

EndTime Issues...

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EndTime Issues... e-Magazine

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Manuscripts are welcomed for consideration. They should relate to something that has recently been happening, to a clearer understanding of prophecy or have a deep spiritual end-time concern, be simply written and well documented with a focused interest to Christians. Length should be limited to 10 double-spaced pages. The ongoing appeal: "Issues of concern to the final generation."

Letters to the editor: We welcome your letters of encouragement, deepening insight on relevant topics and plain feedback relative to *EndTime Issues...* Please keep your communiques brief. Your letters will be the property of Christian Heritage Foundation. Personal answers normally cannot be made. Selected letters may be published in subsequent issues of *EndTime Issues...*

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Christmas

EDITORIAL

Macy's Department Store helped immortalize the 1947 Christmas movie classic, "Miracle on 34th Street." This Christmas they banned that memory and even prohibited their clerks from telling any customer "Merry Christmas" in all 450 stores. They will profit tens of millions of dollars in sales, but it will only be on the politically correct "Seasons Greetings" or "Happy Holidays."¹

Preachers and priests will cry from their pulpits to "put Christ back into Christmas," but growing numbers of Americans are saying "No" because it might offend someone.

- A first-grade teacher in Sacramento Co., Calif., says her principal has *prohibited instructors from uttering the word "Christmas"* in class or in written materials;
- A school superintendent in Yonkers, N.Y., *banned holiday decorations* that contained religious themes more than the generic "season's greetings;"
- *New York City schools are being sued* for alleged discrimination against Christians over Christmas.
- And *atheists reposted their vandalized winter solstice sign* in the Wisconsin Capital, as they declare "Christians stole Christmas" from ancient pagans.²

Complicating this is the growing block of Americans who say that they are unaware of any association between Christmas and Jesus Christ (10% of the populace). A growing movement among atheists is to "re-paganize" Christmastime.³

While the Christmas "tradition" is being bruised and stomped on, another group of Christians are reminding us of the pagan background of Christmas and citing Jeremiah 10:2-4 – "Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the

customs of the people *are* vain: for *one* cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the ax. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not."

It is true that Jesus was likely born in the fall at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles (the time period, incidentally, He will come the second time). December 25 has been artificially set. Some Christians are going as far as to say it is a "sin" to celebrate Christmas. December 25, 2004 has become the most controversial Christmas in U.S. history.

In the throes of World War II (1942) British Prime Minister Winston Churchill came to Washington to join President Franklin Roosevelt in the lighting of the National Christmas Tree (a tradition started by Calvin Coolidge in 1923). Thousands of citizens were there.

"Let the children have their night of fun and laughter," proclaimed Churchill. "Let the gifts of Father Christmas delight their play. Let us grown-ups share to the full in their unstinted pleasures before we turn again to the stern task and formidable years that lie before us, resolved that, by our sacrifice and daring, these same children shall not be robbed of their inheritance or denied the right to live in a free and decent world."

For millions of people, that tree with the season called Christmas is a time of festivity for family and friends. To millions the celebration also points to the birth of Jesus. The story of the manger, baby Jesus and Emmanuel are among the most beloved and majestic reminders of who we really are.

We can become politically correct and use the season to criticize its adherents or even steal the wonders of redemption out of His birth. If we can balance the secularism with the gospel, what a great way to

complement the celebration of Christmas. Christmas is a national holiday and part of the American tradition. We can use it as a hammer to destroy or a tool to build. I'd rather be part of the latter.

Christmas is a way of colloquially saying, "Happy Birthday, Jesus" or maybe even "Thank you, Jesus, for that Birthday." When is the last time you told Him "Thank you" for being born? That was a physical, spiritual and mental "feat." Only eternity will bring to us clues as to the humiliation and condescension that that Christmas Story actually meant to the courts of heaven and the eternal benefit it was to mankind.

This country is having enough problems with the legal eradication of the Lord's Prayer from school and "under God" from the *Pledge of Allegiance*. For Christians and secularists to ban Christmas at a season when part of the gospel can be legally legitimized is wasting an opportunity.

Sexes have become publicly *unisex*. Profiling the honorably distinctiveness of the races has become a *hate crime*. Tolerating sinfulness is even touted by churches today to be *sensitive to*

others. This spirit has led often to greater sympathy for the perpetrator of wrong than the victim. Society and its enduring values have been turned inside out.

If Christmas is removed from this national season, so will Christ. When Christ goes, all that He stands for does also. What only do we have left? What sociologists and politicians may say. The country becomes more and more like a great commune after man's order. And that is the *greater* curse.

