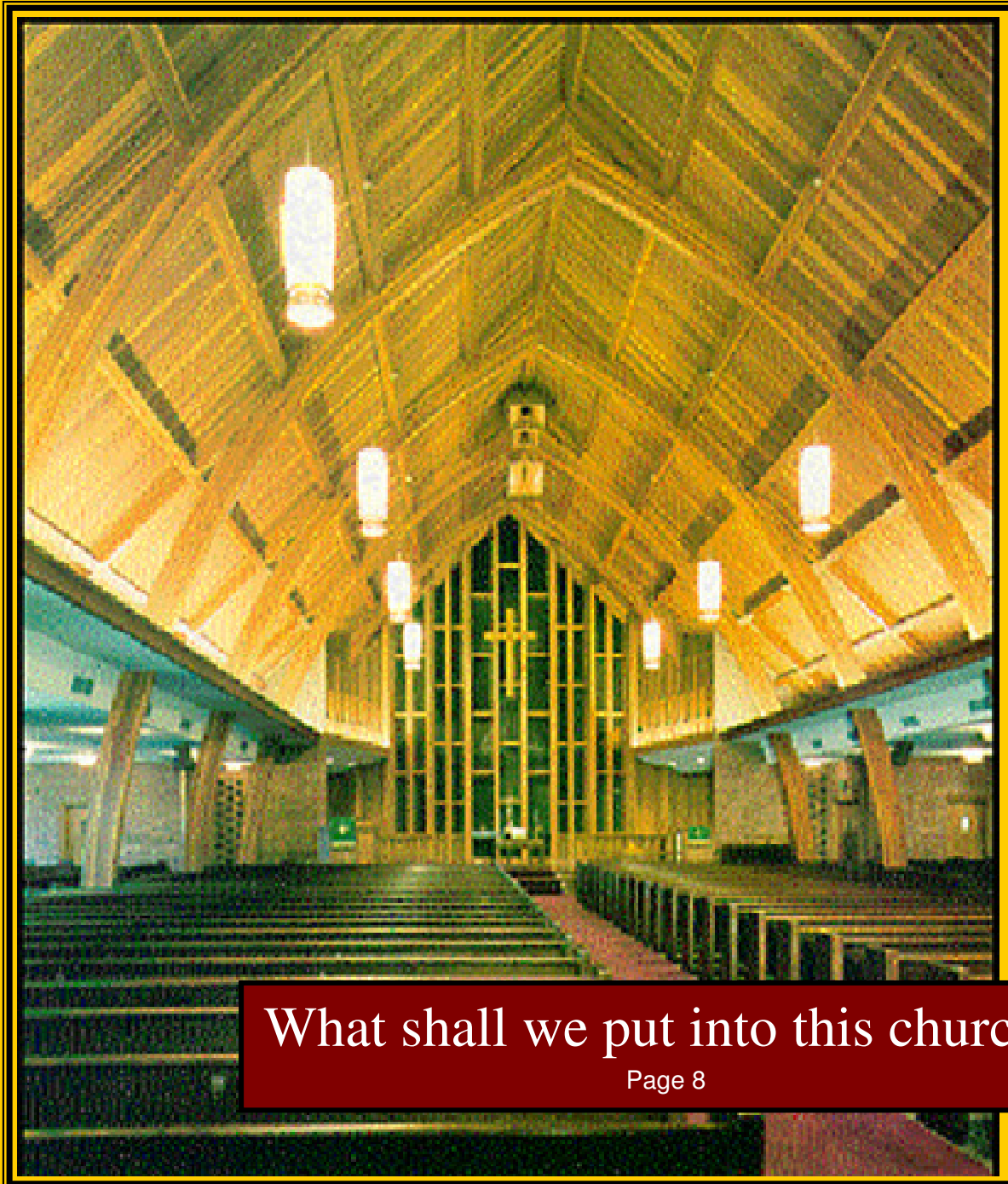


# EndTime Issues

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What shall we put into this church?

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## EndTime Issues... Magazine

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# “The Daily” – *HaTamid*

By Franklin S. Fowler Jr., M.D.

Arguably, one of the most contentious prophetic phrases affecting Adventism is “the daily,” recorded five times in the book of Daniel. Most Bible expositors have identified it as the *continual* burnt offerings or sacrifices that occurred each morning and evening. Compounding this is its related Little Horn, contextually felt to be of the Maccabean era, identified as Antiochus IV Epiphanes. This brought division that rivals Kellogg’s apostasy – all occurring around the same time, the 1900 era.

The early Advent movement saw the pioneers viewing the *daily* as *paganism*. The new view, which was introduced around 1900 by Louis R. Conradi, claimed it to be Christ’s priestly ministry in heaven. The debate was intense, intriguing and devastating. The “pagan” view stifled deeper understanding of the end-time themes of Daniel 8 and 9. The “sanctuary” view led to questions regarding the judgment issues held by Adventists. There is growing evidence that neither view addresses the amazing legal covenant theological issues in Daniel 8 through 12. It is issue that we begin to address here.

This writing takes a simple thematic approach, appealing to what seems to be the obvious. This outline is given with the hope that it will provoke deeper study into what appears to be an exciting end-time setting for the “daily.” Nothing will detract from the elevated message of the sanctuary and judgment presented in Daniel 8–12. That discussion, however, is not the purpose of this document. What is presented here will be better understood if the previous chapter on the Abomination of Desolation is studied.

The word “daily” (*tamid* or *tamiyd*) as used in Daniel is preceded by “ha,” meaning “the.” *HaTamid* – *the daily* – thus acts as a noun. Here in Daniel is the only place in the Bible where it is substantiative. Everywhere else *tamid* is ei-

ther an adjective or an adverb. In spite of this, most translators have incorrectly added the word “sacrifice” after “*tamid*,” assuming it related to the cultic morning and evening sacrifices (Exodus 29:42; Numbers 28:6, 10, 15, 23; Ezra 3:5; Nehemiah 10:34). “Sacrifice” was in the Septuagint but not in the Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (BHS). In his interlinear work, John R. Kohlenberger, III, addresses “sacrifice” in his “direct” expression of the Old Testament Hebrew, prejudicing his work and promulgating the error. Expositor White over 150 years ago correctly shared with her students the mistake in adding that word.<sup>1</sup>

In the Old Testament, *Tamid* is translated as *continually* (53 times), *continual* (26 times), *daily* (7 times), *always* (6 times), *ever* (3 times), *perpetual* (2 times), *continual employment* (once), *evermore* (once), *never* (once). The context governs the best expressions, which the varied translators certainly tried to capture. *Tamid* conveys the concept of “never stopping.” The object or issue is descriptively “ceaseless” or “perpetual.” *HaTamid*, then, is unique since it says “the ceaseless” or “the perpetual” or “the never stopping” was the object of adverse action.

This word in Daniel is tied to an end-time setting. In fact, the *very end* (*es qes*) during *the appointed time* (*moed* – 8:19) when God begins His strange act (Daniel 8:17 (*zaam*); cf. Isaiah 28:21). The question then emerges, in that framework, what does that wicked power (the Little Horn or King of the North) do to “*the perpetual*?” Every place *HaTamid* is used, an antichrist or rebellious “Babylonian” type of power is contextually inflicting harm. Logically, only God can set up something that is “endless” or a “forever.”

<sup>1</sup> White, Ellen G.; *Early Writings*, p. 74.

Our first clue to study this comes as we note that every place it is mentioned in Daniel, it is associated with either the word “transgression” (*pasha*) or “abomination” (*shiqquwts*). We’ve previously noted that transgression is related to rebellion against *God’s authority, law and covenant*. The use of “abomination” is God’s inspired Word to reveal His feelings towards setting up a false standard against a norm that He has already established. When the Roman armies went into battle they carried an *emblem, flag or standard*, which announced to all who they were. They also displayed symbols of their gods who allegedly would help them conquer. Every tribe of Israel had an emblem or insignia (Numbers 2:2). That identified who they were, what their position in the camp was and revealed the symbolic *character* of their group.

