

# The Biblical Examiner

*An Examination of Biblical Precepts Involved in Issues at Hand*

Summer, 2001

Lucky Charms

Book Reviews

*Hypnosis, Medical, Scientific, or Occultic?*

*The Prayer of Jabez*

The Prayer of Jabez

Deceiving, and Being Deceived, by Dave MacPherson

Why Study Bible Prophecy

Whom Does the Land of Palestine Belong? by Thomas Williamson

Christian apologetics, by Darin Gregg

How Many Children Have to Die? by Matthew Chancey

OOPARTS-- Out Of Place ARTifacts, Physical Evidence of Antediluvian Man, by Pastor Karl Hanel, Director of Creation Evangelism Ministries.

Personal

HomeSchooler, see other file.

## Lucky Charms & Talismans or The New Illiterates

*MEM. O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. (Ps. 119:97.)*

One of the more obvious marks of a Child of God is his love for the word of God. The child of God will feel pressed to read and study the word of God. There will be a hunger in the heart that can only be satisfied by reading the Scriptures.

There are practical reasons for studying the word of God also:

*That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; (Eph. 4:14.)*

In Ephesians 4, Paul identifies the various spiritual gifts that are given to individuals in the Gospel Church. The purpose of those gifts is to strengthen the believers in the Biblical faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, so they will not be *tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine*. In other words, so they will be firmly grounded in the faith.

Not only will a Christian desire to be in the word of God, not only does a Christian need to be in the word of God for his own stability, but a Christian is commanded to study God's word. Without God's word, he has no firm foundation upon which to stand:

*Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. 15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. 17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; 18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. (2 Tim. 2:14.)*

Those who are not thoroughly grounded in the word of God are in very serious danger of being swept along with

whatever doctrine sounds good or whatever doctrine appeals to the flesh. They are also in serious danger of disastrous compromise concerning the Christian faith. That is to say, they do not know for themselves what is required of them by God. So they follow what others say about the word of God instead of finding out for themselves what God requires of them.

Observe:

### **Number of unwed couple living together grew in 90s**

By Ganaro C. Armas, ASSOCIATED PRESS

#### **WASHINGTON - Living together out of wedlock surged in popularity in the 1990s, even in Bible Belt states where alternative arrangements traditionally have been seen as less socially acceptable.**

Nationally, there were 72 percent more unmarried-partner households than a decade earlier, 2000 census figures show. Homes headed by married couples increased by just 7 percent.

In Indiana, there were 124,851 unmarried-partner households in 2000, or about 2.1 percent of total households. That was up from 67,714, or 1.2 percent, in 1990.

The practice of living together without being married grew even faster in the South. The portion of unmarried couples doubled in Arkansas and Oklahoma, to 4 percent from 2 percent.

Nationally, 52 percent of homes are headed by married couples, down from 55 percent in 1990.

Unmarried-couple homes made up 5 percent of all households in 2000, compared with 3 percent in 1990.

In many cases, the biggest increase in unmarried couples came in states with some of the highest divorce rates.

The numbers released so far do not disclose how many unmarried-partner homes were made up of same-sex couples. That number and additional details will be released during the next year.

(Indianapolis Star, 1A, May 20, 2001.)

America is being paganized at an alarming rate. And, sad to say, it is being done with not only the approval of but many times with the help of those who say they believe the Bible.

I was an associate pastor in Louisiana for 7 years (1976-1983), just East of Bossier City, which is just across the Red River from Shreveport (Merrywoods Baptist Church, Haughton). Bossier City is the home of Barksdale Air Force Base, and we had a lot of AF men in our church. At that time, Barksdale was the home of a double wing of B-52s (bombers) and a double wing of KC 135s (tankers). For a time, we lived in the flight path; a loaded KC 135 taking off would literally rattle the windows of the house, as it passed right above the house.

Being a large AF base, there were a great number of AF personal living off base. Inter marriage between America Airmen and oriental women was a common sight, and we encountered some godly women among those wives. However, far more common were wives who retained their oriental culture, including their Buddhist faith. It was not unusual to go into a home and see a small statue of Buddha sitting in a corner and candles burning around that alter.

Christians should consider such an alter (it is also common to see altars built to Mary Maryolatry) blatant paganism, but upon close examination, it appears that many Christians also have their pagan alter.

Far too often, Christianity has devolved, even in Bible Believing and King James Only circles, to little more than paganism, as the book that is called a Bible is considered by many little more than a talisman (charm) to keep evil away from the home. Though many professed Christians say they believe the Bible, those same people use it as though it were a cross hanging around their neck.

The following is from a section of NPR's Morning Edition (May 14, 2001), and it should cause great consternation, considering that the man they interviewed, Professor Brown, is a New Testament Theology teacher at Emory University's (United Methodist) Candler School of theology. The introduction of the program posted on NPR's (<http://www.npr.org>) web site reads:

The Bible In America (14.4 | 28.8) -- **The Bible is the best-selling book of all time -- but fewer Americans are actually reading it.** Host Bob Edwards speaks to biblical studies professor Michael Brown about the decline of biblical knowledge in America. (3:35) (Emp. added.)

The text of the program is as follows (Bob Edwards' comments are without quotes, Professor Brown's comments are in quotes, and the emphasis is mine):

Biblical references are part of everyday speech. An eye for an eye. David and Goliath. Forbidden fruit. But a growing number of people are not familiar with the sources of these references. A Gallop poll last year showed that fewer people are reading the Bible. Only 59% of those surveyed said they read the Bible occasionally. Down from 73% in the 1980s. Emory University's New Testament professor Michael Brown (whose grammar was not good, *ed.*) says people have been moving away from traditional religious practices.

Since 60s, there has been a decrease and let's say a general cultural knowledge about the Bible and awareness of what actually is in the Bible. I think that even as Fundamentalism has grown in some places, actually reading the Bible has decreased. And so people know generally or they think they know generally what is in the Bible, but they don't know the specifics.

Though the number of professions of Christ and of Christians who say they believe the Bible is growing, knowledge about the Bible is decreasing, and *shacking up* is increasing.

The lack of scriptural understanding is allowing false doctrines and sin to flourish unhindered among Bible Believers. This lack of knowledge of the word of God permits the *many false prophets* Christ warned about to prosper and *deceive many*. (Mat. 24:11. Sadly, based upon their understanding of passages like 2 Tim. 3:1 & 2 Peter 3:3, there are those who will not stand against the increasing evil, but actually rejoice in it. It means Jesus is coming soon.) It is *all the counsel of God*, the entire word of God, that keeps at bay the *grievous wolves* who shall arise from within the ranks of the Church. (Acts 20:26-30.) We are continually warned by the Holy Spirit that those who do not keep themselves Biblically informed will be victims of the *wolves* and of the *false teachers* that are so rampant in the church.

[Bob Edwards again] Do you find that you have to stop assuming that your students know the basics about the bible and (chuckle) you have to go back to teaching that?

Yes. I mean at one point, I thought that things like knowing the books of the Bible was a Sunday School type topic, that they would have covered that. But they don't even know that. So you have, you have to really teach them the basics—how many books there are, what order they come in, how many gospels there are. I mean, there's some basic stuff people just don't know.

Here Mr. Brown is saying that basic facts such as how many books in the Bible and what books make up the Gospels must be taught to theology students. What are the churches teaching?

[Bob Edwards] They know about the Ark. They know about Eden.

In general. But they haven't read the story. They know, you know, the general story about the Garden of Eden, but when you actually take them to Genesis, and they read it, they are surprised. There's a lot in the story they didn't know.

Remember, these are theology students, and it sounds as though they are getting the facts about the word of God from Hollywood movies, including the *Left Behind* series, and from TV specials such as *Noah's Ark*. Their ideas about the word of God are not coming from the word of God.

[Bob Edwards] The Bible continues to be a big best seller, so how is it that ignorance of the Bible is in the increase?

That's amazing, isn't it? (Laugh) Yea, people buy it. Apparently, they are buying it in droves. They just don't read it. In some ways, it's kind of **like a talisman** (charm) for some people. They feel that if they have it in their house, that makes things better. But they don't read it. And when I used to teach undergraduates, I would come across a lot of Freshmen students, in particular, who brought their Bibles with them to school that grandmother, or their mother, somebody gave them a Bible as a graduation gift, and they, and they brought it with them, but they just didn't read it.

How many church goers do the same thing. If they carry their Bibles to church, at home, they have not spent over a few moments that past week reading it, let alone in serious study. Those people act as though the Bible is little more than a good luck charm, for they do not read nor study it.

[Bob Edwards] I was going to suggest that, that maybe all these Bibles are being bought as gifts (chuckle).

Yea. (chuckle) I think that is what s going on.

Once upon a time, you could talk about this in public schools.

You could. I wouldn't have a problem with teaching Bible in public schools if you had people who, who were credited first of all, and who didn't do it as a platform for evangelization, but just taught the Bible **within its proper context**. But the thing that scares me is that most of the times when it s, when it s proposed as an elective course in public schools or something like that, it s not for that reason. It s for the reason of evangelization. It s because people feel that, you know, the moral climate in the country is become so bad that we need to inject a little moral truth into our educational process. And that really kind of scares me.

How many parents who do not even read the Bible on their own want the Bible taught to their children in the schools, whether public, private or Christian? Can we expect God to honour such a double standard? Over the past years, parents have demanded that the state ( public schools) do for them what they are responsible before God to do and refuse to do basically, educate their children. And then parents complain that the state is taking too much control over the family.

Example: About 10 years ago when we first moved into the country (we had to move back into the parsonage, for the house there was too small for our new family), we lived one house past a school board member (about a mile). I stopped one day, and asked him why the school was so determined to provide breakfast for the kids. He said he did not agree with the situation, but the parents were demanding that the school feed their children. No doubt they wanted the state to take over their parenting, so they could pursue their own dream of a higher standard of living. I realize Dr. Laura is an antichrist, but at least she harps on the parents to raise their own children rather than let the state do it. She has more sense than do many who claim Christ.

[Bob Edwards] There is beautiful literature there, but it can't be divorced from faith.

The only proper context of Scripture is to tell man how to please God. And thus has the ready acceptance of divorce in our culture resulted from divorcing Scripture from faith?

Right. But I think that there are a number of ways to deal with that in, in a manner that s **intellectually honest**, and doesn't seek to cut off conversation, or to **promote one particular cultural** agenda over that of others. I mean, I started studying the Bible because I thought it was important to my, to my faith journey, and it has been. But I m much less now inclined to quote the Bible and to use it as a source of authority in a theological agreement than I was when I first started this, because, like now, I realize a lot more about the Bible, in that it has a lot of limitations in its use in that regard.

The intellectually honest person will teach the Bible in its true context, and that context is that there is only one Christian Faith, one God and only one way to that God, and that is through the finished work of His Son, Jesus Christ. (Eph. 4:3-6.) It is the *exclusiveness* of Christianity that makes it anathema to the ungodly, regardless of how they wear their collar. Neither Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel 3; see Church, Inc. by Bro Need) nor Rome forbade Christianity; the problem was that God's people refused to recognize any other religion as legitimate, and refused to recognize the state's claim of authority over the church.

## Humanist Manifesto II

**ELEVENTH: The principle of moral equality must be furthered through elimination of all discrimination based upon race, religion, sex, age, or national origin.** This means equality of opportunity and recognition of talent and merit. Individuals should be encouraged to contribute to their own betterment. If unable, then society should provide means to satisfy their basic economic, health, and cultural needs, including, wherever resources make possible, a minimum guaranteed annual income. We

are concerned for the welfare of the aged, the infirm, the disadvantaged, and also for the outcasts -- the mentally retarded, abandoned, or abused children, the handicapped, prisoners, and addicts -- for all who are neglected or ignored by society. Practicing humanists should make it their vocation to humanize personal relations.

We believe in the right to universal education. Everyone has a right to the cultural opportunity to fulfill his or her unique capacities and talents. The schools should foster satisfying and productive living. They should be open at all levels to any and all; the achievement of excellence should be encouraged. Innovative and experimental forms of education are to be welcomed. The energy and idealism of the young deserve to be appreciated and channeled to constructive purposes.

**We deplore racial, religious, ethnic, or class antagonisms. Although we believe in cultural diversity and encourage racial and ethnic pride, we reject separations which promote alienation and set people and groups against each other; we envision an integrated community where people have a maximum opportunity for free and voluntary association.**

We are critical of sexism or sexual chauvinism -- male or female. We believe in equal rights for both women and men to fulfill their unique careers and potentialities as they see fit, free of invidious discrimination. (<<http://humanist.net/>> Emp added.)

Professor Brown's problem, and the world's problem, with the Holy Scriptures is that it promotes one particular cultural agenda over that of others -- a teaching the unconverted find absolutely repugnant. By the way, what in the world is a faith journey?

Michael Brown is a professor of New Testament and Christian origins at Emory University's Candler School of Theology (Atlanta, Ga, ed.). He is the author of *What They Don't Tell You, a Survivor's Guide to Biblical Studies*.

End of program.

According to the web site:

Professor Brown's research interests include prayer in the ancient world, issues in Pauline theology, early Christian biblical interpretation, early North African Christianity, the Bible and modern culture, and methods and strategies for teaching the Bible. His current research focuses on early Christian interpretations of the Lord's Prayer. (From <http://www.emory.edu/CANDLER/Brown.html>.)

About Candler:

Mission

Candler School of Theology is grounded in the Christian faith and shaped by the Wesleyan tradition of evangelical piety, ecumenical openness, and social concern. Its mission is to educate--through scholarship, teaching, and service--faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries in the world.

The School

Candler School of Theology is a professional school of Emory University and one of thirteen official seminaries of the United Methodist Church. Founded by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1914, the school became part of Emory when the university was chartered in 1915, occupying the first building on the Atlanta campus.

The theology school offers programs leading to master of divinity, master of theological studies, master of theology, and doctor of theology degrees. The school also provides continuing education opportunities for clergy, church professionals, and lay persons. (<http://www.emory.edu/CANDLER/>)

**The new Christian paganism.**

*And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us to day before the Philistines? Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies. (1 Sam. 4:3.)*

The Bible has been reduced to the same level by Christians as was the ark in the hands of backslidden Israel. It will save us! And the Lord delivered them to the enemy. When God completed His purpose with the ark in the hands of the Philistines, He Himself delivered His ark from the pagans.

What will the Lord do here, as we let the Bible lie unopened in our homes and treat it as not much more than a charm?

*MEM. O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. (Ps. 119:97.)*

Do we love the word of God? Is it our meditation?

From all the sales of books about the Bible, it is safe to assume that many people find more fulfillment in reading what others say about God's word than they do finding out what God says in His word.

