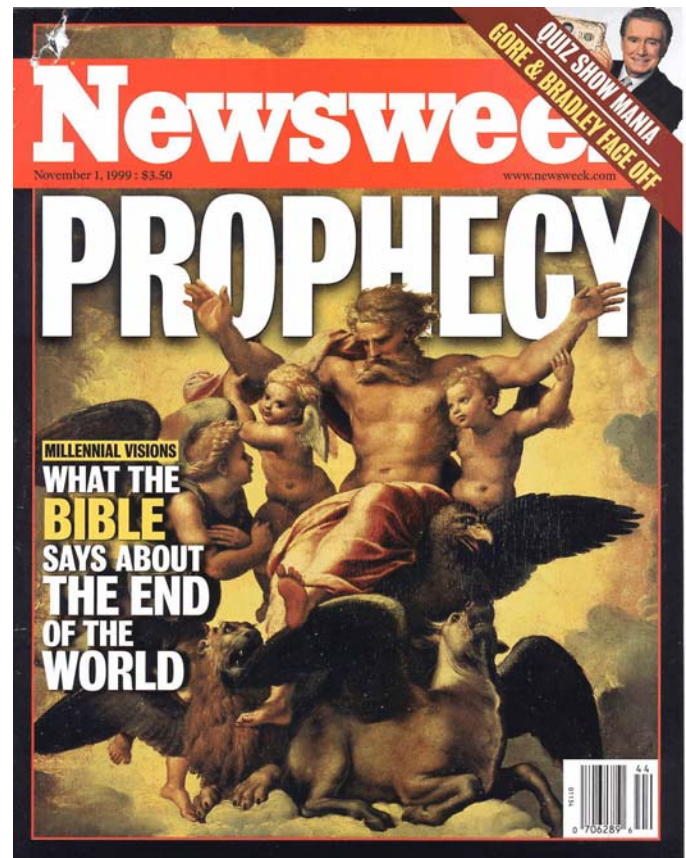
8 Generator of Spiritual Growth — Prophetic knowledge encourages patient waiting (James 5:7-8); provokes earnest watching (Matthew 24:36,42); inspires dedicated work (2 Timothy 4:7-8); and enhances our hope (Titus 2:11-14). The result is holy living. Paul exhorts us to "behave properly as in the day," because the time is at hand when the Lord will return (Romans 13:12-13). Likewise, Peter calls us to gird up our minds and be sober and holy as we look forward to the revelation of Jesus (1 Peter 1:13-15).

9 Understanding of Current Events — The Bible contains detailed prophecies about the end times we are living in, and there is just no way to fully understand much of what is happening today apart from those prophecies. Three characteristics of our day and time immediately come to mind: the intensifying decay of society, the growing apostasy in the Church, and the escalating crisis in the Middle East. All three of these situations are prophesied in detail in the Bible. We are told that society will become as violent and immoral as it was in the days of Noah (Matthew 24:37-39); that the Church will be assaulted with "doctrines of demons" (1 Timothy 4:1); and that all the nations of the world will come against Israel over the issue of who will control Jerusalem (Zechariah 12:2-3).

10 Signifier of the Season — One of the most exciting reasons for studying Bible prophecy is that it provides very definite signs that we are to watch for which will signify the season of the Lord's return. It is true that we cannot know the date, but the Bible makes it clear that we can know the season if we are aware of the signs that we are to look for. The Apostle Paul made this point in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6 when he wrote:

Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night . . . But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober .

According to this passage, Jesus is coming like "a thief in



Occasionally the secular press will focus on Bible prophecy, but their articles are always based on interviews with clergy and seminary professors who do not believe in prophecy.

the night" for the world, but those of us who are "sons of light" — that is, those of us who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit — we should not be surprised when the Lord returns because God's Word gives us signs to watch for.

Paul made the same point again in Hebrews 10:25 where he admonished believers to not forsake the assembling of the saints, especially "as you see the day drawing near." What day? He defines it in verse 27 as the day of judgment. So, Paul is making the point here that there are signs we can watch for that will clearly identify the fact that we are living in the season of the Lord's return.

Jesus made the same point in His Olivet Discourse as recorded in Matthew 24. After specifying many end time signs, He said, "when you see all these things, recognize that He [Jesus] is near, right at the door" (Matthew 24:33).

Advice & Counsel

I pointed out earlier that in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 Paul writes that all of God's Word is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness." I want to emphasize again that this admonition includes God's Prophetic Word. Also, in 1 Thessalonians 5:20 the apostle Paul pleads with us to treat prophecy with respect: "Do not despise prophetic utterances."

Peter warns us in his second epistle, that one of the signs of the end times will be the appearance of "scoffers" who will cast scorn and ridicule on the promise of our Lord's return (2 Peter 3:3ff). The great tragedy of our day is that many of the loudest

scoffers are religious leaders who profess to follow Christ. Such leaders crucified Jesus the first time He came. They now scoff at His promise to return.

A good example of what I'm talking about is the "Jesus Seminar"⁴ that began meeting in 1985 and whose work culminated in 1993 with the publication of a book titled, *The Five Gospels: What Did Jesus Really Say?*⁵ The seminar was composed of forty New Testament "scholars" from a great variety of Christian seminaries in America. The seminar met every six months to vote on the sayings of Jesus as recorded in the four gospels. The goal was to produce a new version of the gospels in which the sayings of Jesus would be color coded: red, if He said it; pink, if He may have said it; grey, if He probably did not say it; and black, if He definitely did not say it.

They titled the evil fruit of their labors, *The Five Gospels*, because they concluded that the spurious Gnostic *Gospel of Thomas*⁶ was as valid as the four Gospels adopted by the early Church Fathers.

When they voted on the sayings of Jesus regarding His Second Coming, they voted that all the sayings were spurious and had probably been "made up" by His disciples. What apostasy!

Spiritual Food

God's Prophetic Word is food for our spiritual growth. We need to take it off the shelf, open it up, and feast upon it — and we need to do so with believing hearts.

The book of Revelation promises blessings to those who read it (or hear it read) and who obey it (Revelation 1:3). It is the only book of the Bible to promise such a specific blessing, but all God's Word is designed to bless us spiritually (Psalm 119), and that includes the Prophetic Word.

Bible prophecy, properly taught, can literally transform a person and a congregation. This will happen if the person or congregation can be convinced of two things regarding prophecy: 1) Jesus is returning, and 2) His return could occur any moment.

Regarding the first point, most Christians believe with their minds that Jesus is returning, but they do not believe with their hearts, and therefore their belief has no impact on their behavior. Regarding the second point, most Christians are unaware that the return of Jesus will be in two stages — first, the Rapture, and then the Second Coming. Because they know little or nothing about the Rapture, they have no understanding that the Lord could truly return at any moment. They believe that many prophecies — like the preaching of the Gospel to the whole world — must be fulfilled before the Lord can return, when the truth of the matter is that there is not one prophecy that must be fulfilled for the Rapture to occur.

Again, if a person or congregation can truly be convinced that Jesus is returning any moment, they will be transformed because they will be motivated to share the Gospel with others and to commit their lives to holiness. A commitment to evangelism and holiness! What more could a pastor hope for?

Bible prophecy does not just relate to the future. It has an important spiritual relevance to the way we live our lives in the present.

Key Scriptures about Prophecy

Let's conclude with a reminder of what the Word of God itself says about the value of prophecy. In this way we can be assured that the effort we expend in looking at the prophetic scriptures will be time extremely well spent.

"The secret things belong to the Lord our God; but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our sons forever" (Deuteronomy 29:29).

"Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret counsel to His servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7).

"I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things which have not been done . . . I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it" (Isaiah 46:9-11).

"[Jesus said] 'Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill'" (Matthew 5:17).

"[Jesus] said to them, 'These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled'" (Luke 24:44).

"Of Him [Jesus] all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins" (Acts 10:43).

"The prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful search and inquiry, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow" (1 Peter 1:10-11).

". . . we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place . . . But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (2 Peter 1:19-21).

