



HEART

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February-March 2024



Chaos or conspiracy? Will all this really happen in 2024?

Tony Pearce p10-11

As even Israel's allies press for a two-state solution, an astonishing admission from an Orthodox Jew:

"GAZA NEEDS JESUS!"

With the war against Hamas raging and 129 hostages held since 7 October, Jonathan Feldstein is calling for Franklin Graham to hold crusades and an army of Christian volunteers to rebuild Gaza

While over 200 Israeli soldiers have been killed in combat, along with many more injured, I am not just praying for the swift and full eradication of Hamas, the safe return of all our soldiers including my son and son-in-law, and release of all the hostages.

Despite being an Orthodox Jew, I am praying for Gazans to get a little Jesus in 2024.

Especially as talks of another cease fire loom and the UN is pressing for a cessation of all combat (even without the return of all the hostages), I am looking to the day after the war ends.

Gaza must be rebuilt, because some two million Gazans need a place to live. Gaza's destruction has been commensurate with how deeply Hamas embedded itself among the population and within schools, mosques, hospitals and UN facilities.

Perhaps this time, unlike 2007 when Hamas took control and began its reign of terror over the population, Gazans will want to get it right. If rebuilt properly, purging the terrorists, and supervised responsibly, Gaza can become a thriving entity like Singapore. Maybe, just maybe, there can be peace.

Asked in an interview recently if

I thought Jesus should come back, suggesting that he would bring peace, I replied that Gazans sure could use a lot more Jesus.

The only chance I see for real peace is that Gazans become real Christians

The best and safest way to change the situation and bring peace is for the masses of Gazans, and Palestinian Arabs in general, to convert to Christianity.

If it were up to me, the late Billy Graham would come back and hold months of crusades throughout Gaza. There are also

many former Muslims who have become Christians, many speak Arabic and know the culture, who I would bring along as well. From day one, Gazans would be fed a diet of Christian faith to counteract the buffet of hate that they have ingested.

I would send along Billy Graham's son Franklin with his aid organisation Samaritan's Purse, and other ministries that can bring thousands of volunteers of all backgrounds and skills, charged with education, medical and spiritual well-being, and physical reconstruction. Ministries like these can bring masses of the most faithful and committed volunteers.

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THE REAL REASON THE HOSTAGES COULD ONLY WHISPER

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Any Christian who understands the biblical covenant between God and the Jewish people, that it's eternal and unbreakable, will transform his or her heart. That's how true peace can be achieved

They will be the most objective, with the greatest ability to succeed in rebuilding Gaza by both genuinely loving and caring about Israel and its safety, but also about the well-being of Palestinian Arabs. They will not allow the restoration of a massive terrorist infrastructure under their noses as the UN, Red Cross, and other "humanitarian" groups have allowed over the decades.

If Gazans become real Christians, they will not just abandon Allah in favour of the God of Israel, but they will also come to love Israel: the land, the people, and the state, as a realisation of God's promise to his people. Any Christian who understands the biblical covenant between God and the Jewish people, that it's eternal and unbreakable, will transform his or her heart. That's how true peace can be achieved.

This is not a task for the Jewish people. Our covenant is unique. We are meant to be a light unto the nations. Nobody wants to live in peace more

than the Jewish and Israeli people. But to really bring lasting peace, we need an army of Christians to restore Gaza.

It may sound crazy, an Orthodox Israeli Jew proposing a plan to establish peace in Israel not based on a mistaken formula of two states, but by calling for our neighbours living in spiritual darkness to become spiritual allies by becoming Christian.

However, the reality is that anger among Gazans toward Hamas is growing to such a degree that if presented a viable alternative, one based in morality that can bring prosperity, the ground is fertile for such an opportunity.

Let's pray that Gazans' dissatisfaction with Hamas increases and that they all get a little Jesus in 2024.

Why two states isn't a solution

The US and Europe, along with the Arab world, are still calling for a two-state solution.

Recently, Vice President Kamala Harris echoed apparent US policy that the two-state 'solution' be with Gaza and other areas under the authority a Palestinian state, to be under (a perhaps revamped) PLO-led Palestinian Authority.

There needs to be a change of heart

Others have discussed an international (Arab led) coalition to rebuild and provide long term stability for Gazans, without Hamas or any terror organisation controlling the territory and its population again. Most echo that they will only do so under the guise of the long touted, and yet still impractical, two-state solution.

Israel has a different vision for what the day after will look like. Israel knows that the PLO is nothing more than a kinder and gentler terror group that, like Hamas, does not accept Israel's right to exist. It rewards terror, paying pensions to terrorists as if they are national heroes.

The idea is not practical now and gives terrorists the idea that if they keep slaughtering Jews, they will get a state.

Rebuilding – who and how?

Rebuilding needs to start from under the ground up, first with anything left of the underground city that's a maze of terrorist tunnels being destroyed, along with the evil Islamic ideology that birthed Hamas originally, and was nurtured from Iran all these decades.

It's not clear that any of the Arab states individually, or as a consortium, can or are even willing to help with

Gaza's long-term recovery.

The last thing Israel and Gaza need is a rebuilding of the extremist Islamic ideology at the foundation of rebuilding the territory, and resumption of arms smuggling. If there's ever a hope for a lasting peace, there needs to be an overhaul of more than the physical infrastructure. There needs to be a change of heart.



Jonathan Feldstein is president of the Genesis 123 Foundation. Born and educated in the US, he immigrated to Israel in 2004. He is married and the father of six. As a leader working with and among Christian supporters of Israel, he shares experiences

of living as an Orthodox Jew in Israel through his work, writing, and as host of the Inspiration from Zion podcast. He can be reached at firstpersonisrael@gmail.com.

Franklin Graham was first evangelical leader to visit after 7 October

Rev Franklin Graham was the first evangelical leader to rearrange his schedule and fly to Israel after Hamas attacked communities and killed 1200 people on 7 October 2023.

"I'm so grateful that he is here," said Joel Rosenberg of All Israel News, who met with Graham.

Rev Graham arrived in Israel on 13 November and met with grieving Israelis whose loved ones were captured by Hamas terrorists and were being held hostage in the Gaza Strip. "In each place, Graham listened to intensely personal and painful stories of heartache and loss," said Rosenberg. "He asked a wide range of questions, and was asked a wide range of questions by some Israelis who are religious and quite a few who are not."

Consistent with Graham's practice in war-torn regions all over the world – including in the Arab/Muslim world – he brought a message of hope. Among Scriptures he quoted was Psalm 23, one



Franklin Graham with Joel Rosenberg, presenter on TBN and All Israel News

of the most beloved in the Bible.

Graham emphasised that God is the Good Shepherd of Israel who wants to care for and protect his flock. Rosenberg adds: "Graham also made it clear – with particular gentleness and respect – he believes that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah and the Good Shepherd who loves both Israelis and Palestinians with a deep and everlasting love."



Rev Graham sees the bloodstains and bullet holes in a home destroyed by Hamas terrorists in Kibbutz Be'eri



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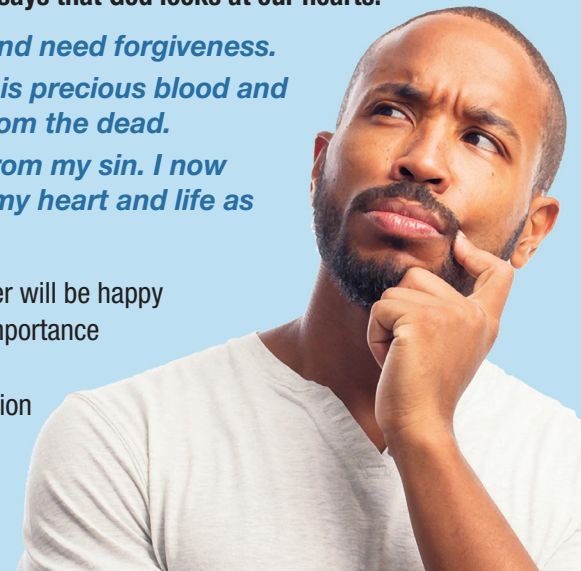
Do I need this?

BEING A CHRISTIAN is about a relationship with Jesus Christ, the only Son of the living God, who died in our place, to pay the price for our sin. He desires to welcome you into God's family here on earth and into heaven when you die.

To start this relationship, simply pray the following prayer; if you mean it, he'll respond, because the Bible says that God looks at our hearts.

*"Dear God, I am a sinner and need forgiveness.
I believe that Jesus shed his precious blood and died for my sin and rose from the dead.
I am willing to turn away from my sin. I now invite Christ to come into my heart and life as my personal Saviour."*

The churches featured in this paper will be happy to welcome you and explain the importance of daily Bible reading, daily prayer, baptism, being part of a congregation where the Bible is preached and believed, and telling others about what Jesus has done for you.



PEOPLE & PLACES

"We did it!" - victory for parents of disabled children

Parents have persuaded Schools Minister Damian Hinds to adjust free school meals guidance for children with disabilities.

A third of eligible disabled youngsters (160,000 children) were missing free school meals because of issues such as special dietary needs,

sensory processing issues, or long term health problems meaning they miss school. Now local authorities and schools will have to offer 'reasonable adjustments', such as supermarket vouchers, following parliamentary support by MPs from all parties.



Parent campaigners at the Houses of Parliament celebrated a school meals 'win'

FINNISH MP FACES 'HATE SPEECH' CHARGES AGAIN

Despite being exonerated by two courts and escaping a potential jail sentence, a Christian MP and a bishop in Finland are now being pursued by the state prosecutor for hefty fines instead.

MP Päivi Räsänen, a former Minister of the Interior, has featured several times in this paper after being charged with 'hate speech' for a tweet in 2019 that shared her biblical views on marriage and sexual ethics. Bishop Juhana Pohjola faced similar charges for publishing a pamphlet on Christian values by Räsänen for his congregation in 2004.

They thought the ordeal had ended on 14 November last year, when the Helsinki Court of Appeals dismissed



MP Päivi Räsänen is being persecuted for her biblical views on marriage and sexual ethics

all charges. Now the state prosecutor is insisting on 'tens of thousands of Euros in fines', according to ADF International, and Finland's Supreme Court is deciding whether to hear the case.

Räsänen said: "After my full exoneration in two courts, I'm not afraid of a hearing before the Supreme Court... I am ready to defend freedom of speech and religion as far as the European Court of Human rights, if necessary."

LYNDA TACKLES LINEKER

Petition to defund the BBC

Rev Lynda Rose of Voice For Justice UK (VfJUK) has started a petition to the Culture Secretary, Lucy Frazer, asking her to defund the "hopelessly Biased Broadcasting Corporation". As well as blasting the BBC's 'woke' bias, VfJUK states that the BBC's news coverage has consistently "demonstrated a pro-Palestinian, anti-Israel bias", which "provides fuel for the unprecedented rise in antisemitism now visible on our streets."

Most recently Match of the Day presenter Gary Lineker shared a post on social media calling for Israel to be stopped from participation in all sporting tournaments abroad, "until it ends its grave violations of international law". After a flurry of complaints the post was deleted, but only after it had apparently been seen by 'millions'.

The BBC's silence over the incident means, says Rev Rose, that "Auntie has decided to turn a blind eye to overtly



Rev Lynda Rose is campaigning for the BBC to be impartial or be defunded

antisemitic prejudice, breaching its own so-called rules of impartiality by unquestioningly supporting the pro-Palestinian narrative of genocide, while ignoring the palpable danger to Israel - which is faced by a foe openly calling for its eradication from the face of the earth."

The aim is for the petition to reach 5,000. See vfjuk.org.uk/demonetise the BBC.

SIMON'S SHOEBOX TREK



Simon Rooksby delivering Christmas shoeboxes in Ukraine to displaced villagers

Shoeboxes filled with useful goodies have become a popular way of bringing Christmas cheer to children in Eastern Europe. But this year an unexpected clampdown saw European vehicles bearing shoeboxes being turned away at the Romanian border.

The news came just hours before Simon Rooksby from Eastbourne was due to drive to Romania, loaded with shoeboxes and medical supplies destined for disabled children in Romania, Bulgaria and Ukraine. Simon, the founder of Computers for Charities, had just been able to replace his 20-year-old van with a newer one and decided to press on to Oradea. "There remained only one option: to try", he said.

Unexpectedly, Romanian customs officials were very supportive and allowed Simon across the border. "It was a moment of holding your breath and remaining positive. It was great that we could help lots of children across Europe", said Simon.

The 4,000 mile trek across eight countries took three weeks. Now he

is starting preparations for 2024.

To offer help, see www.computersforcharities.org or call 01323 848588

Nation unites in prayer against cholera

Hospitals in Zambia are struggling to cope in a cholera outbreak, but Christians are claiming a miracle has happened because the Government and the entire Church in Zambia held a national day of repentance on 19 January.

According to Pastor Jeff Daly of National Day of Repentance, the Zambians sought "God's solution, 2 Chronicles 7:14, to heal the cholera epidemic."

2 Chronicles 7:14 is often quoted as the key to a nation's healing.

For similar updates, email pastorjeff@repentday.com

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NATIONAL NEWS BY ANDREW HALLOWAY

Methodist Church attacks terms 'husband' and 'wife'

Wesley's Church repents of "any hurtful language"

The latest edition of the Methodist Church's "Inclusive Language Guide" advises Methodists to avoid using gendered terms such as "husband" and "wife".

The Church justifies the guidance on the basis that these terms "may sound inoffensive but it makes assumptions about a family or personal life that is not the reality for many people".

When The Christian Post asked for comment, a Methodist spokesperson said the Church is "very proud" of the guidance "to repent of any hurtful language".

"They even affirmed 'informal cohabitation' as equivalent to marriage"

One of the Methodist denomination's founders was revivalist Charles Wesley. Two centuries later, his Church's Guide suggests using "partner" as an alternative to husband/wife, and recommends "sensitive and inclusive" language for a whole range of minorities, including LGBT+ people, and using the pronouns that people prefer. It even warns against using the biblical terms 'brother' and 'sister' for other Christians, because this doesn't "take into account our non-binary friends".

The Guide also recommends controversial organisations like the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) and Stonewall for more information.

Outspoken conservative clergyman Calvin Robinson criticised the guidance as "communist ideology" and said: "This is not Christianity. It is Critical Theory: 'smash heteronormativity.' It is no longer enough to acknowledge

disordered lifestyles. Everything normative and ordered must be demolished... One must make a choice. Embrace the ways of this trendy yet toxic ideology, or embrace God's order."

The Coalition for Marriage stated: "The Methodist Church in Britain... is one of the clearest examples of how redefining marriage to include same-sex couples is the slipperiest of slopes to devaluing marriage completely. The denomination even affirmed 'informal cohabitation' as equivalent to marriage."

US evangelist Franklin Graham wrote on X: "The Methodist Church in the UK is trying to edit what the Word of God says to be more appealing to the changing whims of culture. As Christians, we aren't called to avoid what might offend people—we are called to share the Truth of God's Word."



The Methodist Church's new London headquarters in Tavistock Place, which they plan to move into this year

CONVERSION THERAPY BILL ABSENT IN KING'S SPEECH

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's plan for the current session of Parliament doesn't seem to include a conversion therapy bill. Any mention of it was absent from the King's Speech at the opening of Parliament in November.

The controversial proposal to ban conversion therapy threatened to restrict the freedom of Christian prayer and counselling, as well as preventing any professional from offering treatment for people who want to change from homosexuality to heterosexuality.

The National Director of Christian Voice, Stephen Green, commented: "Your prayers, backed up by emails to MPs, have been answered. The King's Speech today made no reference to any ban on 'conversion therapy'... However, there was nothing to stop the rest of the 'woke agenda'."

Meanwhile Mr Green was facing court proceedings on 19 January for reciting Psalm 139 within the 'buffer zone' of an abortion clinic.



King Charles and Queen Camilla presiding at the State Opening of Parliament in November 2023

SACKED THEOLOGY LECTURER SUES COLLEGE

A Christian lecturer who claims he was fired for his biblical views on sexuality is suing his employers, Cliff College in Derbyshire.

Dr Aaron Edwards was dismissed from the Methodist-led college last March after defending traditional

marriage on social media. As HEART reported last year, he had tweeted: "Homosexuality is invading the Church. Evangelicals no longer see the severity of this because they're busy apologising for their apparently barbaric homophobia, whether or not it's true. This is a Gospel issue, by the way. For if sin is no longer sin, we no longer need a Saviour."

"If I don't do this... ten other Christians are going to be in a similar position"

Dr Edwards says he is pursuing legal action "to raise awareness of the issue and... for the sake of justice. It's just horrendous how many times this kind of thing happens, but my case is quite unique" because it is a "Christian against a Christian organisation" rather than against secular culture. "If I don't do this... ten other Christians are going to be in a similar position."

Faithwire reported that he is being supported by the Christian Legal Centre.



Dr Aaron Edwards: dismissed for defending marriage

FAMILY PAYS TRIBUTE TO CHRISTIAN WHO DIED IN HIT AND RUN

The family of a Christian man who was killed while helping an unconscious woman on the street in Sheffield has praised his selflessness.

He is now "with his Lord and Saviour"

In a statement via South Yorkshire police, the family said Chris Marriott, was now "with his Lord and Saviour" and had "devoted much of his life to helping others". Marriott was also described by the police as a "Good Samaritan" and his death hit the national headlines. He was a member of City Church in Sheffield.

A GoFundMe appeal has raised over £31,000 for the father of two's family. The organisers said Marriott was "a man who loved people".

Hassan Jhangur,

23, has been arrested on suspicion of being the driver who hit Marriott and several others alongside him.

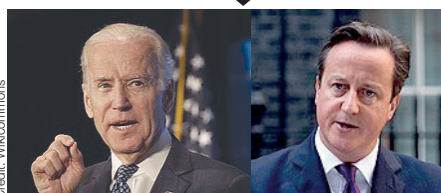
The family added that Chris was a man of faith "who wanted others to also experience the joy he had found trusting in Jesus".



Chris Marriott and his wife Bryony

ISRAEL ON THE FRONT LINE

HARD FACTS THAT 'FRIENDLY' GOVERNMENTS ARE IGNORING



ISRAEL HAS NO 'PEACE PARTNER'

President Biden, in his election year, and Britain's Foreign Secretary Lord Cameron, repeatedly express their desire for Israel to accept a two-state 'solution'.