My wife, Bettie, voices her concern often. People just don't know their Bibles. They are Scripturally ***Illiterate!***

So, what about God's people who saw the ark as simply something to deliver them from the hands of their enemies? The account of the situation is found in 1 Samuel 4.

As an opening statement, we should note that though the Lord sent Israel into battle against HIS enemies, Israel was soundly defeated, and 4,000 lives lost. The question immediately arose, Where is the Lord? If He is in this, then why were we defeated?

John Gill says Samuel sent them to war. On the other hand, v. 1 reads that though the people knew the Lord was now speaking through Samuel, they went without checking with Him. However, the Philistines had oppressed Israel since the death of Samson, so I doubt that Israel would have gone to battle without some kind of words from Samuel. Regardless, Israel went, motivated by the urging of the Lord, and lost 4,000 men.

There are times when the Lord sends His people to their own destruction. He does it so that the results of their sins will catch up with them. And in chapter four, the whole nation will start paying the price for Eli's sin of not doing what he could to restrain his grown sons. Note that the father is the one who is held responsible for their actions; their mother is not even named. Also, at least one of the boys was married, so really, Eli's responsibility was to put the boys out of the place where they were bringing such shame upon the Lord.

This presents questions for which I have no answer: How much responsibility did the nation of Israel have for Eli's actions concerning his sons? How much of society's destruction today is because God's people refuse to instruct their children properly in the ways of the Lord, and have turned that instruction over to a pagan, antichrist state? How long before the Lord sends America, a supposed Christian nation, into a battle designed for its destruction? Maybe the War of Northern Aggression was such a war. At the very least, parents must do what they can to restrain their children.

Here are some reasons why Israel *was smitten* in this chapter:

**First**, Samuel was the last judge, and he anointed both Saul and then David as king over Israel. Note the reason the people desired a king: *they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.* (1 Sam. 8:9.) The people wanted to be like the pagan nations around them, and have a visible king. His sending Israel to the destruction of many men could be God's judgement upon Israel for rejecting Him as its rightful King. We must conclude that the ungodly (those who deny that there is only One God and one way to that God, the Son, Jesus Christ) in authority are God's judgment against America for rejecting Christ as King.

**Second**, the priests had replaced God's word with *custom*, and the people allowed it—in fact, they loved it. (1 Sam. 2:13. Cf. Jer. 5:31. See also Hosea 4.) Those *customs* also caused them problems with the Lord.

**Third**, v. 3, though Eli is held responsible for his sons' behaviour, no doubt they simply reflected the general attitude of the people of their day. Israel's religion had degenerated to plain old ***idolatry***. It was known throughout Israel that the word of the Lord came through Samuel, but they did not check with him, v. 1. Rather, they acted according to their feelings about the matter, and took the *ark* to battle.

Here we see why God allowed the entire nation to pay the price for Eli's sin – the nation had reverted to idolatry; it looked to the ark of God to save them rather than to the God of the ark to save them. Though the idolatry was under the guise of worshiping God, it was still idolatry. A probable reason the ark is missing today is because people would worship it as the source of power instead of the Lord God.

According to Professor Brown above, America now generally considers the Bible on the same level as Israel considered the ark of God – It will save us.

Vv. 3-11

Vv. 1-3 presupposes that the people were confident enough they had the Lord on their side that they boldly went to war against a far superior force. And when they were defeated, they still had confidence the Lord was with them. The people knew why they were smitten before their enemy – that is, the Lord was not with them. But notice the question: *Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us this day?*

Though they asked the question, they made no effort to find the answer. The question was an empty question, for they wanted no answer. It was simply a statement, for they did not ask the Lord through a man of God Samuel or a priest. Rather, they tried a new thing, the ark – *it may save us out of the hand of our enemies.*

How many people have I met that when things go against them, rather than stopping long enough to see if there is sin in their lives, they simply try a new religious procedure? They switch churches or even switch religions until they find one that suits their fancy, one in which they feel comfortable. And the pastors know what will make folks feel comfortable, so they many times cater to that comfort level.

People will ask, **Why Lord?** But they make no effort to find an honest answer from the Lord in His word. They simply ask the question to be asking it, not really wanting an answer.

Illustration:

I have been asked that question by people, yet when I try to answer it the way I see things from God's word, it is obvious they do not want an answer. They only want to ask the question to be asking it; then they want some religious experience to participate in to ease their minds.

V. 3, there was no feeling of remorse nor spirit of repentance – in fact, neither remorse nor repentance ever entered into their minds after the death of so many people. (1 Sam. 7:2, the people *lamented after the Lord*, but they did not want to know why they were crossways with the Lord, for they made no effort to sanctify themselves.)

Their answer was to take *the ark of the covenant of the Lord* with them to battle, believing the presence of the Lord was bound up in the ark. IN OTHER WORDS, they were confident that an outward show of more religion would solve their problem, rather than a change of heart toward the Lord and toward sin.

*He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them. (Ps. 145:19 [69:35].) For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; he will save us. (Isa. 33:22, &c.)*

Note that the people identified the ark as *the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts*. But they recognized the Lord in title only, for they had clearly departed from the *covenant law* of the Lord, or they would not have been smitten before their enemies.

*It may save us...* The Roman religion is built around convincing people that holy relics will save them, and the Church controls the relics.

The Protestant Church has degenerated to the place where it also is built around a holy relic, the Bible. The unread and unstudied Bible is thus treated as a talisman, or a lucky charm placed in the house or carried with the person. It is not with the person nor in his home to be read and studied as the only authoritative message from God (*this is the way, walk ye in it.* Isa. 30:21, Jer. 7:23, 2 Jn. 1:6).

Good, sincere Bible believing people are caught in the trap, believing that their religious activity will save them (church attendance, giving, &c.; I must admit that it would be easy for me to fall into envy, for our local liberal church has money they don't know how to spend as the upper crust of our community all go there, and attempt to purchase their way into heaven), their jobs will save them, their education will save them, their retirement plan will save them, their government will save them, &c. Hope in human activity replaces the power of the God who only acts according to His word.

V. 4, *So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth between the cherubims: and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God*

Note: The ark was recognized as the place where the Lord dwelt *between the cherubims*. Yet the two wicked sons of Eli were the guardians of *the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts*. The people knew what kind of men Hophni and Phinehas were, yet they permitted them to guard the ark. In other words, the people saw no problem with these wicked men being in this very close service of the Lord. They were no better than Eli, who made no effort to separate the wicked men from the close service of the Lord. How many professed Christians see no problem with wicked men being in the close service of the Lord?

Not knowing or rejecting the word of God and its final authority, many see no problem with wicked people serving the Lord, as long as the motives are good. Whoremongers, adulterers, sodomites and pedophiles are permitted to be pastors and priests, and are allowed to remain in places of church leadership. Far too many times there is no connection between men's evil deeds and the Lord's service. What kind of wrath is being stored up for such ungodly associations?

No wonder the Israelites made no connection between their sins and their defeat when Eli refused to remove the evil sons from their place of authority. Is it any wonder that people cannot make the cause and effect connection when religious leaders refuse to make that connection, and neither the leaders nor the people know the Scriptures. Wicked men are left to guard the sacred things of the Lord. God will not permit any kind of victory over the enemy when such things are done.

V. 5, shows us the strong confidence of Israel, but Israel's confidence was in the wrong thing. No matter how sincere or confident people may be, there is *death in the pot* unless the confidence is in the right thing. Sincerity never *saved* anyone. People must act according to God's revealed truth, or they will perish. And how can they act on *truth* when they do not even read the *truth*. Though we are to be where the *truth* is spoken, how will we know the *truth* when the Scripture is ignored?

Vv. 6, 7, *heard the noise... said, God is come into the camp*. The pagans had more confidence in the Lord than did God's people; they knew the power was in the Lord, but Israel depended upon a representation of the Lord. However, the pagans can be excused for viewing Israel's God as being represented by the ark, for their gods were understood to be represented in their idols. Possessing a Bible will not give power over the enemy; it must be read, studied and followed.

Illustration:

Some time ago there was a story of a tavern in Florida. The people tried everything they could think of to get rid of the tavern, with no success. Then they decided to pray that God would remove it. Lightning struck the tavern, and it burned to the ground. Insurance refused to cover the tavern, looking upon the lightning as an act of God. So the owner sued the church, claiming that the prayers of the people caused the destruction of his business. The people then went to court, and said their prayers had nothing to do with the lightning. **The tavern believed in the power of God more than did the people.** (Obviously, the money involved influenced the belief on each side.)

V. 8, the pagans got their story mixed up (the story at this point is over 300 years old), but they had more faith in the power of God than did Israel. (God's people need to know true history.)

However, I would say that *custom* along with no clear preaching of God's word over the years allowed the person and power of the Lord to be replaced with a representation of the Lord, the ark.

V. 9, *servants unto the Hebrews*. The world would rather do anything, even die, than be subject to godly rule. However, there were exceptions, *i.e.*, *the inhabitants of Gibeon*, Joshua chapter 9. What Gibeon did when he submitted to Israel was wholly by the sovereign grace of God.

I will have to admit that *the Hebrews* rule at the time of Samuel was probably not very godly.

Vv. 10, 11.

1) *Israel was smitten* rather than the Philistines. Israel's cause was just, but the sin in the camp caused God's hand to be against his people, giving the enemy the victory.

*How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had shut them up? (Deut. 32:30.)*

Israel shouted while the Philistines trembled, but the shout was a hollow show, for the Lord was against them. Thus a good cause does not guarantee success, nor does confidence in one's abilities and strength.

2) *The ark* was with them, but its presence was a false assurance, for the Lord was not with them because of sin. Israel was trusting in the ark (the Bible), rather than in the God of the ark. Religious forms and rituals will not save one in the time of need; only obedience to the Lord will deliver from the enemy.

Interesting note: Listening to the radio for a few minutes, I heard R.W. Shambach telling his listeners that if they would only send him \$20 for a video tape, all their problems would be solved. The tape was his message on praise. He said that when a person learns to praise the Lord properly, all their problems will be solved. (Among the Dobsonites, it is purchase this book, *The Prayer of Jabez*, and God will bless you.)

And again: I heard another slick tongue on TV. His message was that if one has enough faith, all his financial worries would be solved. And the way to increase your faith was to promise to send him the first \$1000 the hearer received, and the hearer would learn that the Lord does indeed send in the money needed.

I will not bore the reader with the many unscriptural positions of the above two illustrations, other than the following:

Neither speaker mentioned anything about removing sin from one's life, and obeying the Lord's commands.

How many times have we heard these TV preachers preach hard against sin, especially if they depend on their TV income to pay all their bills? There are a few who are supported by their churches who will come down hard against sin, *e.g.*, James Kennedy. But I have noticed the charismatic speakers emphasize some kind of mystical faith that is exhibited by how much money you send to them.

The Christian God, to these men above, is simply a god to come running to the aid of those who believe in Him. (See *The Prayer of Jabez* in this mailing.) They have clearly changed the very first question of the Catechism:

Question #1: What is the chief end of man? A. Man's chief end is to glorify God (1 Cor. 10:31), and to enjoy him for ever (Ps. 73:25-26).

They have changed it to,

Question #1: What is the chief end of God? A. God's chief end is to glorify man, and to enjoy him (man) for ever.

I am continually amazed at the number of people who will send in their money to the many charlatans who operate in the name of Christ.

3) *The ark of God* went with Israel to battle, but they trusted in a form of Christianity while denying the power thereof—obedience to Christ and His entire word. How many proudly carry their Bible while denying the power of God it offers to those who read and obey.

Trust it, *the ark* (the book, the Bible) rather than the Lord, and die. (Pro. 16:25.) It seems right to trust the things of v. 3, above. Israel, and Eli's sons, trusted in the external marks of being God's people, and they perished. The Lord has not bound Himself to external signs and symbols, but to His law-word.

4) As priests, the boys were in charge of *the ark of God*. They saw *the ark of God* as a means of livelihood – a means of support for themselves, in a manner they enjoyed. So they defended it with their lives. Such a fallen trust is common today as Christian workers are in the ministry for the benefit for themselves – it provides a good living.

I have mentioned previously that the Methodist parsonage was right behind our parsonage. (They have since acquired a house more in accord with their high standing in the community.) When we moved into the parsonage in 1983, the wife of the Methodist pastor who lived there told my wife that the reason he was in the ministry was because it was better than selling vacuum cleaners, which he had been doing.

5) God's word to Eli begins its fulfillment as his two evil sons are killed. The boys are the ones who took the ark into battle. Thus being close to the Lord in a physical sense, physically involved in the Lord's work, will not spare one in the time of judgment.

6) The battle was in the open (13:5, 2 Sam. 1:6) where the Philistines could use their chariots. Israel was forbidden to have chariots. Because footmen were powerless against chariots without God, the law against chariots insured that Israel would only go to battle and win if they were right with the Lord. (Ps. 78:60, Josh 11:6, 17:16-18.)

Not only did Israel lose the battle, but they lost *the ark of God*. Idolatry renders God's people powerless in the fact of the enemy.

*The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.* (Pro. 28:1.)

God's people could have used chariots, though forbidden to them, and they still would have lost the battle, for their enemy was not the Philistines, but God. Or using chariots, they might have won this engagement, which would have led to more problems. Sadly, it seems today that God's people use more of the world's means than they do the Lord's power, cf. v. 3.

Observe:

God's people are much involved in idolatry. They go to battle against the heathen. They go using pagan means. They may win a small skirmish or two (they will lose the war). They believe they have the God of the Ark with them, on their side, because they saw some results when actually the only reason for the results was because they learned how to use the horses and chariots effectively – the heathen's weapons which are forbidden. Why do God's people use forbidden means: a) Because to get God on their side they are going to have to clean up the camp, and get sin and idolatry out. It is easier to buy some horses and chariots than to be honest and clean out the camp. b. But maybe they are not even saved, though sincere in their profession. So they know no means of victory other than horses and chariots, the world's methods. c. Then again, they may not know the truth of the matter, for lack of honest teachers. And finally, 30,000 footmen fell, and the ark was taken:

[A] practical proof to the degenerate nation, that Jehovah, who was enthroned above the cherubim, had departed from them, *i.e.* had withdrawn His gracious presence. (K-D)

We should note here that believing in a merely historical Christ will result in death and destruction today, no matter how much one may preach, teach, hear, read, talk, discuss and dispute about him. Without Biblical trust, including turning from sin and obedience to his word, in him, there is no hope. His power to work comes from the inside of his faithful people, not from the outside of an individual.

1 Samuel 4:12-18

Bad news travels fast. A runner came from the battle, which was about 42 miles away (*Gill*), bearing the sad news of Israel's defeat, and of the many dead.

1) Eli's *heart trembled for the ark of God* rather than for his sons. He obviously knew of his sons' wickedness,

and expected God's movement against them. However, in the prophecies, nothing had been said of the *ark of God*.