Christmas is a beautiful time for family and friends. It is also an opportunity for personal ministries. Instead of X-mas, make it Christ-mas. Mark Twain said, "Tell the truth, it will amaze your friends and confound your enemies." Secularists need to be astounded by how exciting Jesus can be to us!

References:

- ¹ www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=41700
- ² www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=29995
- ³ CircleSanctuary.org

“The Immaculate Conception” The Drana, Dogma and Disaster

By Richard Bennett

We are, again, honored to have insight from Richard Bennett, a former priest in the Roman Catholic Church. He was Jesuit trained in Ireland by the Dominican Order and later at the Angelicum University, Rome, Italy. He finished his studies in 1964. After a life-threatening accident, he spent 14 years contrasting Biblical truth with Catholicism. In 1986 he made the step, by God’s grace, to leave the Roman Catholic Church because of what he discovered. He is articulate and a deep thinker, evangelist, writer and apologist now working at Dayspring Fellowship, Reformed Baptist Church in Austin, Texas. www.bereanbeacon.org; – www.the-highway.com

The Catholic world recently celebrated the promulgation of the dogma of “The Immaculate Conception” of Mary begun one hundred fifty years ago. Besides the Vatican in Rome, the eyes of the Catholic world are focusing on Lourdes in France. It was there, the Vatican claims, on March 25, 1858, that Mary appeared to the young peasant girl, Bernadette Soubirous, and announced, “I am the Immaculate Conception.” The Pope took this as a verification of the dogma he had proclaimed four years earlier in 1854. Much preparation took place, and the climax occurred on December 8, 2004. Superlative worship of Mary is already standard practice; “By asking Mary to pray for us, we acknowledge ourselves to be poor sinners and we address ourselves to the ‘Mother of Mercy,’ the All Holy One.”¹ **The reason for the enthusiasm and fervor in the further broadcasting this Papal dogma is that most of the other traditional dogmas on Mary are founded on the teaching of “The Immaculate Conception.”**

Immaculate Conception Presents Mary “Full of Grace” and Completely Sinless

The Catholic Church teaches that Mary was “full of grace” and sinless from the moment of her

conception and that she remained sinless throughout her lifetime. The official teaching is,

“Through the centuries the [Catholic] Church has become ever more aware that Mary, ‘full of grace’ through God, was redeemed from the moment of her conception. That is what the dogma of the Immaculate Conception confesses, as Pope Pius IX proclaimed in 1854: The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin.”²

“By the grace of God Mary remained free of every personal sin her whole life long.”³

The dogma of “Immaculate Conception” is not dealing with the Virgin birth of Jesus Christ, but rather Mary’s own conception in the womb of her mother. It is asserted that she was “full of grace” and that she was free from original sin and sinless for her whole lifetime. The Papacy asserts that the term “full of grace” is found in Luke 1:28. However, even in the Catholic *New American Bible* the text reads, “*And coming to her, he*



Richard Bennett

¹*Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Liguori, MO: Liguori Publications, 1994), #2677. Hereafter *Catechism*.

²*Catechism*, #491.

³*Ibid.*, #493.

⁴New American Bible as given on: http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_PWK.HTM 9/1/04. Bolding in any quotation indicates our emphasis added.

said, *Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.*"⁴ In official dogmas "favored one" is erroneously rendered as "full of grace."⁵ In contrast, the central idea of the Scripture text is that Mary had become the recipient of God's favor rather than being herself "full of grace."⁶ The same verb is used only in one other place in the New Testament, Ephesians 1:6, where all the recipients of God's grace are highly favored.

The key attribute that Catholic Church fallaciously assigns to Mary is that she is "full of grace." The official teaching furthermore declares,

"From among the descendants of Eve, God chose the Virgin Mary to be the mother of his Son. 'Full of grace,' Mary is 'the most excellent fruit of redemption' (SC 103): from the first instant of her conception, she was totally preserved from the stain of original sin and she remained pure from all personal sin throughout her life."⁷

But in Scripture the moral condition of each believer before conversion is clearly stated, "*and you has he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.*"⁸ Because of Adam's sin all of mankind, including Mary, is born spiritually dead. The Scripture clearly depicts the moral state of all mankind, "*as it is written, 'there is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understands, there is none that seeks after God.'*"⁹ However, what makes the attribute "full of grace" assigned to Mary so appalling is the biblical truth that the fullness of grace is distinctly Christ's own prerogative. God's grace and love in salvation is the high-priestly work of Christ and of Him alone. "Full of grace" is the distinct attribute of His office. This unique feature in Scripture is ascribed to Christ Jesus the

Lord alone. "*He dwelt among us, full of grace and truth,*"¹⁰ all that went before Him was but a type and a representation of Him. All that came after Him points back to Him. "*Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ,*" the Apostle John proclaimed, "*and of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.*"¹¹