Israel is not against two peoples living in peace side by side, according to government spokesman Eylon Levy in January, but the Palestinian Authority's own polls show that 70% of its population supported Hamas terrorists' vicious attacks on 7 October. Meanwhile the IDF (Israel Defence Force) has found massive weapons caches in Judea and Samaria (the West Bank) and it was estimated that they were intercepting three terrorist attacks per day.

ISRAEL KILLS FEWER CIVILIANS THAN ANY OTHER NATION



South Africa and protesters in London, who have been absorbing the media's war coverage, claim that Israel is committing 'genocide' in Gaza.

However, Col Richard Kemp, formerly head of British forces in Afghanistan, states that Israel is doing very well at a ratio of civilian to combatant of 1.5:1. The UN says the global average is 9:1 in urban warfare. This is based on the figure of 23,000 reported dead by the Hamas-run Ministry of Health, all of whom are apparently civilians. But the IDF says that 9,000 terrorists have been killed, giving the statistic of 1.5:1. Col Kemp added that Israel is not fighting an ordinary army, but a terrorist organisation bent on killing as many Israelis as possible, that does not care if its own people die.

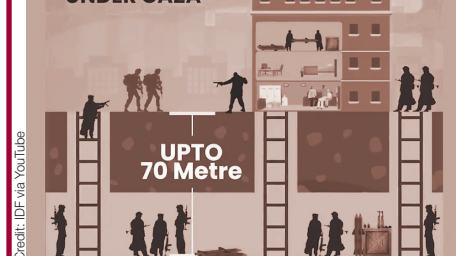
GAZA IS MODERN AND BEAUTIFUL

Gaza is seen as a backward area, the "most densely populated in the world" which has been under Israeli "siege" for years. In fact, Israel handed over control to the Palestinians in 2005.

Moreover, Gaza is "a modern, beautiful and developed city, with large, well-equipped houses, wide boulevards, public spaces, a promenade by the sea and parks", according to reserve IDF soldier Roy Yanovski, returning after 100 days of military service. "If it's a siege, let me live in a siege! The houses are bursting with goods and food from all over the Middle East, the latest furniture and advanced electrical equipment.

"There is absolutely no shortage of wealth in Gaza. Most of the houses I've been in were much bigger than my Tel Aviv apartment. The sentence, 'If only they had a chance for a good life, they wouldn't fight in Israel' is simply not relevant to Gaza."

HAMAS TUNNELS UNDER GAZA



Tunnels uncovered by the IDF have openings under homes and hospitals

UK TAXPAYERS FUNDED THE TERROR TUNNELS

British and EU aid money to the Palestinians has funded a tunnel system even larger than thought. In January it was reported that the 'Gaza metro' is 450 miles long – bigger than the whole London Underground.

HOSTAGES' STORIES

Those hostages who were held for 55 days before being released in the ceasefire window of 23-30 November have been sharing their stories



"To dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life": one of the verses that Sapir Cohen prayed in captivity in Gaza

"PSALM 27 SUSTAINED ME"

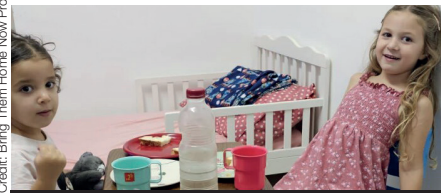
Before Sapir Cohen went to the music festival on 7 October, Psalm 27 had been on her mind and she prayed it daily. This puzzled her because it speaks of victory over enemies and includes: "I would have lost heart, unless I believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living" (Psalm 27:13).

Her partner, whom she has not seen since 7 October when Hamas attacked the festival, had had an uneasy feeling about going. Sapir had persisted, resulting in both being seized and taken to Gaza. She continued to pray Psalm 27 in her mind and one captor told her: "You are my enemy, but with you there is light".

WHY THE CHILDREN HAD TO BE SILENT

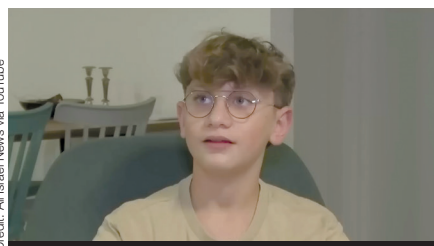
After Yoni Asher's wife and two little daughters were released, the traumatised girls continued to speak in whispers. Their mother revealed that the Palestinian family guarding them in an apartment had insisted they were very quiet. However, it was not for fear of discovery by the Israelis. Their captors were nervous that, if discovered, the little family would be lynched by the mob outside.

When hostages were freed, TV footage showed Gazans swarming round and hitting the Red Cross vehicles transporting them.



Raz and Aviv Asher (seen here before abduction) and their mother kept quiet to avoid being heard by other Gazans

"INNOCENT PEOPLE ARE STILL KEPT WITHOUT WATER, FOOD OR MEDICINES"



Yagil Yaakov is recovering from his ordeal

Yagil Yaakov, age 13, hopes to be reunited with his father, Yair, who is still held captive. After being released with his brother Or, 16, Yagil told All Israel News that he no longer trusted the government, or Shin Bet, Israel's internal security service. "People who did nothing are being kept without water, food, medicine, their families, a phone or electricity. They are scared every day."

SOME GOOD NEWS.... Israel is praying...

The biggest concert ever held in Israel took place on 28 December, 2023, ending with a mass prayer for the return of the hostages held by Hamas in Gaza.

David Soakell of Christian Friends of Israel reports that 1,000 musicians came to the Caesarea amphitheatre and the audience included families of the hostages.



The Caesarea amphitheatre hosted the 'Bring Them Home' concert

WAR WITH HEZBOLLAH?

Iran is using its terror proxies to tie Israel's hands as a way of protecting its nuclear weapons programme. "The mullahs in Tehran hope to exhaust both Israel and the West, and they also hope to influence November's US election", according to Mike Evans of the Jerusalem Prayer Team. "Above all, they are trying to stall any action against their nuclear programme until they can complete their deal with Russia to have a shield Israel will not be able to attack. Any day they could order an attack from the north, telling Hezbollah to use the 150,000 missiles and 100,000 terrorists in a strike on Israel that would leave half the nation living in bomb shelters."

Hezbollah failed to join Hamas on 7 October, according to former Vice President Mike Pence. After an intelligence briefing, Pence told Joel Rosenberg that the plan had been to cut Israel in half with attacks from Lebanon in the north and Gaza in the south.



Mike Evans comforting a hostage's family

For Israel prayer points see page 14

INTERNATIONAL NEWS BY ANDREW HALLOWAY

GERMANY

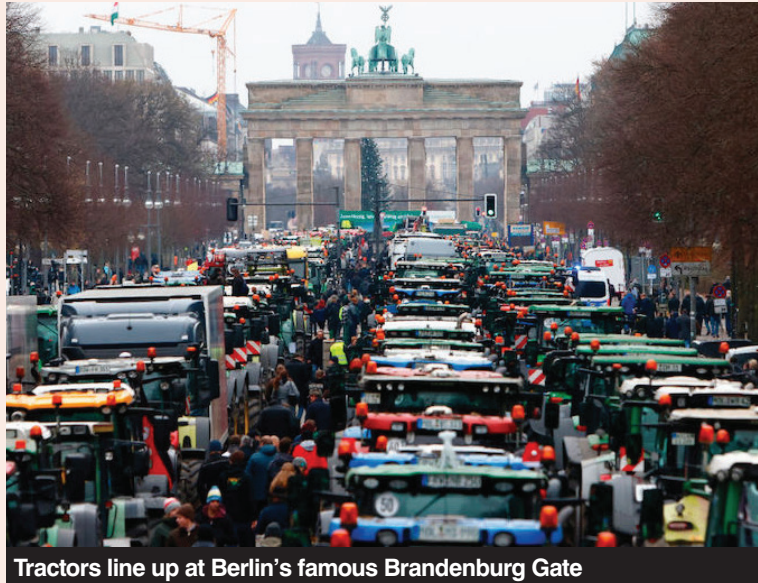
Massive gridlock as farmers protest

Tens of thousands of German farmers blocked highways in January in a massive protest against the left-wing government's cuts to agricultural subsidies.

They are also angry at their government's intention to ban fossil fuels.

A week-long campaign from 8 to 15 January ended with a large demonstration in Berlin. About 19,000 tractors and 25,000 other vehicles were used to block roads across the country, including the A2 highway – one of the busiest roads in Europe.

Berlin's landmark Branden-



Tractors line up at Berlin's famous Brandenburg Gate

burg Gate saw 500 tractors blocking traffic for hours in the government district.

"We're sick of the lies"

LifeSiteNews reported that a farmer on the A2 said: "We're sick of the lies. We're sick of [them] trying to get rid of our jobs. It's not only farmers. It's

the lorry drivers. It's the normal workers. Everybody is sick of politicians who have no idea what they are talking about, who have no education to tell us how our lifestyle should look." In response, Economy Minister Robert Habeck tried to discredit the farmers by calling them "enemies of the constitution" and "right-wing extremists", which the farmers refuted.

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HONG KONG



Christian tycoon needs 'something miraculous'



Jimmy Lai outside The Court of Final Appeal in December 2020

A Christian businessman imprisoned for three years by Hong Kong's ruling Chinese authorities is now facing charges that could result in a life sentence.

Jimmy Lai, born in China but also a British citizen, has been detained in Hong Kong on several small charges, but the 75-year-old pro-democracy tycoon may never see freedom again if he is convicted of more serious crimes. The Communist regime wants him silenced.

Premier reports that Lai converted to Christianity in the 1990s and started the Apple Daily newspaper, which was the

leading pro-democracy Chinese language newspaper in Hong Kong.

"Pray for his health, his family and his spiritual strength"

Benedict Rogers, chief executive of Hong Kong Watch and a friend of Lai, says: "Pray for him, for his health, for his spiritual strength and ultimately, for his release. Pray for his family and for something miraculous, that is hard to see in worldly terms, but it's possible through prayer."

UKRAINE

BRITISH MISSION LEADS DAY OF PRAYER IN UKRAINE

Around 3,000 people attended a United Day of Prayer for Ukraine in the city of Lviv, organised by British evangelist David Hathaway's organisation Eurovision.

"We call for the Lord to intervene"

The prayer meeting was held at Holhafa Church on Sunday 17 December and over 20,000 joined in online. The Ukrainian

army helped the event to go ahead by securing the area.

Vadim Preobrazhenskiy, Eurovision's representative in Kyiv, told Premier: "To reinforce our faith as Christians, we organised a united prayer for Ukraine... we still encourage the world to support Ukraine, because the next year is going to be, we all believe, victorious here. We know that total victory is possible only as an answer of the Lord, so we call for the Lord to intervene... all our hopes are in his hands."



Evangelist David Hathaway (centre) at the United Day of Prayer for Ukraine in Lviv

POLAND

NEW GOVERNMENT CLOSES STATE MEDIA

Poland's government is liquidating the state television, radio and news agency, claiming it wants to restore impartiality to the media.

After a pro-EU coalition led by Donald Tusk (of the "there must be a special place in hell for Brexiteers" fame) won the general election in October, he took state news channel TVP off air in January.

"Tusk's government is destroying the media"

Tusk had pledged to overhaul public media, which according to critics had become the propaganda arm of the Law and Justice (PiS) party which ran the country for eight years.

In reply the PiS says the government has undemocratically avoided standard parliamentary procedure to achieve its goal, because it wanted to remove a conservative voice in media. PiS lawmaker Joanna Lichocka said: "Tusk's government is destroying the Polish media."



New Polish PM Donald Tusk is accused of stifling the media

Meanwhile the Daily Express reported that Tusk was accused of "turning the clock back to Communism". Tensions also mounted after Polish police arrested two members of the Sejm, the lower house in the nation's bicameral legislature, who had been convicted of abuse of power. January saw mass demonstrations organised by the PiS.

Polish truckers also joined the German farmers' protests in January, after reaching an agreement with the Polish government to end their own protests. Polish drivers had been blockading the Poland/Ukraine border since November, angered by an EU deal that allows easy access for much cheaper Ukrainian drivers into the bloc.

MY TRUTH, YOUR TRUTH, OR THE TRUTH!

How did we reach the point where those who cling to the Bible as absolute truth are branded fundamentalist, religious extremists?

BY MAUREEN MARTIN

There is an eternal element to truth, that is God himself; we ignore this at our peril.

Sadly we have opened a Pandora's box that is leading to societal chaos, because truth has become transient.

This is typified by the highly subjective phrase, "My truth", taken to mean: "This is true for me based on my own experience and understanding at the time it occurred and can only be shared with others who have had similar experiences or beliefs".

No wonder "My truth" has been weaponised by liberal-leaning groups.

What is truth?

Pontius Pilate, with all his Roman education, asked Jesus: "What is truth?" (John 18:38), in response to Jesus statement: "I came into the world to bear witness of the truth" (John 18:37).

The Bible is clear that truth is the Word of God and as Christians, we know this as absolute truth. Many Scriptures confirm this, such as Psalm 119:142: "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is truth."

Western civilisation owes its very creation and existence to biblical values, centred on "The Law" or the Ten Commandments, that provide the basics: "Do not steal, do not murder, do not bear false witness against your neighbour."

First the humanistic 'Enlightenment' of the 18th century, then Darwin in the 19th century started to erode man's trust in God. The arrival of Marxism and Russia's communist revolution in the 20th century accelerated the erosion of western civilisation by ushering in an officially godless society.

And although the Soviet empire crumbled within a century (1917-1989), Marx's theories were made culturally palatable in the West by the Frankfurt School, a social research institute connected to the Goethe University Frankfurt, founded in 1923 by a Marxist professor, Carl Grünberg. The School is responsible for the proliferation of critical theory and forms the basis for Critical Race Theory (CRT) that has become fashionable in western universities.

Rooted in godless Marxism, the School's ideology was always going to be hostile to Judaeo-Christian values. In 1933, a group of the Frankfurt



Maureen Martin

School's intellectuals escaped Nazi Germany and brought their ideas to Columbia University in the US.

They spawned cultural Marxism, whose 'fruit' is the modern progressive movement, identity politics and political correctness. These have all been toxic to western civilisation and, most importantly, our Judaeo-Christian values.

In the hands of the liberal left, political correctness has become a powerful tool to change perceptions and control the narrative. It has enabled the acceptance of deviant behaviours, with homosexuals now called gay, and of course, truth itself has been tainted by the use of "My truth."

Whose truth?

One of the main achievements of the Frankfurt School was the relativism of truth or, more precisely, absolute truth! Many of the so-called truths that we are now required to accept fly directly in the face of biblical truth; with no absolutes as a foundation for social interaction and discourse, anything goes! Reality is suspended!

Biological truths are ignored; we are expected to accept that a man can magically become a woman and vice versa just because they say so! Identifying as the opposite sex is that

person's 'truth', and the rest of us must endorse their experience as being real and factual.

Now our children are being taught that they can choose their gender/sex at any point. Not only is this harmful biological fantasy, it is essentially child abuse.

The commitment to this fantasy is so deep that men pretending to be women have been allowed to compete against biological women in certain sports with predictable results. Lia Thomas, a transgender woman, was permitted to compete against women in USA swimming competitions and, of course, he won the title. Thankfully this has now been rectified, but why did it get to this point?

Biological truth has been ignored

Trends that subvert the truth are behind the destruction of the traditional family unit, such as the idea that children do not need two married parents of the opposite sex to bring them up.

This social experiment with our most precious members of society – our children – has failed miserably. Statistics have shown that the outcome for children reared by their biological parents is much more favourable than other family units; please see the studies quoted at the end.

Objective truth

The source of truth must be unchangeable and completely incorruptible. Without this foundation and context for societal order, the result is the cultural chaos that we are experiencing.

Indeed, cancel culture has been weaponised to the extent that the FBI deems 'absolutist' Bible-believing Christians to be fundamental religious extremists and a domestic terror threat!

Those of us who dare to reject subjective truth and adhere to absolute truth as the basis for reality are now a persecuted class. I experienced this personally when I was fired from my job for stating the obvious – that real marriage is between one man and one woman and is the safest place to rear children.

Call to action!

There is a war being waged against truth in western civilisation – by western civilisation!

As Christians, we must be on the front line of this battle defending truth; Judaeo-Christian values are worth fighting for.

So, what can we do? Firstly, church

leaders must abandon the lie that politics and religion do not mix. This is not biblical: the kings who ruled Israel in the Old Testament often received direct instructions either from God or through a prophet. King David is a perfect example. Without godly influence and guidance, our governments are open to demonic influences, the ramifications of which are quite evident in our culture.

As the Church, we are mandated to disciple nations – they should not be disciplining us! Pastors, please get involved and address cultural issues from the pulpit fearlessly.

Christian parents must oppose Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in the state school curriculum.

Individual Christians can get politically engaged and vote for political parties that reflect our Christian world view and values apart from the mainstream parties – they are out there!

Maureen Martin is an ordained minister, business owner and President of the Christian People's Alliance. In 2021 she lost her job at a London-based housing trust for stating in a mayoral campaign that real marriage, between one man and one woman, is the safest place to rear children. She settled out of court with her former employer for an undisclosed sum.

Contact the Christian People's Alliance: www.cpaparty.net, tel 0208 855 8027 or email Info@cpaparty.net

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Studies that refute political correctness

This Canadian study showed that college graduation rates for children reared by their biological parents are higher: <http://www.sfu.ca/~allen/REHallen.pdf>

A US study reveals evidence children of gay couples have more problems: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2500537

President Obama stated that young men from single-parent families are nine times more likely to end up in the correctional system. There is also conclusive data to support the vital role of fathers:

<https://www.fatherly.com/health/science-benefits-of-fatherhood-dads-father-effect> – see The Hard Data Behind Why Dads Matter

INTERNATIONAL NEWS CONTINUED

GLOBAL

Doctors' group criticises WHO gender guidelines

The Society for Evidence Based Gender Medicine (SEGM) is "deeply concerned" about gender guidelines published by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in December.