2) Despite his serious fault concerning his children, he loved the Lord and was genuinely concerned about the *ark of God*. However, his concern for *the ark of God* did not cancel out his hatred for God when it came to his children. Love for the Lord in one area will not influence the Lord to overlook evil in another. We cannot store up righteousness in one area, so we can sin in another.

3) The runner brought the news of the defeat to the city, and the people raised a cry of anguish.

Notice the difference between this situation and the situation with Joshua, Joshua 7. Joshua cried out to the Lord, seeking to know why the Lord delivered them to the enemies. Joshua cried out over the loss of power with the Lord; on the other hand, the people in 1 Samuel 4 cried out over the loss of power over their enemies, and over the loss of the ark, a symbol of their God.

4) Eli enquired about the noise in the city. The runner hurried to Eli, and gave him the sad news of the slaughter of *thirty thousand footmen*, the death of the sons and the loss of *the ark of God*. It was the news of the loss of *the ark of God* that caused Eli to faint, not the news of his sons.

5) The word of God is clear, particularly in the New Testament Church leadership is based upon godly leadership in the home.

And Eli died being 98 years old, and having judged Israel 40 years.

Observation: I wonder how Eli became a judge in Israel. We really have no record of God speaking through him. We do know, however, from his attitude with Samuel that he was a godly man, except in the matter of his sons. The sons were grown men who acted like pagans, and he did nothing to hinder them.

Eli stands as a warning to all the heads of Christian families (and congregations) overindulgence by the head leads to the destruction of the family and of society.

Matthew Henry points out that *the ark of God* never returned to Shiloh, and the city dwindled away to nothing:

All the city cried out (#1Sa 4:13), and well they might, for, besides that this was a calamity to all Israel, it was a particular loss to Shiloh, and the ruin of that place; for, though the ark was soon rescued out of the hands of the Philistines, yet it never returned to Shiloh again; their candlestick was removed out of its place, because they had left their first love, and their city dwindled, and sunk, and came to nothing. Now God forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, they having driven him from them; and the tribe of Ephraim, which had for 340 years been blessed with the presence of the ark in it, lost the honour (#Ps 78:60,67), and, some time after, it was transferred to the tribe of Judah, the Mount Sion which he loved, as it follows there (#Ps 78:68), because the men of Shiloh knew not the day of their visitation. This abandoning of Shiloh Jerusalem is long afterwards reminded of, and told to take warning by. #Jer 7:12,

"Go see what I did to Shiloh. From this day, this fatal day, let the desolations of Shiloh be dated."

They had therefore reason enough to cry out when they heard that the ark was taken. (MH)

Vv. 19-22

A daughter in law, Phinehas' wife, heard the distressing news, and went into hard labor. The child, a son, was delivered, but she died in the process. Her concern was for *the ark of God* and the glory it represented more than it was for her husband. She, evidently, was a godly woman married to an ungodly man.

And thus the Lord appears to abandon his covenant people, but appearances are deceiving.

Conclusion:

This chapter opens with a statement showing that God's people knew the Lord now spoke through Samuel.

However, when the chips were down and they were pressed to the wall by the enemy, they did not turn to Samuel. (Maybe his young age discouraged them, but they knew who he was and what the Lord was doing through him.)

Rather than seek God's answer through Samuel for their distress, they willfully moved ahead, taking *the ark of God* into battle. They evidently recalled Joshua taking *the ark of God* into the battle of Jericho, and thought they had the same authority to do so. However, Joshua had the command of God to take it, but these people had no such command.

No doubt Godly pastors have noticed that a vast majority of Christians, when faced with strife and turmoil in their lives, turn to counselors and fluffy books about the Bible rather than turn to the Bible itself. And then we wonder why the people perish. (They perish because they have rejected knowing and doing the word of God as revealed IN His word; they do not perish because they don't know what is in books like *The Prayer of Jabez* or *Left Behind*. Hosea 4:6.)

The appearance of God (ark or even the Bible) replaced the presence of God; formality replaced obedience, and it cost them 34,000 men.

Eli knew of his grown sons' evil actions, and evidently he expected God to kill them. Such hardness on the part of a parent is not good. Notice there is no mention of God's judgment against their mother.

Everything fell apart in this battle with the enemy, but the people still did not learn their lesson to trust only in the Lord of battles.

Only the sovereign grace of God can open the eyes of his people, and he had not chosen to do so at this time.

*The ark of God* was the *ark of the covenant of the Lord*. (Num. 10:33, 14:44, Deut. 10:8, &c.) But there is no power nor protection in the covenant if *the covenant of the Lord* is broken. However, the broken covenant does not void the covenant; rather, it brings about the curses of the covenant, which Israel experienced in this conflict with the Philistines. (Deut. 29:21, 1 Chron. 16:17. Note that even David was included in the if-then covenant, Ps. 132:11, 12.)

The Bible is not the power of God; it only represents the power of God. Power with God only comes from reading, studying and doing as He instructs us in His word. The acceptance of sin among so many professed Christians shows us that the Bible has become not much more than a **talisman**, a lucky charm to keep evil away from the home and family.

*Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.* (2 Tim. 3:5.)

[The following Book Review is by my wife, Bettie.]

*HYPNOSIS, Medical, Scientific, or Occultic?* By Martin and Deidre Bobgan

When the Examiner editor asked me to review this book, I jumped at the opportunity to read about a matter that had intrigued me for years, especially as I had encountered some aspects of hypnosis personally. A cousin of mine is a psychologist for at-risk youth, and I had heard her using terms like est, affirmation, guided imagery, human potential, visualization, and relaxation as tools to help the young people in juvenile detention centers.

When my first husband and I worked for 6 years with drug addicts, we encountered many evil spirits working in the youths who came to us. (There is a strong connection between drugs and demons, as those who work with drug addicts recognize.) At that time, I became depressed and struggled with my own emotions. A Presbyterian church was offering counseling services in healing of the memories, and my husband was encouraged to take me there for help. I was concerned about the orthodoxy of this method of counseling, but was assured that the counselors were trained according to the Bible.

The counseling room at the church was semi-dark, and the session went smoothly. The counselors assured me that they were going to help me remember things in my past that would help me understand my present spiritual and emotional problems. The counselors prayed, and one of them said she was receiving an impression of three blue

glass balls in my life; did that ring a bell? The only balls I could think about was the three pale blue glass light globes my missionary parents had brought with them from the United States. They had been unable to use them in the Brazilian light fixtures, and so used them for decorations on the piano.

From that memory, the counselors extracted a complicated series of memories about my feeling rejected by my parents, especially by my mother who had frequent bouts of asthma. The conclusion was: I needed to realize my parents' inability to be all things to their family and mission contacts, and forgive them. My secret (unknown) lack of forgiveness toward them was hindering my present effectiveness in ministry. At the end of the session, the counselors prayed with me, releasing me from any bondage toward them I might feel. (At that time, I had no idea I was being hypnotized, nor do I know if the counselors were aware their techniques were based on hypnosis.)

According to the authors, many people, Christians included, believe that hypnosis enables people to remember things that they have forgotten and that are outside conscious memory or awareness. However, it is now well known that when hypnotic memories are objectively examined, many are false and some are total fabrications. Under certain conditions a person's mind is open to suggestion in such a way that illusions of memory can be received, believed, and remembered as true memories. Exploring the past through conversation, counseling, hypnosis, guided imagery, and regressive therapy **is as likely to cause a person to create false memories as to remember accurate accounts of past situations.** In a state of heightened suggestibility a person's memory can easily be altered and enhanced. (Author's emphasis) In other words, a person can be influenced by the therapist, who makes the suggestion, to believe that he or she was molested as a child when no such thing took place.

As I read the Bobgans' book, I realized how insidious hypnotism has become and how it has invaded every area of our lives. It has infiltrated even the church! Satan has transformed himself into an angel of light to make occult practices such as hypnosis appear beneficial, and Christian counselors use aspects of hypnosis without considering the very real danger to their clients. Hypnosis has become scientific and medical for some Christians with little proof of its validity, longevity of its results, or understanding of its nature.

The authors point out that even music with its repetitive sounds and words can also induce an altered state of consciousness. One should be aware that rhythm and tone can be used to induce a trance. In addition to the music, a pastor or church leader may inadvertently and naively use hypnotic inductive techniques as he sets the mood, prays, or speaks. Techniques appealing to emotion, imagination, and visualization over the intellect and active volition are often hypnotic induction devices. Any use of hypnotic techniques in worship is potentially dangerous to the faith of those in attendance. The moment one surrenders himself to the doorway of the occult, even in the halls of science, medicine, and religion, he is vulnerable to the powers of darkness.

Praise the Lord for people like Martin and Deidre Bobgan who have the courage to expose deception and error. Their scholarly approach and in-depth analysis of hypnosis and the widespread use of it in our culture reveals that hypnotism is potentially dangerous at its best, and demonic at its worst. I strongly recommend this book to those who wish to know the truth about hypnosis, and how to recognize and avoid its dangers.

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Editor's comment:

**First**, note that prayer before a session of any kind does not mean that the session is sanctioned by God. The counselors prayed before and after planting an ungodly idea in Bettie's mind.

**Second**, a good title for a book would be *The New Memory Makers*, exposing the memory making process of counselors. Though many of those counselors may be honest people, we must not forget that their income depends on making people dependant upon themselves.

I have heard reports of both children and adults (females especially) who, under the guidance of a counselor, have found that they were molested, though they had no memory of such a thing taking place. And then they

must live with that memory, never able to forgive the one who supposedly molested them. The Bobgans bring into serious question the legitimacy of those forgotten memories brought forward in counseling sessions.

### Third,

Dwight Dwight L. Moody, the great American evangelist, used to be accompanied oDwight L. Moody, the great Am Drummond. Drummond. Originally Drummond. Originally Drummond wDrummond. Originally Drummond was able to infl conversion, conversion, he had difficulty in overcoming these occult powers. While ministering at Moody s meetconv occasionally occasionally noticed that the audience was being influenced by his psychic powoccasionally noticed that the au and and asked the Lord and asked the Lord to free hand asked the Lord to free him from these occult powers. The Lord an Koch, Koch, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. 1978, Koch, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. 1978, 1Koc accompanied accompanied Moody in his meetings. Thus one wonders how much of modern chuaccompanied Moody in hi and how much is men using the spirits renounced by Drummond? See 2 Corinthians 10:4-5, 2 Cor. 10:4, 5.)

Psychic powers are real, even in Christian circles, and can be used to obtain many followers and a good income. How many today would be willing to renounce such powers if it meant losing the majority of their followers and thus a large portion of their incomes?

### Book Reviews

#### *The Prayer of Jabez*

Rick Miesel has an excellent review of *The Prayer of Jabez*. I cannot urge you strongly enough to check out his review. I reproduced it in *The Biblical Examiner*, but Rick requests that his article not to be posted. So you need to cut and copy this address into your browser, and read it.

<http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Letter/V10n1.htm#Do You Jabez?> A Closer Look at Bruce Wilkinson's Book

This is my note in addition to Bro. Miesel s article. It is interesting to note that BIOLA College was the first among many *Christian* groups to follow to discover the tremendous fund-raising potential of the dispensational millennialism/ Pre-trib rapture theory. The prospect of great financial gain caused that theory to become the shibboleth for fellowship at the start of the twentieth century. (See *The Rapture Plot*, Dave MacPherson, Millennium III Publishers, Simpsonville, SC. 1995. 222, 223.) This pastor wonders if the men behind things such as *The Prayer of Jabez* have an insight into public sentiment and what will make money, and they write accordingly?

#### Another Book Review

The following is from **WORLD MAGAZINE**, May 19, 2001. P 20.

**BESTSELLERS** The five best-selling nonfiction hardbacks as measured by placement on four leading lists as of May 6

#### 2 **The Prayer of Jabez**

Bruce Wilkinson

**26 points** (ABA: 3<sup>rd</sup>; NYT: 1<sup>st</sup> on advice/self-help/misc. list; PW: 1<sup>st</sup>; Amazon.com: 3<sup>rd</sup>)

**CONTENT** The key to Gods blessing is found in a 29-word prayer found in 1 Chronicles 4:10.

**GIST** Over the past 30 years as Bruce Wilkinson has prayed this prayer every day, he s seen his Walk through the Bible ministry grow exponentially. That s the experience of all the people he cites: Their ministry opportunities, businesses, families all prosper.

**WORLDVIEW** God as a cosmic bellhop.

**CAUTION** Prayer is good, but one particular phrase repeated over and over can become a mantra.

#### **IN THE SPOTLIGHT**

According to *The New York Times*, *The Prayer of Jabez* has sold more than 4.1 million copies and tops many bestseller lists. It s a lovely prayer, in which Jabez asks for Gods blessing and that his boundaries be expanded. He prays that God will be with him and that he be kept from evil so that he won t cause pain. The text says that God answered Jabez s prayer. Mr. Wilkinson

takes this little prayer and makes it the secret to success in every endeavor. There s certainly not anything wrong in praying this prayer, but it isn t the only prayer we should pray, and there s no biblical evidence that it is an especially efficacious prayer. The Bible does not present a tame God, who responds like a butler when we mechanistically recite certain words. If individuals say this prayer and remind themselves that God is the source of blessing and power, and that He is the one who guards our ways and grants us all we have, then saying it is a good thing. But some individuals read this book and come away thinking that prayer is a series of inputs and outputs.

## The Prayer of Jabez

1 Chronicles 4:9

A friend of mine has many friends in high places that is, places of influence in Christian service, *e.g.*, pastors and people in the home school movement, among other things. I have been quite surprised to discover how many have been enamored by the idea in the best selling book, *The Prayer of Jabez*. And these are people who should know the word of God well enough that they should not be blown about by every breeze that comes along.

The *Jabez idea* is that there is a series of words that one can say that will cause God to come running to the aid of the one saying those words.

Several years ago, there was a TV series named, *I Dream of Genie*. It was a comedy about an astronaut who had been misplaced on an island where he found a bottle. He brought the bottle back home with him. He could rub the bottle, and out would come this beautiful genie, and grant him his desires. The series was about the many funny problems they would get into, and how she got them out of those problems.

The current craze about *The Prayer of Jabez* seems to lower the Sovereign God of the Universe to the level of that genie. If you will say the right words, rub the bottle just right, He will come to your aid. And the current craze again shows us that anything can be proved from the word of God if the context of the rest of the word of God is ignored.

We know nothing about Jabez except the few words that introduce his prayer:

*And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow. 10 And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested. (1 Chron. 4:9.)*

*Jabez was more honourable...* In what way was he *more honourable than his brethren*? We are not told anything other than what is in this short verse. We do know that he was of the tribe of Judah, so was he exalted into a place of leadership? Maybe he fought and expelled the enemy more honourably than did the others?