"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Revelation 19:10). ✚

Notes:

- 1) Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), page 286.
- 2) David Reagan, "Nostradamus: Prophet or Charlatan?" *Lamplighter* magazine, November-December 2003, pages 5-7.
- 3) David Reagan, *Christ in Prophecy Study Guide* (McKinney, TX: Lamb & Lion Ministries, 3rd edition in 2006).
- 4) Birger A. Pearson, "The Gospel According to the Jesus Seminar," www.veritas-ucsb.org/library/pearson/seminar/js1.html.
- 5) Robert W. Funk, *The Five Gospels: What Did Jesus Really Say? The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (New York, NY: Harper One, 1996).
- 6) The Gnostic Society Library, "The Gospel of Thomas," www.gnosis.org/naghamm/gosthom.html.

The **ABUSE** of Bible Prophecy

Dr. David R. Reagan

I want to begin with a paradox: We worship a God of prophecy and yet we either abuse or ignore the Prophetic Word.

That our Creator God is a God of prophecy is firmly established by a proclamation which He made through Isaiah the prophet (Isaiah 46:9-11):

... I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, "My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure . . . Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it."

This passage makes it clear that the God of the Bible has the knowledge to predict the future, the audacity to proclaim it in advance, and the power to see that what He predicts will come to pass.

Being a God of prophecy is one of the many proofs that the God of the Bible is the one and only true God. This was emphasized through Isaiah on another occasion when God spoke through him to mock the false gods made of wood and stone (Isaiah 41:21-24 LB):

"Can your idols make such claims as these? Let them come and show what they can do!" says God, the King of Israel. "Let them try to tell us what occurred in years gone by, or what the future holds. Yes, that's it! If you are gods, tell what will happen in the days ahead! . . . But no! You are less than nothing, and can do nothing at all. Anyone who chooses you needs to have his head examined!"

A Sad Heritage

Yet, despite the fact that the God of the Bible clearly establishes His credentials as the one and only true God by pointing to and emphasizing His prophetic powers, the Church has a sad heritage of both ignoring and abusing prophecy.

In fact, there is probably no other portion of the Bible that has been more ignored and abused in the Christian heritage than the prophetic scriptures.



As the year 2000 approached some Bible prophecy fanatics began to predict that all computers would melt down and that society would collapse. These biblically unfounded predictions caused much derision to be heaped on Bible prophecy.

Prophecy has been abused by apostates, spiritualizers, and fanatics.

The Apostates

The apostates are those so-called believers who mock the very idea that the Bible contains prophecy. They, in fact, hate prophecy with a passion because they reject the truth that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God. Rather, they argue that it represents Man's search for God and therefore is full of legends and superstitions.

If there truly are fulfilled prophecies in the Bible, then the book would have to be supernatural in origin. Since they are unwilling to admit that, they steadfastly refuse to admit that the Bible contains prophecies. They either write off prophetic passages as "poetry" that has no literal meaning, or they argue that the prophecies were written after the events they prophesied.

This is the reason that the book of Daniel has been so castigated by liberal apostates. In the book, Daniel precisely prophesies a whole sequence of world empires. He also prophesies many events that occurred during the inter-testamental

period between the close of the Old Testament and the writing of the New Testament. The apostates dismiss Daniel as a fraudulent book that was written 500 years later than it purports to be.

Of course, this allegation about the book of Daniel flies in the face of the fact that Jesus quoted the book and treated it as sacred scripture (Matthew 24: 15-22).

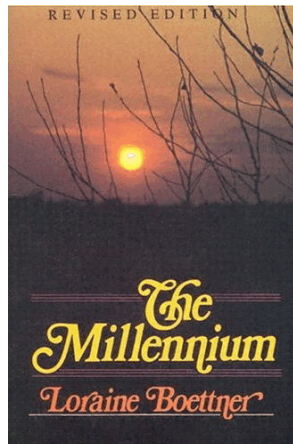
I had a rather brutal, first-hand experience with this attitude in the early 1980's when I was asked to speak at a mainline Protestant denomination in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area. After a few words of introduction, I asked the congregation to turn to the book of Daniel. The pastor, who was sitting on the front row, suddenly jumped to his feet and protested: "We don't allow the book of Daniel to be read in this church." When I asked why, he sneered at me and said, "You obviously are not a seminary graduate, because if you were, you would know that the book of Daniel is a fraud."

The Spiritualizers

Another group of abusers are the spiritualizers. These are people who believe the Bible does contain prophecy, but they argue that it never means what it says. Instead, it means whatever they want it to mean.

People love to spiritualize scripture because it enables them to play the role of God since they can use the spiritualizing process to make a prophetic passage mean whatever they want it to say.

A good example of what I am talking about can be found in a book called *The Millennium* by the renowned theologian, Loraine Boettner.¹ Since he was an Amillennialist who did not believe that Jesus would ever return to this earth to reign for a thousand years, Boettner had to spiritualize the meaning of Zechariah 14:1-9.



That passage clearly and simply states that in the end times when the city of Jerusalem is surrounded by the forces of the Antichrist and is about to fall to him, the Messiah will return to the Mount of Olives. When His feet touch the mount, it will split in half. The Messiah will then speak a supernatural word, and all the forces around Jerusalem will be instantly destroyed. The passage closes by asserting that on that day, the Messiah will become ‘king over all the earth’ (Zechariah 14:9).

Boettner totally destroyed the plain sense meaning of this passage by cleverly spiritualizing it to mean something else. He argued that the Mount of Olives is a symbol of the human heart. Thus, the enemy forces surrounding Jerusalem represent the evil in the world that surrounds the human heart. When a person receives Jesus as his Lord and Savior, his heart (the Mount of Olives) breaks in contrition, and on that day, Jesus becomes the king of his life. So, the passage has nothing to do with the Second Coming of Jesus. Instead, it is a passage about individual salvation!

I grew up in a spiritualizing church where we were taught that the Bible never means what it says when it is speaking prophetically. Because we spiritualized prophecy, we were Amillennial in our eschatology, denying that Jesus would ever return to reign on this earth.

Our preachers seldom ever spoke about Bible prophecy, but when they did, they would always confidently proclaim, “There is not one verse in the Bible that even implies that Jesus will ever put His feet on this earth again.” That was our prophetic mantra, and I heard it over and over again.

So, you can imagine how shocked I was one day when I was about 12 years old and was flipping through the Bible, and it happened to fall open to Zechariah 14. It was easy to read and simple to understand. The message was clear: the Messiah is returning to the Mount of Olives, and when His feet touch the ground, the mount is going to split in half. I couldn’t believe my eyes!

The next time I went to church, I confronted my pastor in fear and trembling with the passage. I reminded him of his teaching that “there is not one verse in the Bible that even implies that Jesus will ever put His feet on this earth again.” I then showed him Zechariah 14 and asked him to read it. He did so — over and over. Finally, after what seemed like an eternity,

he looked up at me, stuck his finger in my face, and said, “Son, I don’t know what this passage means, but I’ll guarantee you one thing, it doesn’t mean what it says!” When I asked why, he bellowed, “Because it is Apocalyptic!”

I didn’t know what that meant, but it sure sounded authoritative, so when I started preaching in my 20’s, I used the same technique to put down anyone who would question my assertion that Zechariah 14 did not mean what it said. I would just growl, “It’s Apocalyptic!”

And then one day I read the entire book of Zechariah, and I noticed that it contains several prophecies about the First Coming of the Messiah, and every one of them meant exactly what they said. Consider:

The Messiah will come humbly, riding on a donkey (9:9).

He will be hailed as a king (9:9).

He will be betrayed by a friend (13:6).

He will be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver (11:12).

The betrayal money will be used to purchase a potter’s field (11:13).

The Messiah will be forsaken by His disciples (13:7).

The Messiah will be pierced (12:10 & 13:6).

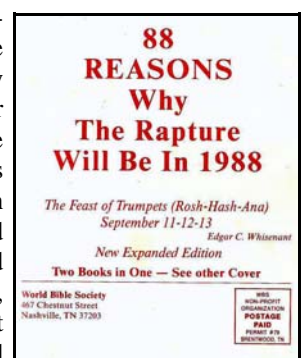
After discovering these prophecies and realizing that they were all literally fulfilled in the life of Jesus, it suddenly dawned on me that if the First Coming prophecies in Zechariah were literally fulfilled, then there was no reason to assume that the Second Coming prophecies in the same book would not be literally fulfilled. I realized that “Apocalyptic” was nothing more than a smoke screen to hide the true meaning of the prophecies.

The Fanatics

Unlike the apostates and the spiritualizers, the fanatics truly believe in Bible prophecy to the point of being obsessed by it. Where they go astray is that they view prophecy as a playground for fanciful speculations.