The international doctors' association says the WHO guidelines encourage gender transition through hormones and surgery, and promote self-identification of gender.

The WHO guidelines encourage gender transition through hormones and surgery

Also, the WHO panel developing the guidelines consists almost entirely of LGBT activists, transgender or non-binary people, and includes some members of gender transition organisations. The panel will review the guidelines in Geneva from 19 to 21 February.

According to Christian Network Europe, the WHO

announced the guidelines just a week before Christmas and only allowed public comment until 8 January. The SEGM commented that the process had been rushed: "The WHO wants to avoid public scrutiny as no one opens their laptop

during the Christmas holidays." SEGM added: "The decision to promote gender transition in the social arena has already been made before the group has even met to review and interpret the evidence."



The WHO headquarters in Geneva where transgender guidelines are being discussed

USA

Sacked teacher wins trial over pronouns

A Christian teacher who refused to use 'trans' pronouns has been vindicated by the Virginia Supreme Court.

Peter Vlaming, was fired by the West Point School Board for refusing to use a transgender student's preferred personal pronouns.

Vlaming tried to avoid causing offence by not using any pronouns at all, but the school still sacked him. His case was supported by religious freedom organisation Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) who accused the school board of violating Vlaming's rights.

He tried to avoid causing offence by not using any pronouns at all

The court agreed that Vlaming was dismissed for his refusal to contradict his religious beliefs, which was a violation of Virginia's constitution. The judgement stated that



Peter Vlaming, a French language teacher fired for declining to use pronouns inconsistent with biological sex

no government should force citizens to endorse beliefs that are in conflict with their own faith.

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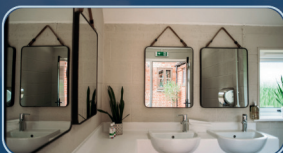
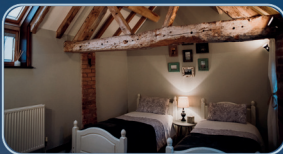
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Advertorial



OUR BEATING HEART FOR MISSION

Has your heart ever burned with the desire to see Jesus transform your community? Through Faith Missions (TFM) works with churches to bring together teams of dedicated volunteer evangelists, bringing the good news of Jesus to people where they live, work and relax.



Read how Lynsey, a TFM team member, came to faith and was led to play her part sharing the Good News. If, like Lynsey, you feel that God may be calling you to short term mission opportunities in the UK, then sign up for our no-obligation Zoom meeting below!

I grew up in a loving Christian home but never really committed to a personal faith. Back in 2005, my Mum wrote my name on a post-it which was prayed over at Spring Harvest for 'prodigals' to come home – back to God.

A few months after that I encountered TFM on the street corner in 2005 during 'Walk South Devon'. As I talked to the two team members, we chatted about God and went through the 'Knowing God Personally' booklet.

I prayed the prayer at the end and that night had a thousand questions! We arranged to speak again the next day, when we talked about my life and then I

I prayed the prayer and that night had a thousand questions!

went on to do the Alpha course.

I continued to do Alpha, supporting others, as I found it easy to talk to people about God's love for them. However, I still found myself praying "Lord, you have done so much for me over the years and carried me through so much, but what can I do for you?"

In 2021, I found the leaflet and

"Lord, you have done so much for me over the years and carried me through so much, but what can I do for you?"



Lynsey with two other team members



Team members of all ages serving together

The training in faith sharing is excellent

'Knowing God Personally' booklet from 2005 and found TFM were doing a local mission in Torbay. I signed up for the pre-mission training and joined the mission team, feeling a real sense of doing what God wanted me to do. I had an amazing sense of joy when I took part in the mission. What a privilege to be able to share with people as we chatted and prayed together!

After the mission, I was hungry for more of God. I wanted to share more of Jesus' love and was seeking more of the Holy Spirit. So I went on to do another mission in Torbay, then Basingstoke in 2022, followed by Wolverhampton and Basingstoke again in 2023.

I can honestly say that I've loved working alongside every person I've encountered in the TFM teams. It has felt like family, with times of being able to

bless others but also being blessed too. I have learned so much about evangelism from the wealth of experience within TFM and am so grateful to everyone who prays for TFM and also gives up time to come on missions.

It has felt like family

It has been a real honour talking to people on the streets and doors about their own beliefs and then witnessing others praying their own prayer of accepting Jesus as their Lord and Saviour ... For me there is nothing comparable, it is just such an enormous privilege!

The training in faith sharing is excellent, whether you join a team afterwards or not. But I would encourage anyone to join a mission team. Again, it's such a privilege and you gain so much from it.

"It's such a privilege and you gain so much from it"

EXCITING LIVE EVENT

Would you like to serve the Lord in a friendly team? TFM offers excellent training backed up by years of experience.

If you have questions about joining a mission, hosting a team or how to be trained, we'd love to talk with you! Join us for a no-obligation chat, absolutely free. You can also hear personally from others who've benefited from helping TFM.

Meet lead evangelist Dan Holland and TFM staff via Zoom at 11am on Thursday 29 February 2024



Dan Holland, left, with team



Also, do view our new promo on Vimeo featuring Lynsey! Just search for 'TFM - Our beating heart for mission'.

Call or email the office for the meeting link admin@throughfaithmissions.org or call 07434661697

CHAOS OR CONSPIR



**Our world is heading for a seriously unstable and dangerous time.
All this ties in with Bible prophecy**

By Tony Pearce

When I survey the news to collect information for my monthly prophecy talk, I often wonder how much longer can we (the human race) go on like this.

It feels as if we're heading towards a precipice and no one has a clue what to do to stop us going over the edge.

In a year when almost half the major countries in the world will be involved in elections of some kind, the possibility of governments being put in place which can sort it all out looks more and more remote. As we hear of more and more wars, natural disasters, famines, plagues, dictatorships and persecutions, bringing chronic suffering to millions, the biblically minded amongst us must be thinking we are indeed living in the last days and Jesus is coming.

CHAOS

In a new book, 'Chaos', Michael Snyder warns of approaching apocalyptic events threatening the future of humanity. As well as the Israel - Gaza war, he refers to a number of situations developing that are bringing chronic suffering to millions - which we hear very little about.

In Sudan seven million people have been displaced, five million are facing chronic hunger as a result of the civil war, medical care has collapsed and Khartoum has been virtually destroyed.

Arab militias are attacking non Arab Masalit people in Darfur, deliberately targeting civilians and causing thousands to flee to neighbouring Chad. This is one of 35 armed conflicts taking place in Africa, causing around 40 million people to be (mainly) internally displaced.

The Ukraine - Russia war enters its third year with neither side currently making significant gains. Russia has lost huge numbers of troops and equipment,

while Ukraine fears that western support may dry up and hand Russia the victory, leading most likely to its population being forcibly displaced and replaced with Russians.

According to China expert Gordon Chang, writing in the Gatestone Institute, Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leader Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin are contemplating starting World War 3, driven by their shared vision for the future world order. He writes that the two regimes "are forming the core of a new axis," and around this core "are proxies and proxies of proxies, such as Iran, North Korea, Algeria, and a host of terrorist groups."

Presidents Xi and Putin "are cooperating across the world," Chang says. "They've basically divided the international system into two. They want to take over the other half. They're actually thinking of starting World War 3 because they talk about using nuclear weapons all the time."

This could bring the whole house crashing down, including Russia and China. Russia has already paid out 40 per cent of its economy on the war; 300,000 Rus-

There are 35 armed conflicts taking place in Africa, causing around 40 million people to be displaced

sians have been killed or maimed in the war, while over a million Russians, mainly intelligent and qualified young people have fled the country.

Apart from producing war material, industry is at a standstill; rural communities are in decline, some without basic amenities. One in three Russians does not have enough to buy anything apart from basic food, while one in ten does not have enough money for food.

Some have joined the army because it's the only way to get a decent wage, although conditions for soldiers are atrocious, with some on the verge of mutiny. Wives and mothers are writing to Putin complaining about the deaths of loved ones. But all criticism is suppressed by the government.

Due to Russia's actions, other countries feel freer to attack smaller neighbours; Azerbaijan versus Armenia, Venezuela making claims on half of Guyana, North Korea building up its missiles and threatening South Korea, Japan and even the USA.

China is harassing its neighbours in the South China Sea and talking openly about 'reunifying' Taiwan, especially



Iran has over 600,000 active personnel and 350,000 reserves, the largest army in the Middle East

while the US has a weak president.

Turkey is attacking Kurdish regions of Iraq and Syria and has threatened Cyprus and Greek islands. Its President Erdogan dreams of restoring the Ottoman Empire and ruling over Syria and Israel. Syria, Lebanon and Libya are wracked by internal conflict.

The Houthis in Yemen have attacked shipping in the Red Sea - through which

widely becoming unaffordable, increasing levels of homelessness. Social conditions of crime and drug addiction are spreading across the nation. Major stores are pulling out of big cities due to rampant shoplifting.

If Russia and China succeed in removing the petrodollar system through the BRICS alliance, it could cause the collapse of the dollar and the US economy. Michael Snyder writes: "The US dollar will never again be as dominant as it once was and great economic chaos is ahead of us." This applies equally to the UK and EU economies.

Snyder also warns of the dangers of AI, with a cultural transformation process as Christianity is abandoned and destructive ideologies take over, and potential massive cyber attacks or natural disasters bringing down the internet and electric grid.

CONSPIRACY?

This may be all part of the plan. In February 2023 at a 'World Government' meeting in Abu Dhabi, World Economic Forum (WEF) leader Klaus Schwab said in a speech: "We're anticipating a Black Swan event." A Black Swan event is something unexpected that happens and changes everything. Schwab is suggesting something big will tip us into a new world order. Is it a war? Economic collapse? Another pandemic? Or a cyber attack to bring down the internet or power grid? Even a supposed UFO invasion?

Some have speculated that they may manufacture such an event before the UN Summit of the Future in September 2024. The UN's website states that the summit aims to address the "major global shocks in recent years - including the Covid-19 pandemic, the Ukraine war,



World trade is threatened by the Houthis in Yemen

Credit: Adobe Stock

Credit: Screenshots, Military Trends YouTube

ACY - WHAT NEXT?



and the planetary crisis, among others – which have challenged our international institutions.” It plans to “address gaps in global governance, reaffirm existing commitments including to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the United Nations Charter.”

They are already making progress towards the ‘Black Swan’ event. In January 2021 news came out of a plan by the WEF to use crises like the Covid pandemic and climate change to push for a transformation of global society. Klaus Schwab described this in his book ‘Covid 19 – the Great Reset’. His new order would embrace every country from the USA to China and every industry from oil and gas to tech in “a Great Reset of capitalism”. His preferred future “will only come about through some form of effective global governance,” creating “a new social contract that honours the dignity of every human being.” In other words, ‘the Great Reset’ is a blueprint for world government.

This is often called a ‘conspiracy theory’, but statements from those responsible say that this is precisely their intention. This ties in with Bible prophecies of a world dictatorship run by the Antichrist, in the final period of history before the return of Jesus Christ (Revelation 13).

Wives and mothers are writing to Putin, complaining about the deaths of loved ones

Several things happening now are preparing the way. The globalisation project is being pushed and a spirit of deception is aiming, through the world’s ‘crisis’, to take control of governments, the economy and means of communication.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has proposed an international pandemic treaty, which would give it power to declare a pandemic, overruling national governments to enforce lockdowns, compulsory vaccines and vaccine passports worldwide.

UNESCO has published a plan, ‘Guidelines for the governance of digital platforms’, to regulate social media and on-line communication and crack down on what it describes as ‘hate speech’, ‘false information’ and ‘conspiracy theories’. This may be used to silence criticism of the globalisation project and the defence of traditional moral values. Already some organisations that publish such material have had funding cut or access to internet programmes denied.

At the World Government Summit in Dubai in February 2023, there was a call for accelerated changes to ‘zero carbon’, reducing, then eliminating the use of fossil fuels. The WEF proposed a system of ‘ESG scores’ (environmental, social, and governance factors) as a means of calculating how much energy businesses and individuals are using. These would be

used by government to monitor and record your use of energy, with a view to stopping you using too much.

‘The Great Reset’ is a blueprint for world government

Speaking at December’s COP conference in Dubai, King Charles III proposed bringing together “public-private philanthropic and NGOs so that they all play their part in delivering climate action, because public finance alone will never be sufficient.” By doing so, he said: “We could mobilise the trillions of dollars we need – in the order of four and a half to five trillion a year – to drive the transformation we need.”



Statues of past leaders in North Korea

Critics say that it will not change the weather, but will be used to transform the global financial system. This will enable the powerful banking interests to recreate the entire global financial system for their benefit under the respectable guise of sustainability. It will empower the super rich power brokers pushing this plan, while destroying ordinary people’s wealth. Ultimately the government will take control of all property and people will end up enjoying the benefits of the WEF’s Great Reset in which, according to their own propaganda: “You will own nothing and be happy.”

In order to get people into line with this project they need everyone on a digital ID system which will contain personal information (government ID numbers, social security numbers, bank account numbers in your digital ‘wallet’). AI will gather and monitor the enormous amount of information needed for this project.

The G20 have endorsed several proposals to explore development of a “digital public infrastructure”. The UN has made no secret of its plans to have a global digital ID as part of its Sustainable Development Goals set forth in Agenda 2030. Controversial microchip implants are already being talked about to maintain such a digital ID system. Scanning the chip ID over an internet enabled device would give someone access.

The UN recently published three new Policy Briefs which are the UN Secretary-General’s vision for the future of global cooperation that will be decided at ‘The Summit of the Future’ in September 2024. These briefings - A Global

Digital Compact, Reforms to the International Financial Architecture and The Future of Outer Space Governance - set out a chilling course for our future.

Among the proposals are a new “apex body” in charge of the entire financial system that will “enhance its coherence and align its priorities with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” This could, according to Secretary-General António Guterres, be done through a “Biennial Summit between the Group of 20, Economic and Social Council, the Secretary-General, and heads of international financial institutions.”

Agustin Carstens, the General Manager of the Bank of International Settlements based in Geneva, which governs all the central banks, says that they fully intend to introduce digital currencies to replace cash. This will enable them “to track anyone, anywhere, anytime, and allow them to know what people are spending their money on.”

Whatever happens, our world is heading for a seriously unstable and dangerous time.



Tony Pearce produces the Light for the Last Days prophetic update.

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WHAT CAN WE DO?

Students of Bible prophecy have long warned that our society was slowly marching towards acceptance of technology that is described in the Book of Revelation. Revelation 13 describes a time in which a ‘mark’ in the right hand or forehead would be used as both a symbol of identification with the Antichrist and a means to conduct commerce. Without that mark, no one can buy or sell.

Agenda 2030 is still six years away, but at the rate technology and society are changing, we may see such changes faster than anyone thought

Agenda 2030 is still six years away, but at the rate technology and society are changing, we may see such changes faster than anyone thought.

All this ties in with the prophecies of the approaching time of the Great Tribulation which will precede the second coming of Jesus (Matthew 24:21-22).

“For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of

the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened” (Matthew 24:21-22).

Before Jesus returns to earth, all born again believers in Jesus will be supernaturally taken out of the world in the event known as the rapture, to be with him forever (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18).

“For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18).

How long before Jesus’ second coming this will be is a subject of debate among believers, but this event will certainly happen. When it does, all those taken in the rapture will be given new bodies (1 Corinthians 15).

They will return to the earth with the Lord Jesus and participate in the great clean up operation when he sorts out the mess which humans have made of the earth and reigns in righteousness on earth for 1,000 years (Revelation 19-20). Finally, this present earth and universe will be burned up when God creates a new heaven and a new earth for all believers in which righteousness will dwell forever (2 Peter 3, Revelation 21).

Now is the time to make sure we have a place in the kingdom of God by repenting of our sins and believing the good news, that Jesus the Messiah died for our sins, and rose from the dead to give eternal life to all believers. He is coming back, not to suffer and die again, but to judge the world in righteousness, according to how we have responded to his offer of salvation by faith in Jesus the Messiah.

When Jesus returns or we die it will be too late to repent and believe, so make sure that you accept Jesus now. Avoid hell and accept life in Jesus’ name.



GARDNER'S WORLD

BLESSINGS AND CURSES

by Charles Gardner

When a Turkish member of parliament rounded off a fiery speech with a strong condemnation of Israel, he was struck down with a heart attack and later died in hospital.

"You will not escape the wrath of Allah," were the last words spoken by 53-year-old Hasan Bitmez before he collapsed to the floor, much to the shock of fellow assembly members who rushed to his aid.

I believe the entire world should take note of this incident. I have also come across videos of rants from imams, mullahs and others calling for the wholesale murder of Jews. What chance is there of peace amidst this kind of hate talk?

Many Christians are also taken in by this deceit

The Bible has much to say about blessings and curses. The former comes from obedience to God's laws, the latter from disobedience. There is also the golden rule of Genesis 12:3 – that if you bless the seed of Abraham, you too will be blessed; but if you curse them, you will come under the judgement of God.

The now global Palestinian narrative accusing Israel of stealing their land is an outright lie. The land belongs to Israel, according to the Bible and international law – check out, for example, Genesis 17:8 and the San Remo Treaty of 1920.

Politicians who keep promoting a 'two-state solution' need to wake up and smell the coffee. What chance is there of such a solution when Palestinian leaders and their supporters insist on destroying the only national home for Jewish people?

Many Christians are also taken in by this deceit.

We must avoid colluding with the lies of genocidal maniacs like Adolf Hitler. It's time to bless, not curse. As Jesus put it, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:44).

As two contributors to Evangelicals Now have both stated, evangelical Christians in the UK have been largely silent on Israel in the wake of 7 October. Joel Barber, a Jewish believer, asked: "Is it because we have somehow become so divorced from the heritage and origins of our faith that, as the wonderful [comedian] David Baddiel phrased it, 'Jews don't

Our stand on the question of Israel is a matter of life or death



Residents come back to Kibbutz Be'eri to pay their respects to neighbours and friends who were murdered or are still being held captive

count'?" Joel asserts that Israel is fighting on our behalf for our freedoms against the evils of terror.

Revelation TV presenter Regan Blanton King, in the same issue, points out that there was much church response to the death in Minneapolis of George Floyd, which sparked the Black Lives Matter movement, and to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, but relative silence following the 7 October massacre in Israel.