It is by His grace that true believers are made acceptable before the All Holy God. "*For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.*"¹² The Father's will was that all fullness should dwell in Him. There is the abundance of grace only in the "Word made flesh." As the source of all grace to His people, He has fullness of merit and righteousness. It delighted the Father that in Him alone as Savior, all fullness should dwell, "*the fullness of him that filleth all in all.*"¹³ He alone abundantly gives to all that are His own people, "*grace for grace.*"¹⁴

Alleging that Mary is "full of grace" as a distinctive attribute of hers is blasphemy. It shows an arrogant disregard for the One who alone is the incarnate Son of God, "*Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.*"¹⁵ To direct anyone toward Mary as "full of grace" is attempted robbery of the distinctive feature of Christ Jesus the Lord.

To call Mary "full of grace" is also an insult to her person. She rejoiced that she had a Savior. She proclaimed, "*my soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.*"¹⁶ God is called "Savior," as He saves His people from sin. Even the mother of the Lord had need of her Savior. The

⁵Also in the most recited prayer in Catholicism, which begins, "Hail Mary full of grace."

⁶The same thought is express in verse 30, "*Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.*" In Greek "highly favoured" is *kecharitomene*. It is the passive participle of *charitoo* and means endowed with grace (*charis*), enriched with grace. This word has the same root as the words for "greetings" (*chaire*), and "favour" (*charin*). Mary is "highly favoured" because she, like all true believers, is the recipient of God's grace.

⁷*Catechism*, # 508.

⁸Ephesians 2:1

⁹Romans 3:10-11

¹⁰John 1:14

¹¹John 1:16

¹²Colossians 1:19

¹³Ephesians 1:23

¹⁴John 1:16

¹⁵Hebrews 1:3

¹⁶Luke 1:46-47

blessedness of Mary was a demonstration of divine favor toward her, especially in calling her to be the physical mother of the Lord. This was an act of sovereign choice on God's part. She, as a virgin, as a believer and according to God's Word to her, conceived and brought forth Christ Jesus the Lord. Later in obedience to the Lord's Word she was wife to Joseph and mother of their children.¹⁷ Like all other genuine believers, Mary of Bethlehem was a sinner saved by God's grace, through faith, not by any essential righteousness or preserving grace granted in her own birth.

The Attribute that Separates God from All Other Beings

Christ Jesus Himself with the Father and the Holy Spirit is God, the all Holy One. In Catholicism an attempt is made to proclaim that Mary also is the All Holy One.

"By asking Mary to pray for us, we acknowledge ourselves to be poor sinners and we address ourselves to the 'Mother of Mercy,' the All Holy One."¹⁸

The Bible clearly teaches that God alone is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, justice, goodness and truth. He is the all Holy One. His Holiness is the attribute that covers all attributes so that His righteousness is Holy, His truth is Holy, and His justice is Holy. He is each of His attributes, and *the overall attribute of holiness is that which separates Him from all beings*. He is totally other. The reason why we need to be made right before the All Holy God is because in the words of Scripture, *"there is none holy as the Lord: for there is none besides Thee: neither is there any rock like our God."*¹⁹ And, again the Word of the Lord proclaims, *"who shall not fear thee O Lord and glorify Thy name for thou only art holy and all nations shall*

*come and worship before thee."*²⁰ To attempt to address a creature as "the All Holy One" is consummate blasphemy and immoral idolatry.

Alleged Exaltation of Mary as having a Saving Office

The Catholic Church states that the one she addresses as "the All Holy One" is also alleged to be the cause of salvation. Rome declares,

"As St. Irenaeus says, 'Being obedient she became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race.'"²¹

This claim is sacrilegious and affects the ordinary person who desires to be saved before God. It assumes Mary's influence with God, and actually credits her as being an effective cause in salvation of souls, including her own. In this it shows an arrogant disdain for the love of God as the original cause of the salvation of souls. The Bible teaches that the salvation of men is a divine initiative because, *"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*²² He is *"merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth."*²³ To point anyone toward Mary as "the cause of salvation" is an outright betrayal of a person's only hope, which through the love of God is in Christ Jesus alone.

An Entry Point into the Occult

On an everyday family level, the cult of Mary leads directly into the occult. Pope John Paul II is the prototype of how it is done. On October 8th, 2000, he went so far as to consecrate the world and the new millennium to "Mary Most Holy."²⁴ In giving honor to "Mary Most Holy," the Pope flagrantly sins against the First Commandment, for

¹⁷For example Matthew 13:55, *"...His mother called Mary? and His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas?"* So why does the Catholic Church deliberately mislead its members? It is to propagate an image of Mary as a quasi-divine creature who is above having a normal marital relationship with her husband, Joseph, and to establish her as a role model for nuns and priests to live a celibate life.