The antichrist sets up an emblem which defies God. That’s the “abomination” that “the daily” is associated with. He’s a leader against God’s true emblem! These two words, *transgression* and *abomination*, distinctly portray setting up a standard or insignia that is reprehensible to God. It is a false Sabbath (see the previous study on the “Abomination Associated with Desolation – Only at the *Es Qes*,” *EndTime Issues...*, Aug. 2006, No. 80). Whatever “the daily” represents, it needs to have an association with the false “Sabbath” because of their contextual association in Daniel’s writings. These are the verses in Daniel where *HaTamid* is used (notice the verb that “the daily” is associated with):

“Daily” Texts	with the Daily
<p><b>Daniel 8:11-12:</b> “Yea, he magnified [himself] even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily {<i>HaTamid</i>} [sacrifice (added)] was <u>taken away</u>, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given [him] against the daily {<i>HaTamid</i>} [sacrifice (added)] by reason of transgression {related to the abomination}, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practiced, and prospered. Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain [saint] which spake, How long [shall be] the vision [concerning] the daily {<i>HaTamid</i>} [sacrifice], and the transgression {related to the abomination} of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?”</p>	<p><b>rum-ruwm</b></p>
<p><b>Daniel 11:31:</b> “And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and <u>shall take away</u> the daily {<i>HaTamid</i>} [sacrifice (added)], and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.”</p>	<p><b>sur-cuwr</b></p>
<p><b>Daniel 12:11:</b> “And from the time [that] the daily {<i>HaTamid</i>} [sacrifice (added)] <u>shall be taken away</u>, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, [there shall be] a thousand two hundred and ninety days.”</p>	<p><b>sur-cuwr</b></p>

	<p><b>Verbs Associated</b></p>
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From this simple contextual setting, the *daily* associated with the *transgression* or the *abomination* is actually the *daily* contrasted with the *abomination* when analyzing the verbs. It is a report of competing emblems of authority.

Let's look deeper and study the noted verbs tied to the *HaTamid*. Looking outside of Daniel is helpful to understand what happened to "the daily," "the forever" or "the perpetual."

*Rum* in a non-cultic use suggests "height" or "elevation." In a *literal* sense it describes the heights of the heavens (Proverbs 25:3), height of people (Deuteronomy 1:28). *Figuratively*, it represents man's attitude when proud or arrogant (Proverbs 21:4, Isaiah 10:12; 2:11, 17; Jeremiah 48:29). It is also used for being elevated or rising up (angels – Ezekiel 10:16). In the Hophal verb form, as originally here in Daniel, it expresses a passive response.<sup>2</sup> However, in the Kethiv Reading in the *qere*, it suggests that it should be a *Hiphal* expression. In *that* setting, one would see the "daily" being lifted up from its place by someone or something, which *results* in the place of the sanctuary, or God's true church, being "cast down."

The Hophal form would suggest that the daily was abolished. That would not fit the story of "the daily" elsewhere in Daniel. It appears that the *qere* is correct. Therefore, in that sense, something that is supposed to be everlasting is lifted "out," "up" or "removed."<sup>3</sup>

In Daniel, whether in the Aramaic section (5:19-20, 23) or Hebrew area (11:12, 36; 12:7), the use of *rum* suggests "lifted up" and out of its place. Some transliterations say "heave." In cultic imagery noted in Leviticus 1-7, *rum* is used as a sacrificial technique, related to "lifting up" the fat out of an animal (lifted up from the animal and placing it on the altar) or "lifting up" the ashes from the altar and placing them where they can be removed.

Contextually, then, in verses 11 and 12, the Little Horn lifts up, takes out of its place or removes "the perpetual" or "the forever."

In Daniel 11 and 12 the verb is different. The daily is "taken away" (*sur*). The primary

meaning of *sur* is to "turn aside from" as a verb of motion. The imagery reflects departing from (Judges 16:20; Samuel 16:14; 28:16; II Kings 10:31; 13:2, 6, 11). In the Hiphil stem here in Daniel, it suggests removing or putting away (II Chronicles 15:16, 30:14; II Kings 18:4; Amos 5:21-23).

Daniel 8–12 is a Hebrew unit that unfolds repetitive themes and issues in various expressions. As the "transgression" and "abomination" associated with "desolation" refer to the same event in those chapters, so does "the daily." Thematically, the Little Horn and its later descriptive symbol, the King of the North, lifts out of its usual place "the perpetual" and takes it away or removes it. If it represented paganism, there would be contextual issues. The Little Horn and the King of the North act as if they were God. They are anti-God and anti-covenant by Daniel's descriptive behavior. What is this anti-God power trying to lift out of its place and remove? Is it paganism? Is it the sanctuary ministry in heaven? It is too easy to add interpretive views (like the word "sacrifice") to Scripture. What does the Bible reveal?

There are helpful clues. Daniel 8:12 notes a host (different than the "host of heaven" in verse 10) was given to the Little Horn, which waxed great. The word "host" (*saba*) usually relates to fighting. It is an army that is fighting on behalf of the Little Horn, which is already in a battle against the Messiah (Prince of the host or Prince of princes – vs 11, 25) and His host (host of heaven – vs 10) or God's people.

Daniel says that the Little Horn was able to get or obtain his host by "reason of transgression" or "by transgression" (*bepasa*). This is a strong Hebrew word for rebellion against God. Contextually, it is against His authority, law and covenant (Exodus 34:7, Numbers 14:18, Joshua 24:19, I Kings 8:50, Proverbs 19:11, Micah 7:18), which brings estrangement (Psalm 89:32, Amos 3:14).<sup>4</sup>

*This host meritoriously earned their service to be in the Little Horn's army by rebelling against God's authority, law and covenant. Interesting – when Gabriel came to Daniel to out-*

<sup>2</sup> Harris, R. Laird (Moody Press, Chicago), vol. 2, pp. 837-838.

<sup>3</sup> *Blue Letter Bible* on *rum*.

<sup>4</sup> Harris, *Op cit.*, pp. 742-743.

line what corrective action “his people” needed to bring in everlasting righteousness (Daniel 9:24), the first thing mentioned was to make an end to *pasa!* Why?

Daniel’s people were in captivity because they had defied the *shemita* or Sabbath rest of each seventh year (Leviticus 25). In Daniel the *pasa* or *pesha* is related to the Sabbath.

II Chronicles 36:20-21: “And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: [for] as long as she lay *desolate* she kept *sabbath*, to fulfil threescore and ten years.”

The Hebrew people had missed 70 *shemita* Sabbaths. They were in captivity 70 years. They had rebelled against God’s authority, His law and covenant. Not only was the seventh-day Sabbath a perpetual requirement, but that “week of years” and its sacred seventh year was also. So important was this that God warned them that their land would become *desolate* if they defied His request (Leviticus 26:14-34).

The daily or “the perpetual” is associated with an *abomination* that leads to *desolation* – nothing left, the land is at rest. It is most interesting that within the Sabbath commandment there is reference to:

- God’s authority – Creator (Exodus 20:11)
- Embodied in His law – the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:3-23, Deuteronomy 5:7-21)
- God’s covenant – promises of deliverance and restoration (Deuteronomy 5:15)

The evidence mounts that the rebellion (*be pasa*), which brought *supporters* to the Little Horn represented active defiance against God’s Sabbath. God’s church, His sanctuary, is polluted by lifting out of its place the Sabbath and putting in its place a false Sabbath, an abomination. “And arms shall stand [host – army] on his part [King of the North], and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength [God’s church], and shall take away [remove] the daily [true Sab-

bath] {sacrifice}, and they shall place the *abomination* [false Sabbath] that maketh desolate [curse God said would come to those defying His authority, law and covenant!]” (Daniel 11:31). It is noted that this end-time force that is against God, has “indignation against the holy covenant” and works and plans with those who “forsake the holy covenant” (Daniel 11:30).

By this action of the Little Horn’s supporters, “truth is cast to the ground” (Daniel 8:12). What are the players in this act on the world’s stage? Though a different study, this Little Horn represents the second rise of the papacy (represented in gender differences as the church and state powers) and apostate Protestantism, the latter, becomes part of or supports the papacy by its rejection of the Sabbath, casting “truth to the ground.” This is precisely what unfolds in Revelation 6, 13–18. There, repeatedly the issue of defiance against the Sabbath is presented related to two apostate powers – the papacy and apostate Protestantism (the false prophet)!