You can spot a fanatic easily. They are always trying to guess the identity of the Antichrist or else they are attempting to set a date for the Lord’s return.

Edgar Whisenant is a good example. In 1987 he published a little pamphlet entitled “88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Be in 1988.”² Over 300,000 copies of 88 Reasons were mailed free of charge to ministers across America, and 4.5 million copies were sold in bookstores and elsewhere. When 1988 came and passed without the Lord returning, Whisenant wrote another pamphlet giving 89 reasons why the Lord would return in 1989!



One characteristic of prophecy fanatics is that they never learn from their mistakes. The classic example is Harold Camping who owns one of the largest Christian radio networks in the

United States.³ He used that network to proclaim his conviction that the Lord would return in 1994. Did he learn his lesson? No! In 2010 he cranked up his procrastinating machine once again and set another date for the Lord's return: May 21, 2011. And when nothing happened on that date, he proceeded unabashed to revise the date to October 21, 2011.



Harold Camping

Needless to say, the fanatics do great harm to Bible prophecy. Their reckless speculations produce disillusionment and mocking. They cause the whole study of Bible prophecy to be held in contempt.

Prophecy Ignored

Another form of the abuse of Bible prophecy is the tendency of Christian leaders to completely ignore it. Many excuses are given for doing so.

Some argue that it is just too complex: "You have to have a doctorate in hermeneutics to understand it." That, of course, is not true. What you must have is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, a conviction that prophecy can be understood, and a willingness to study it.

But instead of studying, many pastors have decided to take refuge in the worn out joke that says: "I'm not Premillennial or Amillennial or Postmillennial. I'm Panmillennial because I believe everything will all pan-out in the end." That's an admission of being too lazy to study the subject.

Another common excuse for ignoring prophecy is that it is too other-worldly: "It's all pie-in-the-sky and has no relevance to the present." This is absolutely false, for if you can convince a person that Jesus really is returning and that He could return any moment, the person will be motivated to holy living and evangelism. Also, the promises of Bible prophecy provide great hope in the midst of a world that is descending into hopelessness.

Some pastors tell me that they avoid Bible prophecy because it is too controversial: "It is too divisive and therefore must be ignored to preserve unity." They fear it will divide their congregations.

There is some validity to this concern. Bible prophecy can be controversial and divisive if it is taught in a dogmatic way by a teacher who is determined to prove that everyone else is wrong except him. But this doesn't have to be the case. When prophecy is taught right out of the Bible with a focus on Jesus, it will provide spiritual strength.

Among Christians in general I have discovered that one of the most important reasons for ignoring prophecy is fear: "Bible

prophecy is too frightening to read because it is all about the wrath of God." This viewpoint was expressed to me in a letter I received years ago from a young man who said he was afraid of prophecy because, "It's all about blood and gore and beasts and things that go bump in the dark!"

It is true that Bible prophecy contains a lot of bad news concerning the future of this world. But all that news is for unbelievers — for those who have rejected God's gift of grace and mercy in Jesus Christ. For believers, Bible prophecy contains only good news — incredibly good news. So good, in fact, that the Apostle Paul exclaimed, "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us" (Romans 8:18). That statement is a mouthful! Think about how horrible all the suffering is in the world today. Yet, Paul says it is nothing compared to the blessings that believers will receive when the Lord returns. And those incredible blessings are spelled out in detail in Bible prophecy (1 Corinthians 2:9-10).

A Conspiracy

The bottom line is that Satan does not want anyone to read and understand Bible prophecy because it clearly reveals his ultimate defeat at the time of the triumphal return of Jesus. The message of Bible prophecy is **"Believers win in the end!"** That is a message that Satan does not want anyone to know.

So, Satan has convinced most Christians that the book of Revelation is a Chinese puzzle that no one can understand. The result is that most Christians have never read the book. It's like reading a novel through to the last chapter and then tossing the book aside, never to discover how the story ends.

A Fresh Assault

In these last days, Satan has launched a fresh assault on Bible prophecy, mainly because he does not want anyone to realize that we are living in the season of the Lord's return.

Particularly disturbing to me are the attacks on Bible Prophecy that are coming today from so-called Evangelicals. As disturbing as this may be, I see this development as a fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Consider, for example the following prophecy by the Apostle Peter (2 Peter 3:3-4):

Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."

In other words, there will be those in the end times who will mock God's Prophetic Word. I used to think this referred to non-believers, and, of course it does. But they are not the ones who are outspoken because they could care less. The sad and tragic thing is that most of the open scoffing today is coming from Christian leaders, causing much confusion within Christendom at large. Consider:

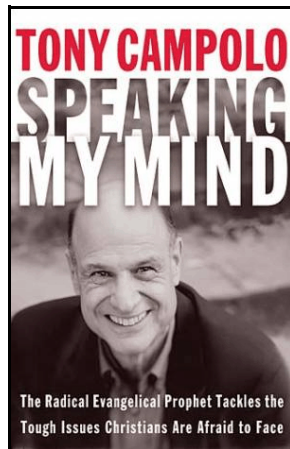
1) Rick Warren

In his book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, he mocks Bible prophecy when he states: "If you want Jesus to come back sooner, focus on fulfilling your mission, not figuring out prophecy." He goes on to characterize prophecy as a "distraction" and

says that anyone who lets himself get involved in distractions like studying prophecy “is not fit for the kingdom of God.”⁴

2) Tony Campolo

In his book, *Speaking My Mind*, he attacks believers in Bible prophecy with these words: “Rigid Christians who believe in the possibility of Jesus’ soon return are a real problem for the whole world.” He then proceeds to blame them for wars and a host of other evils.⁵



3) Bill Moyers

He is the PBS journalist who is a Baptist seminary graduate. He gave a speech in 2005 in which he denounced Tim LaHaye as a “religious warrior who subscribes to a fantastical theology.” He then claimed that those who believe in Bible prophecy desire environmental disaster “as a sign of the coming apocalypse.”⁶

4) The National Council of Churches

In December of 2008 the National Council of Churches joined the chorus of scoffers by issuing a denunciation of all those “who consider the state of Israel to be divinely ordained and scripturally determined, with a central role in ushering in the end of history . . .”⁷

5) Rob Bell

He is one of the leaders of the Emergent Church Movement. Here is one of his many put-downs of Bible prophecy:⁸

I would argue that in the last couple hundred years, disconnection has been the dominant way people have understood reality. And the Church has contributed to that disconnection by preaching horrible messages about being left behind and that this place is going to burn — absolutely toxic messages that are against the teachings of Scripture, which state that we are connected to God, we are connected to the earth, we are connected to each other

6) Brian McLaren

He is the leading spokesman of the Emergent Church Movement. Writing in *Sojourners* magazine in April of 2009 he stated that any theology that stresses a special end time role for Israel is: “Terrible . . . deadly . . . distorted . . . biblically unfaithful . . . and morally and ethically harmful.”⁹



He further stated that those who take the end time prophecies about Israel seriously, “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.”

Or consider this incredible statement from his book,

Everything Must Change:¹⁰

The phrase “the Second Coming of Christ” never actually appears in the Bible [Hebrews 9:28??] . . . If we believe that Jesus came in peace the first time, but that wasn’t His “real” and decisive coming — it was just a kind of warm-up for the real thing — then we leave the door open to envisioning a Second Coming that will be characterized by violence, killing, domination, and eternal torture.

This vision reflects a deconversion, a return to trust in the power of Pilate, not the unarmed truth that stood before Pilate, refusing to fight. This eschatological understanding of a violent Second Coming leads us to believe that in the end, even God finds it impossible to fix the world apart from violence and coercion . . .

If we remain charmed by this kind of eschatology, we will be forced to see the nonviolence of the Jesus of the Gospels as a kind of strategic fake-out, like a feigned retreat in war, to be followed up by a crushing blow of so-called redemptive violence in the end.

The gentle Jesus of the First Coming becomes a kind of trick Jesus, a fake-me-out Messiah, to be replaced by the true jihadist Jesus of a violent Second Coming. This is why I believe that many of our current eschatologies, intoxicated by dubious interpretations of John’s Apocalypse, are not only ignorant and wrong, but dangerous and immoral.

His reference to “the gentle Jesus of the First Coming” in this quote immediately reminded me of the words of Jesus in Revelation 2 where He speaks a strong word of warning to the church at Thyatira for tolerating a false prophetess in their midst. Speaking of her, Jesus says (Revelation 2:22-23):

Behold, I will cast her upon a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. And I will kill her children with pestilence; and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.