As soon as we withdrew our commitment in 1947, our empire began to collapse

"This is a matter for discipleship," he wrote. "To remind people of the promises God made to ethnic Israel... to reflect on the historic evangelical support for a Jewish return to the land of Israel (including C H Spurgeon, J C Ryle and R M McCheyne)."

Britain ruled the world when they blessed Israel by promising, and then preparing, them for statehood in their ancient land. But as soon as we withdrew our commitment in 1947, our empire began to collapse as, first India, then many others under our influence, sought and gained independence.

I love the way Messianic author Steve Maltz succinctly described the dilemma: "The reason that the Jews have survived for so long is that a great power has been protecting them, and the reason that they have been hated for so long is that another great power has been attacking them."

Meanwhile lying prophets – often disguised as priests and politicians – have consistently been telling us that

there is "peace, peace, where there is no peace" in the words of Jeremiah.

Peace will not come through political negotiations designed to placate and appease, but through the Prince of Peace, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Peace will not come through political negotiations designed to placate and appease, but through the Prince of Peace, our Lord Jesus Christ

Whether they realise it or not, the Jewish people over the years have inadvertently followed the path of their Messiah who, like them, was falsely accused, misrepresented, hated and persecuted, largely friendless and alone, and finally crucified. For the Holocaust was something of a picture of what Jesus suffered for us all. And yet, also like their Messiah, they were raised from the dead when a re-born nation came to life 75 years ago.

Bless, and do not curse, Israel. It's a matter of life or death!

NEW PRESIDENT BACKS ISRAEL

Newly elected Argentinian president Javier Milei, a 53-year-old Catholic, has vowed to move his country's embassy to Jerusalem. And meanwhile he has made the rabbi with whom he has studied Torah his ambassador to Tel Aviv.

As major western cities kicked off the new year with their usual fireworks display, Hamas did their bit by sending 20 real rockets into Israel just after midnight!



President Javier Milei of Argentina with Vice President Victoria Villaruel

SAMARIA MOVE BY ISLAND NATION

In an unprecedented move, Papua New Guinea has announced its intention to open a diplomatic consulate in Samaria, the northern half of the area sometimes referred to as the West Bank.

The intended location is Ariel, about 25 miles east of Tel Aviv and one of 127 Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria. The news was welcomed by Israel's Foreign Minister Eli Cohen, who praised the island nation for its friendship and support.

HAMAS WANTS GLOBAL RULE

While Hamas presents itself as a Palestinian movement aiming to eliminate Israel and establish an independent Palestinian state stretching from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, it is also part of the Muslim Brotherhood whose ultimate goal is the establishment of global Islamic rule.



GARDNER'S WORLD Continued

SUSPECTED ARSON ON MP'S OFFICE

After his office in a historically Jewish neighbourhood was hit by a suspected arson attack, Conservative MP Mike Freer revealed that a 'troll' later emailed him to say that he deserved to burn alive. Representing Mrs Thatcher's old constituency of Finchley and Golders Green, Freer subsequently issued a public warning over the abuse and intimidation of politicians. He added that the 'polarised' debate on Gaza had made things worse.

BBC REPORT REMAINS SECRET

It's now 20 years since the BBC commissioned a report to review its coverage of Israel following persistent allegations of anti-Israel bias.

But the 20,000-word Balen Report has been kept under wraps ever since despite petitions, requests under the Freedom of Information Act and lengthy legal wrangles costing an estimated £400,000 of taxpayers' money (excluding costs for the BBC's in-house legal staff).

The report was compiled by then director of BBC News Malcolm Balen, who examined 'thousands of hours' of the BBC's Israel coverage.

"IDF SOLDIERS ARE WORKING FOR PEACE"

Arab atheist Fred Maroun blames decades of lies and a false narrative about Jewish history for the war in Gaza.

A Canadian who lived in Lebanon during ten years of civil war, Fred says the world has failed both Israelis and Gazans by allowing Hamas to transform the enclave into a terror machine using civilians as shields.

"The world has failed both Israelis and Gazans by allowing Hamas to transform the enclave into a terror machine using civilians as shields"

Although an atheist, he prays for the IDF soldiers, his main concern.

"They were thrown into a war they did not want," he wrote in a blog for the Times of Israel. "Many of them have left regular civilian jobs to risk their lives in a land full of booby traps where ruthless murderers could be popping up at any time out of a multitude of tunnels."

It was naïve to think Hamas had any intention of living at peace with Israel, he says.

"Israel and the rest of the civilised world needs the IDF to demolish the formidable war arsenal Hamas and its allies have built... And it is the IDF soldiers who are doing the necessary work of peace."

FORMER MISS IRAQ ON HAMAS 'BARBARITY'

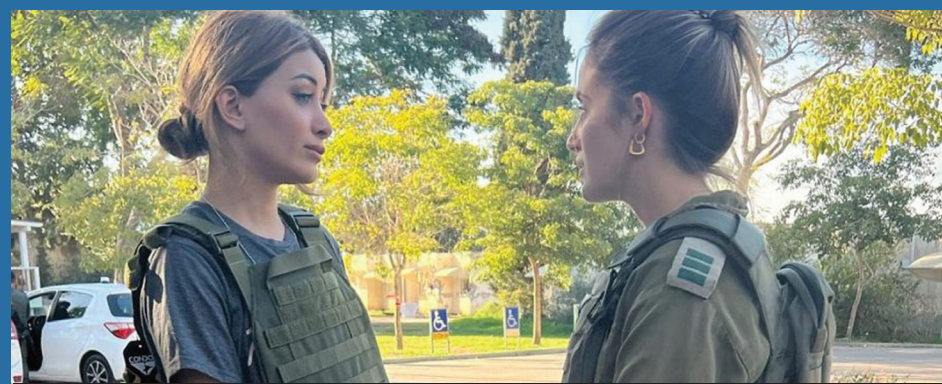
United States congressional candidate and former Miss Iraq Sarah Idan has visited Kfar Aza, one of the Israeli border communities ravaged by Hamas terrorists on 7 October.

"Not even amidst the terror of ISIS, have I seen such barbarity"

A Democrat running to represent California's 30th congressional district

in place of Adam Schiff, who is vying to enter the US Senate, Sarah tweeted: "I brought my old uniform from Iraq to be mentally prepared, but I was still shocked and at a loss for words. Never in my life, not even amidst the terror of ISIS, have I seen such barbarity. What was once a vibrant community now echoes with a haunting silence of tragedy."

The uniform to which Sarah refers was that she wore as a translator for US-led coalition forces in Iraq.



Sarah Idan (left) speaks with an IDF captain at the ruins of Kibbutz Kfar Aza, near the Gaza Strip, 28 December 2023

REUTERS JOURNALIST'S GLEE

I was particularly disgusted to hear that a Reuters news agency reporter had witnessed Hamas barbarity with apparent glee as it happened, suggesting he knew all about the 7 October attack in advance and that he was biased in favour of the Palestinian terrorists.



UNWRA teachers, employed by the UN to teach Gazan children, celebrated at the news of the 7 October incursion and atrocities

NO CONDEMNATION FROM MSF

The neutrality of the international organization Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières) has been called into question. Writing for the Gatestone Institute, Alain Destexhe says such independence is clearly not the case in Gaza.

For despite being extremely active on X and constantly railing against Israel, MSF has not issued a single tweet denouncing Hamas war crimes since 7 October.

BRITISH BAN ON VIOLENT "SETTLERS"

Amidst a war sparked by the mass slaughter of Jews and in a move apparently coordinated with the United States, British Foreign Secretary David Cameron announced a ban on violent Israeli 'settlers' entering the UK. He was referring to 'extremist' Jews living in the so-called occupied West Bank whom he accuses of targeting and killing Palestinian civilians.

Newly ennobled Lord Cameron said they are undermining security and stability for both Israelis and Palestinians. But Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen has since described reports of a growing phenomenon of "settler violence" a "blood libel" and "a lie disconnected from reality".

SOUTH AFRICA'S UNHAPPY CHOICE

At the dawn of my journalistic career, back in the late 1970s, I was based in Fleet Street as a correspondent for the South African Press Association, an associate of Reuters and committed, like them, to impartial reporting of the facts.

As a South African citizen still, I am equally appalled by our government's ridiculous move in taking Israel to the International Court of Justice (ICJ)

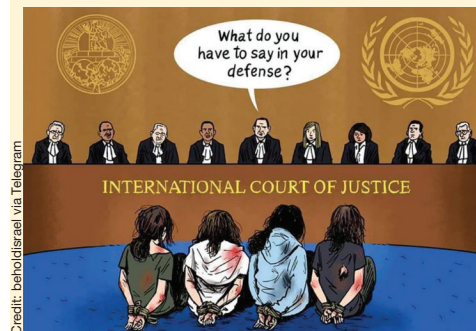
for alleged war crimes in Gaza. For what it's worth, so are all those South African friends with whom I keep in touch. South African churches also released a joint statement distancing themselves from their government's 'lawfare' against Israel.

On the day the case was heard in the ICJ, Brazil and Colombia also announced their support for South Africa's claim.

At the hearing, Israel was refused permission to play the 50-minute video of Hamas's 7 October atrocities against civilians. Bible teacher Amir Tsarfati commented: "Three months after 10/7 and it's Israel who stands for a trial at the politically biased international court. How I long to be there and watch the ultimate bringer of justice – the God of Israel – judging all the nations that come against us (Joel 3:1-2)!"

And after taking Israel to the International Court of Justice for alleged war crimes in Gaza, South Africa has threatened to prosecute its citizens who have chosen to serve in the IDF, saying such action could potentially contribute to the violation of international law.

There was also an outcry when the captain of the multi-ethnic nation's junior cricket team was sacked, simply because he is Jewish.



This cartoon shows four Israeli girls in front of the ICJ judges. Their photos, showing their bloodied faces and hands tied behind their backs, with the sound of another girl being assaulted in the background, were circulated by Hamas shortly after their kidnapping on 7 October. The Daily Mail republished the photos in January to mark their "100 days of hell"

Other recent articles by Charles Gardner, which can be found at www.heartpublications.co.uk, include:

- Resisting the devil!
- The ultimate prisoner exchange
- Grandchildren on the frontline
- Once a 'violent savage'
- The sanitising of violence
- Tears of gratitude

Charles is a regular contributor to Israel Today at www.israeltoday.co.il and is author of 'To the Jew First', 'King of the Jews', 'A Nation Reborn', 'Israel the Chosen' and 'Peace in Jerusalem', variously available from Christian Publications International, Amazon and Eden Books (Eden.co.uk).

PRAYING FOR ISRAEL AND THE MIDDLE EAST

By *Robin Benson*

Israel is well past the 100-day marker in its current war with the Gaza Strip-based Islamist terror entity Hamas and its Iranian-sponsored allies. These prayer topics come from disciples of Jesus the Messiah in Israel, who are living day-to-day with the realities of this war, and who understand fully the consequences if the terrorists win

Knowing what and how to pray is not always easy, especially when some prayer topics are long-term items that need presenting to the Lord again and again. This small selection is accompanied by Scripture references that can be used to pray into that subject.

1. Thanksgiving

- Praise God that we come to the One true God who is God of all the earth...that our God reigns! (Psalm 93:1)
- Thank God for all the prayers that he has answered, and for all those not answered, that were not in line with his will (1 John 5:14-15).

2. For 'Operation Swords of Iron'

Israel's military remains focused on the destruction of Hamas and its allies in the Gaza Strip, even as the number of daily clashes with Hezbollah in Lebanon grows, and the confrontation with the Houthis in Yemen causes increased international concern.

- Ask the Lord to guard Israel from all foolish "suggestions" by leaders of the nations – especially the unhelpful pressure from the USA administration – on how Israel should deal with Hamas and its Islamist allies in Gaza (Psalm 74:22).
- Ask the Lord to guard all Israel's service personnel physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually, and supply their every need (Psalm 18:2).
- Remove all spiritual protection over Israel's enemies, and turn the curses pronounced by Hamas, its allies, and every enemy of the Jewish people back on their own heads (Deut 23:5).

3. For Israeli government and society

After being united by the shock of the 7 October invasion and massacre, signs of the divisions which ripped the nation apart in the first part of 2023 are re-emerging.

- As Prime Minister Netanyahu is still Israel's leader, strengthen him, the war cabinet, and his cabinet, and shield them from all the anti-war noise from the governments and people of many Western and Arab nations (Psalm 35:1-2).
- Ask the Lord to arise and defend Israel against South Africa's ridiculous charge of "genocide" brought to the International Court of Justice in The Hague (Isaiah 54:17).
- May God comfort and draw to himself all Israelis whose loved ones have died, who are still among the 129 hostages, or whose fate is unknown (Psalm 86:15).

4. For internal security

There are increasing signs of unrest among the Arab/Muslim population of Judea and Samaria, whipped up by Hamas and other terror groups who have undermined the already corrupt leadership of the Palestinian Authority.

- Thank the Lord for his continued protection over Israel. Ask him to continue to guard his people and all of his land, especially in light of increased terror attacks in Judea and Samaria, and from there into Israel itself (Jeremiah 31:10).
- Ask the Lord to sow massive confusion and discord in and between every terrorist group (Psalm 59:12-13).
- Ask the Lord to save many Palestinian Arabs/Muslims in Gaza, Judea and Samaria at this time (Romans 11:11).

5. For external security

Israel's greatest earthly threat comes from the Shi'ite regime ruling Iran (ancient Elam). It (not the Iranian people) is the prime sponsor of all the Islamist terror groups seeking Israel's destruction, no matter where those entities are located (Jeremiah 48:35-38).

- Ask the Lord to prepare the IDF, Israel's politicians and its people for the very real possibility of an all-out multi-front war against Iran and its proxies in Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Yemen (Jeremiah 51:20,24).
- Ask the Lord to show Israel's leaders how to guard all its borders, including with Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and along the Mediterranean coast (Jeremiah 23:23-24).
- Ask the Lord to sovereignly destroy Iran's nuclear facilities, and any associated industries whose purpose is the destruction of Israel (Psalm 68:1).

6. For Aliyah (the return of Jews to their ancient land)

God is restoring his people to his land for his holy name's sake (Ezekiel 36:21-24).

- Use the increasing hatred of Jewish people and Israel throughout the nations resulting from Israel's self-defensive war against Hamas to warn Jews in 'exile' that, while it may not be 100% safe in Israel, it is safer than living outside the Jewish state (Jeremiah 23:3).
- Thank the Lord for the large number of Israelis who have come home since 7 October because of rising Jew-hatred, and to offer solidarity with their nation. Ground them in the Land, and forbid them from ever returning to exile (Amos 9:14-15).



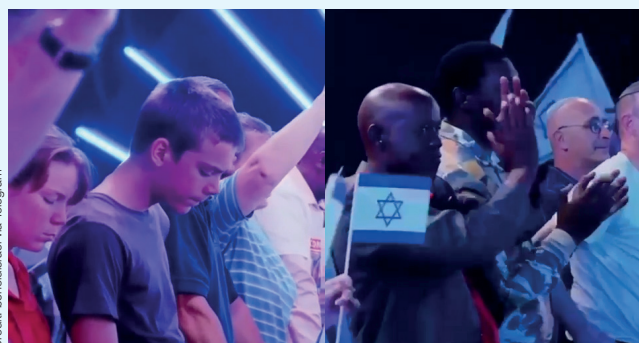
Crowds of Jews, Christians and Iranian exiles filled Trafalgar Square on 14 January to support Israel and urge the release of the hostages



Kidnapped hostages' photos displayed at a 'Bring them home' rally



Christians who came to Trafalgar Square to rally for Israel and the kidnapped hostages included, centre left, Lady Carol Baker from Devon, Jane Smyth and (behind), Kate Rose, both from Sussex



"We won't be silenced": South African Christians have opposed their government's bringing of genocide charges against Israel to the International Court of Justice. At this meeting, Christians assembled to hear preachers declaring:

"Without Israel, South Africa will never reach its highest potential. It's always beautiful seeing our people so united. Light chasing after darkness. For the sake of Zion, we won't be silenced, for the sake of Jerusalem we won't be silenced. What's happening in Israel and across the world is so crystal clear. There has never been a clearer demarcation of good and evil. God is sorting out the teams. And everyone here today has declared I am with the Bible and I am with God. I am with Israel, the Jewish people."



Itai Svirsky was taken hostage to Gaza on 7 October.

Hamas forced him to participate in a propaganda video released on 15 January and then murdered him



Robin Benson has reported on current events in Israel for many years and appears regularly on Revelation TV's 'Politics Today' and 'Middle East Report'. He also hosts online prayer meetings for Israel (currently Monday and Wednesday evenings) and issues weekly prayer bulletins. Contact: shekinahlegacyprayer@icloud.com

INTERCESSORS FOR BRITAIN



**SPECIAL 4-PAGE
PULLOUT**

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE CHURCH

We have written the letter below as leaders of Intercessors For Britain, in consultation with others, as a warning and exhortation to the body of Christ. We ask you to weigh it prayerfully, and to consider anyone that you might pass it on to. The letter can also be read and shared online at the following link: www.intercessorsforbritain.co.uk/ifb-open-letter

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

For some time now we have been extremely burdened for the church and nation of which we are a part. Our nation has been in steep moral and spiritual decline for many years, and has been under a measure of judgement as God has handed it over to its own rebellious desires. We see from Scripture¹ that God lets people and nations reap the consequences of their rebellion so that they may learn and come back to Him, and He mercifully gives prophetic warnings first² so that His judgements may be averted. Such prophecies have been given to our nation before³, but we have felt the Lord drawing our attention to them again recently. As we and others have listened, we believe God has given a weighty, pressing burden and highlighted relevant situations and Scriptures; our conviction is that He wants us to trumpet these publicly, and this is why we write. We have included various Bible references as footnotes, and ask you to consider them prayerfully alongside this letter.