¹⁸Catechism, #2677.

¹⁹I Samuel 2:2

²⁰Revelation 15:4

²¹Catechism, # 494.

²²John.3:16

²³Exodus 34:6

²⁴L'Osservatore Romano, Weekly edition in English, 11 October 2000.htm

he encourages the ordinary Catholic likewise to turn away from the true worship of God and to enter into the occult realm of the spirit world. Such behavior brings the judgment of God on nations and families, as His Word declares, "*The LORD is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.*"²⁵

In Catholic countries black madonnas, considered wonder working, lead easily into a climate of the devils, angels, magic and the occult. There is a revealing parallel between the Roman Catholic false Mary and pagan goddesses. The heartbreaking reality, however, is that such behavior is the entrance into satanism, pornography, suicide, and a general decline in morals. The Catholic Cult of "the Immaculate Conception" and the Queen of Heaven leads one into the occult and is found in the occult. The Roman Catholic Virgin Mary is included among the goddesses that are listed on, for example, the following WebPages: The Spiral Goddess Grove, The White Moon, and Goddess 2000. They consider Mary to be the "Divine Feminine" and say that for centuries, many people have blended their ancient goddesses with Mary.²⁶ Thus on the White Moon webpage under the heading of "Mary And Other Goddesses" it is stated that "when you pray to Mary, mother of Jesus, you pray, without knowing it, to the World Mother in one of her many forms."²⁷ The snare is not just for adults but is also for children. One webpage has a special kids' coloring page where young children are led into the occult as they color Mary and other goddesses.²⁸

The Consequence

All that has been documented regarding Rome's view of Mary—"the Immaculate Conception", "full of grace," "the All Holy One," and the "the cause of salvation"—is utterly profane and blasphemous before the All Holy God and the exclusive Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. The drama that led up to December 8, 2004 was in fact a debacle and a disaster. It endangers the eternal welfare of people across the world. What is essential is distinct faith and trust on the Lord Jesus Christ alone. "*He that believeth on him is not condemned.*"²⁹ "*He that believeth on the son hath everlasting life.*"³⁰ "*He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.*"³¹ Because man is a fallen being, the Gospel is the only way to God and it is through Christ Jesus the Lord alone. To add trust in Mary as the way to believe on Him is a most dangerous and damming barrier to eternal salvation.

While the Scripture states that "*Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light,*"³² it still comes as a shock to see the Prince of Darkness, the most alien to the light, misuse the wonderful believer, Mary, until she appears as a goddess. The Lord's judgment will come upon all who teach and practice this malicious doctrine. The Lord Christ Jesus Himself declared, "*For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.*"³³ All right and power of administrative judgment and correction has

²⁵ Psalm 9:16

²⁶ www.goddess2000.org/Mary.html, www.spiralgoddess.com/Mary.html

²⁷ <http://www.thewhitemoon.com/mary/other.html> 8/21/04

²⁸ Pagan Kids' Coloring Page, <http://www.goddess2000.org/Coloring.html>, 8/21/04

²⁹ John 3:18

³⁰ John 3:36

³¹ I John 5:10

³² II Corinthians 11:14

³³ John 5:22, 27

been given to Christ Jesus as ruling King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The Lord Himself declared, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father;"³⁴ and "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."³⁵ He will be true to His Word, "Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord."³⁶

Turn to Him in faith alone for the salvation that He alone gives by the conviction of the Holy Spirit, and based on his death and resurrection. Believe on Him alone, "to the praise of the glory of his grace."³⁷ The Pope makes no secret of where he stands. Whether done in ignorance or not, Catholics (even sincere ones) who remain loyal to the Pope in exalting Mary spurn the exclusivity and splendor of Christ and His Gospel. The Word of the Lord speaks clearly to the choice that is before all Catholics. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.

*For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven."*³⁸ When God speaks to men in the Scriptures, the guilt of those who refuse Him is the greater – and their punishment will be more intolerable. He justly expects from them the strictest attention in the Gospel that demands faith on Christ Jesus the Lord, Who alone is full of grace and truth. This is no time to presume on the grace of God, but rather to pray urgently for it! The Lord's glory, Gospel, and promise are at stake! "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire."³⁹

³⁴ Matthew 11:27

³⁵ Matthew 28:18

³⁶ Hebrews 10:30

³⁷ Ephesians 1:6

³⁸ Hebrews 12:25

³⁹ Hebrews 12:28-29



Why Jesus is Coming Soon

The Great Week of Time

Part 8

Tarrying Time

If the *Great Week of Time* is a precise system of reckoning, how does one reconcile the numerous “tarrying” allusions in the Scriptures? Wouldn’t they lengthen or alter the “sacred seven” millenniums? What is a “delay” relative to? Does this force God to move to plan “B?” Is it related simply to man’s perceptions? Or – is it a “delay” in some other timed matter?