I have 8 points as to why Jabez was probably *more honourable* than those around him. Just the first one will show that the modern attitude toward this passage is more occultic than it is Scriptural.

1) he was *more honourable* in that he realized it was God who must enlarge his coast. Jabez lived during the time of expelling the enemies from the promised land. So in order for his coasts to be enlarged, Jabez had to go to war and drive the Canaanites out of his land.

People are desiring that their *coasts be enlarged* that is, their ministries enlarged, or physical prosperity increased. And they seem to feel that Jabez found the secret words, the magic words that will cause God to yield to their desires.

I find it strange that many who say that the Old Testament promises of God s physical blessings are not for us today are the very ones who are claiming a supposed promise of physical blessings here from this magic prayer.

*Jabez* lived during the time of Israel's occupation of the promised land. God had commanded Israel to possess the land, and to enlarge his borders. The way Israel was to do that was by obeying God's word. (Deut. 7, below.)

Genesis 17:17-21, the Lord had promised Abraham that He would give to Abraham's descendants the land of Canaan, a land possessed by 10 nations greater than Israel. In Deuteronomy alone, the Lord tells Israel that the nations they must drive out of the land are *greater and mightier* than they are: 4:8, 7:1 (lists 7 nations), 9:1, 11:23.

The Lord also tells Israel that if they do not drive out the pagan nations, those nations will become a *snare* to them, Exodus 23:33, 34:12, 7:16, Judges 2:3.

Israel was to possess the land—that is, enlarge his borders. The nations were *greater and mightier* than was Israel, so Israel had to depend upon the Lord God to give the victory. The way they depended upon the Lord was by **DOING** what was required of them in Deuteronomy 7. (About every preacher worth his salt has compared the commands in Deut. 7 against the pagan nations to the Christian's war against sin—every sin must be removed from one's life if he expects to have God's blessings. Those sins cannot be removed without the working of the Spirit of God, God's grace. And that Spirit can be easily grieved to where the sins keep their dominant hold, Eph. 4:30. Not only will remaining sins cost us God's blessings, they will also be a snare.)

Deuteronomy 7:

V. 2, nothing of those nations was to remain among Israel. (We are told to avoid the very appearance of evil.)

V. 3, there could be no inter marriage between Israel and any pagan nation. (The New Covenant clearly forbids close relationships with the unsaved.)

Vv. 5, 25, everything that represented the ungodly practices of the pagans was to be utterly destroyed. (We are commanded, Eph. 5:3, to not let sin even be named among us.)

V. 26, nothing representing the pagan culture was to be brought into the house. Everything representing the pagan culture must be considered under God's curse, and avoided at all costs. Yet how many of those who ritually pray *The Prayer of Jabez* have their children in the pagan school system, as well uncontrolled TV in the home?

Vv. 9-12, God fighting on the side of His people against the nations that were to be dispossessed was dependant upon His people obeying His commandments, statutes and judgments—in other words, obeying the total word of God.

I know there are those depending on *The Prayer of Jabez* to deliver into their hands the material possessions they so desperately want who do not even believe that the commandments apply to us who are under grace, not law. But God gives the same promise in the New Testament:

*And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. 23 ¶ And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. 24 And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. (1 Jn. 3:22.)*

Christ clearly stated that answered prayer is conditioned upon salvation, keeping His commandments and doing those things that are pleasing in His sight.

Where is the call in Jabez's prayer for confession of sin and holy living as is called for in the Lord's Prayer?

From what I understand, even the unsaved are snatching up the book, *The Prayer of Jabez*. (My wife and I were at Wal-Mart 6/20, and prominently displayed was an advertisement for *The Prayer of Jabez*. There is

money in these kinds of things *Left Behind* series, 38 million copies & *Jabez* 6.6 million, *ibid.* Considering that the authors get at least \$1.00 a book, the temptation to write to the dollar is strong.)

V. 10, the Spirit tells us that those who fail to do v. 9 (*love God and keep his commandments*) **HATE GOD**. Therefore, if those who hate God (reject or fail to keep His commandments) receive material blessing, where do those blessings come from? (Cf., Ex. 20:5.)

Deuteronomy 13 tells us that God at times allows false prophets and their false messages to prosper. He does so to give His people a choice will they obey His word or will they obey their emotions? Will His people get caught up in the winds of the times, or will they remain true to His word?

V. 16, any people of those nations that were commanded to be removed who are **LEFT BEHIND** will be a *snare* to the people of God. They will draw God's people away from the Lord.

These nations that were to be driven out have continually been compared to sins in the lives of God's people sins that are to be driven out at all costs. A good name for a series of books would be *Left Behind*, and those books should deal with sins we hang on to after we are saved, and the devastation those sins cause in our lives.

V. 19, the righteous are bold as a lion. (Pr. 28:1.)

V. 20, the promise is given to God's faithful people. He alone must drive out the strong and mighty nations, so His people can enlarge their borders. And He will only enlarge the borders of those who are faithfully observing to do all He has commanded, v. 9.

There are illustrations of Deuteronomy 7 in action: **First**, Joshua 14:6-14, Caleb had God's blessings and his borders enlarged because he *wholly followed the Lord God of Israel*, not because he found the magic words to pray. The way Caleb had his borders enlarged was by obeying God, and driving out the Canaanites. **Second**, on the other hand, many of God's people became lazy and content with what they had. They felt they could keep sin under control. They did not obey Deuteronomy 7, and the result was that their borders were not enlarged. They had to live short of what was promised to them by the word of God. (Judges 1:9-35) If God does not bless our labour, we labour in vain. (Ps. 127:1.)

We are told that Jabez was *more honourable* because he had more dedication to the cause of Christ; he worked harder; he fought more battles; he shed more blood; he got up earlier and stayed up later *than did his brethren*. He put in long, hard hours; he knew nothing of a 40 week and retirement. Jabez's borders were enlarged above his brethren's borders because he was more dedicated to the task at hand than they were.

IT WAS NOT JABEZ'S PRAYER THAT GOD HONOURED IT WAS HIS HARD WORK AND DEDICATION to God's instructions laid down in Deuteronomy chapter 7.

And thus any man can be *honourable* if he will apply himself to the word of God.

2) he was *more honourable* in his knowledge of the Word of God. 1 Chronicles 2:55, lists a city named Jabez, and it is a city of scribes, or experts in the law of God. Jewish tradition holds that Jabez was a famous doctor of the law who left many disciples behind.

I must say that from what I have gathered, those caught up in these various winds of strange and sometimes false doctrines, *e.g.*, this hope in a prayer, as a rule, do not know the scripture, or they would understand that God will be obligated to absolutely no man.

3) he was *more honourable* in his godliness. He was a man of prayer, for he prayed for God's blessings upon himself. Notice the tone of sincere desire, ***Oh, that thou would bless me.*** His prayer here was not a ritual he was going through to pray every day, but it was the expression of a sincere heart and desire. We have no reason to think that Jabez had to pray this prayer every day for many years before God enlarged his borders.

How many of us go through the motions of prayer because it is expected of us, but our heart is not really in it? Our praying becomes more like the prayer we say before a meal – simply a ritual with our minds a million miles away.

Jabez sincerely prayed from his inner most being. But he did not pray this prayer without putting feet to his prayer.

4) he was **more honourable** in overcoming his past. His name meant affliction or sorrow. We are not told what kind of sorrow he brought to his mother, but we do know that he turned that sorrow into joy. We do know that his life was not controlled by sorrow and grief, but by godliness and joy in the Lord.

Whatever the sorrow was, he overcame it, and lived a victorious life. And eventually he brought joy to his mother as he got older.

5) he was **more honourable** in desiring to stay away from evil – he prayed that the Lord **wouldest keep me from evil**, which reminds us of the Lord's prayer, **DELIVER US FROM EVIL**.

Jabez knew that the Lord would have to keep him from evil. It is the Lord who must work in our lives, or our sinful nature will drag us down into evil. If the Lord takes His hand off us for a moment, we will perish in our sins.

It does not matter what prayer a person prays, if one has a sincere desire to avoid evil, and he works at avoiding evil, he will prosper.

## Psalm 1

The promises of Psalm 1 have nothing to do with praying a magic prayer. Every preacher I know of has preached Psalm 1 at least once. The message there is clear – the prosperity promised by Psalm 1 has to do with avoiding evil and evil people; it has to do with delighting in and meditating on the law of the Lord day and night, which will lead to doing the law of God. There is nothing about praying *The Prayer of Jabez*.

What in the world are people thinking of when they get caught up in false teachings like *The Prayer of Jabez*? Do people place their brains in neutral, and let the most gentle breeze blow them about? It appears that the vast majority of Christians are captive to their emotions rather than to the sound doctrine as presented in the word of God, or these kinds of books would not sell the many millions that they do.

6) he was **more honourable** in realizing the damage evil can do, **that it may not grieve me**.

If we fully realized the grief sin causes, we also would pray that the Lord would **keep us from evil**. Human nature looks at evil and sin as fun. Jabez saw evil as a source of much grief. Evil is fun for awhile, but in the end it bites like a snake. (Pro. 23:29.)

7) he was **more honourable** in that he realized who the true God is, and that God will hear and answer prayer:

*<<To the chief Musician, A Psalm and Song of David.>> Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed. 2 O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come. (Ps. 65:1.)*

Let me quickly give you some closing points about Jabez's prayer:

### First,

*And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. (Luke 11:1.)*

The disciples asked the Master to teach them to pray: *Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples*. They did not say, *Lord, teach us to pray as Jabez prayed*. Christ's response to His disciples request had no hint of Jabez's prayer. If Jabez found the magic words to compel God to come running to man's aid, why did not Christ use Jabez's prayer?

How many feel that God will bless them if every day or at every church service they pray the Lord's Prayer, or say their Hail Marys?

### Second,

*And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. (Jn. 16:23.)*

Jabez did not pray through Christ because he was before Christ. Christ made it very clear that no one will come to the Father since He came except through Him.

### Third,

*22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. 23 And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. 24 And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. (1 Jn. 3.)*

God's promise for His people is clear, and it has nothing to do with saying any set formula of magic words.

From what I can read in Jabez's prayer, none of the three things above are mentioned.

Those who are not thoroughly grounded in the word of God are in very serious danger of being swept along with whatever doctrine sounds good or whatever doctrine appeals to the flesh. They are also in serious danger of disastrous compromise concerning the Christian faith. That is to say, they do not know for themselves what is required of them by God. So they follow what others say about the word of God instead of finding out for themselves what God requires of them. (*Lucky Charms and Talismans* in this mailing.)

The lack of scriptural understanding is allowing false doctrines and sin to flourish unhindered among Bible Believers. This lack of knowledge of the word of God permits the *many false prophets* Christ warned about to prosper and *deceive many*. (Mat. 24:11.) It is *all the counsel of God*, the entire word of God, that keeps at bay the *grievous wolves* who shall arise from within the ranks of the Church. (Acts 20:26-30.) We are continually warned by the Holy Spirit that those who do not keep themselves Biblically informed will be victims of the *wolves* and of the *false teachers* that are so rampant in the church. (*Ibid.*)

On the South side of Lafayette is a large billboard advertisement for a church, proclaiming, "Come hear our worship band. How many would come if it said, "Come hear the word of God, King James Version?"

Human nature continually seeks a magic pill to obtain what it wants without having to pay the price of Bible study, prayer, repentance of sin and holy living. I am reminded of the lottery folks love the idea of something for nothing, but after a while, they find out that all it does is cost them money. Then they lose interest in the lottery, so the state must continually look for ways to get them to gamble that money. Likewise, folks rush out and spend money on such foolish notions as *Jabez's Prayer*, and over a period of time, find out that getting things from God involves more than repetitious praying, as the heathens do. (Mat. 6:7.) So interest is lost in that *magic formula*. But another will be along soon, and the cycle will start over, and fortunes will be made from gullible people.

My wife, Bettie, laments the fact that even church members do not know the word of God. She is right, for if they did, they would not waste the time nor the money God has given them on such clearly unscriptural material as *The Prayer of Jabez* and *Left Behind*. If folks would spend as much time in the Scripture as they do in things like *The Prayer of Jabez* and the *Left Behind* series, there would be a genuine revival in America.

In 1987, it was *88 reasons why Christ will come in 1988*, then it was *89 reasons why He will come in 89* the author made a fortune. What will be the next Christian fad that will finance some authors who are endowed with vivid imaginations?

WELL, HOW ABOUT ALL THE REPORTS OF GOD ANSWERING THAT PRAYER?

How many of those reports are self-fulfilling ?

Did not Job say, *For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.* (3:25.)

Jabez was an honorable and godly man. And God in His sovereign providence saw fit to bless Jabez above his brethren. Implied in God's blessing upon Jabez is that it was not because of anything special in this prayer nor because God was under any obligation to Jabez. God blessed him because Jabez was a godly, hard working man, and God was pleased to bless him.

In this one short verse, we see that Jabez sets an example for all of us to follow. But following his example requires hatred for sin, diligent, faithful and hard work for the Lord, and holy living.

God enlarged Jabez's borders, but why did God do that? Was it because Jabez stumbled onto the right words in a prayer, or was it because Jabez obeyed the law-word of God (Deut. 7), lived a holy life, went to battle, and depended on God to drive out the enemy?

### **"DECEIVING, AND BEING DECEIVED"**

by Dave MacPherson

You've probably heard that the pretribulation rapture view was published by a Rev. Morgan Edwards in 1788 and also by a Medieval writer called Pseudo-Ephraem 1000 years earlier.

The Edwards claim (promoted by John Bray and copied by Frank Marotta, Thomas Ice, Tim LaHaye, etc.) is based on a 1980 book by Thomas McKibbens and Kenneth Smith, while the claim for Pseudo-Ephraem (promoted by Grant Jeffrey and copied by Thomas Ice, J. R. Church, Jerry Falwell, Tim LaHaye, Chuck Missler, Dave Hunt, Hal Lindsey etc.) rests on a 1985 book by Paul Alexander.

Not only have these promoters covered up and twisted what McKibbens/Smith and Alexander have written, but they've also concealed and perverted Morgan Edwards' and Pseudo-Ephraem's own words! Let's focus first on Morgan Edwards (hereafter: M.E.).

Promoters see a pretrib rapture in the following words by M.E.:

"...the dead saints will be raised, and the living changed at Christ's 'appearing in the air' (I Thes. iv, 17); and this will be about three years and a half before the millennium...."

If promoters had been sure of their pretrib claim, they never would have had to collusively cover up the following M.E. statements that contradict their claim:

On p. 14 M.E. described the "Turkish or Ottoman empire" (which began around 1300 A.D.) as the "beast that started out of the earth" (Rev. 13's second beast). (Since Bray etc. repeatedly claim that M.E. had only a "futurist" outlook, without which M.E. couldn't have logically expected a pretrib rapture, Bray deliberately skips over the historicism in M.E.'s "Ottoman" remark - historicism being the belief that the tribulation, covering many centuries, began at some point in the distant past.)