That statement alone should be sufficient to dispel the myth of the supposedly “gentle Jesus of the First Coming.”

McLaren also ridicules the teaching of the Rapture and the Millennial rule of Jesus, and he dismisses Dispensational teachings about the end time as “pop-Evangelical eschatology.” Yet Dallas Theological Seminary (a Dispensational school) recently invited him to speak to all their students!

Conclusion

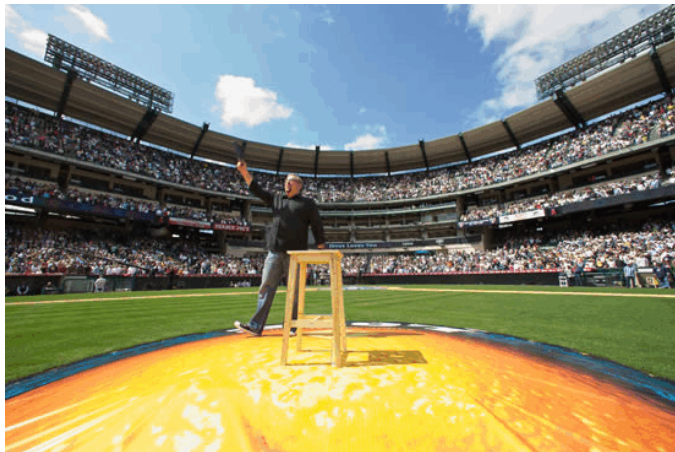
What appears to be happening in the Evangelical Movement today is that it is being hijacked by people who are advocating the old liberal Social Gospel together with Dominion theology.

Increasingly, they talk about the responsibility of the Church to “restore God’s creation.” The mission of the Church, according to them is to take the world for Christ, solve all the world’s

political, economic, social, and ecological problems, and then present a restored earth to Jesus.

In April of 2010 when Rick Warren unveiled his PEACE plan before 30,000 people at the Angels Baseball Stadium in what he called his “Sermon on the Mound,” he said:¹¹

I’m looking at a stadium full of people who are telling God they will do whatever it takes to establish God’s Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.



Rick Warren presenting his “Sermon on the Mound.”

The Truth

The truth is that the Church was never given the task of conquering the world for Christ or solving all the world’s political and social problems.

We were commanded to preach the Gospel and make disciples. And yes we were instructed to stand for righteousness.

But the restoration of God’s creation is a task that will be accomplished by Jesus when He returns to reign in glory and majesty from Mt. Zion in Jerusalem.

The sad thing is that the new apostasy concerning Bible prophecy is distracting people from the truth that we are living in the end times and that we are right on the threshold of the Tribulation when God will pour out His wrath on those who have rejected His grace, mercy and love.

Satan must be very pleased, because that is a truth he does not want anyone to know.

The formidable task we face as believers in God’s Prophetic Word is to stand firm and continue to urge the study of God’s Prophetic Word while proclaiming the truth of the Lord’s soon return to as many people as we can, as quickly as we can. ✚

Notes:

- 1) Loraine Boettner, *The Millennium* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, revised edition, 1990).
- 2) Pamela Starr Dewey, “Edgar Whisenant’s 88 Reasons,” www.isitso.org/guide/whise.html.
- 3) Alyssa Newcomb and Lyneka Little, “Harold Camping: Doomsday Prophet Wrong Again,” <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/business/2011/10/harold-camping-doomsday-prophet-wrong-again>.
- 4) Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), page 286.

- 5) Tony Campolo, *Speaking My Mind* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2004).
- 6) StarTribune of Minneapolis, Minnesota, January 30, 2005, “Bill Moyers: “There is no tomorrow.”
- 7) National Council of Churches, “Dangers of ‘Christian Zionism’ are cited in new NCC brochure,” www.nccusa.org/news/081202christianzionismbrochure.html, 2008.
- 8) *Relevant* magazine, “Rob Bell tells it like it is,” January/ February edition, 2008.
- 9) *Sojourners* magazine, “Four Points Toward Peace in the Middle East” by Brian McLaren, April 16, 2009, <http://blog.sojo.net/blogs/2009/04/16/four-points-toward-peace-middle-east>.
- 10) Brian McLaren, *Everything Must Change: Jesus, Global Crises, and a Revolution of Hope* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2nd edition, 2007).
- 11) Don Koenig, “Rick Warren’s Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan is Dominionism,” www.thepropheticyears.com/comments/Globel%20Peace%20plan.htm.

Sir Isaac Newton and Bible Prophecy

Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) is considered to be the single most important contributor in all of history to the development of modern science. This fact is ironic since he was a strong believer in both God and the Bible.

What makes it ironic is that the scientific community today takes the position that a belief in God disqualifies a person as a legitimate scientist. But Newton, whose methodology was strictly logical, believed deeply in the necessity of God. He reasoned that the beauty and complexity of the universe could only “proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being.”



Sir Isaac Newton

Another fascinating thing about Newton is that he was a student of Bible prophecy. He wrote a commentary on both Daniel and Revelation.

Perhaps his best known comment about Bible prophecy is a prophetic one: “About the time of the end, a body of men will be raised up who will turn their attention to the prophecies, and insist upon their literal interpretation, in the midst of much clamor and opposition.” ✚

Your Bible Prophecy Insight

Nathan E. Jones

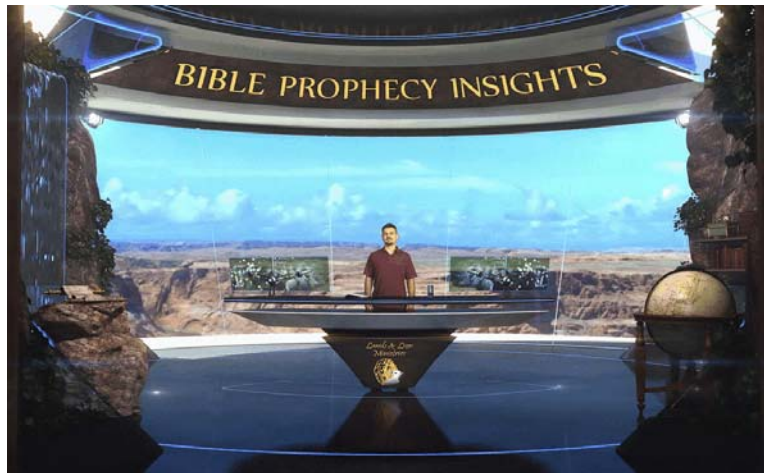
Are you one of those who love to troll YouTube, Facebook and other video and social networks?

Maybe it's you, maybe it's not. But according to Pew Research, 50% of Generation X (that'd be ages 30-45 like me) and a whopping 75% of the Millennial Generation (ages 18-29) spend many, many hours per day living on social networks and watching online videos. Yet, tragically, 25% of this same younger generation claim to be without any kind of religion, making it the least religious generation in American history.¹

There's a spiritual need. There's a highly in-demand technological medium. Put them together into an engaging, visually appealing video and we can evangelize a new generation desperate for the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

How then do you share an awesome insight into God's prophetic word to a generation who will barely give it a minute? Welcome to the ministry's newest video series "Bible Prophecy Insights," where you get an awesome insight into Bible prophecy — in just one minute!

These specially produced, computer animated videos, hosted by yours truly here at Lamb & Ministries, are designed to be shared all over the Internet, drawing people to the outright amazing promises God has for us all. I think of them as fancy fishing lures. Sent out to attract people who have never considered Bible prophecy and drawing them into a deeper study on our website at lamb1ion.com.



Episodes

We've begun with three videos covering some of the core messages of the ministry. Here is what these episodes teach:

Episode 1 - "The Accuracy of Bible Prophecy"

Can math prove the accuracy of Bible prophecy? Let's take just 8 of the 109 prophecies fulfilled in Jesus' life. Mathematician Peter Stoner calculated that the probability of all 8 being fulfilled in the life of one person is 1 in 10 to the seventeenth power. That's 17 zeros! That'd be like filling the entire state of Texas two feet deep in quarters. Mark one, throw it in. Next, drop in a blindfolded man. The odds would be that the very first coin he picks up, that's the one with the mark. Impossible, right? Not if the Bible is truly God's Word.