All this won’t happen until the 2300 atonement evenings and mornings (Daniel 8:14, 17, 19) are *past*. Is there a “perpetual” or “forever” message related to the Sabbath?

“Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it [is] a *sign* between me and you **throughout your generations**; that [ye] may know that I [am] the LORD that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it [is] holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth [any] work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh [is] the sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD: whosoever doeth [any] work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, **[for] a perpetual covenant**. It [is] a *sign* between me and the children of Israel **for ever**: for [in] six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed” (Exodus 31:13-17).

There is a temptation to look for the word (*tamid*) elsewhere as the *only* exegetic tie to understand the “daily.” Since Daniel is the only

place it is a noun and the context is the covenant and the Sabbath, we discover powerful ties to Exodus 31. The sin or *bepasa* that casts truth to the ground challenges God's authority, law and covenant. That is exactly what defying the Sabbath does!

God said in the above verses that the Sabbath was a "sign" (*owth*):

1. That He was the Lord (His authority)
2. He was the Lord that sanctified or made us holy (cf. Ezekiel 20:12 – observing the law was the basis for God to exercise this right). It is *the ensign* or *standard* God's people are to use to show that they are the covenant people (the agreement between God and man, which He legally uses to restore them).

Twice within the context of these verses God conveys two most interesting thoughts:

1. Observing the Sabbath is one of man's obligations in that covenant agreement.
2. It is a sign "forever" that identifies the God of deliverance and restoration.

The words "forever" and "perpetual" used in Exodus 31 are the Hebrew word *olam*. It represents "indefinite continuance." Not even the future can confine it. The Septuagint uses the word *aion* with basically the same meaning. *Tamid* or *HaTamid*, used in Daniel is best understood as continuous, forever, perpetual, always or regular. It has been suggested (by *Homjmel*) that its origins were Arabic, meaning *fixed* or *established*.

The word "established" means that it won't change. It is a "forever" or something that God has indefinitely put in place. The Little Horn or King of the North (8:12, 11:31) lifts out of place "the established." Its followers fight "the established" because they rebelled against God's authority, law and covenant found in the fourth commandment. His followers even take the Sabbath away and put in its place the abominable false Sabbath (11:31). This action is wicked and against the covenant (11:32; cf. Exodus

31:15). From the time "the established" or true Sabbath is taken away (something formal is decreed to cause that to happen – it involves a corporate act – "host") and the abomination is "set up" (12:11) (that means some law or decree creates it – a false standard), it will last or be in effect 1290 days (12:11). (The Hebraic "day" (*yom*) *with* a number is literal.)

The context, the linguistics, the tie to the abomination all point to the "daily" as representing the true Sabbath, which is a resisted issue at the end of time.

Past views of paganism ("old view") and Christ's ministry within the heavenly sanctuary ("new view") have drawn attention away from the details of the end-time setting, which so much of Daniel sets in (8:17, 8:19, 12:1-2). E. G. White, expositor of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, was cautious and non-committal regarding "the daily." Her son Arthur reflected: "The advocates of the old view maintained that the wording of this statement placed Heaven's endorsement on the view of the daily held by Miller and eventually repeated by Uriah Smith. The new-view advocates held that the statement must be taken in its context – the context of time setting. Ellen White's repeated statements that 'I have no light on the point' (Letter 226, 1908) and 'I am unable to define clearly the points that are questioned' (Letter 250, 1908), and her inability to make a definite statement when the question was urged upon her, seemed to give support to their conclusion."<sup>5</sup>

In 1910 she said in reaction to the controversy which followed the "new view:" "I now ask that my ministering brethren shall not make use of my writings in their arguments regarding this question { 'the daily' }; for I have had no instruction on the point under discussion, and I see no need for the controversy. Regarding this matter under *present conditions*, silence is eloquence."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> White, Arthur L.; *The Latter Elmshaven Years 1905-1915*.

<sup>6</sup> White, Ellen G.; *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 164.

It is being increasingly recognized in prophetic apocalyptic messages that a pivotal end-time matter will be over the Sabbath. Daniel's *Tamid begins* to unfold this amazing fact. The last day antichrist will make the Sabbath and God's everlasting covenant a legal issue. Its "host" will be pitted against the Prince or Commander of heaven's "host." New insights are now unfolding that show the seventh-day is prophetically unveiled as an end-time crises issue! "The daily" represents God's true Sabbath.



# The Emergent Church

## “Goes Rome”

Richard Bennett

<http://www.bereanbeacon.org>



Dear Friend,

As we continue to expose the Emergent Church movement, it is very clear that the ecumenical battle plan announced in Vatican Council II and post-Vatican Council II documents is being successfully implemented, as the men and women who lead the Emergent Church movement demonstrate. The Emergent Church continues to grow and infiltrate churches in the USA and across the world. Such indeed is their policy. The Emergent Village website has just announced that “Brian McLaren, Doug Pagitt, Tony Jones, Nanette Sawyer, and Troy Bronsink will team with Columbia Seminary and the Atlanta Emergent Cohort to provide three days of stimulating conversation and dreaming about the nexus of emerging church life and the mainline Protestant church in America.”

In the last three newsletters we have critiqued two prominent leaders of the Emergent Church Movement, Brian McLaren and Tony Jones. Another leader, Anglican Alan Jones, takes the movement further into the Roman Catholic fold. His audience is large. It is important to study his stratagem. He also has endorsed the United Religions Initiative [under the United Nations’ auspices], which includes an acceptance of Islam that has become a terrorist menace in recent times.

This is the first of two articles on the method and goal of his ecumenism.

Yours in Christ Jesus and for His Gospel,  
Richard Bennett

### *Alan Jones’ Reimagining Christianity: The Way Back to Rome*

Anglican Alan Jones, Dean of Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, California, and author of *Reimagining Christianity: Reconnect Your Spirit without Disconnecting Your Mind*, lives deeply and unhappily awash in a world of particulars from which he has found no escape. He says his book “is a snapshot of the world in which I live. I wrote it because the Christian world for me is no longer as life-bearing as it once was. In fact, much of it is downright toxic.”<sup>1</sup> Alan Jones is not alone in his disenchantment with Christianity nor, apparently, does he comprehend the source of his confusion. There are many today who call themselves Christian and many with them who would not call themselves Christian, and all of them together are milling around in and out of seeker-friendly churches, mega-churches, purpose driven churches, emergent churches, and every kind of liberal church that does not present the Gospel. Neither do such churches worship God in spirit and in truth nor preach the Bible faithfully so that these poor folk might properly understand Who God is, what He requires of them, and what provision He has made for them. These are potentially

<sup>1</sup> Alan Jones, *Reimagining Christianity: Reconnect Your Spirit without Disconnecting Your Mind* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2005), p. 22.

Alan Jones' audience.<sup>2</sup> Their lostness and their ignorance make them especially vulnerable.

Jones is speaking in the wake of the 1960's cultural revolution and Vatican Council II to a generation to whom moral relativism, irrationalism, and Roman Catholic ecumenism are fast becoming dominant forms of thinking. This generation must navigate on the present intellectual high seas where moral absolutes are a thing of the past, and logical opposites are simultaneously held as valid. Rather than an emphasis on logical thinking based on the absolutely rock-solid historical fact of God's revelation to man through His Written Word, visualizations, imaginations, and images based in the lusts of the mind are fast becoming a predominant mode of teaching.