On p. 20 M.E. wrote that the "wicked one" (II Thess. 2:8) has "hitherto assumed no higher title than 'the vicar general of Christ on earth'" and described "Antichrist" as "popery" and a "succession of persons." (Promoters emphasize M.E.'s comments about the "last" Pope and ignore M.E.'s view that "popery" had "hitherto" (for many centuries) been playing the role of II Thess. 2:8's "wicked one" while wearing a "mask" (as he put it) - a first beast that historicism could easily see during the second beast's reign!)

Since historicism - and not preterism or futurism - is the only one of these three schools which often thinks "years" when reading "days" in the Bible, it isn't surprising to find such year/day historicism in M.E.

On p. 19, for example, while discussing Rev. 11's two witnesses, M.E. says "there are no more than about 204 years between now and their death: I should therefore expect that their appearance is not far off." (Bray quotes

M.E.'s very next sentence, on another matter, but ignores this one! Could a futurist ever apply a couple of centuries - instead of only 1260 days - to those witnesses?)

Something else. The authoritative 1980 book about M.E. that inspired the claim promoted by Bray, Ice, LaHaye etc. never classified M.E.'s view as "pretrib," or even remotely resembling it, and the book's authorship had the same conclusion when later interviewed by both phone and correspondence!

And when Thomas Ice's "Pre-Trib Perspectives" newsletter (Sep./Oct., 1995) ran his own article promoting Edwards as a teacher of "pretribulationism," he couldn't find any of the heavyweight authorities on Edwards, that he listed and quoted, evaluating that 18th century pastor as a pretrib!

In light of the fact that Edwards embraced historicism (which can see some future things yet to be fulfilled) and not pure futurism (which sees no past tribulational fulfillment), it's easy to believe that Edwards, like some other historicists of that period, saw a three-and-a-half-year period at the end of a 1260-year tribulation - the same percentage a futurist would have if he were to see a period of three and a half days at the end of a 1260-day tribulation; such a percentage would of course be a posttrib view!

At least I don't have to juggle or cover up historical data to come to such a conclusion!

But now it's time to analyze Pseudo-Ephraem (hereafter: P-E), the name attached by scholars to manuscripts that were possibly, but not provably, written by the well-known Ephraim the Syrian who lived from 306-373 A.D.

And what's the discovery in P-E's early Medieval sermon on the end of the world that's led pretrib promoters to see pretrib in it? It's basically these words:

"For all the saints and elect of God are gathered, prior to the tribulation that is to come, and are taken to the Lord lest they see the confusion that is to overwhelm the world because of our sins." A pretrib rapture is seen by promoters in the phrase "taken to the Lord."

It needs to be emphasized that pretrib in P-E has been palmed off on unsuspecting Christians by promoters seeing rapture aspects in P-E's sermon where none exist and by covering up such aspects where they do exist in his 10-section sermon!

In Section 2, P-E says that the only event that's "imminent" is "the advent of the wicked one" (that is, Antichrist). Nevertheless, Grant Jeffrey in his 1995 book, FINAL WARNING, had the audacity to claim that P-E "began with the Rapture using the word 'imminent'" and added in the next sentence that "Ephraem used the word 'imminent' to describe the Rapture." (If he and other P-E promoters can look at a coming of Antichrist and see a coming of "Christ," is it any wonder that in his endtime view folks will look at Antichrist and see "Christ"?)

Ephraim the Syrian, reportedly P-E's inspiration, said the same thing (SERMO ASCETICUS, I): "Nothing remains then, except that the coming of our enemy, Antichrist, appear...." (Nobody's ever found even a trace of pretrib in this earlier work!)

In the before-the-tribulation sections, P-E mentions neither a descent of Christ, nor a shout, nor an angelic voice, nor a trumpet of God, nor a resurrection, nor the dead in Christ, nor a rapture, nor meeting Christ.

So where does P-E place the rapture? The answer is found in his last section (10) where he writes that after "the sign of the Son of Man" when "the Lord shall appear with great power," the "angelic trumpet precedes him, which shall sound and declare: Arise, O sleeping ones, arise, meet Christ, because the hour of judgment has come!" (Like Morgan Edwards and Manuel Lacunza, Pseudo-Ephraem has the nasty, non-pretrib habit of blending the rapture with the final advent!)

In the July/Sep., 1995 BIBLIOTHECA SACRA, Dallas Seminary's journal, Thomas Ice and his co-author Timothy Demy pulled off one of the worst revisionisms of P-E ever: when summarizing Section 10 they carefully deleted what P-E included between "trumpet" and "judgment" (deleted the distinctive I Thess. 4

aspects in that posttrib setting), giving unsuspecting readers this utterly misleading condensation: "A trumpet will sound, calling forth the dead to judgment."

But P-E says much more, as can be seen; he places the resurrection of those who sleep in Jesus and the rapture of those who meet Jesus (details found only in I Thess. 4) at the Matt. 24 coming!

A moment ago I said that Edwards and Lacunza had the same rapture/advent blending. Here's evidence. Edwards in his 1788 work (pp. 21-22) speaks of "the son of man in the clouds, coming to raise the dead saints and change the living....The signs of his coming, in the heavens, will be 'the trump of God [I Thess. 4:16], vapour and smoke, which will darken the sun and moon [Acts 2:19,20]....'"

Lacunza's 1812 work THE COMING OF MESSIAH IN GLORY AND MAJESTY (Vol. I, p. 113) declares: "...you will find St. Paul and the Gospel speaking one and the same thing: He shall send his angels and they shall gather his elect from the four winds; who can be no other than those very ones who are in Christ, who sleep in Jesus." (A few have assumed that there's pretrib in an earlier Catholic, Franciscus Ribera, but in his 16th century Revelation commentary he viewed Rev. 12's "woman" in the tribulation as the Christian Church!)

But let's go back to Pseudo-Ephraem.

Dr. Paul Alexander, the leading authority whose book inspired the P-E claim, is portrayed in Jeffrey's book, FINAL WARNING, as "perhaps the most authoritative scholar on the writings of the early Byzantine Church." But this misleading statement, designed to make readers think that Professor Alexander supports the P-E claim, covers up the fact that this world famous scholar sees not even a smidgen of pretrib in the same Medieval writer!

In fact, Alexander writes that the phrase "taken to the Lord" (which has become a bonanza for pretrib history revisionists) means "participate at least in some measure in beatitude." While Jeffrey and Ice do include this "beatitude" phrase, all P-E promoters carefully avoid revealing that the Catholic doctrine of "beatitude," according to the NEW CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA, has to do with "the highest acts of virtue that can be performed in this life" - works on earth and not being raptured off earth! (Elsewhere in his sermon P-E repeats the importance of doing "penance," because of "our sins," so that church members will be "sustained" during the tribulation!)

In fact (again), Alexander has two summaries (textual and outline), in chronological order, of P-E's endtime events. And guess what. Alexander demonstrates both times that P-E saw only one future coming ("Second Coming of Christ" for the "punishment of the Antichrist") which follows (!) the great tribulation ("tribulatio magna lasting three and a half years") - claim-smashing summaries that self-serving promoters, with malice aforethought, have jointly swept under their "secret rapture" rug!

**Since "Dr." Thomas Ice is the most rabid pretrib defender who's long promoted the (false) claims for John Darby and, more recently, Edwards and Pseudo-Ephraem, and at the same time covered up or twisted the (true) claims for Margaret Macdonald and the Irvingites, it's fitting to quote the first sentence of a recent news item:**

WorldNetDaily reported on March 7 that a Texas district court has ordered the Tyndale Theological Seminary to pay fines totalling \$170,000 for issuing 34 theological degrees without receiving approval from the state education agency."

This is the Fort Worth seminary that gave the title of "Dr." to Ice -which is at least an improvement over "Dr." C. I. Scofield who, in the 1890's, began deceitfully adding "Dr." to his name instead of waiting for some institution to confer it upon him!

Well, I didn't mean to write a book here; I merely wanted to share some long covered up facts about pretrib dispensationalism. My 300-page book THE RAPTURE PLOT (with footnotes, index, bibliography, appendices, plus great commendations from leaders, and obtainable by calling 800-967-7345) has the sort of info I've just outlined plus much, much more.

If you decide to get a copy of my PLOT book, I won't have to tell you about the rest of the bizarre history of the 171-year-old, British-born pretrib rapture view.

I won't tell you that the same promoters have used the same unscrupulous, "twistorical" methods to try to discredit Margaret Macdonald, the real pretrib originator in early 1830, and cover up the fact that other partial rapturists who followed her and taught the same thing have all been classified as pretribs!

I won't tell you that promoters who claim that John Darby was pretrib as early as 1827 won't admit that he then had only his "heavenly church" theme, that he was still clearly posttrib as late as a Dec., 1830 article (he was waiting "to meet Him in the air in order to His judging of the nations"), that he wasn't clearly pretrib before 1839, that in 1839 Darby's only pretrib basis was Rev. 12's "man child" symbol (which symbol had been Edward Irving's pretrib basis since 1831!), that in his 1991 book (p. 100) R. A. Huebner admitted that his source for his 1827 claim for Darby could just as easily refer to something completely un-rapturesque, and that Ice since 1991 has covered this up and continues to declare, while searing his conscience, that Huebner "documents" his belief that Darby was pretrib in 1827!

I won't tell you that all of Darby's so-called "thoughts" which promoters for generations have claimed led him to pretrib (thoughts like the "Gentile parenthesis," "Church/Israel dichotomy," and the "literal method") were taught by others much earlier and that he subtly plagiarized them! (Dispensationalist scholars must have known that airing even a tiny fraction of this would have been a deathblow to their system!)

I won't tell you that throughout most of the 1800's the leading church historians - whether Irvingite or (Plymouth) Brethren - overwhelmingly credited the Macdonald/Irvingite orbit with pretrib; none credited Darby!

I won't tell you that in 1880, a year after his Christian conversion, C. I. Scofield was in jail in St. Louis for forgery (he'd stolen his mother-in-law's life savings by means of a real estate scam; would most non-Christian crooks do this?), that after he deserted his wife and children she divorced him in 1883 and he remarried three months later and covered everything up, and that as late as 1899 he still owed thousands of dollars he'd stolen 20 years earlier and had been writing phony IOU's to keep from paying back the money!

I won't tell you that after Darby's death in 1882, the editor of his many books, William Kelly, plotted to steal credit for pretrib away from the Macdonald/Irvingite connection and give it posthumously to Darby, that he achieved this between 1889 and 1903 by changing and covering up portions of early Irvingite and Brethren documents, and that 20th century British and American publishers have conspired to continue this historical revisionism in order to enjoy phenomenal sales of pretrib rapture material!

And I won't tell you that during the past century and a half, some of the most influential pretrib rapture books, by British as well as American authors, have been filled with sloppy scholarship and, what's worse, breathtaking amounts of plagiarism and even occultic teachings mixed in with evangelical theology!

Or that my PLOT book and my later book THE THREE R'S reveal, with comparison quotes and in more or less chronological order, embarrassing plagiarism in writings by John Darby, Joseph Seiss, E. W. Bullinger, Hal Lindsey, Tim LaHaye, Merrill Unger, Jerry Falwell, Ed Dobson, Ed Hindson, Charles Ryrie, David Jeremiah, C. C. Carlson, Paul Tan, Chuck Missler, and Jack Van Impe, for starters!

Finally, let me say that although I've been researching rapture roots more than 30 years now, I've been into computers only a relatively short time. The discovery of the extent to which misinformation about the pretrib origin has been circling the earth at computer speed still boggles my mind!

But authors are only part of the problem. After all, if an author gets royalties of, say, 10 percent, the other 90 percent goes to the publisher - which means that publishers can have much more incentive to keep churning out bestselling books that are filled with historical error and even deliberate deception simply because they receive far more money than the authors!

Which leads me to give you some of my reactions to publishers that are less than pleasant. After I gave proof to a well-known publisher in the Chicago area that one of its authors had plagiarized one of my books, I received a

sympathetic letter from the publisher expressing concern; but no changes to my knowledge were made in the dishonest book which was kept in print, and neither my publisher nor I was ever financially reimbursed.

I know a pretrib book publisher in California that was caught publishing a pretrib book that was a huge plagiarism of a book that had come out several years earlier. After being confronted by the other publisher, the offending publisher promised to withdraw the book, which it did for a while. But sometime later the offending book was quietly reissued - with the same old plagiarism but with a new book title to avoid detection!

In recent years Hal Lindsey has learned what publishers have always known, that there's far more money if you can be your own publisher or at least control the publishing of your own books. If a person looks closely at his 1999 book, VANISHED INTO THIN AIR (published by the same Western Front Ltd. which was, oddly enough, his "neighbor" when his home was in Palos Verdes, California), he discovers that more than 200 pages (out of 396 pages) are virtually carbon copies of corresponding pages in his 1983 book THE RAPTURE - with no "updated" or "revised" notice included!

This is robbery on a grand scale for unsuspecting buyers who've been assured that VANISHED is a "new" book! Hal has done the same nervy thing with several of his books, something that's allowed him to live in million-dollar-plus homes and drive cars like Ferraris!

And what about Lindsey's THERE'S A NEW WORLD COMING which Harvest House Publishers has owned and been republishing for years? During the same time Lindsey has been peddling his reportedly "new" APOCALYPSE CODE, much of which is word-for-word the same as the Harvest House book! And there's no notice of "simultaneous publishing" in either book! Think of the feelings of customers who buy Lindsey's version only to find out that it's largely a mirror image of the other publisher's version which they had bought previously! Talk about greed!

And then there's Tim LaHaye. His 1992 book NO FEAR OF THE STORM, published by Multnomah Press Books, has an entire chapter entitled "MacPherson's Vendetta." Relying on miscopied secondhand sources that in turn miscopied still earlier sources, he gives the impression that my decades of rapture roots research is my revenge for the troubles pretrib caused my family in the 1950's including my expulsion from Biola in downtown Los Angeles. (My mother went to be with the Lord not long after I was "raptured away" from L.A.) But LaHaye's "crystal ball" is cracked because I didn't even wonder about the pretrib origin, or start any research on it, until two decades later - long after the chief troublemakers had been off the scene and forgotten!

Since my origin research has never had any reason to hide or twist any historical facts, my practice in my eight book titles has always been to give proper credit and list sources when quoting or discussing others including pretrib critics. In light of LaHaye's chapter about me, maybe he (or Multnomah) can explain why he doesn't list any of my books in his footnotes or even his bibliography!