Episode 2 - "Signs of Jesus' Return"

Jesus promised He would return. While we cannot know the day or hour, Jesus did give us some signs to look out for. They'd come more frequent and intense - like birth pains - the closer He got. Deadly natural disasters, crumbling morality, spiritual apostasy, world wars, technological breakthroughs, and the greatest

sign of all — Israel would become a nation again. After almost 1,900 years of the Jews living in exile, it happened in 1948. Wow! We are truly living in the season of Jesus' return. Are you ready?

Episode 3 - "The Rapture"

The Bible tells us that Jesus will return one day soon to catch up — to Rapture — those who have accepted Him as Savior. Two people will be walking along and then — in the time it takes to snap your fingers — one will be left standing. In the blink of an eye, millions will be . . . gone. We will be taken off this earth to meet Jesus up in the clouds to live with the Lord forever. Those left behind will face the worst period in history — the Tribulation. Have you given your life to Jesus today? Will you be part of the Rapture?

Behind the Scenes

How do we make these videos? Well, other than me, everything about them is totally computer animated, and even then parts of me for technical reasons are animated like my feet and hair. So there's more to it than presenting on a live set. After the writing process, I stand in front of our studio's green screen and give my memorized "sermonette," reacting to what will eventually be placed all around me.

Our awesome Media team has to lock the camera into one position so that later the camera movements can be added in the computer. The digital copy is then sent on to our animator.

Speaking of animators, the Lord has really blessed us with a top-notch computer animator. Ralph Streat of Sevenfold Films is a former Disney animator who founded his own studio to serve Jesus Christ. He has a real heart for the Lord and an amazing talent. Ralph "plugs" me into the virtual set

and designs the effects and sounds that will enhance the message. The final version then spends almost a week of rendering on the server farm, and that's just for one minute of video!

Sharing

These evangelistic videos wouldn't be possible without your generous partnership with us in reaching the lost with the Good News of Jesus Christ and His soon return. Thank you for that! Our hope is that you'll learn from, enjoy, and pass these messages on to family, friends and acquaintances so that they too may know the spiritual richness of Bible prophecy. The more they go viral, the more people will be given these messages.

To watch "Bible Prophecy Insights," visit lamb1ion.com, YouTube and other social networks. If you'd like a hi-res copy for your sermon or study, visit sermonspice.com. ✚

Notes:

1. For more on what the various generations believe in the way of religion, technology and lifestyle, visit <http://www.onlinegraduateprograms.com/millennials>.



Announcing the 2012 Lamb & Lion Bible Conference

Theme: *Israel in the End Times*

Dates: June 29-30, 2012 (Friday evening through Saturday afternoon)

Location: The Marriott Hotel in Allen, Texas (a suburb of Dallas)

Speakers



Dave Reagan — A former professor of international law and politics. He is founder and director of Lamb & Lion Ministries. He is an expert on Middle East politics and the Jews in Bible prophecy. His topic will be “An Overview of Israel in Prophecy: Past, Present and Future.”

Jeff Seif — A former professor of Jewish studies at Christ for the Nations Institute. In 2006 he was invited to become the spokesman for Zola Levitt Ministries. He currently serves as a freelance writer and speaker, focusing on Israel and the Jewish heritage of Christianity. His topic will be “The Arabs and Israel.”



Mark Hitchcock — Pastor of Faith Bible Church in Edmond, Oklahoma. He has a law degree from Oklahoma City University and a doctorate from Dallas Theological Seminary. He is a prolific writer who has produced more than 20 books related to Bible prophecy. He will speak on “Israel in the Tribulation.”

Arnold Fruchtenbaum — Born in Russia of Jewish parents who migrated to the States in 1958. Founder and director of Ariel Ministries in San Antonio, Texas. He is a scholarly writer, best known for his book, *The Missing Link in Systematic Theology*. His topic will be “Israel in the Millennium.”



Gary Frazier — Founder and director of Discovery Worldwide Ministries in Hurst, Texas. He is a recognized expert on the nation of Israel, having visited the country more than 100 times. He is an author and conference speaker. His topic will be “The Salvation of Israel.”

Bill Koenig — A member of the White House Press Corps. He publishes a news report called “Koenig’s Watch,” which is a weekly summary of important Middle East and world news. He has traveled extensively throughout the Middle East, meeting with both Arab and Israeli leaders. His topic will be “The United States and Israel.”



Musicians

The conference will begin on Friday evening, June 29, with a concert by Ted Pearce. Jack Hollingsworth will sing throughout the conference and will present a concert at a banquet on Saturday evening.



Jack Hollingsworth — Jack wandered the streets homeless for 20 years before his life was transformed by Jesus. For the past 17 years he and his wife, Sally, have traveled the nation speaking, teaching, and singing. He is the featured singer on the Lamb & Lion television program, “Christ in Prophecy.”

Ted Pearce — Ted is one of the most gifted Messianic song writers, performers, and worship leaders on the scene today. His albums of original songs have touched hearts all over the world. His ministry is based in the Dallas, Texas area.



The conference is free of charge, but seating is limited, so registration is required. **You can register by calling 972-736-3567.**

There will be a banquet on Saturday evening, and there will be a charge of \$35 for it. Dr. Reagan will be the featured speaker at the banquet.

Mark your calendar now for this important event! ☆

The Deception of CHRISLAM

Eric Barger



Chrislam, which purports to join Islam and Christianity into one harmonious, synthesized religion, is fast becoming a rallying point in some American church circles.

Under the leadership of something called “Faith Shared,” two organizations, Interfaith Alliance and Human Rights First, spearheaded an event loosely called “Chrislam Sunday” on June 26, 2011. It was celebrated by dozens of churches nationwide as joint Christian-Muslim services were held in various Methodist, Episcopal, Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, Unitarian Universalist, Catholic, Lutheran, Congregational, Baptist and other denominations and groups.

Make note that we know of no mosques used for a Chrislam service. The fact is that no imam is about to bring a Bible into a mosque and suggest that our God is their god. For the Muslim cleric, the only acceptable agreement that both religions are somehow equals is if doing so presents the perceived image of a kinder, gentler, politically correct Islam and if doing so furthers the cause of Islam.

It isn’t peculiar that Muslim leaders would endorse Chrislam Sunday, claim that both religions are on equal footing, or partake in the charade of dialog indulged in by the Yale Divinity School and assorted foolish Christians over the past four years. The Muslim practice of deception of the infidel (that’s everyone outside of Islam) knows no boundaries. This is called *Kitman* and *Taqiyya*. Kitman refers to half truths meant to mislead an infidel, whereas Taqiyya is complete deception of unbelievers. Both are acceptable tactics — as long as Islam is the winner in the end.

Chrislam Fact Check

Though Chrislam supporters correctly suggest that both Islam and Christianity have Abrahamic roots and that both religions teach morals, ethics and monotheism, the similarities quickly disintegrate with a careful study of either the Bible or the Qur’an. An examination of the deities worshiped by the two religions immediately brings into question how any thoughtful, biblically-minded Christian could ascertain Chrislam’s chief edict — that we all worship the same God.

As I close my live seminar teaching on Chrislam these days, I list the following facts, which I spend the better part of the previous hour documenting:

- * Allah is NOT Jehovah.
- * The Jesus of Islam is NOT the Jesus of the Bible.
- * The Bible does NOT harmonize with the Qur’an.
- * Salvation by faith is NOT available through Islam.
- * Chrislam is neither Christian nor Muslim.

Movements like these only gain ground because Christians either do not know their Bibles or because they are unwilling to resist heresy for fear of being ridiculed and labeled as politically incorrect, hate mongers, or narrow and bigoted.

As more Bible believers in the West become aware of Chrislam, we are waking to the fact that some of those whom we’ve accepted as our leaders have been busy formulating and selling a different gospel and making alliances at the cost of the Bible, our Christ, and our God.

Eric Barger is pictured on the right in the Lamb & Lion video studio where he has participated in numerous television programs with Dave Reagan and Nathan Jones.

Eric is the founder and director of an apologetics ministry called “Take a Stand! Ministries.” His website can be found at www.ericbarger.com.