Amongst other recent situations, the devastating surprise attack on Israel on 7th October 2023 was a sober reminder that the Lord sometimes allows a sharp, severe punishment to fall upon His people and upon nations so that they might wake up and repent.⁴ We are so grateful to live in an age of grace as believers, yet God has not changed in His dealings with nations⁵, and our nation's sins are now comparable to those of others in Scripture before they were judged. We are asleep, have been sleeping a long time, and desperately need to wake up or be woken up. A people that keep ignoring warnings and do not turn back to righteousness need divine

correction⁶, and this is true of the church⁷ as well as the nation generally. Can we still ask God to hold back judgement from us, or has He given us over to an imminent and potentially catastrophic national crisis?⁸ We believe that He has – that we have passed the point of His sparing us from further judgement⁹, and the focus of our prayers and attention must now be repentance and preparation rather than a potentially false expectation of imminent revival and deliverance.¹⁰

The need for repentance

There are always things we need to repent of as individuals and as Christ's corporate body, listening to the Holy Spirit as He seeks to make us a bride worthy of our coming Bridegroom.¹¹ We also recognise that the Lord will have different issues to point out in each church and individual believer. But as we've listened to the Lord and to brothers and sisters up and down the country, there are three overarching areas we believe God would have us consider in confession and repentance before Him and to one another:

ISRAEL

The church is not blameless when it comes to anti-Semitism. We have all seen the ugly attitudes recently shown towards God's covenant people¹² the Jews; the not-so-subtle hatred on our streets is a stain on our nation, and we should remember that those who curse Israel will be cursed.¹³ The church has not replaced the Jews but has rather been grafted¹⁴ into the covenant God still keeps with them, and some prophecies about the Jews and the land of Israel have yet to be fulfilled.¹⁵ Yet too often we teach the contrary, ignore them altogether, or downplay their significance. We must love them through spiritual,

Scriptural eyes, and pray and speak up for them.

THE SANCTITY OF LIFE

Over ten million precious and defenceless babies have been killed in the womb since 1967¹⁶, and we as believers (both individually and corporately) have often been deaf to their suffering and blind to how God sees them. Each one was divinely planned before the beginning of the world and overseen by God during his/her development¹⁷; children are a blessing from the Lord and precious in His sight¹⁸, but we have often rejected God's intentions and the value of human life in favour of our own convenience. How we think and speak about abortion – and about related matters such as family planning¹⁹, IVF²⁰, assisted suicide and the care of the elderly²¹ – is of great importance to the Lord.

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX

Across our communities we are seeing increasing break-ups of relationships and families, as cultural

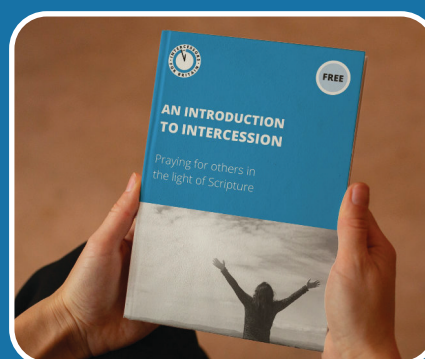
attitudes about marriage, parenting, sex and gender tear apart the millennia-old fabric we previously took for granted and relied upon. God's perfect plan for marriage (as a lifelong²² and complementary²³ relationship between one man and one woman) has been cast aside, as have His clear prohibitions of pre-marital sex²⁴ and homosexual unions²⁵, and His perfect plan for our gender.²⁶ Rather than stand as a lighthouse of refuge amidst the stormy waves, too often we have capitulated to the world out of fear or even approval. We may at times have been harsh and hypocritical rather than loving and gently steering those who were in pain; we have certainly hidden God's timeless truth and glorious saving gospel inside our cloaks by not warning people in wrong relationships, and we have often turned a blind eye to over one hundred thousand children in need of safe, loving homes that the church should have fostered or adopted. How does God see it all – and us?



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The need for preparation
We are so grateful to serve a God that prepares His people by giving them prophetic warnings. But we will gain nothing from the warnings if we think that they're a joke like Lot's sons-in-law did²⁷, or that they're for another time beyond us²⁸, or that God no longer speaks prophetically into the darkness and confusion of our world.²⁹ There comes a time when God can delay no longer, and we can be guilty of thinking we have more time to get ready than we do, whether for a situation like this or for the Lord's imminent return.³⁰ We want to warn you in love as our brothers and sisters in Christ to prepare for what is coming and to take up these four action points:

PRAY
While we must always be professing the name of Christ, and busy for the Kingdom, we believe that in this particular hour Christ urgently wants us to watch and pray with Him in the garden of the Great Intercession in Matthew 26³¹, even more than He wants us to be busy with the Great Commission of Matthew 28. How else can we know what He is saying to us in this moment, see what is coming, and ready ourselves for it, if we are too busy with work (even for His kingdom)? There is always a danger that we are taken up with apparently good activities like

Martha, rather than sacrificially prioritising time at Jesus' feet like Mary.³² Through recent shocks (most notably the pandemic), we believe God has been trying to bring us to an end of ourselves and cause us to stop. We naturally hate stopping our routines, but Joel told God's people to cancel everything in response to a plague and famine, and to call everyone instead into God's house to get right before Him.³³ Intercession should be our immediate priority, and there is no better route map than that of 2 Chronicles 7:14.

REPENT
We have already noted above some areas for repentance, and the Lord may highlight other issues to you and your church as you seek Him. We must all draw closer to the Lord now so that we can endure the trials to come, and repentance and obedience are a key step. If we are to minister to others in distress, we must first be sure our own house is in order and the log has been removed from our own eyes.³⁴ Isaiah offers us the choice between repentance and rest or rebellion and defeat.³⁵ Which will it be?

PREPARE
Preparation for trials is a wise and important Scriptural principle.³⁶ We believe we are moving into a time when fear will increase, as well as lawlessness and persecution.³⁷ How

will we stand firm if we haven't already learned to put on our spiritual armour, stay calm if we've not learned to trust God fully, and stay nourished if we've not put down spiritual roots?³⁸ And while spiritual preparation is significantly greater in importance, we would be wise to consider practical preparation too. How and where are we spending and saving our money? How are we looking after the physical body God has given us? Are we and those we care for ready for economic shocks or supply shortages? Have we told our friends, families and flocks what is coming for all true believers and for the world generally? Joseph prepared the nation for famine in response to God's warning; the church in Antioch prepared too when Agabus gave a prophetic word of a famine to come, and they made plans to support their brothers and sisters.³⁹ How would God have us prepare for ourselves, our households, our loved ones and our communities?

UNITE
Scripture, church history and the growing evidence in our day tell us that God's judgement in the form of national crises can significantly change how we 'do' church. Many believers who are wholeheartedly following the Lord and concerned about the situation we're facing are already moving closer to one another, drawn by the Spirit. As an apostate church becomes more easily identifiable and more closely aligned with the world, God's remnant must separate from those who persist in error, and align themselves instead with like-minded believers, whether in a traditional church context or in informal house churches. While we can only be united with those who are of the truth⁴⁰, we must be willing to lay aside secondary issues where appropriate⁴¹, not forsaking fellowship because of minor disagreements but pursuing it 'all the more' as the day of Christ's return draws near.⁴²

Finally, we believe the Lord recently gave us a direct word of prophecy (overleaf), which is a message from Him to those who have strayed from His word and are in danger of judgement. We invite you to weigh this word as others have done, to receive anything that's relevant for yourself or how you pray for others, and to consider passing it on to others along with this letter.

All of us are weak, and it is only by the grace of God that we can continue to stand. We humbly submit this letter to you as a warning, an exhortation, an invitation, and hopefully an encouragement. Please do listen to

Footnotes
¹ Ps 81:11-14, Gal 6:7
² Amos 3:7, Jer 7:25-29
³ E.g. www.bit.ly/ifb-127; www.bit.ly/ifb-128
⁴ 2 Chr 12:1-8
⁵ Heb 13:8; for examples of New Testament judgement, see Acts 5:1-11, Rev 2:5,16,21-23
⁶ Isa 26:9, Ps 78:34, Luk 19v41-44
⁷ 1 Pet 4:17, Jer 7:12-14
⁸ Ps 81:11-12; Jer 20:4b-5
⁹ Jer 44:22, 2 Kgs 24:4, Gen 15:16
¹⁰ Jer 28:1-9
¹¹ Tit 2:14, Eph 5:25-27
¹² Gen 17:7-8, Jer 31:35-37, Rom 9-11
¹³ Gen 12:3, Num 24:9, Zech 2:8
¹⁴ Rom 11:1,15-27
¹⁵ Isa 2:1-4, Jer 31:31-34, Zech 14 etc.
¹⁶ www.bit.ly/ifb-130
¹⁷ Ps 139:13-16, Jer 1:5
¹⁸ Ps 127:3, Mrk 10:13-16
¹⁹ www.bit.ly/ifb-131
²⁰ www.bit.ly/ifb-131
²¹ Lev 19:32, Mat 15:4-6
²² Mar 10:2-12, Mal 2:16
²³ Eph 5:22-33, 1 Cor 11:11
²⁴ 1 Cor 7:2, Heb 13:4, 1 Cor 6:18 (the Greek word for 'fornication' or 'immorality' is porneia, which includes all forms of sex outside of marriage)
²⁵ Lev 18:22, Rom 1:26-27, 1 Cor 6:9-10, Matt 19:4-5
²⁶ Deut 22:5, Gen 1:27,31, 1 Cor 7:17-20
²⁷ Gen 19:14
²⁸ Eze 12:27-28
²⁹ 1 Thes 5:19-21, 1 Cor 13:8-13 (note that "perfect" and "face-to-face" knowledge hasn't come yet)
³⁰ Luk 12:42-48, Mat 25:10-13
³¹ Mat 26:36-41, Is 59:16, Ezek 22:30-31
³² Luk 10:38-42, Jhn 12:2-3
³³ Joel 1, 2
³⁴ Mat 7:3-5
³⁵ Isaiah 30:15-16
³⁶ Rev 2:10, Mat 24:24-26, Luk 21:14
³⁷ Luk 21:25-28, Mat 24:9-13
³⁸ Eph 6:13, Mt 24:6, Jer 17:7-8, Ps 1:2-3
³⁹ Gen 41, Acts 11:27-30
⁴⁰ 1 Cor 5:11-13, 2 Cor 6:14-18
⁴¹ Rom 14, 15:7
⁴² Heb 10:23-25

anything the Lord may be saying through these words, and we pray that you will know the Lord's blessing and direction as you seek His face.

With love, in His greater love,
Ashley Thompson and Josh MacDonald
IFB Co-Directors



BECOME A MEMBER OF IFB

It's free to become a member of Intercessors For Britain. Members receive updates about our prayer days and other events, and a prayer bulletin six times a year (by post or email) covering recent and upcoming developments in the nation for prayer. There is also the option to get weekly emails of relevant news, to be part of our regular Zoom prayer meetings, and to link up with others for prayer locally.

Our only request is that members seek to pray regularly for the nation. If you'd like to become a member of IFB, just fill in the form below and return it to our office (14 Orchard Road, Moreton, Wirral, CH46 8TS), or complete it online at www.intercessorsforbritain.co.uk.

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I'd like to receive the bi-monthly bulletin by: **Post / Email** (please circle)

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*Please fill out all sections if possible, whichever your contact preference. An address helps us build up a picture of how our members are spread around the country, and an email address / phone number is helpful to save on postage if we need to contact you about anything.

LEAVING THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND



The following is a transcript of a video we released at the end of November, which can be viewed on our YouTube channel along with other recent talks.

On Wednesday 15th November, all three houses of the Church of England's General Synod voted in favour of the bishops' proposals for implementing blessings of same-sex couples, and of an amendment requesting full services of blessing to be introduced in the coming months. For those of us (both outside and within the denomination) who have grieved over its departure from sound teaching, and over its dishonouring of our righteous and unchanging God, it was another blow. For some people it was a line in the sand, marking the point at which the sinking ship should be abandoned to its fate; for some, it has triggered soul-searching and anguish over whether to leave; and for others, it's just a setback in their quest to reform and revive the denomination.

Having watched the General Synod's proceedings with a heavy heart, I released a short video after the vote, trying to put into words something I felt the Lord wanted His true followers to hear. I was unable to give detailed reasons for my position in such a short video, and it made some question why I was speaking so strongly. I would therefore like to lay out a summary of those reasons here, and I ask you to weigh it prayerfully against Scripture (as the benchmark for all that we think, say and do) to see if it rings true.

With some people calling for a partial separation while remaining within the Church of England, and others saying that a complete departure is the only appropriate response, I want to start by asking how much separation the Lord requires from His people. We'll then consider the potential for God's judgement in this situation, before considering the cost of separation and some closing thoughts about caring for the flock.

"we should ask whether partial distinctions like these are enough in the eyes of our pure and holy God."

How separate must we be?

Various ideas have been put forward by conservatives over how a partial separation could take place, so that they could be distinct from liberals while remaining within the Church of England.

These ideas include delegated oversight (where ministers are allowed a like-minded bishop to oversee them spiritually), separate dioceses (local groupings of churches based on their beliefs about same-sex marriage), and separate provinces (a rearrangement of the provinces of Canterbury and York to cater for the two camps). Putting aside the question of whether the uninformed world would see or understand such distinctions, we should ask whether partial distinctions like these are enough in the eyes of our pure and holy God.

"we need to be very careful about the things we touch, partner with and bind ourselves together with."

Holiness is rarely spoken of in parts of the UK church, despite it being a central part of God's character and a biblical requirement for us as His children. When the need for holiness is recognised, it can be transformative for a person's walk with the Lord and for His pleasure in them. However, while we may have recognised the need for holiness, have we really grasped the infinite holiness of our God, and how strongly He desires this holiness within His bride the church? When we read in Psalm 104:2 that God "wraps Himself in light", do we realise how pure He is, and how much He cares for our purity?

The strength of God's feelings on this can be seen in many Scripture passages, including those where He warns of judgement on people for their sin. God never wants to judge His people though, and He often calls longingly to them, either to repent as a group (as with the Israelites before being exiled), or to come out as individuals from an entity which He is about to judge (as with Lot and his family).

Amongst other passages, we should consider the two which are often quoted in regards to being separate. One of these is 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, which deserves careful pondering. It speaks of not being "bound together" (or "unequally yoked") with unbelievers, conjuring up a picture of two animals yoked together – they are separate bodies, and yet there is something connecting the two of them. However much separation may occur within the Church of England (for example, with separate provinces or dioceses for conservatives and liberals), there will still be a connection between the two, in the eyes of both the uninformed world and the all-seeing God, because the Church of England will still be binding them together. The passage also asks what partnership righteousness and lawlessness can have, and what a believer can have in common with an unbeliever – even if there are different provinces, there would still be something of a partnership between

them in some ways, and much in common between them.

In connection with this warning, Paul refers back to the Old Testament and the Mosaic law, as he reminds the Corinthians not to touch what is unclean. In connection with this, we might remember the words of Haggai 2, where the Lord got a point across about His people's uncleanness. The Lord asked the priests for a ruling in verse 11, and they acknowledged that anything which in any way touched something unclean would also become unclean. The Lord was and is very strict on this – merely touching something unclean in the Old Testament would make that person unclean – and if this is how the Lord sees things, and how Paul applied the principle in the New Testament, we need to be very careful about things we touch, partner with and bind ourselves together with. If we knowingly continue to touch something unclean, isn't there a danger that the Lord may also count us as in some way unclean?

We could also consider 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, which makes clear that while we are not expected to avoid unbelievers in

daily life, we are expected to completely separate ourselves from "any so-called brother" who persists in error, not even eating with them, although we should still keep calling them to repent (as 2 Thessalonians 3:15 makes clear).

Is God's judgement on its way?

The second passage which is often quoted regarding separation is Revelation 18:4, where God highlights wicked Babylon, describes how He will have to judge her, and says: "Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues; for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities."

However we interpret this passage, there is a principle here – that if God is going to bring judgement because of sin, and His people don't heed His call to come out, they could end up being caught up in the judgement. Lot had tried to be a righteous influence in Sodom, but there came a point where enough was enough for the Lord, and if Lot had refused to heed the warning and leave Sodom, he too would have perished.

MY SHEEP - HEAR MY VOICE!

A prophetic word received on 3/11/2023 by Josh MacDonald. (Linked scriptures: Isaiah 5v1-6 and John 10, esp. vv14-16, 27)

We invite you to weigh this word, which we believe is from the Lord for the church in the UK, and is especially intended as a merciful warning and tender exhortation to those spiritual sheep who have – some knowingly, and some unknowingly – been led astray from the safety of God's truth to a place of great eternal danger by lying wolves in sheep's clothing, who do not submit to the authority of scripture and have come to destroy.

"My sheep - hear My voice.

I placed you in a field, a pleasant pasture, that was good. It was the place you were supposed to be. It was walled, it was boundaried, and in that field was the food of My word and the protection of My presence. It was high, and well-appointed, and you had need of nothing. But one or two of you opened the gate, and now so many of you are gone.

That gate was your protection. That gate is your defence. The lines for you had fallen in pleasant places, but My Word and My presence were not enough and you lifted the latch, and now you are gone. My sheep, oh so many sheep, are My sheep no more. You have entered someone else's field; you have run easily, and willingly, down the hill and into the pasture of another, and you are gone. You cannot hear My voice and the gate stands open, a steady stream of My sheep passing on their

way to the stranger's field. They hear another shepherd's voice, someone who is not Me, and who does not speak My words.

You must now learn that the pasture you have chosen is not safe, and full of wolves. You must now learn that the grass you have chosen could not last forever, and it will shrivel up and dry, and you will hunger and thirst. You will no longer find any shepherd there – they will all abandon you. You did not notice that there were no walls, but you will realise, and you will tremble.

My sheep. Look up. My field remains, with its strong walls and green pasture, and the gate is open. See those sheep that still remain with Me, and join them again under the sound of My voice and the safe blessing of My protection. Turn, follow Me, come back and let Me close the gate behind you before it is too late. In My field you will be safe. You will find food, you will bear fruit, and there – and only there – will you weather the storm that is coming on the whole earth.

Hear My voice, and live!"