But his bibliography does list John Bray's 1982 pretrib origin booklet, containing only 34 pages of "origin" text, even though LaHaye has denounced Bray's claim that Lacunza taught pretrib (the same Lacunza that Bray has long since de-emphasized!) and even though Bray's little booklet is packed with miscopying errors, misspelled names, and even two instances of his plagiarism! How fair is it for LaHaye to discuss me at length without listing my books and publishers so that readers can learn what I've actually written?

The same LaHaye book (reprinted in 1998 as RAPTURE UNDER ATTACK) is filled with mountains of copying errors and missing footnotes, and his inclusion of Margaret Macdonald's short 1830 revelation account has 48 missing words - the same 48 words that Thomas Ice somehow left out (which changed the meaning) when he reproduced it three years earlier!

Why is it that Multnomah and other pretrib publishers almost never make any changes whenever errors and dishonesty in their books are pointed out to them? Don't they have time or money for necessary proofreading? Don't they have any self-respect? Don't they fear God?

One happy exception to publishing dishonesty is Thomas Nelson Publishers. After I convinced that company, with a stack of photocopies of marked pages, that David Jeremiah's and C. C. Carlson's ESCAPE THE COMING NIGHT (1990) is a massive plagiarism of Lindsey's THERE'S A NEW WORLD COMING, a top TNP official sent me a letter, part of which revealed that "we at Thomas Nelson are very concerned about this

matter. Accordingly, we are destroying all our current inventory of this title and will not reprint the book. Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention." (Anyone wishing a copy of this TNP letter can send a SASE and request it from me: Dave MacPherson, Box 1226, Monticello, Utah 84535.)

But as I've shown, many pretrib publishers are a far cry from Thomas Nelson. Their bottom line consists of three things: money, money, and money! They don't care that pretrib is less than 200 years old and that it didn't take over American evangelicalism much before "Doctor" Scofield's Bible in 1909! They don't care that the late Corrie ten Boom stated in a published article that pretrib leaders are "the false teachers Jesus was warning us to expect in the latter days" and that pretrib caused the deaths of "millions" of Chinese Christians when the Communists took over China! And they don't care that the dishonest pretrib theory they peddle for money in fact makes them accessories to the past, present, and future mass-murder of fellow believers!

### Gullible public purchases

Since the same evanjellyfish publishers don't care, I intend from now on to focus as much on their business practices and personal lives as I have on past and present pretrib authors. If anyone can send me documented evidence in this regard, I'll be happy to share it on the internet and in other ways.

But I really must stop. If this article has whetted your curiosity, call 800-967-7345 in South Carolina and get my book *THE RAPTURE PLOT*, the most detailed and documented book on the pretrib rapture's astonishing and long hidden history. Or you can order it through online bookstores such as [armageddonbooks.com](http://armageddonbooks.com).

As a historian I confess that I am no expert on where the different kinds of "wrath" (e.g. Satan's wrath and God's wrath) should be placed on prophecy charts. To me, a really important "wrath" question is whether or not the rapture will happen before the coming of pretrib wrath against those who expose pretrib dishonesty!

**Bro Need s editorial note:** From what I understand, though reprinting Spurgeon s sermons, the *Sword of the Lord* edits them to support their own view. Sad to say, in my research, I found that lies were a common practice among those who developed modern dispensational millennialism, for neither Scripture, orthodox Christian doctrine nor the saints of old could support the new house of cards they were building their new system of theology. The following is from *The Death of Victory* :

Brethren writers, especially Darby, edited the writings of past saints including the Reformers and hymns to support their theories. (*Plot*, 145, 146. Darby tells of his hard work in changing the words of the Reformers and of then existing hymns. *Darby s Collected Letters*, I.413, III.45.) The apparent reason was to make the millennial system appear orthodox when it clearly was not. Darby readily admitted that his new *truths* changed the orthodox understanding of multitudes of Scriptures as he intentionally went against the orthodox Christian doctrines of his day. (*Collected Writings of JN Darby*, II.493, 494.) He changed meanings of words, passages of Scripture and even the Scripture itself by issuing new translations to support his prophetic opinions. (*Letters*, I.55, 380, 382, 402 he convinced American Christians that the Old Testament is not for today, 534, II.32, 48, 65, 420, &c.) Among other things, he boasted that his unique prophetic views changed the entire book of Psalms from its historic understanding of the past eighteen hundred years. (*Ibid.*, I.243ff., II.561. His views were not unique with him. Though Edward s and Lacunza s system had been public domain for several years, it was, apparently, not generally known.) For example, Darby defined sovereign grace as a God-given ability to remain heavenly minded, detached from earthly things. (*Writings*, II.381, 425.) He translated, studied and taught all Scripture in light of the opinions he propagated around the world.

In other words, the modern dispensational millennial doctrine was founded in lies and half-truths, so we have no reason to doubt that the supporters of that faith must continue the precedent set for them at the foundation of the system that has made so much money for them.

### Why Study Bible Prophecy

My wife and I were going to or coming from somewhere. I had picked up the mail, and though I cannot read while traveling in a car, she can. So she started reading Jerry Falwell s *National Liberty Journal* (July 2001). She pointed out to me an article, **Why Study Bible Prophecy?** By **Dr. Edward Hindson, Dean, Institute of Biblical Studies, Liberty University**. Before she even started reading the article to me, I told her that I smelled

money there are untold millions of dollars to be made in millennialism, particularly rapture fever. The article opened:

Most of us would like to believe that Jesus is coming in our lifetime. Yet even as we anticipate the Lord's return, we need to be aware that eschatological excitement and prophetic panic tend to go hand in hand. Every time a war heats up in the Middle East, there are a number of "prophetic panhandlers" who assure us that this is "the Big One."

Despite the church's 20-century-long struggle to understand biblical prophecy, these modern-day "prophets" claim to have the last days and Christ's return all figured out some to the very day! The problem is that Christians have had the mindset for centuries and have often attempted to read prophecy through the eyes of their own experiences. The results have been a host of miscalculated guesses based on faulty presuppositions.

Mr. Hindson continues on with a tolerable article, pointing out the fallacy of understanding prophecy in light of current events. I was pleasantly surprised that it contained much I could agree with. But I told Bettie, There s money in it somewhere. And sure enough:

The issue at stake is that we must carefully distinguish between *facts* of prophecy and our own *assumptions* and *speculations*. This is why we are launching the Tim LaHay School of Prophecy at Liberty University. We want to help our students study, understand, and teach Bible prophecy properly and effectively based on the facts.

And there it was. The money trail led to Liberty University. It sure looks to me like they are trying to cash in on the current craze for Christian fiction as evidenced in the Left Behind series.

The following is from *The Biblical Examiner*, Summer, 1999, which is posted on our web site [biblicalexaminer.org](http://biblicalexaminer.org). Also, see *Introduction to Prophecy*, which is also posted index page, under Prophecy, Wild Prophetic Speculation.

Prophetic speculation for profit is not new. Spurgeon dealt with *prophets for profit*. Speaking on 1 Corinthians 11:25, 26, he said:

Till he come. I must not say anything about that, except that he will come, and I think that ought to be enough for Christians. To my great sorrow, I had sent to me, this last week, two or three copies of a tract purporting, according to the title-page, to have been written by myself, prophesying the coming of the Lord in the year 1866. Now, you may expect to hear of me being in Bedlam, whenever, by my tongue or my pen, I give countenance to such rubbish. The Lord may come in 1866, and I shall be glad to see him; but I do not believe he will; and one reason why I don t believe he will, I have told you before: it is because all these false twopenny-halfpenny prophets say that he will. If they said he would not, I should begin to think he would; but inasmuch as they are all crying as one man that he will come in 1866, or 1867, I am inclined to think he will not come at any such time. It seems to me that there are a very great many prophecies which must be fulfilled before the coming of Christ, which will not be fulfilled in the next twelve months; and I prefer, beloved, to stand in the position of a man who knows neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of man cometh; always looking for his appearing, but never interfering with those dates and figures, which seem to me to be proper amusement for young ladies who have nothing to do, and who take to them instead of reading novels, and for certain divines who have exhausted their stock of knowledge about sound doctrine, and therefore make up, and gain a little ephemeral (passing, short-lived, *ed.*) popularity by shuffling texts of Scripture as the Norwood gipsies shuffled cards in days gone by. Leave the *prophets* to divide the *profits* which they get from simpletons; and as for you, watch for Christ s coming, whether it shall be to-day, or to-morrow, and set no limits, and no dates, and no times. Only work while it is called to-day; work so that, when he cometh, he may find you, as faithful servants, ready to come in to the wedding with him. Till he come, then, the Lord s supper is to be a showing forth of this death. (Sermon, *The Lord s Supper, Simple but Sublime*. Lord s day evening, 1866. Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, Pilgrim Publishers, V. 55, p 318. Emp. his.)

(E mail from TndrMtnWmn: EARTH-SHAKING NEWS. ... Over the July 4<sup>th</sup> Holiday weekend Bible Codes researchers discovered specific codes that tell not only who the Antichrist is..., but implies that the Y2K

problem is mentioned. All this means that "September 10 thru September 12, 1999" is when MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WORLD-WIDE COULD DISAPPEAR INSTANTANEOUSLY!! Not long ago, one of the news programs, e.g., Date Line, had an spot about the multiplied thousands of Christians who have purchased one-way tickets to Israel to wait on the rapture. An Israeli official said that if the rapture does not take place, the nation will be overwhelmed with these people who have no where to go. *One-way tickets* tells us that they sold everything to wait for the rapture.)

Five points from Spurgeon's comments above:

First, the purpose of studying Scripture is to equip God's people to be faithful servants... Till he come. It is not to know the future, impress the hearers, nor to attract money nor people.

Second, prophetic speculation (Tim LaHay School of Prophecy) is proper amusement for young ladies who have nothing to do, and who take to them instead of reading novels, and for certain divines who have exhausted their stock of knowledge about sound doctrine. They have no practical application of God's word, so they preach *prophecy*.

Third, much prophetic speculation is done by *prophets* [wishing] to divide the *profits*, for prophecy conferences, messages and speakers attract both crowds and lots of money.

Fourth, there is good *profit* in *prophecy* to be reaped from simpletons *n.* A silly person; a person of weak intellect; a trifler; a foolish person. (Webster, 1828.) Or more commonly, A person lacking intelligence or common sense. (It seems to me that a great amount of modern *prophecy* flies in the face of common sense, e.g., *Left Behind*.)

Spurgeon pointed out that men like to speak on "prophecy" because of its profits. Few seem to care whether or not the words are according to sound, orthodox doctrine, for the message brings in money and people:

These views (the prophetic theories that have gained a large acceptance among Evangelical Anglicans, Fundamentalists in all Protestant Churches, Plymouth Brethren, Keswick and similar movements, free-lance Bible-teachers and evangelists, *ed.*), which began to be propagated a little over a hundred years ago in the separatist movements of Edward Irving and J. N. Darby, have spread to the remotest corners of the earth, and enlisted supporters in most of the Reformed Churches in Christendom, including the Mission field. They are held and spread with conviction and tenacity, and occasionally with overbearing confidence. They have had the advantage of being outstanding tenets in all sections of a denomination, which has had the satisfaction of seeing the peaceful penetration of other communions by their theories of the End. So much so that an increasing number of pastors feel called upon to leave the ordered work of the pastorate, to stir up interest in what is called the imminent or impending Coming of Christ. Some of these at a few hours' notice can fill the largest Churches with audiences anxious to hear of the latest signs of the times, though it is a fundamental presupposition of the school that the Imminent Advent awaits the fulfillment of no signs whatever. Some of this interest is wholesome; more of it would be if all of what is taught were true. (*The Approaching Advent of Christ*, Alexander Reese, xi, xii. First printing, 1937. Reprint by Grand Rapids International Publications Edition, 1975.)

Mr. Reese makes a good point: "...fill the largest Churches... The millennial message has the ability to raise tremendous amounts of money, and it will no doubt fill Falwell's *Let's Study Prophecy* class. Fortunes were and are made with Dispensationalism. (*The Rapture Plot*, Dave MacPherson, 208, 223. Millennium III Publishers, 1995.)

Spurgeon's fifth point: Dispensationalism (particularly date setting) depends upon shuffling text of Scripture as the Norwood gypsies shuffled cards in days gone by. Many have developed great skill and ability to *divide* scripture in such a way as to keep the shuffling hidden from the observers *rightly dividing* justifies shuffling text of Scripture.

The word of God was not given so man might see into the future events on this earth. It was given to equip man to be a faithful *workman* in the present, till he come.

The following is from *Sinful Enquiry*, *The Biblical Examiner*, March, 1997. It also is posted.

Throughout Scripture, God gives man a choice: obedience to God's *statutes* and *judgments*, leading to life and peace, and disobedience to God's *statutes* and *judgments*, leading to oppression, turmoil and death. (See Safety in the Land. ) The choice is offered throughout Scripture: Lev 25:18 uses *statutes* and *judgments* together. Ezekiel chapter twenty uses the two words together more than any other passage, a total of **SIX** times, vv. 11, 13, 16, 19, 21 & 24.

Ezekiel twenty is an interesting chapter. In it, Israel's elders come to enquire of the Lord through Ezekiel. However, rather than enquiring as to why Israel is in trouble with his God, they desire to know the future. (Enquire or inquire? Ezekiel and some older authors use enquire. Others use inquire. We will use enquire unless quoting.)

The Lord told Ezekiel that He would not give them counsel because they were refusing to do what they already knew to do. V. 40 gives the qualifications for enquiring of the Lord. And in the last verse, v. 49, the elders say to Ezekiel that they cannot understand what he is saying to them. Why? Obviously because they had refused to do what they knew to do. Therefore, we see that the Holy Spirit must give the understanding of His counsel which is found in God's Word. Those who refuse to do what they know God would have them do will not be shown anything else by the Holy Spirit.

Four times we are told that the result of not doing (because they could not see nor understand) is death, vs. 11, 13, 21, 25. The problem is in the heart, v. 16. Look at what we are told by God through Ezekiel:

First, vv. 1-4, *certain of the elders of Israel came to Ezekiel to enquire of the Lord, and sat before Ezekiel.* Evidently, they wanted a revelation from God concerning their future state:

... Instead of giving a revelation concerning the future, especially with regard to the speedy termination of the penal sufferings, which the elders had, no doubt, come to solicit, the prophet is to judge them, *i.e.* as the following clause explains, not only in the passage before us, but also in ch. xxii. 3 and xxiii. 36, to hold up before them the sins and admonitions of Israel. It is in anticipation of the following picture of the apostasy of the nation from the time immemorial that the sins of the fathers are mentioned here. (Keil, *Ezekiel*, 265.)