As I was researching for this article, I ran across someone with whom I wasn’t familiar, a writer and researcher named Bill Muehlenberg from “CultureWatch.” He is a staunch opponent of Chrislam and in a blog entry, “Chrislam: Ten Reasons To Say ‘No,’” he lists many of the same reasons to reject Chrislam that I do. One of those is that anytime Christians enter into dialogs like these it’s always at the cost of divine and absolute truth. Muehlenberg says:

This attempt at interfaith dialogue simply compromises the Christian gospel. It waters it down so much that there is nothing recognizable left. When the very core teachings of Christianity are scuttled or downplayed simply in the interests of ‘getting along’ or ‘reducing tensions,’ then it is a counter-productive effort.

Muehlenberg is completely right.

It isn’t shocking that the root of Chrislam is accepted among liberals, socialists, one-worlders, Emergents, and others who appear to be Christian in name only. When Robert Schuller, Jim Wallis, and Brian McLaren added their names to the list of those who signed “Loving God and Neighbor Together: A Christian Response to a Common Word Between Us and You” (the Yale Divinity School’s 2008 Muslim-Christian dialog initiative), few were surprised. However, it is mystifying how at least the notion that Islam’s Allah is Jehovah God by another name has gained

ground in Evangelical circles.

When men such as Bill Hybels of Willow Creek, NAE President Leith Anderson and Fuller Seminary head Richard Mouw signed the Yale document, informed Bible believers, who understood the implications, began to speak up. Another signer was Rick Warren, who in recent days has strongly denied any alignment with the Chrislam movement; yet his name curiously remains on the Yale paper. Warren may not be ready to participate in joint services with Muslims but, as one of the original Yale signatories, he indicated over three years ago his agreement with the basic premise of “Loving God and Neighbor Together” — that the two religions serve the same God — the very crux of Chrislam.

Islam rejects both the deity of Christ (Sura 5:17) and His death on the Cross (Sura 4:157-158). What is there to discuss? Still not convinced? One of the best refutations of Chrislam comes right from the Qur’an itself:

O People of the Book! Commit no excesses in your religion: Nor say of Allah aught but the truth. ***Christ Jesus the son of Mary was (no more than) an apostle of Allah,*** and His Word, which He bestowed on Mary, and a spirit proceeding from Him: so believe in Allah and His apostles. ***Say not “Trinity”:*** ***desist:*** it will be better for you: for Allah is one Allah. Glory be to Him: ***(far exalted is He) above having a son.*** To Him belong all things in the heavens and on earth” (Sura 4:171, emphasis added).

How much clearer can it be? There is no spiritual foundation for this dialog. There is no common ground. Their Allah had no son. **Their god is NOT our God!**

If the countless admonitions given to us in the Bible weren’t enough, let this passage from the Qur’an forever stand as a roadblock in the way of any sneaky Muslim mullah or slippery Christian leader who seeks to equate Jehovah with the false god of Muhammad.

I know some will think I’m being too hard or counterproductive. However, Bible believers are pledged to the Gospel and not to what’s politically correct. Frankly, I have no time to show respect to a religion that has damned the soul of every individual who has followed its demonic teachings for the past 1300 years.

How odd that, at a time when more Muslims are being saved than ever before in history, this assortment of foolish American Christians have taken it upon themselves to try to merge with Islam. Whether they honestly see it as noble, charitable, or conciliatory, their mistake will undoubtedly be at the cost of souls and a further weakened Church. This, while Muslims are fleeing into the arms of Jesus and rejecting Islam in places where doing so could cost them not only their family, friends, and career but also their lives. ✚

(For an in-depth look at Chrislam and to understand the failure of many Church leaders to see the peril it represents, get a copy of Eric Barger’s new DVD “The Deception of Chrislam” recorded at Jan Markell’s “Understanding The Times” Conference in October 2011. You can order it through his website at www.ericbarger.com.)

Lamb & Lion Finances

When Lamb & Lion Ministries was founded in 1980, the Board of Trustees determined that one of its operating policies would be to avoid debt by paying cash for everything. That meant that if we had a need and didn’t have the money to cover it, we would pray for the Lord to supply the funds.

That policy has proved to be a great blessing to the ministry. We have ended every year since 1980 with all our bills paid in full, and our property, buildings, and equipment are all debt free — for which we praise the Lord!

Our trustees also decided from the beginning that we were going to operate the ministry in a totally transparent way by providing full disclosure of our income and expenses. Accordingly, our monthly financial statement is available to anyone on request, free of charge. Our annual audited report is also available for the cost of printing and mailing the report. And our annual report to the U.S. government concerning all our financial activities is available for inspection on our website.

Early in the history of the ministry, our trustees applied for membership in the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability. We were accepted, and we have been a member in good standing ever since. This organization requires the highest standards of operation regarding income, expenditures, and overall governance.



The integrity of our financial operations has been verified by an organization called Charity Navigator. It is an independent, non-profit organization that currently evaluates more than 5,000 American charities — both religious and secular. Its website address is www.charitynavigator.org.



In December of last year we received a letter from the president of Charity Navigator, Ken Berger, in which he informed us that we had received their highest rating (4 stars) for the seventh year in a row! He wrote:

Only 2% of the charities we rate have received 7 consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating that Lamb & Lion Ministries outperforms most other charities in America. This “exceptional” designation from Charity Navigator differentiates Lamb & Lion Ministries from its peers and demonstrates to the public it is worthy of their trust.

Please pray that we will continue to be good stewards of the donations that the Lord entrusts to us. ✚

The March Toward Secularism —

A recent study by the Barna Group found that almost 60% of Christian young people between the ages of 15 to 29 have fallen away from involvement in a church. David Kinnaman, president of the Barna Group made the following observation: “Christianity has become so hip, so watered-down, so about entertainment — and they [young people] are looking for something of more substance.” In short, the Seeker-Friendly Movement which was designed to attract this group, has driven them away. *When will the Church stop dancing with the world and get back to proclaiming the Gospel?*

The Supreme Court recently rejected an appeal from a North Carolina county commissioners’ court concerning Christian prayers offered before its public meetings. A lower court had ruled that prayers could not be presented in the name of a specific god, like Jesus. Instead, they had to be prayed to a generic god. The Supreme Court allowed this ruling to stand! The ruling does not ban prayers altogether, just those that are directed to a named deity. *Can this really be happening in America?*

A federal judge ruled in January that a Rhode Island high school must take down a decades-old banner that encouraged students to be kind and helpful. Why? Because the exhortation was worded as a prayer, beginning with “Our Heavenly Father,” and ending with, “Amen.” The brief prayer was written by a seventh-grade student years ago. This ruling goes a step farther than the one above in that it rules out a prayer to a generic god who is not mentioned by name. *Where will this nonsense end?*



Jennifer Keeton

In 2010 Jennifer Keeton, a psychology graduate student at Augusta State University in Georgia, was placed on academic probation because she requested permission to work with conversion therapy by helping clients to stop living a gay lifestyle. The school’s officials demanded that she complete

a “remediation plan” that would include attendance at gay events, enrolling in sensitivity training, and writing monthly reflection papers — all of which she declined on the basis of her Christian principles. In December, the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals denied her request to complete her studies while her case works its way through the courts. *So, if you believe homosexuality is a sin and that a person can be delivered from it, you can be kicked out of school, denied a career choice, and be forced to take a brain-washing course?*

The sanctity of marriage continues to erode in America. The Pew Research Center has announced that as of the end of 2011, only 51% of adults in the United States are married, whereas in 1960 the total was 72%. This means, of course, that more and more adults today are simply living together without being married, and this is true even among those who regularly go to church. Most professing Christians today would probably be shocked to learn that the Bible teaches that the only moral sex is that within a marriage between one man and one woman. *Is there any question that the erosion of Christianity impacts all aspects of society?*

TIMES and Seasons

The Christian Decline of Europe —

Christianity continues to fade from the social scene in Europe. On the Continent, only about 2 to 3% of professing Christians attend church anymore. In England, which was the center of Christianity in the 19th Century, only 7% attend church. And many of these are attending churches, like the Church of England, that are spiritually dead.

The vacuum is being filled by Islam. There are now more Islamic mosques in France than Roman Catholic churches. Likewise, there are more mosques in England than Methodist churches. The Church of England has closed hundreds of churches which it is either giving away to the Muslims or else selling to the general public to be transformed into movie theaters or night clubs.



David Cameron

The Prime Minister of England, David Cameron, recently stated that he still considers his nation to be “a Christian country.” He then proceeded to emphasize the problem in his nation by describing himself as a “vaguely practicing Christian who has doubts.” He further stated that he wanted to make it clear that he was not saying that it was wrong to have another faith, like Islam.