In such turbulent waters as these, Alan Jones' book is hardly a strange navigational star. Indeed, Alan Jones is having a worldwide influence, as a quick perusal of the Internet will confirm. But his influence does not stop with lecturing world wide to ordinary individuals. Much more serious is the political and international recognition that Alan Jones is receiving. In the midst of the bloodiest attack on Israel by Hezbollah guerrillas in July 2006,<sup>3</sup> "British Prime Minister Tony Blair [was present] at Grace cathedral 2006...[as was] Afif Safieh, the Palestinian Authority's official representative to the U.S. [B]oth worshipped at Grace Cathedral on Sun., July 30. Mr. Blair, [who was] in San Francisco as a part of a five-day official visit to promote trade and environmental issues, attended the 8:15 a.m. service as a private worshipper."<sup>4</sup>

What is critical is Jones' effort to influence the world community by endorsing the United Religions Initiative (URI). In this he follows in the same path as his predecessor, Bishop Swing, who conceived the idea of the URI in 1993. The purpose is to create a United Religions, a world parliament of religions, "a per-

manent assembly, with the stature and visibility of the United Nations, where the world's religions and spiritual communities will gather on a daily basis, in prayerful dialogue and cooperative action, to make peace among religions and to be a force for peace among nations, to address urgent human need and to heal the earth."<sup>5</sup> This "peace among religions" is to include acceptance of Islam, something that the Papacy has already officially done.<sup>6</sup> The political ramifications of this are transparent. For example, URI is to embark on the "International Day of Peace" on September 21, 2006. Of it, Kofi Annan says, "The International Day of Peace 'is meant to be a day of global cease-fire, when all countries and all people stop all hostilities for the entire day.'"<sup>7</sup>

URI has two hundred and two chapters throughout the world, called Cooperation Circles. It is designed to evolve into a United Nations for Religions. While the whole emphasis is supposedly "spiritual," a desire for legal power is evident in URI documents. For example, according to the Preamble to the Charter, URI plans a Worldwide Movement "... to support freedom of religion and spiritual expression, and the rights of all individuals and peoples **as set forth in international law.**"<sup>8</sup>

Alan Jones also has influence with militant feminists. For example, on June 2, 1994, hundreds of women staged San Francisco's "Renaissance of the Sacred Feminine Conference" at Grace Cathedral where Alan Jones is dean. Alan Jones not only participated but he "shared his delight in our 'post-traditional' culture and 'the new ways and forms to express the spirit.' A worldwide sisterhood of angry, militant feminists is rising to power."<sup>9</sup>

Alan Jones' global impact in both religion and politics did not start on its own. Its

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<sup>2</sup> Jones, "The fastest-growing 'religious' group is composed of the unaffiliated. This book is for them....," p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/nickrobinson/2006/07>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.gracecathedral.org/church/new/detail.php?id=244>

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<sup>5</sup> [www.scp-inc.org/publications/journals/J2204/Penn1.php](http://www.scp-inc.org/publications/journals/J2204/Penn1.php)

<sup>6</sup> *The Papacy and Islam* on [http://www.bereanbeacon.org/articles\\_new.htm](http://www.bereanbeacon.org/articles_new.htm)

<sup>7</sup> [www.uri.org/United\\_Nations.html](http://www.uri.org/United_Nations.html)

<sup>8</sup> [www.uri.org/About\\_URI.html](http://www.uri.org/About_URI.html) (Bolding in any quotation indicates emphasis added in this paper.)

<sup>9</sup> [www.crossroad.to/Books/TwistofFaith/1-Father-Mother.html](http://www.crossroad.to/Books/TwistofFaith/1-Father-Mother.html)

launching pad was the Emergent Church movement. There Jones will continue dialogue with Brian McLaren in the fall of 2006 as Jones, from his position as Dean of Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, California, attempts to change the face of Christianity and the present day world.

### **Hooked on Images from the Start**

Jones, whose book is endorsed by Emergent Church movement leader Brian McLaren, is an Anglo-Catholic by admission and claims to be Christian. As a boy he gave his heart to Jesus in Sunday school.<sup>10</sup> But it is unclear which Jesus he means for he says, "...from the very beginning when I heard those Bible stories, I believed them but I believed them in a mystical way—as a way of communicating deep truths by way of images. I instinctively read the Bible as allegory and metaphor, not as literal truth..."<sup>11</sup> He makes an important point when he says that the Bible stories communicated truth to him by way of images, and denies the fact that the Bible communicates literal truth verbally. In another place he says, "...about the stories of the Bible. Are they to be trusted? If so, in what way? Are the words attributed to Jesus in the New Testament really his? My approach has always been skeptical with regard to the text and open with regard to the tradition ... I don't believe that what we can know of Jesus is confined by the New Testament. We have two thousand years of experience and worship to draw on ... We can get to the truth only through inference—through myth and poetry, through metaphor and storytelling. There is no such thing as 'what really happened.' That's why history is always being rewritten." (pp. 209-210)

To posit that "We can get to the truth only through inference ... there is no such thing as 'what really happened,'" shows he believes God has not revealed to us truth about Himself and His creation that we can grasp with our rational minds. How cruel then to Jones' perception must be the God whose invitation to the Israelites was "*Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet,*

*they shall be white as snow ...*"<sup>12</sup> Given Jones's premise, how logical it is that in his darkened thinking, he offers idolatry through the use of "Christian images" as a primary way to come to a knowledge of God.

To whomever Jones gave his heart, it clearly is not the Lord Christ Jesus of the Bible. He confirms this when he states, "I always believed that forgiveness was at the heart of the Christian enterprise, but I was brought up with a great sense of shame and guilt.... The Christianity that had been passed on to me saddled me with a crippling idealism. There was no way I could live up to it.... [Eventually] I simply discovered the liberating belief that was known only by those who feel themselves to be morally and spiritually shipwrecked and who experience the miracle of resurrection in knowing that they are loved. In the end it wasn't beliefs that saved me. It was other people. It was simply other people loving me." (p. Xviii) Realizing that he could not live up to the standards of divine perfection that God requires of men, he states that he was saved by the love of well-meaning mortals. Jones' own testimony shows that in spite of his undoubtedly sincere ritual of giving his heart to Jesus in his Sunday school class, he does not know the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. Nevertheless, Jones states "Anglicanism is the one tradition that enables me to call myself Christian."<sup>13</sup> The reason for this is that the Anglican Church is, to use his own terminology, the "tribe" from which he sprang. Perceptively, he also points out that when he was young, "one could move through the whole ecumenical movement without leaving the Church of England. The church was a means of upward mobility...."<sup>14</sup> Clearly, he has made the most of that means.

### **Flight to Irrationalism**

Casting aside the ultimate authority of the Bible as the basis of truth by which to understand his life, and by understanding Christianity simply to be the tradition in which he grew up—but one in which the contradiction between Ro-

<sup>10</sup> Jones, p. Xiv.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. Xiv.

<sup>12</sup> Isaiah 1:18.

<sup>13</sup> Jones, p. Xii.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. Xiv.

man Catholicism and Evangelicalism was and still is accepted as the status quo—he demonstrates that he has given up logic when he says, “It is not difficult for me to embrace contradiction. I can be Protestant, Catholic, agnostic, and devout believer all at the same time.”<sup>15</sup> This “liberating freedom” as an irrational moral relativist has serious restrictions and problems, for he confides, “As a romantic, what did I want?... I didn’t want either to be a victim of my emotions or enslaved to dogma. Early on I realized that the name of the game is freedom ... [but] these early battles have still to be fully resolved and have affected my deepest relationships ... At any rate, the world began to slip away from me about twenty years ago [age 45 about], and I have never fully recovered. I believe that the slipping away of the world was the true beginning of my spiritual journey. There was breakdown and there was breakthrough ... Looking back, the experience of therapy was central in helping me face that inner, unintegrated world. I joined a growing crowd of pilgrims who were realizing that their inner work was not a private trip but a way of helping to heal the collective psyche.” (p. Xix)

Since he has “never fully recovered” from his breakdown, one cannot be so sure that the irrational contradictions he holds are as easily maintained as he purports them to be.

The “inner, unintegrated world” of which Jones speaks Francis Schaeffer addresses in his book *Escape from Reason*<sup>16</sup> as the very dilemma that Thomas Aquinas set in motion within the Roman Catholic Church in the thirteenth century when he took an unbiblical view of the Fall. Using pagan Greek philosophy as his escape route, Aquinas removed Catholic theology from under the absolute authority of the written Word.<sup>17</sup> Deriving from Aristotle the famous

principle regarding knowledge, “Nothing is in the intellect which was not first in the senses.”<sup>18</sup> Aquinas maintained that human reason could prove the existence of God by means of the senses. He held that man had the ability to abstract general meanings from particular experimental data—exactly the premise on which McLaren, Tony Jones, Alan Jones and other “emerging” liberals are constructing their theology and practice. Under ways to know God, Aquinas added to the five senses, the powers of understanding, imagination and memory. Basically, Aquinas held that the intellect and imagination make experience understandable by abstracting general principles of knowledge from the data perceived—precisely what Alan Jones does in *Reimagining Christianity*.