The “poster-child delay” parable is recorded in the end-time chapter of Matthew 24.

“But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming ...” (vs 48).

The setting of this verse surrounds the little word *ean*, which means “if.” Jesus has just been describing a good servant and suddenly describes an evil servant:

That servant is head of other servants:

He abuses them.

He still calls his master “My Lord.”

But, it says, “if in his heart ...”

In the context, it is a warning to anyone who chooses to believe that Jesus’ coming is in the distant future. His actions, described in subsequent verses, betray that conviction. He lives carelessly. Is this a statement of spiritual truth? Yes. Any thought or action that leads to a lifestyle that suggests a delay is fatal. When the Master returns judgment comes to this servant. The subliminal warning is to not function as though the coming of Jesus is postponed.

Does that mean it could be postponed? We are to live as though it is imminent. *A delay in Jesus’ return is not the message portrayed.*

Peter, reflecting on truth that had already been “spoken *before by the holy prophets*, and ... of us the apostles” said:

“Knowing this first [the foundational principle], that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming?” II Peter 3:3-4.

The imagery states that those who declare that the Lord delays His coming are sinners. Then God makes the point that He operates in His own timing sphere: “A day is as a thousand years and a thousand years is as a day” (vs 8).

For the godly, Paul provides the context of how the timing will occur.

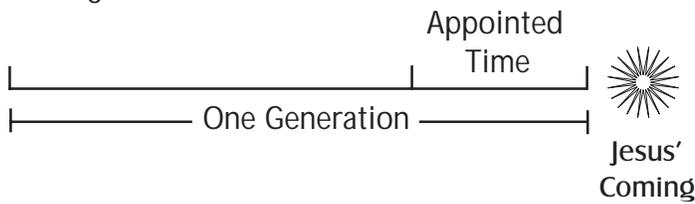
“For yet a little while [a small space of time] and he that shall come will come, and will *not* tarry.” Hebrews 10:37.

In a couple of days – in God’s time – He’ll return. There is more specific information that Jesus has given to us found in Matthew 24, Mark 13 or Luke 21. He has outlined two distinct end of times that we are to focus on – one for the Jewish people within the apostles’ day and one for the end of the world at the second advent. They are spelled out with great detail. For the end of time the “rest of the story” is found in Daniel (Matthew 24:15). Jesus stipulates that those end-time prophecies would each be fulfilled within one generation – or – 40 years.

When Jesus told the inquiring disciples that “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath in his own power” (Acts 1:7), He never said it was going to be delayed, nor did He say it would come with mystical suddenness.

Jesus already gave detailed signs for when it could be declared that “the season” has arrived, “it is even at the door.” The “beginning of sorrows” is *the beginning of the end!*

What then did Jesus allude to in Acts 1:7? This is vital to grasp! Looking forward in time, one cannot predict when the consummation of events will begin – that was in the Father’s hand. But – when the predicted developments *begin* to occur, it’s going to happen within one generation. When looking at Daniel, there will be even further refinements in the three-and-a-half-year appointed-time setting!



Within the timing structure of God’s end-time prophecy there are built-in delays.

1. Between the two end times
2. *Within* the timing of one generation to the three-and-a-half-year appointed-time
3. Prophetic times of waiting

It is vital to note that *in* God’s predictive time periods there is *no* delay. He does recognize the tarrying time between prophecies or specific time periods. A notable example of this was recorded by Habakkuk:

“And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make [it] plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision [is] yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.” Habakkuk 2:2-3.

The vision is tarrying – the prophecy has an *apparent* delay to its fulfillment. But wait for it, it will come to pass, and then it won’t tarry any longer. Thus a specific prophecy can tarry *within* the greater framework of God’s time.

The parable of the ten virgins is instructive. The bridegroom tarried (*chronizei* or *chronizo*) (Matthew 25:5). What was the delay or lingering in reference to? The people who were waiting. The bridegroom is Jesus. It does not say God’s plans were delayed. It does say in the perspective of the virgins that they waited so long that they “slum-

bered and slept” (vs 5). While the foolish virgins tried to play catchup, the appointed time had already come and they were barred from the marriage.