This may seem a very strong thing to say in connection with the Church of England – but there is a biblical precedent for God judging His people (or those who claim to be His people), even when they're trusting in their relationship with Him. God twice destroyed the temple where He was worshipped and where His Name dwelt, shocking those who thought they were safe because of their outward religion and their devotion to their place of worship. He also said in Malachi 1:10 that He wished someone would shut the doors of His temple, preferring this to being insulted by the tainted offerings that were being made to Him there.

There's a popular view within parts of the church which says that God doesn't judge today as He did in the Old Testament now we're in an age of grace. Some things certainly have changed since the Old Testament period, but our God hasn't, and judgement features enough in the New Testament to make clear that we should still take it seriously – from Jesus's own teachings, to the death of Ananias and Sapphira, to the warnings in the epistles, through to Revelation, where the Lord warns of judgement not just on the wicked world, but on apparently healthy churches amongst the seven churches of Asia.

"...no cost can be too great for us to pay in the light of His selfless sacrifice for us..."

Earlier this year, after the initial vote to approve same-sex blessings, two prominent Anglicans outside the Church of England spoke of their fear that the Lord was going to remove its lampstand as a result. That was a very real possibility for the church of Ephesus in Revelation 2:5, despite its impressive list of good qualities; how much more of a possibility could it be for a church denomination which has voted to cast His law behind their backs? And would any true believer want to remain in a church whose lampstand was in danger of being removed, when it's clear that the church and its leadership is determined not to heed the Lord's call to repent?

Our increasing conviction within IFB, and the conviction of other prayer leaders we are connected with, is that we have now passed the point of God withholding His judgement on His rebellious house, just as He reached that point with the Israelites when He told Jeremiah on three occasions not to pray for their welfare any more. The Lord is always willing to show mercy to individuals, but we believe the Lord has given over the denomination as a whole to its desires, and is going to judge her further. We can't be sure what this may look like or when it may occur, but we are convinced that this is not a time to linger in Sodom as Lot did, but to escape and bring others with us to safety.

What about the cost?

I wouldn't wish to minimise the very real cost that there will be for those who

come out from a denomination or church which they have grown up in, poured themselves into, or come to depend on. It can be easy to speak as an outsider who won't pay such a cost, and only those on the inside will be fully aware of what it may mean for them. The list of potential negative consequences for leaving is long: the loss of church buildings and finance; the loss of a minister's salary, house and position; the loss of a church's online presence and its position in the community; the potential for ridicule, arguments and acrimony; the potential lack of fellowship elsewhere; and concerns for a flock being divided and sheep being left behind.

However, while these concerns are right to be considered, if the Lord ever calls us to do something, no cost can be too great for us to pay in the light of His selfless sacrifice for us at Calvary. Concerns for earthly situations (as we see them with our fleshly eyes) can hinder us from hearing and obeying the Lord's call – but if we faithfully follow His perfect and sometimes counter-intuitive plan for our lives, we can be sure He will take care of all our concerns as we cast them upon Him in prayer.

In 2 Chronicles 25, a key event is described in the life of King Amaziah. He assembles Judah to go out to war, and he also hires thousands of warriors from the northern kingdom of Israel for one hundred talents of silver. But in verse 7, a man of God comes to him and says: "O king, do not let the army of Israel go with you, for the LORD is not with Israel nor with any of the sons of Ephraim. But if you do go, do it, be strong for the battle; yet God will bring you down before the enemy, for God has power to help and to bring down." King Amaziah then protests about the cost, pointing out that he had paid lots of money to hire the extra soldiers, but the prophet simply responds: "The LORD has much more to give you than this." Thankfully, the king takes this to heart, accepts the cost, dismisses the soldiers he had hired, and goes on to win a mighty victory without them.

We can note two things from this passage. Firstly, God said that no matter how righteous Judah was, He wouldn't be with them if they were partners with the wicked kingdom of Israel – they had to be separate and not touch what was unclean, so that He would accept and help them. But secondly, the Lord is able to repay us richly when we make sacrifices for Him, as 2 Corinthians 9:7-9 also makes clear. Right now, you may be understandably counting the cost – you may be asking like King Amaziah: "What shall we do for the buildings? What shall we do for the finance? What shall we do for the gospel opportunities we have?" But I'm sure God would say to you in this moment: "I have much more to give you than this" – possibly in material things, but certainly in spiritual blessings for your obedience and sacrifice. Whatever your head or heart may be saying, if the Lord is calling you to a costly path, that cost must be paid – and the question

NEW YEAR CONFERENCE REPORT

In our conference over the New Year period, we felt led to devote the majority of our prayer sessions to interceding for the church. This reflects our increasing feeling that, while there are many other issues worthy of prayer at this time, the biggest need of the hour is for the church to get right with the Lord and become more of the bride He desires her to be.

The prayer times inevitably required our own confession and repentance over areas we had fallen short personally, and our pleas for the Lord to give us and other believers a new love for Him, respect for His word, and desire for His Spirit. We also prayed about the rise of Islam in our nation, and two current consultations (on transgender school guidance and age verification for pornographic websites).

The conference talks focused on how the Lord cares for His Name versus how we care for it, and on how we should be inspired and challenged by the book of Hebrews for the days to come. You can hear the talks on our YouTube channel (www.bit.ly/ifb-videos), and find out about upcoming prayer gatherings on our website (www.intercessorsforbritain.co.uk).

one must ask in such a situation should never be "What is the least costly option?", but "What is the most holy option, that will please God most?"

We could also consider the painful and costly separation which the Israelite remnant had to walk through when they returned from Babylon. In Ezra 10, in response to Ezra's mourning before the Lord over their mixed marriages, his repentant countrymen acknowledged their sin and resolved to take drastic action in order to be clean again in the Lord's sight. These men didn't say they would just have a partial separation from their loved ones – they didn't say they would spend less time with them, or live in a separate part of the house from them – they committed to sending their precious wives and children away permanently. I can't begin to imagine how painful that cost must have been for them to pay, but they were willing by God's grace to pay it, and that must have been such a fragrant aroma to the Lord as a sacrifice for Him.

(We might also note in passing that while these men were willing to pay the cost, they recognised it would require co-ordination and leadership – they told Ezra it was his responsibility to direct, but that they would be with him – and how we need leaders at this time who will lead the way, as an inspiration to others who are afraid to walk out into the unknown.)

"I'm sure God would say to you in this moment: 'I have much more to give you than this.'"

What about the flock?

Having spoken generally about the cost of leaving, I would like to finish by addressing one particular cost which deserves special attention. Some within the Church of England have a serious and understandable concern about what could happen to some of the sheep if the righteous shepherds depart, potentially taking half of the flock with them while leaving others behind. Should such a concern override any discomfort over remaining within the Church of England at this time?

As church leaders, we certainly do have a responsibility to watch over our flocks. We are called as under-shepherds to love and tend those under our care, seeking to emulate our great Shepherd who laid down His life for the sheep. However, leaving a denomination and caring for one's flock aren't necessarily mutually exclusive – indeed, part of a shepherd's role (as seen in Psalm 23) is to lead the flock to suitable pastures, while protecting them from attack – and if a flock needs to relocate to better and safer ground, the shepherd's most caring action would be to lead it there, and to trust God with the rest.

Additionally, at the risk of being misunderstood or misquoted, I would suggest the Bible teaches that our highest loyalty isn't to our sheep, and our highest priority isn't the gospel. These are absolutely fundamental priorities for us of course, but our first and ultimate priority must always be to love, serve and glorify our precious and holy Lord. When asked what the greatest commandment was, Jesus said it was to love God with all one's heart, then added that the second commandment was to love one's neighbour. In His pattern prayer, Jesus put "Hallowed be Thy Name" as the very first request, followed by others.

In this and every other situation we face, we must ask first and foremost: "How is God's Name and glory being affected, and what path will bring the greatest honour to His Name?" With God's word being cast aside and His Name being associated with a false gospel, how must the Lord feel, and what action on our part will best address this if the church at large won't repent? May God give us all the zeal of Phinehas in Numbers 25, so that our love for the Lord and the honour of His Name will eclipse everything else, and will give us the courage to take whatever costly action is necessary to tell a watching world what it really means to serve our righteous and holy God.

Ashley Thompson, 27 November 2023
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PERSECUTION WATCH by Andrew Hallaway

NIGERIA

238 CHRISTIANS KILLED IN ONE WEEK

The mass murder of Christians that occurred in one week over Christmas 2023 in Nigeria has continued into this year.

Between 23 and 30 December, 238 people were killed by Fulani militants in predominantly Christian areas of Plateau State, according to Release International and Morning Star News. The governor of Plateau State declared a week of prayer and mourning, and the attacks continue without any effective response from either the Nigerian authorities or the international community.

“The world must wake up to the religious and ethnic cleansing in Nigeria”

Despite Nigeria’s tourist office calling Plateau State, ‘The Home of Peace and Tourism’, the Christmas massacre drove 20,000 people from their homes in what seemed like a coordinated campaign. Then, on 4 January, Boko Haram terrorists murdered the pastor of a Church of Christ in Nations congregation and at least six of his church members.

Also on 4 January, the United States Commission on International



Burial on Christmas Day 2023 of Christians slain in NTV village, Plateau State, Nigeria

Religious Freedom expressed “extreme disappointment that the US Department of State yet again failed to designate Nigeria as a country of particular concern”.

Release International reports that the Rev Gideon Dawel, a District Overseer of Christ’s Apostolic Church, was an eyewitness to the Christmas attacks. His wife and five daughters were all killed in Kambarpelli. He says

the militants shouted ‘Allahu Akbar’ (Allah is greater) as they slaughtered people with guns and machetes and set fire to houses.

Release International CEO Paul Robinson says: “The world must wake up to the religious and ethnic cleansing that is unfolding in Nigeria before their eyes. How many people must be slaughtered, before the international community puts sufficient pressure on Nigeria to protect its Christian minority in the north?”

According to the Nigerian NGO Intersociety, since 2009, jihadists have killed 52,000 Nigerian Christians and destroyed 18,000 churches

Credit: Christian Daily News/Morning Star News

EGYPT

CHURCH BUILDING SITE AND CHRISTIAN HOMES ATTACKED

Muslim extremists have attacked workers laying the foundations for a new church and set fire to Christian houses.

Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) report that a mob entered the building site in Al-Azeeb in Minya province on 18 December. Around 3,000 Coptic Christians live in the village and had recently been given permission to build a new church.

The attackers tried to prevent any work being done and even continued when police tried to stop them. They threw stones and Molotov cocktails which set fire to several Christian homes.

They threw stones and Molotov cocktails which set fire to several Christian homes

CSW President Mervyn Thomas commented: “We call on the Egyptian authorities to hold those responsible for this attack accountable, and to refrain from resorting to reconciliation meetings as a replacement for the rule of law, as they impose ad-hoc, unjust and often unconstitutional conditions on the victims of sectarian violence and perpetuate impunity for the perpetrators.”

This is despite President al-Sisi having given verbal and practical backing to the Christian community whenever anti-Christian incidents occur, according to aid organisation Barnabas Aid. It reports that Egyptian Christians say their situation is now better than it has been in living memory. Al-Sisi’s government introduced the 2016 Law for Building and Restoring Churches, which has led to 3,189 churches or church-affiliated buildings receiving licences. (Source: Barnabas Aid, January/February 2024)

Credit: Ramirez 22 nic/Wikimedia



Bishop Rolando Alvarez, pictured in 2019, has been convicted of treason and is serving a 26-year sentence

26-year prison sentence. The second bishop to be arrested is Bishop Isidoro Mora.

The government increased its scrutiny of priests after the Pope described Ortega’s government as a “gross dictatorship” similar to communist and Nazi regimes. Ortega cut official links with the Vatican.

Exiled Nicaraguan researcher Martha Patricia Molina believes there are at least 11 Catholic leaders currently imprisoned in the country.

Bishop Alvarez objected to the government’s use of violence to suppress mass protests in 2018

The authorities have not made any statement as to why the priests were targeted, but Ortega has previously accused Catholic leaders of trying to undermine his government.

Bishop Alvarez had objected to the government’s use of violence to suppress mass protests in 2018. He was convicted of treason and is serving a

SRI LANKA

PASTOR JAILED OVER CHRISTMAS

A church leader in Sri Lanka has been arrested for comments in a sermon.

Pastor Jerome Fernando, senior overseer of The Glorious Church in Colombo, was granted bail and released on 3 January after being in jail since 1 December. Police took him into custody even though a court had ordered that he should not be arrested.

Morning Star News (MSN) reports that Fernando was charged with “outraging the religious feelings of any class of persons” in an online sermon.



Pastor Jerome Fernando was arrested in Sri Lanka on 1 December 2023

A Christian leader told MSN that many churches had publicly demanded his release. He said: “We stand in solidarity, because today it is he, tomorrow it could be us as well.”

He added that the government and leaders of other religions have been turning Sri Lankans against churches in the country.

Police took him into custody even though a court had ordered that he should not be arrested

The National Christian Evangelical Alliance of Sri Lanka made a statement after the pastor’s arrest that decried the decline in religious freedom in the nation and appealed for the charges against Fernando to be dropped.

Continues on page 20

Credit: Keshia Kumaresan/Creative Commons



PERSECUTION WATCH Continued

SUDAN

CHRISTIAN COUPLE ESCAPE TO US

A Sudanese couple who were threatened with death because of their Christian faith have found safety in the United States.

After Nada and her husband Hamouda were convicted of converting to Christianity, they faced 100 lashes each and a year in exile. Some of their family were also threatening to kill them.

Changing religion was decriminalised in 2020, yet people still face attacks and arrest. Nada and Hamouda were accused of "criminal adultery" as a Sharia (Islamic law) court ruled that their marriage had become illegal after Hamouda converted to Christianity.

They faced 100 lashes each and a year in exile

Religious freedom group ADF International supported Nada and Hamouda in their court case, but helped evacuate them to the USA after the court decision and death threats. The couple and their children are overjoyed to be free.

However, elsewhere in Sudan a Coptic monastery was attacked by rebels fighting the Sudanese government. Christian Solidarity Worldwide reports



Hamouda and Nada are now safe in the US with their children

that the Rapid Support Forces attacked the monastery in Wad Madani, Gezira State, on 16 December and are now using it as a military base.

At least five priests, five novices and four workers have been missing since the attack.

Sudan has recently experienced tumultuous political changes. Until recently, the government criminalised apostasy and adultery charges have been used to punish converts, as in the

famous case of Mariam Ibrahim.

In May 2014, while eight months pregnant, she was sentenced to death for apostasy under Sudan's Sharia law and was flogged for being married to a Christian. Mariam was forced to give birth to her baby daughter while shackled in a prison cell that she was confined to with her other one-year old child. She now advocates for everyone's right to live out their faith freely without fear of persecution.

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HEALED FROM TRAUMA BY JESUS

NEW
AUTHOR

After a miserable childhood and failed marriage, Victoria Neville was amazed to be able to leave it all behind and embark on a healing adventure with God

“Weighing just two pounds at birth and nearly three months premature, I was a miracle baby. My twin, Bella, weighed less than two pounds; of all the twins born in 1970, we were the earliest surviving ones.

My very first memory is of nearly drowning in my father's swimming pool at the age of five. Mercifully, my father came through the garden gate, jumped in the swimming pool and saved me from drowning.

It was as if I had left my miserable childhood and unhappy marriage at the bottom of the river

At that young age, I was totally unaware of Jesus, but I do remember coming out of my body and watching my father jump in the swimming pool to get me out. Looking back, I now realise that it was an out of body experience.

Despite our premature birth, I was blessed to develop normally, but my twin was brain damaged and from the age of 12 she suffered petit-mal and grand-mal epilepsy.

For much of my childhood, though, I felt as if I was struggling to keep my head above water. My father had married my nanny when I was four years old, which resulted in my mother becoming an alcoholic.

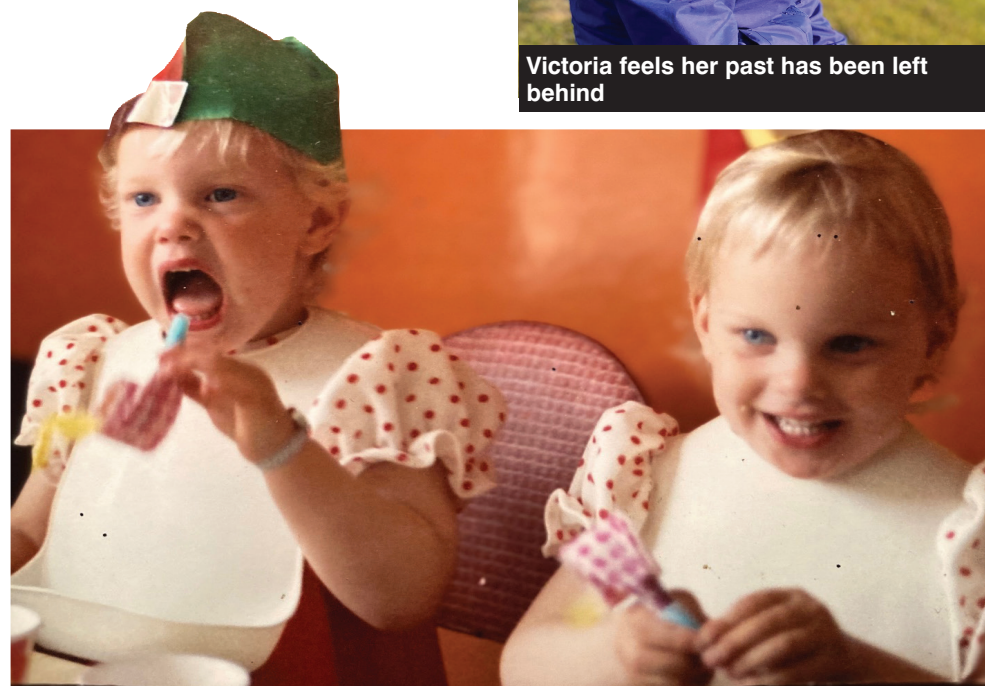
When I was ten, tragedy hit my family: my elder sister was killed in a riding accident. This galvanised my faith and from then on I started to pray to Jesus.

At secondary school I was encouraged to take my faith more seriously and so I agreed to be confirmed at 16. A very nice priest explained to me that Jesus loved me and had died on the Cross for my sins, so for the first time I repented and accepted Jesus into my life.