While Aquinas held to the Fall of mankind because of Adam’s sin, he still forthrightly taught that the intellect is always accurate as regards first principles, or basic knowledge including the knowledge of God. This he dogmatically held in *The Summa Theologica*. He wrote, “The intellect is always right as regards first principles, since it is not deceived about them for the same reason that it is not deceived about what a thing is. For self-known principles are such as are known as soon as the terms are understood, from the fact that the predicate is contained in the definition of the subject.”<sup>19</sup>

It is no wonder Catholic author G. K. Chesterton declared, “St. Thomas Aquinas was one of the great liberators of the human intellect.”<sup>20</sup>—but not according to the truth as revealed in the written word of God. Twentieth and twenty-first century history is showing that the Papacy unleashed an unparalleled intellectual disaster in the West by demanding (for centuries coercing by torture and Inquisition) wholesale submission to Aquinas’s theology. The whole Roman Catholic religious system is built on it and even today has never deviated from it

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. Xiv-xv.

<sup>16</sup> Francis Schaeffer, *Escape from Reason* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 1968), p. 9.

<sup>17</sup> Jones applauds this aspect of Aquinas, “Thomas Aquinas got up each morning, as it were, studied a pagan philosopher named Aristotle, and found his thought absolutely congenial and appropriate for creating and structuring Christian theology. Why was he never afraid of the conjunction? He was never afraid because truth from whatever source is of the Holy Spirit,” p.

149. Jones does not recognize that what Aquinas took from Aristotle was not truth.

<sup>18</sup> Aristotle *De Anima*, 3.8.

<sup>19</sup> *The Summa Theologica*, First part Question 17, Article 4 reply to objection 2.

<sup>20</sup> [www.dur.ac.uk/martin.ward/gkc/books/aquinas.txt](http://www.dur.ac.uk/martin.ward/gkc/books/aquinas.txt) 8/2/2006

as their basis, post Vatican Council II. McLaren, Tony Jones, and Alan Jones—none of whom started as Catholics—trust their own and others’ powers of intellect and imagination, and each prescribes Roman Catholic dogma and mystical exercises as the route to finding a renewing excursion into religion.

### Aristotle’s Legacy

That dilemma started by Aquinas is now bearing a bumper crop of deadly fruit throughout the West not only within the Catholic Church, but also outwardly into secular society, particularly through Catholic schools and educational institutions, as well as into Evangelical churches as they have gone liberal. This same destructive irrational mind-set is now invading the more conservative Evangelical churches through ecumenism set formally in motion by Vatican Council II, particularly by means of dialogue with them and social action outreaches.<sup>21</sup> A child of Roman Catholic ecumenism within the Anglican Church, Jones’ expression of his own personal “inner, [still] unintegrated world” is a prime example of this evil fruit. The lack of integration of which he speaks is seen in his insistence on the fact that a man cannot know truth, “there isn’t any such thing;” his ability to hold clear contradictions as valid; his flight from logic to imagination in order to keep his mind together under the tension produced by his irrationalism. He goes further than either McLaren or Tony Jones in his insistence that images are the necessary replacement for verbal communication. This is his heritage from thirteenth century Catholic theologian Thomas Aquinas.

### Packaging Imaginations for Export

Jones’ irrationality within the Anglican Church is now being transferred to a broader canvas in his necessity to build a global tribe in which everybody is included. He begins with the premise that “In nearly every major faith, strains of radical fundamentalism have been ris-

ing up, renewing or reintensifying faith conflicts that go back, in some cases, for millennia.”<sup>22</sup> Defining religion as “our response to the ache of life,”<sup>23</sup> he is upset that conflicting views of religion remain strongly held. Particularly those who hold the Bible to be literally true upset him, but so do strong-minded atheists. Rather than logically working through the issue of whether the Bible is literally true, however, Jones retreats into the New Age notion that there is an evolution in human consciousness, which he romantically views as centuries ahead of the spiritual primitiveness of literal belief in the Bible.<sup>24</sup>

### His Goal

The goal of his book is to reinvent Christianity because, in his opinion, “**Religion is broken, and something needs to be done to fix it. It needs to be reinvented ... Many of us feel that the old story of religion—the way it makes sense of our place in creation—is in need of serious revision...** Human beings have always told themselves stories about their longings. In fact, this need for stories binds us together. **We need a new way of telling the Great Story.**”<sup>25</sup> Given that premise, he states, “This book is about Christianity, its expression in symbols and stories, and how its practice can be redefined as art...” (p. 2)

### His Dialectical Method of Argument Demonstrated

To accomplish this end, he employs the same anti-biblical dialectical method of argument as do Brian McLaren and Tony Jones. Rather than logically defending what he posits as truth, Alan Jones’ method is always to tell a story or quote somebody (mostly Roman Catholics) as his premise or thesis—purposely something open to a veritable briar patch of interpretations because ambiguity is the desired effect, as he says. The next step is to pit the story against some idea (his antithesis) and move to a

<sup>21</sup> See Ralph Ovadal, *More Than These: A History of How the Pro-Life Movement Has Advanced the Cause of the Roman Catholic Church: A Call for Reformation* (Monroe, WI: Heart of the Matter Publications, 2004).

<sup>22</sup> Jones, p. 2.

<sup>23</sup> Jones, p. Xi.

<sup>24</sup> Chapter entitled “Literalism and Other Headaches,” p. 36.

<sup>25</sup> Jones, pp. 9-10.

synthesis, or intermediate position somewhere between the story and his antithesis. The content of this synthesis then becomes the new thesis, which he then illustrates by a different story or anecdote. For example, he states, “When someone asks me, ‘Do you really believe in the Virgin Birth? Do you really believe in the Resurrection?’ they want a simple yes-or-no answer.... **they assume that there are answers based on an objective knowledge we simply don’t have.** With theologian John Millbank I would answer, ‘Yes, of course we believe.’ But what we’re saying is that the story of the Virgin Birth is a complex theological statement that none of us fully understands.... The Virgin Birth is ... not just a metaphor or only a metaphor. It’s something more than that. It uncovers the mystery of language.

“John Millbank writes, ‘Jesus is essentially a linguistic and poetic reality.’ What can that mean? It means that language is a lot stranger than we think.” (p. 145) Jones states that both he and Millbank believe in the Virgin Birth, but he uses it as a statement to float his thesis that we do not have any answers based on objective knowledge because the Virgin Birth is “a complex theological statement that none of us fully understands.” Next he introduces as an antithesis Millbank’s statement, ‘Jesus is essentially a linguistic and poetic reality.’”

This statement is undoubtedly meant to shock the reader so that Jones’ synthesis—which comes in the next paragraph, “We live by images,” and is the more familiar concept—might be a bit more readily acceptable to those to whom idolatry is not now acceptable. Another example:

[Thesis] “I ask you to consider the best of the Christian tradition ... and see it through its three basic images of pregnancy (Mary), suffering (Jesus), and communion (Trinity).

[Antithesis] It means leaving behind the world of dogma as something fixed and forever—the last word—and entering the world of dogma as the first word to help us move into the mystery, with dogma seen as metaphor, poetry, and myth ... dogma rightly understood, should be like an ice ax breaking up the frozen sea inside us. It will open the floodgates of the imagi-

nation. It will liberate the mind and heart, not imprison them ...

[Synthesis] Remember the only way to talk about the sacred is by metaphor. Metaphor’s power lies in bringing two disparate things together for us to move forward in our feeling and thinking to a place where we could not go before. This is how we construct or invent new ways of thinking and feeling.” (pp. 144-145)

This man is an Anglo-Catholic in a church where for some time biblical doctrine and Roman Catholicism have both been accepted as valid. He is living in the tension between them. Often enough Roman Catholic dogma fits under his definition of “dogma seen as metaphor.” For example, Vatican Council II Document No. 28 states, “Taken up in to heaven she [Mary]...continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation... Therefore, the Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and **Mediatrix**. This however, is so understood that **it neither takes away anything from nor adds anything to the dignity and efficacy of Christ the one Mediator.**”<sup>26</sup>

This paragraph from Vatican Council II falls directly under Jones’ definition of dogma as metaphor by bringing two essentially opposite ideas together which results in a tension that cannot be solved logically. It is not any wonder that Catholics turn to mysticism and idolatry, and Jones does the same.