Imminent Return in Revelation

In the book of Revelation there is this repetitive theme:

- Revelation 1:1 – The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must *shortly* (*en-tachos*) come to pass; and he sent and signified [it] by his angel unto his servant John:
- Revelation 1:3 – Blessed [is] he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the *time [is] at hand*.
- Revelation 1:19 – Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things *which shall be hereafter*;
- Revelation 11:14 – The second woe is past; [and], behold, the third woe *cometh quickly* (*tacho*).
- Revelation 12:12 – Therefore rejoice, [ye] heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but *a short time*.
- Revelation 16:15 – Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed [is] he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.
- Revelation 22:6 – And he said unto me, These sayings [are] faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which *must shortly be done*.
- Revelation 22:10 – And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: *for the time is at hand*.
- Revelation 22:12 – And, behold, *I come quickly*; and my reward [is] with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.
- Revelation 22:20 – He which testifieth these things saith, *Surely I come quickly*. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

On the surface it appears as though the message to John decrees a rapid return of Jesus in his day. He did appear to him in 1:13-17, but that is not the meaning of the above verses. Also, a similar message goes to the seven churches.

- Revelation 2:25 – But that which ye have [already] *hold fast till I come*.
- Revelation 3:11 – *Behold, I come quickly*: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

“The time (*kairos* – last opportunity) is at hand.” “Behold I come quickly (*tacho* – soon) – without delay.”

At the end of the Bible in this apocalyptic book, the message is “no delay!” There has been a forward movement of prophetic thought from Daniel through the gospels to this final unveiling of the end. Is this prophecy a declaration that Jesus was coming in John’s day? Clearly not. There was an expectancy by the disciples. But *their timing prophecies* related to the “end” of time for the Jewish nation. The eschaton is defined as distinct and separate by the books of Daniel and Revelation.

Revelation 1:4-6 is a commentary insert. There is a break in the introductory thought to extend greetings from the Trinity to the seven churches. When verses 1-3 and 7 are combined, which they should be, the “shortly come to pass” (vs 1) and “time is at hand” (vs 3) refer to Jesus’ coming in the clouds when every eye will see Him (vs 7).

The apostles had the privilege of knowing that there would be a delay – just as Daniel did! Daniel 8:14 makes it clear that the final restoration of God’s people would not occur until after the 2300 evenings and mornings – distinctly 2300 years. (That is in atonement–sacred–legal language). Daniel did not understand at first. Several years later he did (Daniel 10:1). That was part of the *mareh* vision that was *not* sealed.

For the apostles there was an imminent *end* within one generation. But for the great *eschaton*, when all will be made new, that was far into the future. The “end” of Jerusalem had already occurred in 70 A.D. The Revelation was penned approximately 96 A.D. The time when Jesus would come was John’s focus. The angel made that clear in verse 7: “Behold he cometh with clouds; and

every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him.” As consummation-event prophecy unfolded as revealed in the prophetic books, He would come quickly. That is the exact concept outlined in Daniel and Matthew 24.

Daniel’s Appointed Time

Few have paid attention to the amazing information that Gabriel opened to Daniel. He said: “*At the time of the end (eth qets) shall be the vision.*” Daniel 8:17. The *chazown* vision within Daniel 8–12 revealed how the Mystery of Iniquity would work right at the end of time.

“I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation (*zaam* – God’s wrath): for at the time appointed, the end shall be.” Daniel 8:19.

At the time appointed is the end of time – at the time of God’s wrath.

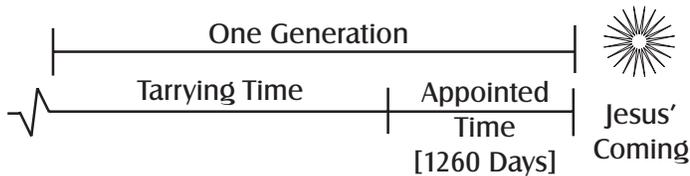
Habakkuk said the tarrying time or waiting period would end at the appointed time (*mowed*). Therefore, we can see the following outline emerge:

- The finale’ of the Mystery of Iniquity of Daniel 8–12 is at the end of time.
- The appointed time is at the end of time.
- The appointed time is when the tarrying time ends.
- The end of time is when God’s wrath finishes.

The information continues to pour in. Daniel asked Jesus in chapter 12, “How long to the end of these wonders?” (vs 6), referring to Michael standing up, the time of trouble, deliverance of God’s people and the special resurrection (Daniel 12:1-2). When will all this occur? Jesus said simply:

“*[It shall be] for a time, times, and an half {mowed, moweds and half mowed – 1260 days}; and when he {king of the north (Daniel 11:40-45)} shall have accomplished to scatter {persecute} the power of the holy people, all these [things] shall be finished.*” Daniel 12:7.