This brought me a sense of peace,



Victoria feels her past has been left behind



Victoria with twin sister Bella, aged two



Victoria Neville in 2018

but I did not achieve high grades for my A levels, because I had to look after my twin in the holidays as she was having grand-mal epileptic fits and my mother was at work all the time. I did, however, manage to get into Westminster University and achieved a 2:2 in English and French.

To escape my miserable home life (by this time my mother was on her third marriage), I married at 25 and moved north. Sadly I soon realised that my husband was not a Christian, so I was “unequally yoked” (2 Corinthians 6:14), because he did not share my faith at all.

We had three beautiful daughters, but sadly after 18 years our marriage was beyond repair and so we divorced. My divorce caused me to hit rock bottom and I had to be prescribed antidepressants by my doctor.

One night I felt so miserable that I cried out to Jesus in desperation. The Holy Spirit literally gave me word for word the salvation prayer to say: “Lord Jesus, I repent of all my sins. Please forgive me. I believe that you died on the Cross and rose again on the third day. Jesus, please come into my heart, and fill me up with your Holy Spirit. I accept you as my Lord and Saviour. Amen.”

Then I fell asleep and received a dream from the Holy Spirit about getting baptised in water. So, not long after, I drove to Hollybush Christian Fellowship and asked if they could baptise me in the river Rye during their summer camp. They kindly agreed and I was baptised on 8 August 2014.

What a glorious day! I felt like a

different person when I came up out of the water. For the first time in years, I felt joy. I also felt clean and renewed; it was as if I had left my miserable childhood and unhappy marriage at the bottom of the river, and I experienced an immediate difference in my spirit.

I was now a born-again Christian, a new creation in Christ and this time I really took my faith seriously, praying and reading my Bible daily. For the first time in my life, I felt a desire to go out evangelising and I remember my second time vividly.

I had arranged to go out in York with Christa, a lovely Christian. Outside York Hospital we bumped into a young man pushing his father who had just had a toe amputated.

We got chatting to the young man and asked if we could pray for his father's pain to go. Then, to our surprise, the son asked us to pray for him as he had a ripped cruciate ligament and was awaiting knee surgery. I agreed and put my hands round his knee, praying for all the pain to go and for the ligament to be healed and go back into place.

To my astonishment, he started leaping for joy and bent his knee right back to show he was healed. “I'm healed! I'm healed! My goodness, I'm going straight back to church!” he exclaimed.

His son's knee was still healed and he was over the moon

I gave his father my phone number and later that evening he rang me to say that his son's knee was still healed and he was over the moon.

Since that day I have seen the power of God heal two homeless men with fractured wrists on the street. I have served on the Filling Station ministry team for the last four years and have seen people delivered from illness, addiction and depression. I have also witnessed others receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit on Zoom and in Filling Station meetings.

Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever and he is letting us know that he is still Jehovah Rapha, the God who heals TODAY!

Victoria Neville has written her testimony and the healings that she has witnessed first-hand in her first book, ‘The Reluctant Disciple’, which is available from Amazon, Waterstone's website and Foyles. She can be contacted for prayer at crusadervictoria@gmail.com

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Right side of history

I write to say what an excellent Christian publication HEART is, particularly the recent coverage of the Israel/Gaza conflict, which gave its historical origins based on fact, not from the anti-Israeli bias in much of the media coverage.

It was good to see a letter, too, from my one-time pastor and friend Mervyn Tilley (rtd), to whom I owe a great debt of gratitude for directing me, many years ago, to the book 'From Time Immemorial' by Joan Peters. This book is extensively researched and details the history of the Arab-Jewish conflict over so-called Palestine, the name ascribed to it by the PLO in 1967.

Thank you, Mervyn, for setting me on the right side of history.

Bruce Stevens

Reading, Berkshire

Famine in Britain?

Further to my last letter about an economic crash and healing miracles breaking out in the Church (Dec/Jan 2023-24), a friend once told me that in the 1960s a preacher in Manchester had forecast a great famine coming to Britain one day. Throughout the famine, he said, Christians would receive just enough food to keep them alive.

Roger Nutton

Chelmsford, Essex

Contradictory behaviour from a C of E priest

It's reported that Paula Vennells, who led the persecution of innocent postmasters for a crime they didn't commit, had applied to be made Bishop of London.

This is the third most senior post in the Church of England. She didn't get the role – but she is a practising Church of England priest. She repeatedly lied, stating that the Horizon computer system was not faulty, even though she knew the truth.

The Bible clearly states that Christians must not lie and must care for people and show kindness. If she is a Christian, how could her conscience allow her to continuously lie and destroy the lives of honest, hard-working people?

This contradictory behaviour by one of their priests should be investigated by the Church of England as it seems they need to tighten up their screening processes.

A Wills

Middlesex, Greater London

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DISCIPLESHIP

WITHOUT GOD'S WORD AND THE CROSS, CHRISTIANITY IS MEANINGLESS

Some professing Christians today pick and choose what they want to believe. It is no wonder many churches use the word "inclusive" which means pandering to the world's desires, rather than standing on the Word of God

BY TIM AND TOPE PEARSON

It is best to cover God's Word early on when discipling a new convert.

If they don't believe that God's Word is infallible from the start, there is a likelihood they will stay as a convert and not realise the awesome power of being a disciple.

The Cross and its central theme

The Apostle Paul states in 1 Corinthians 15:14: "And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith." Our faith is totally dependent on the fact that Jesus, died, rose again and in doing so, gave us eternal life, meaning death has no sting.

Islam, in particular, tries to mitigate the importance of the Cross to justify their religion, so that they bring Jesus



down to a mere prophet. This is both an insult to our faith, but also tries to destroy the amazing sacrifice that our Lord made for us, with his death and resurrection opening the way for our place in heaven.

They will not realise the awesome power of being a disciple

Let's remember that because Mary was visited by the Holy Spirit, Jesus was born without any sin. As a result of the fall, we are all born in sin, but Jesus has a unique, sinless connection to our Father.

This is why, when he had taken all our sins and nailed them to the Cross, for a short while he lost this priceless connection to his and our Father, and cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46).

The importance of knowing how to teach others God's Word

In the third year of King Jehoshaphat's reign, the king sent his officials to teach the book of the law of the Lord throughout Judah. As a result, the people were convicted of sin, and the fear of the Lord fell on all, including the

surrounding communities (2 Chronicles 17:3-11).

Jesus commanded his followers to teach all future disciples to obey everything he taught. Hence discipleship training is paramount today, and why we, as Equipping the Saints (ETS) Ministries, will continue to teach until Jesus returns! See Matthew 28:18-20.

The people were convicted of sin

Tim & Tope Pearson are co-founders of Equipping the Saints Ministries: "At ETS the participant will learn how to disciple others, and prepare to lead one-to-one discipleship sessions to build up another believer to be fully reconciled to Christ, through the Word of God. Please get in touch if you would like to find out more about helping your church members grow to be true disciples."

*Find out more via
etsministries.org.uk
or call **01733 230 769***

In my own words

Readers' longer letters

Fresh thoughts on a newsworthy or devotional topic will be considered for this feature.

Email up to 350 words with your name, town, county and photo, if possible, by Friday 23 February 2024 to letters@heartpublications.co.uk

C of E ignores former gays

Why does the Church of England overlook the power of Jesus to cancel unwanted same-sex attraction?

I do not have a testimony in this area, but many do. During the Church of England's Synod on 13-15 November last year, I joined a small group of ex-gay people from Core Issues Trust and X-Out-Loud (an international community of former LGBT people).

Jesus is able to transform people from being LGBT

They had already been removed from standing outside Church House. Having been denied an audience with both archbishops and an opportunity to share at the Synod meeting, they stood outside Westminster Abbey, sharing their testimonies with any Synod member who would listen.

Sadly, the Synod officials removed those wearing 'Once Gay, Not Anymore'

T-shirts from the public gallery, while allowing those wearing LGBT lanyards to be present on the Synod floor. What



This 'Once Gay, Not Anymore' T-shirt was not welcomed in the Synod

What the Horizon scandal has revealed about British life

The local post office should be cherished

The emotional and financial devastation unleashed by the Horizon scandal on postmasters, postmistresses and their families, has shaken us all.

But it also revealed something else – the love we have as a nation for our local post office and the important role it plays in the life of our community. Kate Middleton, now Princess of Wales, invited her village postmaster, Hasmukh Shingadia, to her wedding.

The campaign to 'Save Felpham Village Post Office' in West Sussex is a good example of the affection, not to mention the need, to protect this vital asset. In the past few months, residents and local businesses have overwhelmingly supported the campaign.

Why? Not just because of the services it provides... yes, all of that is important, but it's about the preservation of community. A healthy post office means more footfall for local businesses. Going into our village post office makes us feel part of something; the chatter, the laughter and the brilliant staff confirm that we belong, that we're not alone.

If that sounds sentimental, good, let's make no apology for that. It's too easy to feel cut off and powerless that community is splintering. Well, not in Felpham and its environs.

Lizzie Mickery
Felpham, West Sussex



Credit: YouTube

Royal approval: the Princess of Wales invited her village postmaster to her wedding



Ex-gay demonstrators outside the C of E's Synod deliberations

was shocking was to hear seasoned Synod clergy openly celebrating their long-time gay relationships.

Both archbishops and every bishop have been previously sent a copy of the 'X-Out-Loud, Emerging Ex-LGBT Voices' book of testimonies (xoutloud.com/book) by former-LGBT people but, in most cases, appear to have ignored its truths.

Our brave contributors are living proof that Jesus is able to transform people from being LGBT.

As Paul warned in 2 Timothy 4:3: "For

the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but having itching ears, they shall heap to themselves teachers in accordance with their own lusts."

See also Colossians 2:8: "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ."

Elene Haralambous
Guildford, Surrey

DAILY WORD

BY MICHAEL FARKAS OF PRAYERCHAIR

God will make a way

"And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow-not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below-indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39).

You are so incredibly loved by God, who only wants the very best for your life. Sometimes how we see ourselves can limit what we think we can do.

If you feel unloved or unworthy, you may give up before you've even started. But keep your eyes on God who loves you so much, who has an amazing plan and purpose for your life, and he'll make a way. Thank God today that you're loved beyond measure and as

you choose to keep your eyes on him and trust him, he'll make a way.

See Prayerchair.org to sign up for other weekday messages

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News you won't hear in the mainstream media

HEALTH WATCH

WORLD LEADING EXPERTS TESTIFY IN PARLIAMENT

Top doctors travelled to Britain to voice their Covid concerns

By Sonia Elijah

Six world leading scientists and medical professionals presented their expert testimonies on the Covid pandemic and its consequences to a packed room in Parliament.

Over 20 MPs attended the event hosted by ex-Tory MP Andrew Bridgen, whose solitary voice has been 'crying in the wilderness' about Covid-19 vaccine injuries and excess deaths, while other 'Honourable Members' have remained deafeningly silent.

In October, Bridgen secured a 30-minute adjourned debate (after 20 rejections – reported in the last issue of this paper) on excess deaths in the UK House of Commons, to an almost empty chamber, and another on 16 January, when more facts were presented.

Experts who came to testify in Parliament on 4 December included: Dr David E Martin (scientist and adviser to corporations including the World Bank), Dr Robert Malone (scientist and specialist in mRNA, US), Dr Ryan Cole (pathologist, US), Dr Pierre Kory (respiratory specialist, Canada), Prof Angus Dalgleish (oncologist and infectious diseases specialist, London), and Steve Kirsch (US businessman and philanthropic supporter of medical research, whom Wikipedia calls a "promoter of misinformation about Covid-19 vaccines").

All have risked their reputations to warn the public about the steps being taken in the name of 'health' in the past three years.

The perpetrators acting as the World Health Organisation have absolute immunity

Unfortunately, video addresses by Dr Mike Yeadon (former Pfizer Vice President of respiratory section, UK) and Dr Peter McCullough (highly cited cardio-renal specialist, US) were not possible due to unforeseen technical issues in the UK Government office building. Also, no live streaming or official recording of the event was allowed.

Dr David E Martin, PhD, was first to speak about the web of deception by governments, corporations, and regulators that led to the Covid-19 pandemic and how they built immunity from prosecution for themselves.

He said: "You have to remember that in 1944, and [this was] finalised in 1947, the perpetrators acting as the World Health Organisation have absolute immunity. I've tried to point this out. You cannot file charges – it's not a legal thing to do... I've said this many times, if you fight a battle on the day of your enemy's choos-



Dr David E Martin addresses attendees about the web of deception

ing, on the field of their choosing, with the artillery of their choosing – there's a high probability you'll lose.

"The problem is, we have a number of legal efforts that have unfortunately flown into the buzzsaw of the immunity that these people built for themselves. This is why I've said that the anti-trust case is the only silver bullet we have

presented a comprehensive summary of the published scientific literature showing harms from the toxic lipid nanoparticles and synthetic RNA found in the Covid-19 mRNA vaccines. He shared the shocking fact that cancer rates have skyrocketed throughout the world, post mRNA vaccine rollout.

Cole also highlighted how the mRNA

The web of deception by governments, corporations, and regulators that led to the Covid-19 pandemic

globally because it precedes all the other crimes and is not exempt under the WHO's treaty. I've been around tons and tons of people, who say 'Yes, but there's fraud' – all of that is true, but it's 100 per cent un-prosecutable."

Dr Pierre Kory, ICU doctor and president of the FLCCC (Front-line Covid-19 Critical Care) presented an excellent summary on the 'war' (through suppression and sabotage) of two much-maligned treatments against early Covid: ivermectin and hydroxychloroquine.

Dr Ryan Cole, MD and pathologist, pre-



Dr Ryan Cole presents evidence of cancer rates and vaccine contamination

MPS WHO ATTENDED THE HEARING ON 4 DECEMBER

Ian Paisley, Sammy Wilson, Sir Jeffrey Donaldson, Paul Girvan, Carla Lockhart, David Davis, Sir Desmond Swayne (who left after the first few minutes), Jonathan Lord, Heather Wheeler, David Jones, Philip Hollobone, Neale Hanvey, Duncan Baker, Sir Christopher Chope, Sir George Howarth, Sir John Redwood, Ben Lake, Sir Robert Syms, Dean Russell, Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown and Karl McCartney.

oped over decades. Human beings have the right to informed consent and what was done here, in a haphazard way, under the justification that we had to reject the norms that had been developed over decades, both for assuring vaccine safety and for assuring informed consent of



Dr Malone: "I come to you with one request – open the books! Let's see the data"

patients – all had to be jettisoned at short notice because of a threat of a 3.4 per cent case fatality rate and the need to move a counter-measure forward, without the due process that would normally take place."

Dr Malone concluded his speech by explaining: "What we have here is a rushed product, a rushed technology. A failure to provide respect for humans in not allowing them to have informed consent. And furthermore, actively deploying the most massive propaganda campaign in the history of the modern world, to suppress the ability of the public to gain access – merely to have the knowledge – of what the adverse event risks are."

"I come to you with one request: open the books! Let's see the data and let's allow the data to be examined so we can actually get to the bottom of the most important question the world is facing: were these products actually safe and effective?"

A failure to provide respect for humans in not allowing them to have informed consent

Importantly, he discussed bioethics and how human beings have the right to informed consent: "There was a concerted effort to justify the imposition of this [modified RNA gene therapy] technology in a rapid fashion on the basis that there was this 3.4 per cent case fatality rate associated with this virus (when in reality it was close to 0.02 per cent which was known from the first quarter of 2020).

"What transpired in that rush was a fundamental breach in both ethics and regulatory norms that have been devel-

HEALTH WATCH

“As an oncologist, I am seeing people with stable cancer rapidly relapse after a Covid-19 booster”

Prof Angus Dalglish, Consultant Medical Oncologist and professor of oncology at St George’s, University of London, shared how the Covid vaccine boosters are directly associated with excess deaths seen around the world.

Prof Dalglish stated: “As an oncologist I am seeing people with stable cancer rapidly relapse after a Covid-19 booster.”

He went on to stress how “You are more likely to suffer from serious adverse events from an mRNA jab than be hospitalised from Covid.”

Last to speak was Steve Kirsch, founder of the Covid-19 Early Treatment Fund and the Vaccine Safety Research Foundation. Like Dr Malone, he also called for the books to be opened. In particular, he questioned why the UK’s ONS (Office of National Statistics) is hiding the vaccine mortality data.

Cancer rates have skyrocketed post mRNA vaccine rollout

Kirsch went on to discuss the Covid vaccine mortality data connected to specific Covid-19 vaccine batches, recently disclosed by New Zealand Ministry of Health employee-turned-whistleblower, Barry Young, who has since been arrested by New Zealand authorities for exposing the truth.

He also presented alarming death estimates from the Covid shots – 13 million people worldwide.

He questioned why the ONS is hiding the vaccine mortality data

In the days leading up to the 4 December event, The Mirror described this elite group of experts with their superior level of scientific and medical knowledge as “a string of discredited Covid conspiracy theorists.”



Sonia Elijah has a background in Economics. A former BBC researcher, she now works as an investigative journalist. See Sonia Elijah Investigates at Substack.

HUNT WANTS AI VAX FOR ‘NEXT’ PANDEMIC



Jeremy Hunt, currently Chancellor but also a former Health Secretary, says that Artificial Intelligence (AI) will speed up vaccine development. Speaking at a panel discussion at the WEF in January, Hunt said:

“When we have the next pandemic, we don’t want to have a year before we get the vaccine and if AI can shrink the time it takes to get that vaccine to a month, then that is a massive step forward for humanity.”

FREEDOM WATCH

Councils’ net zero pledges ‘undemocratic’

Local authorities are virtue signalling their green credentials by promising to reach ‘net zero’ before the Government’s country-wide deadline of 2050.