The people want to know of the future, so they enquire of God's Word (through Ezekiel). Rather than the Lord telling them of the future, He soundly and clearly rebuked them for their past sins. The only thing the future held for them was trouble, sorrow and misery because of the sins of the fathers, from which the children stoutly refused to turn. Patric Fairbairn points out that though we are not told precisely what these men enquired about,

There can be little doubt, however, that it had respect in some shape to the then depressed and suffering condition of the covenant-people, and implied, at least, if it did not openly express, a desire to ascertain something more definite about God's purpose respecting them. But here, again, a preliminary objection arose from the moral state of the persons inquiring, which was such as precluded them from any right to expect a friendly response from God to their desire for any further information. Regarding, as they did, iniquity in their heart, the Lord could not hear them. (Ps 66:18, ed.) He therefore, at the outset, denounced the presumption of such persons in coming to inquire at his servant, and called upon the prophet to do toward them the part of a judge, by charging upon them the rebellious spirit of their fathers, and showing how little either they or their fathers had received in chastisement from God compared with what they deserved. (Patric Fairbairn, *Ezekiel*, 209, 210.)

The problem clearly spelled out by the Lord to these inquirers was that their fathers had set in motion sinful practices which had passed on to the children; thus to enquire of the Lord and seek His aid without dealing with those sinful practices was presumption.

The parents should have been passing on to the children the ways, words (Law-Word) and works of the Lord (2 Thess. 1:5). Because they did not pass down the proper faith, the result was that instead of the children hoping in the Lord, they established their hope in themselves and in the surrounding pagan gods. They became *a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose spirit was not steadfast with God* (Ps. 78:4ff.). Moreover, the children had an over abundance of leaders, who, in the name of the Lord, supported them in their stubbornness and rebellion against God's Law-Word (Isa. 8:19, &c.).

Now the children wanted to hear from God about the future without facing up to and correcting the sinful

practices established by their fathers. Consequently, they SHOULD HAVE BEEN Enquiring from God's Word what they needed to do to correct the past sins, so they could again have God's blessings.

End of quote from *TBE*, March, 1997, but there is much more in the article.

The sum of the matter is this:

The issue at stake is that we must carefully distinguish between *facts* of prophecy and our own *assumptions* and *speculations*. This is why we are launching the Tim LaHay School of Prophecy at Liberty University. We want to help our students study, understand, and teach Bible prophecy properly and effectively based on the facts.

No! The issue at stake is that the fascination with the study of Biblical Prophecy, as exhibited by the Tim LaHay School of Prophecy it is clearly antichristian, and though it may produce a good income for Falwell, it has the same words against it as God spoke against the *elders* who came to Ezekiel to enquire about the future.

There is no call from God to study His word to find what the future holds. Such study is far more occultic than it is Biblical. And Falwell will turn out many young men who will lead their people into the occult practice of prophetic study.

Before condemning me for the above statement, read the article it is posted. Or I will send it to you, *Sinful Enquiry*, *The Biblical Examiner*, March, 1997.

### **To Whom Does the Land of Palestine Belong?**

by Thomas Williamson

In January of 1997, an Israeli soldier opened fire on Arab civilians in the city of Hebron in occupied Palestine, killing some and wounding others. His motive was to prevent the return of Israeli-occupied lands to the Arabs.

This soldier was convinced that God has given the land of Palestine to the Jews, and that it would be a sin to return the land to the Arabs. Many evangelical Christians, while not condoning the soldier's act of killing Arabs, agree with him that the Jews have a divine title deed to Israel and that the land must not be given back to the Palestinians.

Christian Zionists who believe this way, when asked to cite a Biblical justification for their views, usually go all the way back to Genesis 12 and 13 in the Old Testament. Many such Zionists are dispensationalists, who teach that the Old Testament and the Law of Moses are not for today, and that only selected parts of the New Testament are to be followed in this dispensation. However, they never quote from the New Testament to justify their Zionist convictions, for the simple reason that no New Testament teaching exists that would possibly back up such beliefs.

Zionists prefer to rely on the Old Testament, citing Genesis 13:15 where God said to Abraham, "For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever." They construe this verse to teach that a large chunk of the Middle East still belongs to the Jews today, including the ancient lands of Edom and Moab, even though God said in Deuteronomy 2:5, 9 that He would never give those lands to the Jews.

Christian Zionists regard God's covenant with Abraham, including the land grant, as an unconditional covenant. They admit that the Jews have broken that covenant, and have rejected their Messiah, but insist that Palestine still belongs to the Jews because God gave it to them "forever."

However, the Bible teaches that God's covenant with Abraham and his descendants was a conditional covenant, not unconditional. In Genesis 17:9-14 the Jews were warned that they must keep the covenant or be cut off from God's people. Leviticus 26:40-45 teaches that the Jews must confess and forsake their sins in order to maintain the covenant. Deuteronomy 7:12, 1 Kings 9:6-9 and Exodus 19:5-6 all teach that the covenant was conditional. Joshua 23:15-16 and 2 Chronicles 7:19-22 not only teach that the covenant was conditional, but they also specify that the Jews would lose their land grant if they broke the covenant.

As for the statement in Genesis 13:15 that God was giving the land to the Jews "forever," we must compare this with other uses of the same word in the Law of Moses in order to understand what God is saying to us.

In Exodus 12:23-24, God ordained the ordinance of the Passover to be observed "forever."

In Deuteronomy 18:3-5 the Levites are ordained to be God's ministers, and to receive the offerings of the people, "forever."

In Deuteronomy 23:3 we find that an Ammonite or Moabite cannot join the congregation of the Lord's people "forever."

In Leviticus 7:34 we find that the peace-offering was to be observed "forever ."

In Leviticus 10:15 we are told that the wave-offerings are to be observed "forever."

Leviticus 16:29 specifies that the Day of Atonement is to be observed "forever."

In Leviticus 23:41 we are commanded to observe the Feast of Tabernacles "forever."

Numbers 18:19 tells us that we are to observe the heave-offerings "forever."

In Numbers 19:9-10 we are instructed to use the ashes of a red heifer for purposes of purification "forever."

If we ask our dispensational Zionist friends why they are not observing any of these commandments today, they will explain that they are not for this dispensation, that they were intended only for the observance of the Jews in the dispensation of Law, before the coming of Christ.

The same reasoning applies to the land grant of Palestine to the Jews. Not only is that land grant no longer in effect in the new dispensation of grace, but it is also very clear that the Jews were given that land under a conditional covenant, and that they broke that covenant when they rejected and crucified their Messiah.

The covenant and the land promise to the Jews were not eternal, to last until the end of time. The Jews did not keep the conditions of the covenant, and for this reason God took away the kingdom of God from them, Matthew 21:42-45, and gave it to the New Israel (Galatians 6:16,) the Church which consists of believing Jews and Gentiles.

The inheritance of the new Spiritual Israel is not land in the Middle East, but rather the new Jerusalem in heaven. The old Jerusalem on earth is of absolutely no importance to God's people, John 4:21, Galatians 4:24-28, Hebrews 12:18-24. The Apostle Paul in Galatians 4:25 condemns as children of Hagar all those whose focus is on the earthly Jerusalem.

In Hebrews 8:13 we read that the old covenant with Abraham was about to disappear. The final disappearance of the old covenant took place in 70 AD when the Romans destroyed the Temple, the City of Jerusalem, and the Jewish state. The genealogical records of the Jews were destroyed also, meaning there is no Jew alive today who can trace his ancestry back to the Palestinian Jews of the First Century.

There is no statement or hint in the New Testament that God will revive the Jewish state. It has been revived by man twice, in 132 AD and in 1948 AD. There is no prophetic significance in these human restorations of the Jewish state, and Christians are under no obligation to support such a political entity.

Even our father Abraham has no interest in a restored Jewish state, Hebrews 11:13-16. He is in a much better place, the new Jerusalem. Instead of encouraging our Jewish friends to seek out the earthly Jerusalem, we should point them to the heavenly Jerusalem, available to them by faith in the Messiah. Some Zionists accuse American Jews of greed, saying that they belong in Israel and have stayed in America so they can make more money here. Instead of telling American Jews that this is not their country and that they should emigrate to Israel, we should rather encourage them to stay here where they enjoy all the blessings of religious freedom for their faith as well as a better opportunity to convert to Christianity if they so desire

Nowadays there are prominent evangelists who preach to their followers that God never fulfilled His promise of giving all the land of Palestine to the Jews. They support whatever action necessary, even nuclear war, to obtain Arab lands in the Middle East and give them to the Jews.

This belief is not only a threat to world peace, but it is also totally mistaken and unscriptural. The Bible clearly teaches that God did keep His promise to His chosen people the Jews, and that He did give them all the land that was promised. The boundaries of the land promised are given in Genesis 15:18 - from the river of Egypt (the Wadi El-Arish, not the Nile) to the river Euphrates.

Read Joshua 11:23, Joshua 21:43-45, 2 Samuel 8:3, 1 Kings 4:21, 1 Kings 8:56, 2 Chronicles 9:26 and Nehemiah 9:7-8, 24 and it will become very clear that God did give all of the land promised to the Jews. If God says that He did, who are we to say that He did not?

It is not necessary for us to start a war in the Middle East to fulfill a promise that God already fulfilled 3400 years ago. As for the Old Testament promises that Israel would be restored some day, these prophecies were fulfilled by the return from the Babylonian Captivity in 536 BC. The prophet Jeremiah is often quoted to prove that God promised a restoration of the Jews to their land and that the promise began to be fulfilled in 1948 AD. However, Jeremiah very clearly said in 606 BC that this prophesied national restoration of the Jews in their land would take place within 70 years (Jeremiah 29:10, Daniel 9:2). Christian Zionists need to study their Bibles more carefully, so that they will realize that God already kept His promise, when He said that He would, and that we do not need to stir up war and bloodshed in the Middle East in order to fulfill the promise yet again.

Christian Zionism and dispensationalism represent a giant step backward in our theological progress. Instead of resting in the once-for-ever sacrifice by Christ on the Cross for our sins, dispensational Zionists look forward to the building of another temple in Jerusalem with animal sacrifices. Instead of rejoicing in the New Covenant which was promised to all God's people, Jeremiah 31:31-34, they want to go back to the Old Covenant which has been forever abrogated. Instead of inviting our precious, beloved Jewish friends to partake in the eternal blessings of the heavenly Jerusalem, they try to send them back to the Old Jerusalem, even though they believe that 2/3 of them will be slaughtered in a 7-year period of Tribulation to come very soon.

The entire tendency of this theological system is to lead us all back to Judaism. The founder of dispensationalism, John Nelson Darby, openly admitted that his teaching would lead us back to Judaism. Let us rather heed the exhortation of the apostle saying, "Let us go on," Hebrews 6:1, rather than turning back to the empty shadows of a religion that was meant only to prepare mankind for the coming of Christ.

The duty of Christian churches today is to seek the well-being of Jews according to the flesh, Romans 9:3. We will accomplish that, not by lobbying for the territorial expansion of Israel, but rather by preaching the Gospel and planting churches, thereby giving all Jews and Gentiles an opportunity to enter the heavenly Jerusalem for all eternity.

Mr. Thomas Willimasom is an ordained Baptist minister who lives in Chicago, Illinois. He contributes to *The Biblical Examiner* from time to time.

Editor's note:

Micah 1:15, *Yet I will bring an heir unto thee... Heir* a legal term denoting the proper division of property among the legal heirs (an illegitimate child could not be an heir). *Mareshah* means possession. Israel had fallen heir to this possession when it was given the land by God. But now because of sin, God was giving the possession to another nation, Assyria. Just as a man can pass his possessions on to his heirs according to his desires, God can leave His possession to whomsoever He pleases. And fighting over who owns the inheritance is not uncommon, though the owner made it clear to whom he passed it on.

*For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.* (1 Cor. 10:26, Ps. 24:1.)

*Adullam* had been one of the royal cities of the Canaanites. Not far from Gath, it had been the scene of David's memorable victory over Goliath. (1Sa. 17:2.) It was one of the towns which Rehoboam fortified against Egypt. (2 Ch. 11:7.) At this place is a hill some 500 feet high pierced with numerous caverns, in one of which David gathered together "every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was

discontented". (1Sa 22:2.) Here in v. 15, it is called the glory of Israel.

Observe:

First, no piece of land belongs to any people; it all belongs to God. And thus Canaan, the promised land, never belonged to Israel. Israel was simply a steward for a time of a piece of property that belonged to someone else (as we all are, and that owner is not the State).

Second, because the land belongs to God, He can and does give it to whomsoever He will, and no man can say What doest thou? (Dan. 4:17, 25, 35, Job 9:12.)

Third, though God had given the land to Israel, He was now sending another *heir* to possess it, the Assyrians in this case.

Fourth, no place nor nation is sacred to the Lord God. He sent the new *heir* to *Adullam, the glory of Israel*. It is significant that the location being passed down to the new *heir* is *Adullam*, the place where David's glorious reign started. Though this was not where he was anointed, this is the place he came into public notice when he killed Goliath. This is also the place where men started gathering to him.

V. 15, God warned the people through His prophet that He was bringing the next legal *heir* to the property to take possession of it, but Israel still refused to heed the warning. So He passed it on, taking it from His people, and giving it to the pagans. The new *heir* of the land had to throw Israel off the land. (See Is. chapter 10.)

There are those who say that God gave the land of Palestine as an everlasting possession to Israel. But here we are clearly told that the land belongs to God, and Israel lost the *inheritance* because of sin. God then dispossessed the faithless people, and HE MADE another nation, a pagan nation, the legal *heir*. (Did God violate His own law when He made a pagan nation His legal heir to His property?)

## **Christian apologetics**

By Darin Gregg

For those who are not familiar with the term "apologetic", it basically means a defense. The Greek word *apologia* is translated as answer or defense in the scriptures. There are different forms of Christian apologetics. The most common being an evidential approach while others use a strict presuppositional method, which breaks down the faulty logic of those who reject the scriptures.

The unbelief and skepticism of today, in many cases demands the use of apologetics in order to even give a hearing of the gospel. While God saves by grace alone, He uses the human element as an instrument of this grace.

It is often times easy to secure a quick, emotional response to Christ. But many times this person ends up being like the seed in *stony places*. He quickly sprouts, endures for a while, and is soon gone. (Matt. 13: 20-21.)

It is also often impossible today to even obtain a hearing of the gospel without first preparing the ground by removing all the stones of misinformation about supposed Biblical contradictions and other errors in Christian doctrine.

This is why I believe that any apologetic method is good as long as it supports the truth of God's word. Let us take a short look at the evidential method.

I have personally found that an evidential approach is best used on those whom God has already begun to work in their hearts, (people who come to you with questions) although the Lord has used evidential reasoning to convert even the hardened atheist.