[Thesis] “There’s often a stern voice inside us telling us not to think beyond our means. We should be satisfied with flat, one-dimensional thinking, with a kind of nine-to-five inner life.

[Antithesis] But there are already analogies, metaphors, and poems buried in our feelings and thoughts. Sometimes these treasures and mysteries trapped inside us are liberated when we read a book, see a movie, fall in love.

[Synthesis] This is how we move forward in our lives, by engaging in images, even strange ones. They bring us to places we wouldn’t have reached otherwise.”<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Vatican Council II Document No. 28, *Lumen Gentium*, 21 Nov. 1964, Ch. VIII, Sec. 62, pp.418-419 in Flannery.

<sup>27</sup> Jones, p. 145.

So the process rolls from side to side while pointing up into the clouds of his mysticism and then down to the swelling waves of redefined words and data as his argument plows heavily along through circles of hopeless confusion until at last he has tethered it securely to idolatry.

### **Alan Jones, Near Perfect Roman Catholic Ecumenist**

As a writer, Jones, who reveres his Catholic classical education, has absorbed to near perfection the method for ecumenizing to Catholicism those dug into the religious traditions of Christianity but unprotected by the blood of Jesus Christ and the authority of His Word. The technique which Jones uses is clearly described in post Vatican Council II Document No. 42, “the Catholic participant [in ecumenism] must carefully inform himself of the content of his Church’s faith, without either overstating or minimizing it...”<sup>28</sup> Jones articulates and advocates Roman Catholic dogma throughout his book. He does not do the same for biblical truth. The same document under Part V, “Method of Dialogue,” states, “The partners will work together towards a constructive synthesis, in such a way that every legitimate contribution is made use of, in a joint research aimed at the complete assimilation of the revealed datum. This research involves an effort to return to the sources, going back to Christian origins before the appearance of subsequent disagreements. It also calls for ... looking to the future for solutions that will transcend present historical differences.” (p. 548)

Throughout this book, Jones pounds on the idea that everyone must work for a synthesis of data offered in which no legitimate datum will be left out. Because the logical mind must reject such a synthesis, he continually hammers at inserting in men’s minds the superiority of imagination over objective revealed truth and historical fact, which leads him finally to idolatry through the use of “Christian images.” In this he looks to the future when the authority of the Bible is again erased and replaced by images, or

<sup>28</sup> No 42, Reflections and Suggestions Concerning Ecumenical Dialogue,” S.P.U.C., 15 Aug., 1970, Sec. 4 (a), p. 545.

the Dark Ages Revisited. He also presents both New Age and traditional Roman Catholic mysticism, carefully couched in ambiguously redefined Evangelical terminology, as the method for uniting everybody under a new all-inclusive tribe having one “global soul,” as he calls it.

### **Rebuttal of Evil by the Power of God**

*“The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.”<sup>29</sup> True Christians see God’s power and boldly proclaim His grace, every individual who is saved “being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”<sup>30</sup> The Gospel is the chosen instrument that God uses to deliver His people from irrationalism, imaginations, images, false ecumenism, darkness, and the power of Satan. Thus it is proclaimed, “but God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved).”<sup>31</sup> Sin is an evil of infinite significance since it is committed against an infinite Person. There is no way of escaping the wrath of God against sin except by God’s initiative, His grace. This grace is seen in the Lords’ promise to send the Holy Spirit, “when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.”<sup>32</sup> The Holy Spirit convicts of sin as He makes the sinner realize his lost condition and brings him to sense his need of Christ’s righteousness. The Holy Spirit alone can impart spiritual life to the soul and supernatural light to the mind. Therefore the Lord Himself proclaimed the need for God’s proposal, “verily, verily, I say unto thee except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (John 3:3)*

Where irrationalism substitutes for the new birth, the cultivation of imaginations and images in place of the power of the blood of Christ, false ecumenism as a replacement for complete dependence on God, the carnal mind may be attracted and human reason charmed, but all this is destitute of any power to bring salvation to

<sup>29</sup> Romans 1:16.

<sup>30</sup> Romans 3:24.

<sup>31</sup> Ephesians 2:4-5.

<sup>32</sup> John 16:8.

souls. There is no Gospel in Alan Jones' system or in the whole Emergent Church movement. In face of all of this, the grace of God still conquers, redeems and saves. The Scripture explains grace as power. Grace not only makes salvation possible but is also efficient and all-powerful to that end. The Lord God's astonishing grace breaks the arrogance of the Emergent Church apostasy. How is God's grace made a reality in one's life? Simply by claiming the promises in His Word. We admit

our lost condition and our need of Christ's righteousness. We abandon our own efforts totally. We trust Him in His grace as we are sensitive to the conviction of His Holy Spirit. *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is a gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."* *"And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace."*<sup>33</sup>

The soul-destroying teachings of Alan Jones and his associates are demolished by the direct work of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel. The Gospel alone remains the power of God unto salvation. In the face of subjective irrational speculations it is objective, rational, consistent, and all powerful. *"The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."* (Hebrews 4:12)

Richard Bennett, friend, Director of "Berean Beacon"

WebPage: <http://www.bereanbeacon.org>

His conversion story and rich material is priceless to all Christians.

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<sup>33</sup> Ephesians 2:8-9 and Romans 11:6.





# Prophecy

## The Seven Trumpets of Revelation

### Chapter 20

## Life After Death

***“And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them” (Revelation 11:11).***

Refer back to verse 9 for a discussion on the three and a half days. Commentators dance around this number and have few substantive remarks. God gave a final three and a half years to finish the work and for the wicked to persecute and thwart those efforts. God now steps in and, in a “mockery of hope,” says, “You’ve had *three and a half years* to vindicate yourselves. Your response was to hurt, persecute and kill. Those are My people. They are now going to be delivered in a ‘short time’ – truth, My name, My witnesses will come to life in just *three and a half days!*”

“Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall

disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain” (Isaiah 26:20-21).

The allusion of God’s “Spirit of life” entering the two witnesses goes with the story of the breath of life entering dead bones, making them alive so they could stand on their feet again (Ezekiel 37:5, 10; cf. II Kings 13:20-21). What could all this be referring to? This is an explicit description of the deliverance of God’s people! This ties specifically to Daniel 12:1-2 when the **end** of the “time, times, and an half” finishes (Daniel 12:7) – the 1260 days when persecution ceases. This is one of many links between Daniel and Revelation. In Revelation 10:6 time was no longer delayed. The 1260-day period of Daniel’s open book started. Here it now ends!

“Could men see with heavenly vision, they would behold companies of angels that excel in strength stationed about those who have kept the word of Christ’s patience. With sympathizing tenderness, angels have witnessed their distress and have heard their prayers. They are waiting the word of their Commander to snatch them

from their peril. But they must wait yet a little longer.”<sup>1</sup>

“The very delay, so painful to them, is the best answer to their petitions. As they endeavor to wait trustingly for the Lord to work they are led to exercise faith, hope, and patience, which have been too little exercised during their religious experience. Yet for the elect’s sake the time of trouble will be shortened. ‘Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him? ... I tell you that He will avenge them speedily.’ Luke 18:7, 8. The end will come more quickly than men expect.”<sup>2</sup>

“Glorious will be the deliverance of those who have patiently waited for His coming and whose names are written in the book of life.”<sup>3</sup>

“Then a rainbow, shining with the glory from the throne of God, spans the heavens and seems to encircle each praying company. The angry multitudes are suddenly arrested. Their mocking cries die away. The objects of their murderous rage are forgotten. With fearful forebodings they gaze upon the symbol of God’s covenant and long to be shielded from its overpowering brightness.”<sup>4</sup>

“It is impossible to describe the horror and despair of those who have trampled upon God’s holy requirements.”<sup>5</sup>

“Now they are condemned by that law which they have despised. With awful distinctness they see that they are without excuse.”<sup>6</sup>

“Those who have sacrificed all for Christ are now secure, hidden as in the secret of the Lord’s pavilion. They have been tested, and before the world and the despisers of truth they have evinced their fidelity to Him who died for them. A marvelous change has come over those who have held fast their integrity in the very face of death. They have been suddenly delivered from the dark and terrible tyranny of men transformed to demons. Their faces, so lately pale, anxious, and haggard, are now aglow with won-

der, faith, and love. Their voices rise in triumphant song: ‘God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.’ Psalm 46:1-3.”<sup>7</sup>

Expositor White was able to envision the unfolding of these great issues at the very end. When the witnesses return to their feet, the mockery and merrymaking of the wicked are silenced. Fear, terror and despair seize their every fiber. This echoes the fear experienced by the Egyptians over the plagues before the deliverance of God’s people (Psalm 105:38, Exodus 15:16).