The *chazown* vision with all the oppression of God’s people and church will come to an end at the end of 1260 days – at the deliverance of God’s people. From Habakkuk to here it is now clear that:



This coincides exactly with Jesus' message to John in Revelation 10:6. There will no longer be a delay. Both times Jesus gives end-time timing messages – first to Daniel and secondly to John, He swears by heaven with the hand uplifted. Those timing messages are so vital, so sacred, so important that Jesus didn't leave them to that mighty angel, Gabriel. He personally came to present them.

The honor and reputation of heaven itself stands against the truth of those *time* prophecies. When the *appointed time* comes, it is a prophetic, literal-time countdown to the deliverance of God's people. There is no prophecy that sets a time/date for the second coming of Jesus. Everything ends at the deliverance!

"The book that was sealed was not the book of Revelation, but that portion of the prophecy of Daniel which related to the last days. The Scripture says, 'But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased' (Dan. 12:4). When the book was opened, the proclamation was made, 'Time shall be no longer.' (See Revelation 10:6.) The book of Daniel is now unsealed, and the revelation made by Christ to John is to come to all the inhabitants of the earth. By the increase of knowledge a people is to be prepared to stand in the latter days."¹

"As we near the close of this world's history, the prophecies recorded by Daniel demand our special attention, as they relate to the very time in which we are living. With them should be linked the teachings of the last book of the New Testament Scriptures. Satan has led many to believe that the prophetic portions of the writings of Daniel and of John the revelator cannot be understood.

But the promise is plain that special blessing will accompany the study of these prophecies. 'The wise shall understand' (verse 10), was spoken of the visions of Daniel that were to be unsealed in the latter days; and of the revelation that Christ gave to His servant John for the guidance of God's people all through the centuries, the promise is, 'Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.' Revelation 1:3."²

"Daniel shall stand in his lot at the end of the days. John sees the little book unsealed. Then Daniel's prophecies have their proper place in the *first, second, and third angels' messages* to be given to the world. The unsealing of the little book was the *message in relation to time!*"³

Summary

The Great Week of Time is not marred or impinged by the tarrying-time message. The *apparent "delay"* is between the two great end-time prophecies of Matthew 24. It represents a waiting time within the Great Week of Time concept. The prophetic tarrying time comes when, within one generation, *after* the beginning of sorrows, God's people must wait until the three-and-a-half-year appointed time. Then time is no longer delayed and His coming is expected.

An analogy can be seen from Noah's day. God delayed from the fall of man to Noah to deal with violence and rebellion. Once the preaching began, there was a distinct tarrying time that God had foretold. There was a 120-year wait before the wrath of God while Noah built and preached. When the animals and Noah were in the ark, the door was shut. That began the appointed time of seven days. They were safe in the ark, sealed from harm. When God's wrath was poured out, they had His protecting care within the ark.

In the next issue we will explore the issues of E. G. White's repetitive thoughts that we could have been in the kingdom "err long this."

¹*Selected Messages*, vol. 2, p. 105.

²*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 547-548.

³*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 19, p. 320 (emphasis added).



Prophecy Unfolds

DANIEL CHAPTERS 8–12 – PART 10

BY FRANKLIN S. FOWLER JR., M.D.

Chapter 29

KEY SECULAR LEADERS DURING THE 490 YEARS

Daniel 11:1-20

Introduction

“Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, [even] I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him.” Daniel 11:1.

This verse is the launching *period* for this chapter. It reveals heaven’s ultimate control and influence over earthly leaders. And it revisits key issues of Satan’s hatred towards God’s covenant by harming God’s people. Written in Hebrew, Daniel 11 describes elements of that conflict especially important for the last generation. Its storyline extends right to the end of probation, tribulation, deliverance of God’s people and the special resurrection just before Jesus comes. How awesome to recognize God’s deep concern for the end-time remnant way back in the 6th century B.C.!

Gabriel conveyed to Daniel why he gave this message before the message was presented. It involved (here it is again) clarifying future *time* (10:14).

- Gabriel came to make Daniel understand
- What would befall God’s people
- In the future – or latter days

The Hebrew entymological setting is different than that of chapter 8. There the future was tied to the very end of *time* (*eth qets*), the *appointed time* (*mowed*) and the *future days* (*acharith*) when God’s wrath would be exhibited. Collectively, that setting relates to the eschaton. Those prophetic messages were the first part of the *chazown* vision – the sealed portion of Daniel. In this new vision, Gabri-

el’s timed introduction is couched in more cautious terms, yet still part of that *chazown* vision. The use of *acharith* alone suggests a *general future*. When used with the word “days” (*yowm*) it usually refers to when Jesus comes the second time. The context reveals to which era it applies.

Reason for Daniel 11

“Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter [acharith] days [yowm]: for yet the vision [is] for [many] days.” Daniel 10:14.

Paraphrased: “I’ve come to make you grasp what is going to befall thy people in the *future*. Yet, it won’t happen right away but sometime in the *distant future* – at the *consummation*.”