The good news is that Christianity is growing exponentially in Africa, Asia and the Americas. Whereas two-thirds of all professing Christians lived in Europe 100 years ago, only one-fourth of them live there today. Almost 40% of professing Christians live today in the Americas, 25% in sub-Saharan Africa, and 13% in Asia.

Call for a One-World Government —

The Vatican’s Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace issued a 41 page statement in October of 2011 in which it called for a world government and for a single world financial system. The document quoted several Popes to show how support for a centralized world government is very much a part of the philosophy of Rome. In the document, the Vatican pledged its commitment to such a government. *In short the document calls for the fulfillment of Revelation 17 to the letter!*

Knocking Israel —

In January UN chief Ban Ki-Moon spoke at a conference in Beirut, Lebanon, at which he issued a demand for Israel to end its “occupation” of Arab and Palestinian territories, which includes Jerusalem. He declared that all



Ban Ki-Moon

Jewish settlements, old and new, are “illegal.” *We are witnessing the fulfillment of Zechariah 12:2-3! ♦*

Is this the Year? —

The poem below was written by John Ecob, the editor of *Herald of Hope* magazine in Australia (www.heraldofhope.org.au).

2012 — Is this the year?

The year of the upward call,
The year the Church will see her Lord
When tears will cease to fall.

Is this the year, the crowning year
When all around the throne,
The year when saints of every age
Join praise to Him alone?

Is this the year, the final year
Life's journey now complete
The year we rise, in glad surprise
And sit at Jesus' feet?

Is this the year when saints will meet
With those who've gone before?
The lonely days will all be past
No parting there for evermore.

Is this the year with terror filled
The year the world will see
The "man of sin" rise on the scene
With beastly claims of deity?

Is this the year when chosen men
From every tribe of Israel's race
Are sealed by God to tell the world:
"Prepare to stand before God's face"?

Is this the year — the Father's choice
When He will send His Son
To snatch away His lovely Bride
Which He by grace has won?

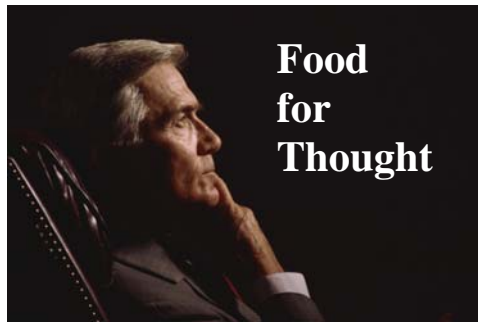
Come quickly, Lord, we cannot wait
Thy lovely face to see.
Is this the year? How soon t'will be?
Together, all, at home with Thee.

Relating to God —

The poem below was written by a Muslim mystic — a woman by the name of Rabia al Basri (717 - 801). She was a native of Iraq. Normally, we would not publish anything by a Muslim spokesperson. But this little poem contains a profound insight about God. Read it carefully and think about it.

If I adore You out of fear of Hell, burn me in Hell.
If I adore You out of desire for Paradise,
Lock me out of Paradise.
But if I adore You for Yourself alone,
Do not deny to me Your eternal beauty.

What is the basis of your commitment to God? Is it a desire to receive blessings? Or is it motivated instead by a desire to avoid Hell? Is God your Cosmic Sugar Daddy, or do you view Him as a Cosmic Sadist who loves to torture people? Are you seeking a heavenly credit card, or are you trying to find an eternal fire insurance policy? The only proper relationship with God is to fall in love with who He is — our Creator and Savior.



Food for Thought



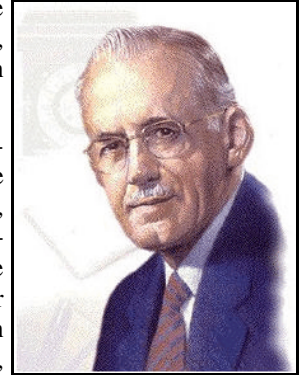
John Ecob

The Crucial Question for the Modern Day Church —

"There is a great decision that every denomination has to make sometime in the development of its history. Every church also has to make it . . . [and] eventually, every board is faced with the decision and has to keep making it . . . [Likewise] every pastor has to face it and keep renewing his decision on his knees before

God. Finally, every church member, every evangelist, every Christian has to make this decision.

"The decision is this: Shall we modify the truth in doctrine or practice in order to gain more adherents? Or, shall we preserve the truth in doctrine and practice and take the consequences?" — A. W. Tozer (1897 - 1963). He was an American Christian pastor, preacher, author, magazine editor, Bible conference speaker, and spiritual mentor.



A. W. Tozer

"A false gospel offers the natural man what he wants: good feelings, healings, riches and success. The true Gospel offers him what he needs: forgiveness of sin, redemption, perfect righteousness, reconciliation with God and the power to live a victorious life." — Mike Gendron, founder and director of Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries, a ministry whose fundamental purpose is to deliver the Gospel to Catholics.



John MacArthur

"Why is the contemporary Church so eager to be tolerant? I'm certain a major reason is the sin and unbelief that pervade the Church. If casual Christians can lower the expectations on their leadership, they will be much more comfortable with their own sin. With lower moral standards, the Church becomes more tolerant of sin and less tolerant of holiness. The 'sinner-friendly' Church is intolerable to God — that is a frightening condition." — John MacArthur, an Evangelical writer and minister noted for his radio program titled "Grace to You." He is the pastor of Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, California and also serves as president of The Master's College in Santa Clarita, California.

"God hates the lukewarm gospel of half-truths that is now spreading over the globe. This gospel says, 'Just believe in Jesus and you'll be saved. There's nothing more to it.' It ignores the whole counsel of God, which speaks of repenting from former sins, of taking up your cross, of being conformed to the image of Christ by the refining work of the Holy Spirit. It is totally silent about the reality of Hell and an after-death judgment." — David Wilkerson (1931-2011), former pastor of Times Square Church in New York. ✚

New Programs

Dr. David R. Reagan

We have been working hard on the production of new television programs for this new year. At this point in time it appears that we will produce more new programs this year than in any previous year.

A total of 8 new programs are based on the presentations that were made last year at our 2011 Bible conference. The theme of that conference was ‘Christianity Under Attack.’ We had five guest speakers, and I spoke twice, once at the conference and again at the conference banquet. It took an enormous amount of editing to prepare these programs for broadcast. That’s because each presentation ran 50 minutes, and only 24 to 25 minutes could be used on each TV program. If you would like to get copies of all the conference presentations in full, you can do so by purchasing the conference album. It contains 3 DVDs with a total of six presentations. The cost is \$25.



George Collich, Dave Reagan and Trey Collich are shown above at the entrance to the Protestant Cemetery on Mount Zion in Jerusalem.

We are also busy putting the final editing touches on the five programs we shot in Israel last summer. Four of them focus on the key mountains that surround Jerusalem — the Mount of Olives, the Temple Mount, Mount Zion, and Mount Herzl. The fifth program will be titled “A Walk Through the Old City.” We may put together a sixth program that will focus on the life of Eliezer Ben Yehuda, the man who revived the Hebrew language from the dead.

Another group of new programs will be centered around the visit we made last year to the Explorations in Antiquity Center in LaGrange, Georgia. This is the wonderful facility that was established by Jim Fleming, one of Christendom’s foremost experts on biblical archaeology. ❖



“Christ in Prophecy” Broadcast Schedule

National Networks

Daystar Network				
DirecTV Channel 369		DISH Channel 263		
On cable networks throughout the nation.				
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Wed. 4:00pm	Wed. 5:00pm	Wed. 6:00pm	Wed. 7:00pm

Inspiration Network				
Available on cable networks				
DirecTV Channel 364		DISH Channel 259		
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Sun. 3:00pm	Sun. 4:00pm	Sun. 5:00pm	Sun. 6:00pm

The Church Channel				
DirecTV Channel 371				
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Sat. 6:30pm	Sat. 7:30pm	Sat. 8:30pm	Sat. 9:30pm

National Religious Broadcasters Network				
DirecTV Channel 378				
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Sun. 2:00pm	Sun. 3:00pm	Sun. 4:00pm	Sun. 5:00pm

Golden Eagle Broadcasting Network				
DirecTV Channel 363				
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Tues. 4:00pm	Tues. 5:00pm	Tues. 6:00pm	Tues. 7:00pm

Regional Networks



“Christ in Prophecy” is broadcast throughout southern Louisiana on the **Family Vision Network** at various times. See: www.kajn.com/familyvision.