The earlier tie to Ezekiel 37 was a dual prophecy. It is a prophecy of God’s restoration of Israel out of Babylon. It is also a deliverance prophecy at the end of the world. It portrays the restoration of spiritual Israel as “an exceedingly great army ... the whole house of Israel ... my people” (Ezekiel 37:10-13). These are God’s true people.

There is another amazing picture presented in this little verse. If both witnesses are given life – here eternal life – then the candlestick witnesses representing the martyred Smyrna church must be raised to life. This depicts then the time when martyred saints are resurrected. Jesus won’t come until the next verse. It must be a special resurrection. That, again, is alluded to in Daniel 12:2 and referenced in Revelation 1:7! Incredible as it may be, Ezekiel 37:12 says that at that time God would open these graves and bring His people out of them.

When the two witnesses were overpowered and killed, the wicked celebrated their “death.” Now terror strikes the wicked as the witnesses come back to celebrate life. There is a fascinating tie to the Jewish exodus. Egypt was glad when they left because the fear of Israel had fallen on them. The Song of Moses celebrated the “terror and dread” of the nations when the Israelites were *delivered*. This is exactly what is depicted here.

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<sup>1</sup> White, Ellen G.; *The Great Controversy*, p. 630.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 631.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 634.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 635.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 639.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 640.

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 638-639.

“Those who a little before were so reckless, so boastful and defiant, so exultant in their cruelty to God’s commandment-keeping people, are now overwhelmed with consternation and shuddering in fear. Their wails are heard above the sound of the elements. Demons acknowledge the deity of Christ and tremble before His power, while men are supplicating for mercy and groveling in abject terror.

“Said the prophets of old, as they beheld in holy vision the day of God: ‘Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.’ Isaiah 13:6. ‘Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be

humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon everyone that is proud and lofty, and upon everyone that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low.’ ‘In that day a man shall cast the idols of his silver, and the idols of his gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty, when

He ariseth to shake terribly the earth.’ Isaiah 2:10-12, 20, 21, margin.”<sup>8</sup>

What a story! In a thousand ways God is bringing hope to His people. His plan calls for a period of painful trial – the tribulation – then, after this final loyalty witnessing test, eternal life. The “Spirit of [eternal] life” fills each of God’s children.

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<sup>8</sup> White, Ellen G.; *The Great Controversy*, p. 638.

## Chapter 21

# Jesus Comes – They Ascend

***“And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them” (Revelation 11:12).***

The martyrs are raised to life in a special resurrection and God’s people, His witnesses, are delivered. The next prophetic event is John’s record that those saints hear a *great* voice from heaven. The word for “great” (*megales*) implies a loud voice. This expression is used twenty-four times in this Book – but only once with such an invitational message.

In Revelation 4:1 Jesus invited John to “Come up here.” It was a visionary period when God’s people were to look through a newly opened door into the heavenly sanctuary. That, in turn, related to the Philadelphia church, when God said, “I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut” (3:8).

Here the great voice says exactly the same thing, “Come up hither.” This time it is an invitation to all the saints, God’s church, the great body of witnesses: “Come up” to heaven. The first “Come up” was an invitation into the throne room in the heavenly temple. The second, to the remnant, “come” and be physically received in that divine home. One transitions into a time when the heavenly mission is changing. The other transitions the saints from earth to heaven. One parallels the era when the “Son of man” approached “the Ancient of Days” (Daniel 7:13). The second, the time when the saints approach Jesus.

The saints ascended up into heaven in a “cloud.” This description is very interesting. The disciples had asked Jesus end-time questions as to when that period would occur, what would be a sign of the end of the world and His coming. The “sign” of His coming, Jesus said “will appear in the sky.” The “clouds” are the first sign of the Advent.

“And I saw a flaming cloud come where Jesus stood. Then Jesus ... took His place on the cloud which carried Him to the East, where it first appeared to the saints on earth – a small black cloud which *was the sign* of the Son of man.”<sup>1</sup>

In a remarkable cloud-and-Advent language, expositor White noted: “The 144,000 were all sealed and perfectly united. On their foreheads was written, God, New Jerusalem, and a glorious star containing Jesus’ new name. At our happy, holy state the wicked were enraged, and would rush violently up to lay hands on us to thrust us into prison, when we would stretch forth the hand in the name of the Lord, and the wicked would fall helpless to the ground. Then it was that the synagogue of Satan knew that God had loved us, and they worshiped at our feet. Soon our eyes were drawn to the east, for a small black cloud had appeared about half as large as a man’s hand, which we all knew was the sign of the Son of man. We all in solemn silence gazed on the cloud as it drew nearer, and became lighter, glorious, and still more glorious, till it was a great white cloud. The bottom appeared like fire; a rainbow was over it, and around the cloud were ten thousand angels singing a most lovely song. And on it sat the Son of man, on his head were crowns, his hair was white and curly and lay on his shoulders. His feet had the appearance of fire, in his right hand was a sharp sickle, in his left a silver trumpet. His eyes were as a flame of fire, which searched his children through and through. Then all faces gathered paleness, and those that God had rejected gathered blackness. Then we all cried out, Who shall be able to stand? Is my robe spotless? Then the angels ceased to sing, and there was some time of awful silence, when Jesus spoke, Those who have clean hands and a pure heart shall be able to stand; my grace is sufficient for

<sup>1</sup> White, Ellen G.; *Maranatha*, p. 287 (emphasis added).

you. At this, our faces lighted up, and joy filled every heart. And the angels struck a note higher and sung again while the cloud drew still nearer the earth. Then Jesus' silver trumpet sounded, as he descended on the cloud, wrapped in flames of fire. He gazed on the graves of the sleeping saints, then raised his eyes and hands to heaven and cried, Awake! Awake! Awake! ye that sleep in the dust, and arise. Then there was a mighty earthquake. The graves opened, and the dead came up clothed with immortality. The 144,000 shouted, Hallelujah! as they recognized their friends who had been torn from them by death, and in the same moment we were changed and caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air. We all entered the cloud together, and were seven days ascending to the sea of glass, when Jesus brought along the crowns and with his own right hand placed them on our heads."<sup>2</sup>

That "cloud" is not only linked to the eschaton (Matthew 24:30, Mark 14:62) but is related to Jesus' ascension (Acts 1:9), and even His resurrection (I Thessalonians 4:17).

In ancient Israel a cloud by day signified the Shekinah (Exodus 13:21), a term used to express the "presence of God" when anthropomorphic terms were inadequate. The cloud signified His theophanic appearances (Ezekiel 1:40). It is described also as encircling Him (Ezekiel 1:28, Daniel 7:13).

Therefore, the cloud gives a sense of God's *glory* and His *presence*. In all such Biblical imagery, there is intuitive hope, protection and deliverance! Revelation opens with Jesus and clouds (Revelation 1:7), the epitome of the Shekinah glory with the physical presence of deity. It is thrilling imagery!

In that wonderful message, Gabriel said, "Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him" (1:7 – NIV). Here we are told that their (saints) enemies saw them ascend in the cloud to heaven. Though the wicked will be destroyed by the brightness of Jesus' coming, they are permitted to witness the redeemed, who shortly before they were trying to kill, drawn to Jesus, then heaven. What a stunning message! What a solemn warning to the careless.