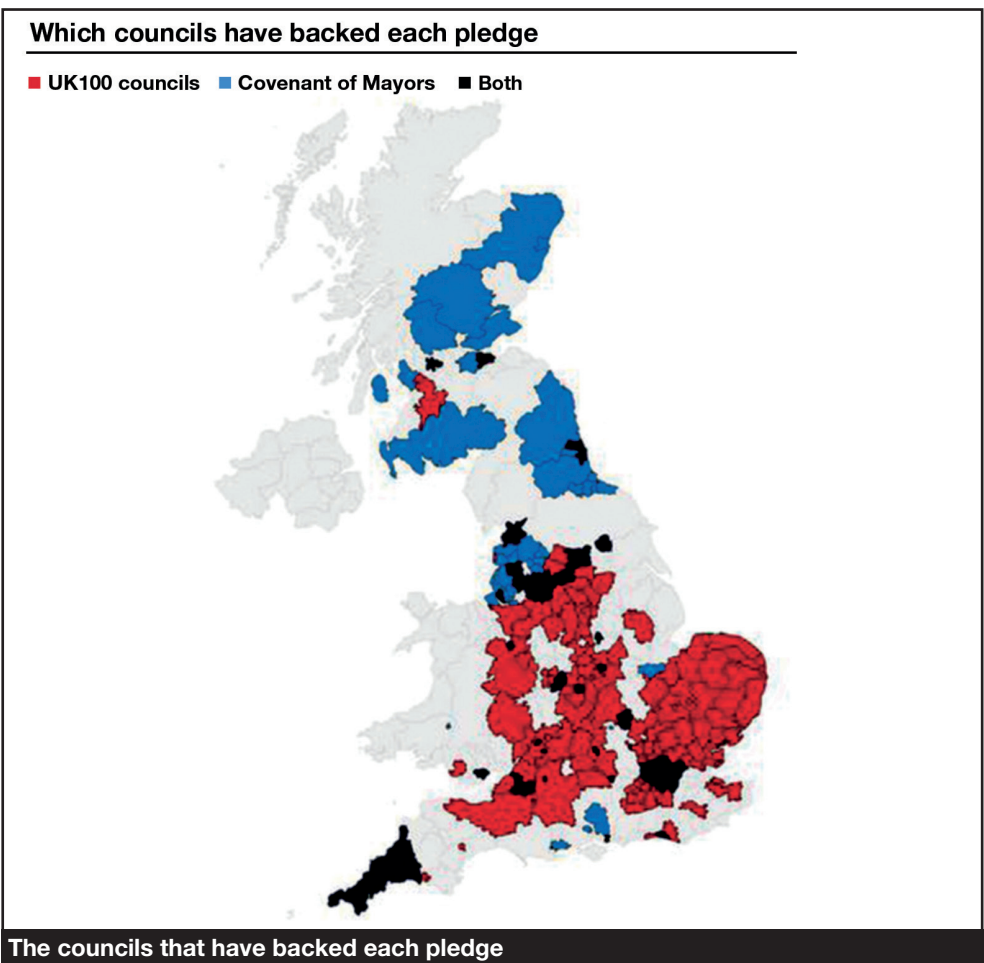
However, the 160 or more mainly left-wing councils who have made the pledge have gone ahead without a democratic mandate. According to the Daily Telegraph, millions of council tax payers will be funding the race to meet the target without having voted for it.

“The public have not been asked for their consent”

Together and Climate Debate UK revealed the councils involved and say: “The pledges are not just undemocratic, but anti-democratic. The pledges’ principles and aims have not been contested in public. And the public have not been asked for their consent.”

Oxford council is targeting net zero by 2040, and has zero emission zones in which petrol, diesel and even hybrid cars are charged up to £10 a day to use roads. Leicester council wants to be carbon-neutral by 2030.

Ben Pile of Climate Debate said: “Labour councils are among the keenest to deny working and poorer families the freedom of private transport. These are the very people Labour claim to fight for, but rather than asking local people if they want these draconian policies, Labour councils seem to be serving the world’s richest people instead.”



PRAYER FOR HEALING FROM ADVERSE REACTIONS

We are reprinting this prayer that first appeared in the paper in April 2022, along with a testimony of a woman healed from side-effects of the Pfizer vaccine, and it is still on our website. The prayer came to David Tidy, director of Prayer Warriors International, early one morning in May 2021, shortly after the Covid vaccines had been launched.

Father, I am sorry not to have trusted you fully regarding my spirit, soul, body, and my future. I am sorry that I have responded to the world’s manipulations. I felt it right at the time but I have now come into further revelation knowing that it was not from you.

I am now aware that I have in my body something that is contrary to your created immune system given to me when born; for this I am truly sorry.

I now recommit my spirit, soul and body to you in Jesus’ name.

In your name I now take authority over and cancel all negative effects from these jabs and loose myself from all future repercussions from them. I speak to my immune system to take back control of my spirit, soul and bodily protection as ordained by God.

I ask you Lord, if you would be generous in your unfailing grace and restore what has been stolen from me, that I may serve you fully with all that I am.

I declare that my spirit, body and soul will be healed and restored according to Psalm 91:5-11 in Jesus’ name. Amen.

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Matthew 8:8

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BOOKREVIEWS

By Gordon Pettie

The story of the 'Kindertransport' hero

One Life, *The True Story of Sir Nicholas Winton*

By Barbara Winton

Robinson, an imprint of Little, Brown Book Group, 2024

A classic television moment occurred in 1988 during a recording of Esther Rantzen's 'That's Life' TV programme.

The producers had invited Nicholas Winton, a retired stockbroker, to join the live audience and had seated him on the front row.

When the programme began, Esther Rantzen outlined how Nicholas had rescued 669 Jewish children from Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia on the brink of World War 2. Then she asked if anyone in the audience owed their life to Nicholas Winton.

I can still see the look of amazement and the tears that flowed

To Winton's astonishment, almost the entire audience rose to their feet. I can still see the look of amazement and the tears that flowed, as he turned round and saw all the people standing – people he had never met since he had masterminded a seemingly impossible plan to rescue them as children in 1939.

I don't want to spoil the story for you, but the book tells his story of how a friend told him of the horrors in Prague after the Nazi annexation in October 1938. Winton, whose parents were in fact German Jewish emigres to Britain called Wertheim, cancelled a skiing holiday to go and see for himself what was happening.

For nine months he did what he could



Sir Nicholas Winton revisited Prague in 2007

and got 669 children out. Amazingly, he never told anyone the story until it became public in 1988.

He had masterminded a seemingly impossible plan to rescue them as children

Winton was knighted in 2003 by Queen Elizabeth II for "services to humanity, in saving Jewish children from Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia". Sir Nicholas died in 2015 at the age of 106, 76 years to the day after 241 of the children he saved left Prague by train.

His daughter, Barbara Winton, has



A young Nicholas Winton with an endangered child

written her father's story. It has been made into a film, also called 'One Life', with Sir Anthony Hopkins playing Sir Nicholas, which premiered in cinemas in January.

I am looking forward to seeing the film but am equally loving reading his story. The book covers so much more of his life than it is possible for the film to show.

WINTON STATUE DEFACED BY PRO-PALESTINIANS



The Kindertransport memorial was vandalised with a crude drawing of the 'Dome of the rock'

A memorial to Sir Nicholas Winton's work with the Kindertransport was defaced with graffiti during pro-Palestinian protests on New Year's Eve in Berlin.

CUFI (Christians United for Israel) reports that the bronze sculpture shows at least two depictions of what appears to be the Islamic Dome of the Rock, which is situated on the Temple Mount, the holiest site in Judaism.

The "Trains to Life – Trains to Death" memorial by architect and sculptor Frank Meisler, stands outside Berlin's Friedrichstraße station. It depicts two sets of children, one representing the 10,000 children saved on the Kindertransport trains to safety, and the other representing the 1.6

million mostly Jewish children who were transported by train to the Nazi death camps.

The German authorities had banned pro-Palestinian protests during the Christmas and New Year holiday period for security reasons, and hundreds of unruly protesters who attacked security forces were arrested.

Walter Bingham, who survived the Holocaust thanks to the Kindertransport, and celebrated his 100th birthday that week, said, "It's a terrible thing to happen but unfortunately not surprising. I am sure the culprits are ignorant of its true meaning or history. I hope the police will manage to catch them."



Nicholas Winton was amazed to see a studio full of people he had rescued

BOOKREVIEWS

By Gordon Pettie

The raw power of the Holy Spirit in the Lewis Revival

Island Aflame: The Famed Lewis Awakening that Never Occurred and the Glorious Revival that Did (Lewis & Harris 1949–52)

By Tom Lennie

Christian Focus, 2023

How Tom Lennie manages to find time to write the books he does and be the Executive Editor of *Prophecy Today UK*, at the same time is beyond me.

And his latest excites me; it is scholarly, factual, well written and about a subject that should be on the heart of all believers – hearing the stories of a move of God in revival times.

R T Kendall, in his foreword, says: “We are reminded again and again of the raw power of the Holy Spirit and the supreme knowledge that he – like Jesus – is ‘the same yesterday, today and tomorrow’.”

Tom Lennie has already written about several of Scotland’s amazing revivals in previous books; I have his ‘Glory in the Glen’, which documents Scottish revivals from 1880–1940.

By far the best known of the revivals Scotland has experienced is the Lewis Revival of 1949–52 (also known as the



Tom Lennie, Executive Editor of *Prophecy Today*, has written several books on revival

Hebrides revival). The stories around it are extraordinary, with the Holy Spirit working in the lives of many people across this Scottish island.

Take the (simple) story of Finlay

Maclean. “Finlay was a heavy drinker”, Tom Lennie writes, “but his life was transformed, and he went on to be an elder in Leverburgh Church of Scotland” (page 203).

It is scholarly, factual, well written and about a subject that should be on the heart of all believers

As a good investigator, Tom Lennie has researched the revival, met some of those still alive, checked the accounts of those who have died, and accurately tells amazing stories of what God did in people’s lives, and continued to do when the revival ceased. What is so encouraging is the way God used ordinary, humble people. No person was deemed too ‘ordinary’ for the work of God.

Now to the provocative sub-title at the top of this review: ‘The Famed Lewis Awakening that Never Occurred and the Glorious Revival that Did (Lewis & Harris 1949–52)’.

Sadly, over the years, even with Christian history, there has been a tendency to romanticise and exaggerate events. That is true with the Lewis revival.

Tom shows how many of the stories associated with the revival just did not happen – even stories as famous as the two praying sisters initiating the revival, the lack of young people in the

churches, the seven praying men in a barn twice a week.

The fact they didn’t happen does not detract from the revival, because the revival did happen! It is just that we need to know the truth.

Even someone such as Duncan Campbell, who was the catalyst that God used in the revival, was prone in later life to share stories for there is no evidence that they ever occurred. Tom Lennie is good at cutting through the exaggeration to show the revival as it really happened.

He has done a great amount of research on Duncan Campbell, enquiring of eye-witnesses, family members and biographers; he notes a meeting he had with Duncan Campbell’s daughter Sheena, where she said of her father, “his deep humility was his most salient characteristic.” Campbell truly was a man who loved the Lord Jesus.

I started by saying this is a book that excited me. As I turned the final page, I still felt that way, and I believe you will too, if you read it.

Throughout the book we read of the presence of God, the power of prayer, the preached Word, the unbelievers’ response to God, and the fellowship in the meetings. Everything points you back to seeking more of God.

My longing is that the story of the Lewis Revival will stir your heart, build your faith, and inspire you to ask God to use even you for his glory.

The book to help you explain the Middle East conflict

What’s next? Israel-Gaza war Connecting Today’s Headlines to Tomorrow’s Prophetic Events

By Jimmy Evans and Mark Hitchcock

Tipping Point Press

As a nation, we are being plied with other people’s views on events in the Middle East and what is the supposed right course of action that governments and the United Nations should be taking.



Professor, pastor and author Mark Hitchcock

But what if the right course of action is not man’s ideas but God’s plans and purposes?

After an internet search, I was so glad to find ‘What’s Next? Israel-Gaza War’ with its helpful sub-title, ‘Connecting Today’s Headlines to Tomorrow’s Prophetic Events’.

At just 88 pages, I read it in a couple of evenings and I recommend doing so.

The authors were new to me. Jimmy Evans is an American pastor and Bible teacher, who has written more than 50 books concerning end-time prophecies. Mark Hitchcock is a Research Professor of Bible Exposition, as well as senior pastor of a church in Edmund, Oklahoma.

Taking as their basis the premise that God assures blessing for those who bless Israel, they look at the implications of the current conflict in Gaza, Israel, Egypt, and Lebanon as it might affect Israel’s future and biblical prophecy.



Jimmy Evans, author of over 50 books on end-time prophecies

Their clear statement is:

“God chose Israel and gave the Jews the land. Though displaced at times, their ownership remains. Palestinians have no biblical claims to the land through political argument.”

The chapter headlines give an idea of the subjects covered: ‘What Role does Gaza play?’, ‘Attack on Israel!’, ‘A Timeline for Israel and Palestine’, ‘God’s Eternal Covenant with Israel’, ‘Where do we go from here?’

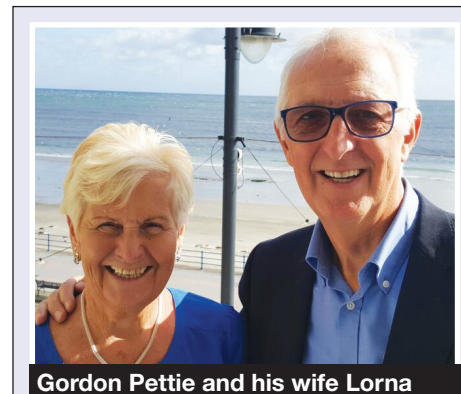
The final two chapters are particularly interesting as they look at the rapid acceleration of events surrounding Israel, with antisemitism and opposition to God’s purpose reaching a crescendo.

This book ends with a reminder to us of the things to look out for as we watch

events unfolding, and how to respond to them with

- 1) Persistent prayer
- 2) Proclaiming the truth boldly
- 3) Preparing diligently

So if you are wondering how to answer neighbours and friends who talk to you about events in the Middle East, this could just be the book for you.



Gordon Pettie and his wife Lorna

Gordon, along with his wife Lorna, is part of the leadership team of *Revelation TV*, a 24/7 Christian television station that broadcasts in the UK on Sky 581 and Freesat TV 692, and throughout the world via the Roku Box and Apple TV. Gordon’s passion is writing and he is the author of eight books.

CREATION CORNER



by Geoff Chapman

There are many beautiful things in the natural world, but why are they beautiful? The theory says that every step in the process has to be of use to the organism.

Things don't need to be beautiful to survive, so the fact that so many things are beautiful is strong evidence for design.

Added beauty

Take a look at the two arches in the photos. One is plain and simply functional, while the other one has been carved and decorated to make it look attractive. These carvings are not necessary for the arch to do its job. They were added by a designer who wanted to make it look nice. *This is added beauty.*

There are many examples of added beauty in the natural world. One example is the tail of a peacock.

Evolutionists claim that this is the result of *sexual selection*, and that the males with the most beautiful tails survived because peahens were more attracted to them.

However, if this is true, why



The beautifully carved arch's beauty is superfluous, compared to the plain arch which serves exactly the same function

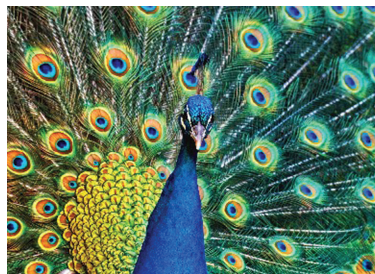
WHY CAN'T EVOLUTION EXPLAIN THE ORIGIN AND PURPOSE OF BEAUTY?

Even Darwin couldn't explain why the peacock has its dazzling display

have birds like crows, which are very plain, survived just as well? There are more crows than peacocks in the world! The peacock's tail would actually be a hindrance, since it would make the bird conspicuous, and being so large, make it harder to escape from predators.

Charles Darwin admitted that the sight of a peacock's tail made him sick!

Professor Stuart Burgess wrote: "Since evolution requires every step change to have a selective advantage, it is very difficult for evolution to explain how the eye pattern



Nothing to crow about: the peacock's brilliant tail has no evolutionary purpose because plain crows have multiplied more successfully

could evolve."¹

Charles Darwin admitted that the sight of a peacock's tail made him sick! We agree with Professor Burgess that beauty is no accident. It reveals the wisdom of a Creator who took delight in creating beauty.

Hidden beauty

There are many beautiful things which can't be explained by evolution through natural selection. Most puzzling from an evolutionary point of view is *hidden beauty*.

Why are micro-organisms that live in water, and can't be seen without a microscope, so

beautiful? They don't need to be in order to survive.

Many of the sea creatures that inhabit coral reefs are amazingly beautiful, and divers are dazzled and awestruck by them. Why would they evolve such brilliant colours?

Many sea shells have beautiful colours and intricate patterns. Why? They are not necessary for survival.

It's much more logical to believe that they were designed by an intelligent Creator with an eye for

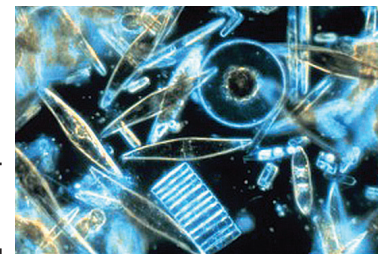
Divers are dazzled and awestruck by coral

beauty. Charles Darwin wrote: "Few objects are more beautiful than the minute cases of the Diatomaceae (see photo); were these created that they might be examined and admired under the higher powers of the microscope?"²

I believe the answer is "Yes!"

Why ugliness?

While there is a lot of beauty that evolution can't explain, there is ugliness, too, which



Darwin asked if tiny Diatomaceae "were created that they might be examined and admired under the higher powers of the microscope?"

is a real problem for many people.

Despite the strong evidence for the existence of a Creator, the presence of evil and suffering makes many ask how such a Creator can be good. Darwin struggled with this, and wrote to a friend, Asa Gray, confessing that he found it difficult to believe in a "beneficent and omnipotent God", because "there seems to me too much misery in the world."

However, the Bible says that God declared his original creation to be "very good." (Genesis 1:31). The Bible also explains that human sin spoilt everything, resulting in suffering, decay and death.

But there is a promise of restoration and a new creation. (Romans 8:20-22), in which all who come to Jesus Christ will share.

¹ *Hallmarks of Design*, Day One Publications, 2008

² *The Origin of Species*

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February / March 2024

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Melanie Symonds

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