Evidences which are used today involve anything from the proof of the resurrection to the scientific evidence against evolution, thus supporting the Biblical message. It is important to note when dealing with the lost today that many have studied atheistic answers to Biblical apologetics, and are very well prepared. This is why so many Christians are embarrassed and rejected when they try to witness to such a person.

Let us first take a look at some scriptural references that back an evidential approach and how they apply to us.

The first is found in Romans 1:18-20.

*18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; 19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. 20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:*

Here we see the Apostle Paul using evidential apologetics not to prove there is a God, but to show everyone that they already know He exist based on the evidence of creation itself.

Even some of the strictest of evolutionist maintain a faith in God of some sorts because He has manifested Himself in such a way that the honest person truly cannot deny His existence. Just taking someone out on a beautiful day and taking a good look around is a powerful witness to God s handiwork.

Now let us take a look at Acts 4:33

*And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.*

The Apostles used the witness of the resurrection to declare the truth of the Gospel message. Without this evidential fact that Christ had indeed arose, there would be no proof. Although we did not see Christ ourselves, we can use the same evidence based on both scriptural and secular sources to argue for the factual account of the resurrection of Christ. There are many skeptics who have studied so-called sources denying the resurrection; should not we as witnesses for Christ study the evidential rebuttal to such false attacks?

Also see 1st Corinthians 1-8 for a look at the Apostle Paul s use of evidential apologetics concerning the resurrection. Although he is talking to believers here, he is encouraging them in the faith and outlining the clear evidence of the resurrection.

There are many good evidential approaches a person can use today to at least be able to give an answer to those who have studied and searched these things out from a non Christian perspective.

And this leads me to my final scriptural reference. 1Peter 3:15.

*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:*

While the context of this verse is not dealing directly with apologetics, the premise is the same. We should always be prepared both from a scriptural perspective or other apologetic arguments to answer the skeptics. Believe me, when I tell you that they are well prepared themselves.

In conclusion, I would like to encourage Christians to at least have an introductory knowledge of the creation/evolution debate and some understanding of historical apologetic arguments. It has been my experience to find that the enemy is hard at work brainwashing individuals into faulty science and logic. Once these things become entrenched in their minds, it becomes an unbreakable wall of partition. If it was not for my faith in the grace of God, it would be easy to surrender now. Just remember, what is impossible with man, is not impossible with God.

In the next issue we will take a closer look at evidential apologetics and examine some issues concerning the current creation and evolution debate.

(Darin is a young layman in our church.)

**How Many Children Have to Die?**

By Matthew Chancey

June 11, 2001

Dear Congressman Squish,

In the wake of the violent school stabbings in Japan, I believe the U.S. should not wait until such violent acts reach our coast before enacting legislation that will prevent the same tragedies from happening in our schools. The following is a list of recommended legislation that Congress should introduce and pass immediately:

#1 Enact a 21-year-old rule.

All knives and sharp objects used for cutting, regardless of their make and model, shall not be sold to individuals under 21 years of age. Consequently, all Boy Scouts will be prohibited from using knives, axes, machetes and other tools that could hurt others. Cooking classes and school cafeterias shall eliminate all metal knives in favor of the cheap plastic variety only. Pocketknife companies must affix warning labels to all their products. Companies that market their products to minors will be liable for federal lawsuits.

#2 Ban the import of high-capacity knife holders.

Foreign-made wooden or plastic knife organizers that contain slots for more than ten knives should be banned. Who needs more than ten knives anyway? Besides, the slots in some of these holders are built for very large Assault Knives that are obviously intended for criminal purposes.

#3 Ban the import of cheap foreign knives.

All knives that are designed to be mass-produced and shipped abroad should be banned from importation in the U.S. This is especially the case with Japanese and Swiss knives.

#4 License all Domestic Knife Manufacturers.

All knife producers and distributors in the U.S. shall be required to obtain a Federal Cutlery License from a newly created agency called the Sharp Things Under Public Investigation Department (S.T.U.P.I.D.).

#5 Pass a National Knife Registration Act

All knives and other sharp objects with blades more than ¼ inch in length shall be registered at the time of purchase with the S.T.U.P.I.D. organization.

#6 Require Background Checks on All Knife Purchases.

Anyone purchasing knives from FCL dealers shall undergo a criminal background check from the S.T.U.P.I.D. organization. All applicants with a history of knife injuries shall be required to take a one-day course on safe knife handling conducted by a S.T.U.P.I.D. instructor.

#7 Enact Background Checks at Knife Shows.

Private knife owners shall NOT be exempted from conducting a S.T.U.P.I.D. background check on all private purchases at knife shows.

#8 Ban Mail-Order Knives.

All t.v. and radio commercials offering knives for sale by mail order shall be banned. This is especially the case for knife sets under \$19.95. The only exceptions are knives shipped to FCL dealers.

#9 Enact a 1,000 ft. rule.

No knives or sharp objects shall be allowed within 1,000 feet of a school.

By enacting this and other responsible knife control legislation, we will take the first step in preventing stabbings and eliminating violence from our nation s schools. I call on Congress to seriously consider these options and work to undercut knife violence before it s too late.

Sincerely,

Sarah Grady

President, Persons Mad about Sharp stuff (P.M.S.)

(Matt is Bettie Need s son-in-law.)

### **OOPARTS-- Out Of Place ARTifacts, Physical Evidence of Antediluvian Man**

By Pastor Karl Hanel, Director of Creation Evangelism Ministries

Because of their overwhelming numbers and vast support in the various media, evolutionists appear cocky and self -confident to the uninitiated. However, it is now becoming more difficult to find those who will **debate against knowledgeable Creation** scientists. This fact is not at all surprising when we begin to look at the lack of physical evidence available to support the theory of evolution. Open minded **and thoughtful examination** of the fossils in the geologic strata shows that the Creation submodel more readily fits the pattern seen there. Evolutionists are unusually good at deflecting and obfuscating when presented with evidence that does not coincide with their theory, but there are some items that create problems for even the most faithful believer of evolution. Those artifacts are called **OOPARTS or -Out- Of -Place ARTifacts**. These are artifacts that are found out of place either in the geologic strata or out of place historically.

One wonderful OOPART was found in 1889 in Nampa, Idaho and still resides in the local museum. It is a small clay doll, about an inch tall, that clearly shows marks of clothing or jewelry and was brought up from the 320 foot depth of a well being drilled locally in Nampa. The layer of rock in which it was found is estimated by evolutionary geologists to be 12 million years old. An obviously handcarved doll buried in rock 312 feet down, must be regarded as presenting somewhat of a problem for the dogmatic evolution believer. However, many such artifacts exist, but are almost totally disregarded by evols because they "cannot" exist based upon their dogmatic belief system. Occasionally, however, a few of the more honest ones will acknowledge that there are unexplainable pieces of evidence that require thoughtful reconsideration or new theories.

Omni Magazine, a modern secular science magazine, now out of publication, in the September, 1982 issue, featured an article about what they called **OOPARTS** . The article began with this statement:

*"An unprecedented explosion of knowledge 5000 years ago, may have been foreshadowed by an earlier society whose cultural remnants have long since vanished "*

This article mentioned the fact that the Egyptian, and other early middle eastern societies, were able to accomplish great feats of architecture, technology and science without any buildup of prior historical ability in these areas. Omm's intention was to exhibit the astonishment of modern science at an apparent explosion of knowledge that suddenly appeared about 5000 years ago!

For instance, it was stated that the earlier pyramids, such as the one at Zoser, were the most technologically and architecturally sound, when normally one would think, evolutionarily speaking, that as civilization progresses the best examples of architecture and technology would be the most recent. Evolutionary logic would posit that ancient man was brutish and ignorant, slowly developing, finally discovering metals and ultimately developing into "civilized man."

(Biological evolution giving way to social and cultural evolution.)

Who could have been the foreshadowing society "whose cultural remnants have long since vanished?" The editors of Omni magazine tend to think that these OOPARTS may have come from Atlantis, an island that was supposed to have sunk in the Mediterranean Sea thousands of years ago. Scripture, however, tells us that a highly developed culture existed before the Great Flood of Genesis 6-8 and that God wiped it off the face of the

earth because of its wickedness. Genesis 4:21 and 22 tell us that shortly after the creation, men generated complex musical instruments, as well as brass and iron. It therefore is conceivable that many other instruments of various forms, materials and construction were invented during the next thousand years or so. Antediluvian (ante= before ...diluvian=flood) men living long life spans, up to 969 years, as in the case of Methuselah, would have had a long creative life for creation of technology, whereas today's inventors would only have a useful inventing life of probably 50 years. High intelligence, with a long and easy life because of the excellent atmospheric and growing conditions, would have given man much time to develop technology to our present level or beyond.

As the Great Flood subsided (lasting 371 days), it deposited in layers, uncountable tons of sediment in some cases miles thick, stirred up by the scouring action of the flood. Within those layers of sediment, called strata, are the physical evidences of the up to two billion people who populated the earth prior to the Flood. Occasionally, unusual pieces of that evidence are found by excavation or mining. Man made articles such as gold chains, an iron cube, a bronze bell, and an iron teapot were found in chunks of coal. Other items including a metal vase, a small doll, what appears to be a spark plug, and a hammer have been found in rock strata estimated by evolutionists to be millions of years old. Other evidences such as fossil human and dinosaur footprints only feet apart, a petrified finger and human bones have also been found in strata allegedly millions and millions of years old. ( Pictures of many of these items are included in my video tape advertised in this edition of Biblical Examiner )

These evidences, as well as what we read in the Scriptures, lead us to theorize that the "great explosion of knowledge" 5000 years ago was the recorded knowledge of the antediluvian civilizations brought on board the ark with Noah. Within a relatively short time that knowledge was put to use by Noah's sons and their offspring in the building of new civilizations which populated the ancient middle east. Unfortunately, over the centuries, the knowledge of these technologies were lost as kingdom conquered kingdom, destroying evidence of technology and the libraries that stored it. For example, when Rome conquered Egypt, the millions of volumes of books stored in the library of Alexandria, mostly papyrus scrolls, were sent to Rome to fuel the public baths. Untold secrets of the ages went up in smoke because of ignorance and apathy.

Archeological excavations have provided evidence that ancient post-diluvian man had electric power, the ability to see with telescopes, the knowledge of winged flight and computer technology capable of providing navigation to sail the entire world. Substantial evidence found in North America shows that Basques, Phoenician, and Celtic sailors explored the entire western hemisphere and began trade with American aboriginal citizens up to 2300 years ago.

How does all this evidence of the technology of ante and post diluvian man apply to us today? It applies because it correlates with the Genesis account of high technology before the Flood, God's creation of man as highly intelligent from the very beginning instead of evolving into intelligence, and it shows that the geologic strata beneath our feet is not millions of years old, but very likely no more than four to five thousand years old. All this adds up to tells us that as more ancient sites and layers of strata are explored, more evidence will be uncovered that will support the fact that the Scripture is accurate and reliable in every way.

### **Personal:**

In the last Examiner, I mentioned my plans to remarry. Well, I did. Bettie Ethell and I were married in Gettysburg April 29<sup>th</sup>, at the Dobbin House. She moved back here with the Brazilian girl (Fernanda Ferreira Fleury, or Fay ) who is staying with us until December 11<sup>th</sup>. At that time, if the Lord provides, Christina, Bettie and I will all go with Fay to take her home to Brazil. (Her parents sent her here to be immersed in English. Bettie has a sister who married a Brazilian man, and who has remained there as a missionary. Their best friend wanted to send their daughter to the US to be trained in English, and Bettie's sister suggested they send her to Bettie, for at the time Bettie was a widow living alone. So when I married Bettie, Fay came with her. She is a wonderful Christian girl, just a year older than Christina. So the two of them have hit it off very well together. God's timing has been perfect. Bettie is a wonderful lady, more than I ever hoped for or dreamed of.)

We had to move into the Parsonage, for our house in the country is much too small for all of us, especially with two teenage girls.

Moreover, this summer, we had to move Carol's mother here close to us. She is still able to live alone, but she must have someone check on her often, as well as do things around her house. Carol was an only child, so I need to watch after her now. And Bettie understood that responsibility before we were married, and she gladly accepts the role of a daughter for Carol's mother. There are apartments right across the alley from the parsonage, which is as convenient as anything can be.

So time has been terrible this summer. I took three weeks to get married: one week with her and the family before we got married, then we were married with four days' honeymoon, and then another 4 days loading a truck, driving it the six hundred miles back and unloading it. We then had to take another week to go back to VA for a doctor's appointment for Bettie. We are still trying to get out of boxes here at the parsonage, which will probably be a year project.

There is a man in Chicago who has been on our mailing list for many years. His heart has been in reaching the Spanish community for the Lord with good, sound theological material. He has become very proficient in Spanish, and attends Spanish speaking churches in order to grow in his ability with Spanish. His ministry is to send good material into Spanish speaking countries, particularly into Central America. (There are 70 Spanish speaking churches in the Chicago area alone.) His desire is to try to counter the influx of the fluffy, vain and sometimes downright false theological material that is finding its way into those countries. Upon hearing of Bettie's and my marriage, he has encouraged and is encouraging me to now translate my material into both Spanish and Portuguese (though quite similar, the two languages are not the same), which is spoken in Brazil. I understand there is a large Portuguese presence in some of the bigger United States cities. And of course, Bettie has good contacts in Brazil for good material.

#### My Request

We have before us an open door to place what the Lord has given us into the hands of Spanish and Portuguese speaking people. There is good computer software now that will translate, but it is not cheap. And the Lord has provided Mr. Williamson in Chicago and then my wife here at home who can proof the material. The Lord has also provided an outlet for the material, but at this point, He has not provided the funds. I can probably have the material printed for about \$150 for the first thousand in each language and send it bulk to those who are willing to distribute it. That expense on top of the regular Examiner expense will be about \$1,000 a printing, which is more than we can handle.

However, before I would print anything like that in Spanish and Portuguese, I want to send some sample copies (laser printout - I have an 11x17 laser printer by which we can make some sample copies in our old format for a trial run) out to see what kind of response we can get.

Pray for us, and may the Lord lead you to help with the finances.

#### Book Report

The folks who were taking care of printing *The Death of Victory* have failed to deliver. So I contacted Millennium III Publishers. I received the offer of a contract from them, with a small advance, and, Lord willing, they have set February, 2002 as a release date, if I can have a ready to publish MS to them by the middle of August. If they can work it into their publishing schedule, it will be sooner. Dave MacPherson is looking it over for historical accuracy, and plans to write another Foreword for it. One of the publisher's major goals will be to get the book into both public and college libraries because of the book's value as an honest history of the modern millennial movement. Obviously, this summer has come and gone, leaving me in the dust.

I will be 60, August 14. Those of us who have reached this age wonder how it has happened so quickly. I must admit, I have more to do now than I ever had, and I find more excitement in the Lord's work than ever.