Those enemies that observe Jesus' coming are more than contemporary wicked survivors. Gabriel specifically noted that "even those who pierced him" (1:7) would witness this event. That means that there is a special resurrection before the eschaton. Daniel tells us that at the deliverance of God's people (the end of the persecution of 1260 days – time, times, and an half) there would also be a unique resurrection (Daniel 12:2). The deliverance of God's people is a special apocalyptic timing point immediately preceding the second coming. It is then that a special resurrection of the wicked occurs.

From the references noted, we know that this group of enemies, who are final witnesses to Christ's return, have been divinely selected. It appears that those who have been powerful against Jesus are forced to see His triumphant return. That is of legal interest to the universe. They will note, as witnesses themselves, the utter helpless submission to Jesus, Whom they previously so successfully resisted. Their acquiescence to Him is one of the significant steps that heaven has planned to vindicate God's character. The enemies were intolerant of Christianity when Jesus was "visible" through the saints. Now, they will be intolerant of themselves as they momentarily cry for the rocks and mountains to fall on them (6:16-17).

***"And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven" (Revelation 11:13).***

The expression "and the same hour" is tied to the previous verse when the saints ascended to heaven. It is a timing statement: *kai en ekeine te hora* – "in the same hour." When John saw the witnesses rise heavenward, a great earthquake occurred.

A "great" earthquake was noted under the sixth Seal: "And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; ... And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.... And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us,

<sup>2</sup> White, Ellen G.; *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, p. 32.

and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb” (Revelation 6:12a, 14, 16).

That depicts the second coming of Jesus just like we see here. God furnishes these amazing clues to help us see that they all occur right at the same time. That will be noted once again under the seventh Plague (Revelation 16:18-20) when “every island fled away, and the mountains were not found” (vs 20).

Here, the phrase “in that hour” is a strong suggestion that the events of the sixth Seal come right at the end of the period of Jacob’s trouble, which follows the close of probation. That period is 45 days long by the marvelous evidence we have from Daniel 12.

E. G. White described the results of that earthquake: “The earth looked like a desolate wilderness. Cities and villages, shaken down by the earthquake, lay in heaps. Mountains had been moved out of their places, leaving large caverns. Ragged rocks, thrown out by the sea, or torn out of the earth itself, were scattered all over its surface. Large trees had been uprooted and were strewn over the land. Here is to be the home of Satan with his evil angels for a thousand years. Here he will be confined, to wander up and down over the broken surface of the earth and see the effects of his rebellion against God’s law.”<sup>3</sup>

Ezekiel 38:19-20 describes a “great” earthquake when Gog attacks Israel. What happens? God’s people are delivered. This is another parallel prophecy.

A significant challenge is in the “numbers” within this verse:

- One tenth of the city fell
- 7000 people were killed

The only place we find a parallel to this “7000 people” is in I Kings 19:18. Elijah had fled Queen Jezebel’s threat to kill him. In discouragement and fear, he lost his trust in the God of the recent amazing Mt. Carmel victory. Finally, leaving his servant at Beersheba, he

went a day’s journey deep into the wilderness. There an angel strengthened him with food and water while resting under a juniper tree. That didn’t resolve his despondency, and he hiked another forty full days to a cave in Mt. Horeb (apparently the same as Mt. Sinai – Exodus 3:1).

There God confronted Him, “What are you doing here?” Elijah poured out his heart to God. He thought that in all of Israel he alone worshiped the true God. Then God said, “I have left me 7000 in Israel who have not bowed to Baal.” How does that parallel the earthquake deaths?

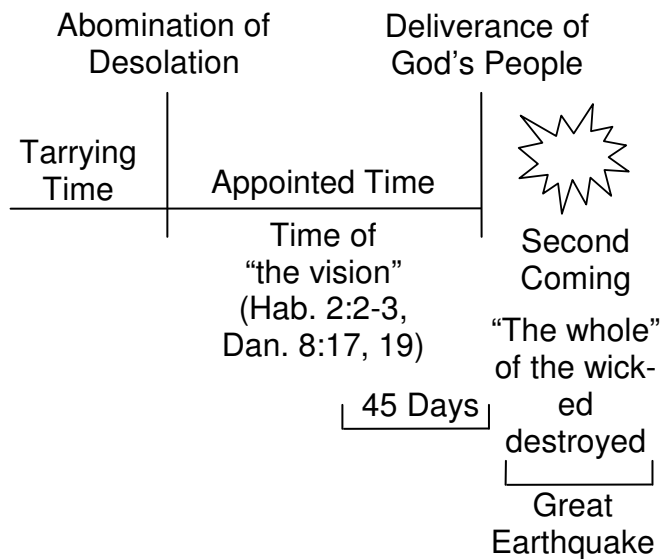
- Elijah, at a time of great clashes between right and wrong, had fear and despondency, though a man of God. There were 7000 (representing the *whole*) who were loyal to God.
- At the end of time when the final clashes between right and wrong come, God’s people are joyous in their deliverance. 7000 (representing the *whole* of the wicked) are destroyed.

In the sixth Seal the wicked want to be killed (Revelation 6:16) and, in reality, they lose their lives. I Thessalonians 2:8 says they succumb to the brightness of His coming. Perhaps the glory of His face even causes inanimate nature to rupture and convulse. The “seven thousand” report means that *all* the wicked are now dead.

What does a “tenth” of the “city” mean? From the seventh Plague description and the end-time imagery of the apostate city described in Revelation, it unquestionably refers to Babylon. That is the “great city” (cf. Daniel 4:30) that came up in remembrance before God “to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath” (Revelation 16:19, cf. 14:8).

In Revelation 16 it says that the earthquake divided Babylon into three parts. Babylon was a symbol of *apostate* Christianity, composed of *apostate* Protestantism, Catholicism and Spiritualism. The seventh Plague typology means that those end-of-time cooperative elements of rebellion are now powerless and no longer a threat. That verse immediately says “and the cities of

<sup>3</sup> White, Ellen G.; *Early Writings*, p. 290.



Heaven

Rejoice, give  
God glory

**Wicked**

**Vss 7-9:**

Persecutors

Death of apostate  
church

Death of  
individuals

Abyss

**Vss 10, 13:**

Rejoice

Split in three

Terror of  
wicked

Implied

the nations fell," then "every island fled away, and the mountains were not found" (16:19a, 20).

By now most of the wicked are dead from the first four Trumpets to Armageddon of the sixth and to the first four Plagues. Apparently only one tenth now remain. As there is a select group who are raised at the special resurrection to see His return, so there will be a select group of wicked individuals preserved to witness that great advent. John says that they come from all walks of life (Revelation 6:15). The tenth represents the totality of the unbelievers remaining at the "same hour" of Jesus' coming.

The evil nature of the city (11:8) and the hardness of the earth-dwellers (11:10) preclude any repentance. Why does it say that a remnant was terrified and then gave glory to God? Many commentators conclude that this "remnant" refers to the wicked who were not destroyed (i.e., nine tenths). This throws one's understanding into space and misuses God's thematic objective. The NIV accurately portrays the meaning. The righteous survivors were frightened from the great earthquake and its outcome, then gave glory to God.

This appears to be a parenthetical review statement. Notice the crescendoing contrast:

**God's People – Witnesses**

**Vss 7-10:**

Persecution

Death

(church helpless)

Raised to life

**Vs 13:**

Terror

1. An enemy rejoices over Israel's "defeat."

<sup>4</sup> White, Ellen G.; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 638-639.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 641.

2. Israel is delivered and restored, seen as “rising” and likened to the exodus from Egypt.

3. The enemies see the deliverance and cover their mouths in astonishment.
4. The enemies are horrified and shamed.
5. Their cities are destroyed.
6. The enemies become afraid of God.

The verse ends with the striking little phrase that glory was given to the “God of heaven.” In Jewish thought this expression distinguished the sovereign, majestic God from all other gods (Genesis 24:7, II Chronicles 36:23, Nehemiah 1:4-5, Daniel 2:10-19).



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