New Mexico Family Stations is a network consisting of two stations in Albuquerque. Our program is broadcast on Thursday at 11:00pm and on Saturday at 3:00pm.

Schedule —

Due to surgery for knee replacement, Dr. Reagan canceled all his appointments in January and February. In **March** he will resume his speaking schedule at First Baptist Church in Dallas where he will be one of the featured speakers at the church's conference on "Impacting the Culture" (morning of the 3rd). That evening he will begin a prophecy conference at Woodland Hills Baptist Church in Longview, Texas (3-4). Nathan Jones will conduct a conference via Skype with the 2nd Metropolitan Baptist Church in Cleveland, Ohio on the 17th. Dr. Reagan will end the month by speaking at the annual Tulsa Prophecy Conference sponsored by Phillip Goodman Ministries (29-31). In **April** Dr. Reagan will speak at Lakewood Christian Church in McAlester, Oklahoma (15). In early **May** Dr. Reagan is scheduled to take a pilgrimage group to Israel (5-16). In **June** both Dr. Reagan and Nathan Jones will conduct a prophecy conference at Hilltop Bible Fellowship in Ashdown, Arkansas (2-3). And all the Lamb & Lion staff will be involved in the ministry's annual Bible conference to be held in Allen, Texas (a suburb of Dallas) at the end of the month (29-30). Please note that Nathan Jones is available for both speaking engagements and radio interviews.

Volunteers —

We are very blessed to be assisted by a number of volunteers. Several of these are people who assist our Web Minister, Nathan Jones, with the Christ in Prophecy Facebook group. One of the moderators of that group is Dorothy Phenicie who lives in High Springs, Florida.



Dorothy and her husband, Chuck, have one son, three grandsons, and two canine kids. Dorothy is a retired Orthodontic Assistant and now spends her time taking care of her husband and home, as well as gardening, painting, reading, and interacting with members of the Christ in Prophecy Facebook group.

Dorothy says she can't remember a time in her life when she did not believe in God, but it wasn't until the year 2000 that she allowed the Lord to reign in her life. She discovered the *Left Behind* books and bought an NIV Bible. Those resources led her to doing research on the Internet concerning the word, Rapture. And that, in turn, led her to the Lamb & Lion website.

We praise God for people like Dorothy who give selflessly of their time to assist the outreach of our ministry.

Ministry News



Missions —

During 2011 we contributed over \$200,000 to missions, both domestic and foreign. During 2012 we will continue to send regular monthly support to the following missions:

Domestic Missions:

According to Prophecy (Don Perkins)
Lion of Judah (Gary Fisher)
Crown & Sickles (Don McGee)
Maranatha Ministries (Al Gist)
Prophecy Depot (Bill Salus)
Spirit of Grace (Dennis Pollock)
Mercy Ships (Becky Bynum)
Acts 29 Ministries (Jack & Sally Hollingsworth)

Foreign Missions:

Evangelist Remegio Blanco in the Philippines
Worship Leader Edmund Martinez in the Philippines
Hands of Luke Ministries in Juarez, Mexico
Pastor Nazir Gil in Pakistan
Evangelist and Publisher John Ishmael in Bangalore, India
Pastor Abraham Louw in Kimberley, South Africa
Evangelist Kenneth Humphries in Belfast, Northern Ireland
Evangelist and Teacher Paul Liu in China
Evangelist and Translator Donald Dolmus in Nicaragua
Pastor and Evangelist Avi Mizrahi in Tel Aviv, Israel
Christian Friends of Israel in Jerusalem, Israel

In addition to the donations we make each month to these ministries, you can designate special donations which we will forward to them. We praise God for enabling us to be a channel of blessings to these great ministries!

Prophecy Partners —

Our Prophecy Partners provide the financial base of our ministry. They are also our prayer partners. We would like to invite you to become one of our Partners by pledging to give \$20 a month or more for one year. When you become a Prophecy Partner, you will start receiving a special letter each month from Dr. Reagan, together with a gift. The letter outlines our financial and prayer needs and provides updates about our outreach through television, the Internet, and publishing. The gift is usually a DVD copy of one of our TV programs. Prophecy Partners are also eligible for discounts on purchases from the ministry. To sign up as a Prophecy Partner, just call 972-736-3567. ✚



Prophecy Partners John & Mary Ann Roberts of Destin, Florida with Dr. Reagan in Tel Aviv, Israel.



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A Challenge to Believers

Last year, at the Lamb & Lion annual Bible conference, Dr. Reagan delivered a special hard-hitting message at the conference banquet. It constituted a challenge to professing Christians to believe the Bible for what it says, from its beginning to its ending.

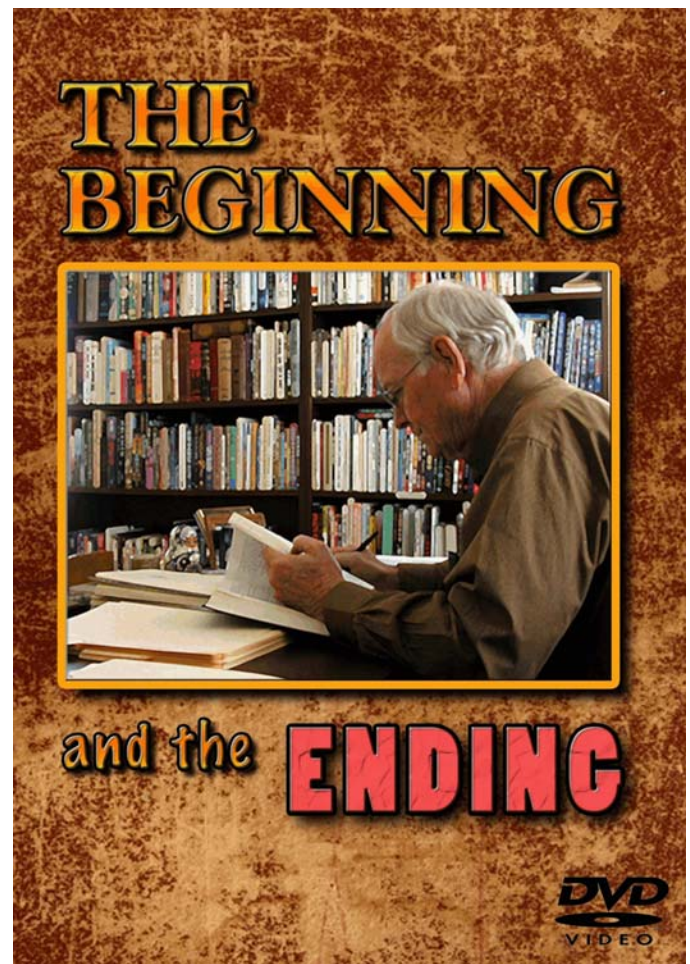
Dr. Reagan focused on the tendency of Christian leaders to spiritualize the beginning and ending of the Bible by converting the Creation narrative into a mythical story and the Second Coming and Millennium into mythical promises.

Half of the presentation deals with the effort of many Christians to make the Creation story conform to modern scientific theories through theological gymnastics like the Gap Theory and the Day-Age Theory. Dr. Reagan strongly asserts his belief that Genesis chapter 1 means exactly what it says — namely, that God created the universe in 6 literal days about 6,000 years ago. He then presents counter-arguments to the scientific theories that estimate the earth and the universe are billions of years old.

He also talks about the absurdity of the theory of Evolution, and he rejects the efforts of some Christians to accommodate that theory with notions of Theistic Evolution.

The second half of his presentation deals with the effort of Amillennialists to explain away the promise of Jesus to return to this earth to reign for a thousand years. He refutes the basic assumptions of Amillennialism point-by-point.

Dr. Reagan concludes his presentation by pointing out that the very integrity of God's Word is at stake, because if we cannot believe what the Bible says about the beginning and ending of human history, then how can we believe what it says about such things as the Virgin Birth, the miracles of Jesus, and



the Resurrection?

This is a very thought-provoking presentation that is appropriate for viewing by both individuals and groups.

This DVD video program runs 40 minutes in length and sells for \$12 plus the cost of shipping. To order, call 972-736-3567 between 8am and 5pm Central time, Monday through Friday. Or place your order through our website at www.lamblion.com. ❖