The *chazown* vision describes the workings of Satan and *his* people, persecuting or seeking to harm God’s agents and His church. It is a divine bulletin warning the remnant what it will be like – thus, prepare.

The great timing issues of Daniel 8 surround the second coming of Jesus. Here Gabriel switches the *chazown* vision imagery to look only at a general future. Daniel 11 is unique to the whole book. Its mission is to carefully supplement what has already been presented with additional fascinating details. By the time the vision ends we will be at the very end of time. The introductory timing statement let **Daniel know** this vision wasn’t for his day. It was *far* into the future.

Daniel 7 talked about one rise of the papacy – the *little horn* in the Dark Ages. Daniel 8 talked about a second rise of the papacy – at the eschaton – at the *appointed time*. God is extremely anxious that those distinct separate rises are not only seen but that key events surrounding each are identified.

God foresaw many scholarly opinions arising in an attempt to define the *little horn*. He sent Gabriel back to make sure there would be only one line of understanding – He gave Daniel 11 to set in stone forever the rises (plural) of the papacy! As Gabriel interacts with Daniel he urges a thought:

“I will show thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth.” Daniel 10:21.

“And now will I show thee the truth.” Daniel 11:2.

That is amazing! He is going to show truth from what was *already* revealed in the Scripture that was not understood. In other words, “I’m going to show you, Daniel, the truth about truth.”

Intriguingly, *between* those two verses about truth is that verse that shows heaven’s protection of the deliverer of God’s people (11:1):

“Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, [even] I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him.”

You will be astounded – this vision ends with the deliverance of God’s people (12:1)!

“I not only will give you truth but I’m the one that gave strength and courage to Darius in his first year.” What does that have to do with the truth of the *little horn*? There lies a greater issue – literalism will lead to a spin of opinions as to what Gabriel is saying. Darius was the Median monarch whose general, Cyrus from Persia, conquered Babylon. Babylon fell, and God was strengthening Darius, and later Cyrus – both great Biblical symbols for *deliverers*.

The deliverer and deliverance theme were *from* oppressive apostate powers. That is, “People of God, be courageous. No earthly power can hold you down forever. Deliverance *is* the *truth* for this hour!” “I even use worldly powers to achieve that.”

Same Symbol Sequence

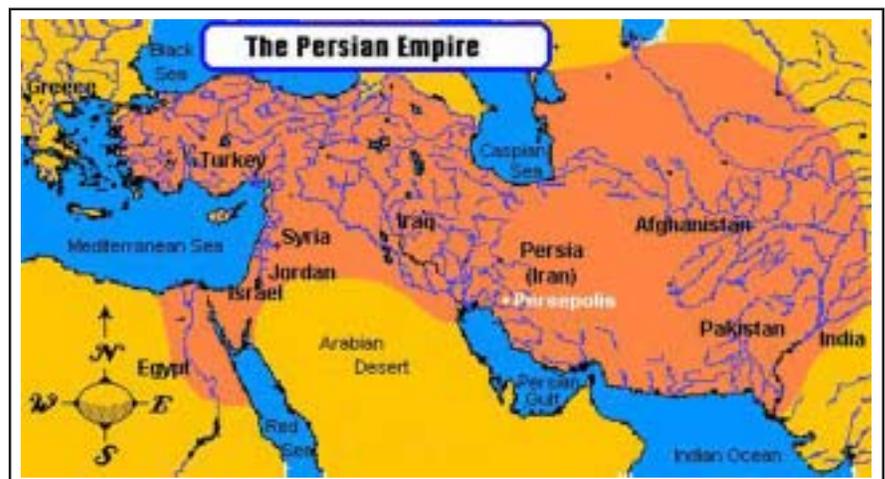
<u>Literal</u>	<u>Dark Ages</u>	<u>End of Ages</u>
God’s people in Babylon	God’s people vs. the Roman Catholic Church	God’s people vs. Babylon
Oppressed	Oppressed	Oppressed
Daniel and Ezekiel’s message of deliverance and restoration	Protestants message of reformation, deliverance and restoration	144,000 Loud Cry Message of deliverance and restoration

When Daniel 11 was given, Cyrus had been in power for three years. God’s people were delivered and restoration was underway. That frames the end-time imagery of the terminal conflicts between good and evil, the deliverance of God’s people and then their restoration! That is repeatedly coupled with warnings that the end of wickedness will be *desolation*.

E. G. White saw clearly the contextual themes when she said: “The prophecy of the eleventh chapter of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment. Soon the scenes of trouble spoken of in the prophecies will take place.” – *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 14. She then quotes Isaiah 24:1-8; Joel 1:15-18, 12; Jeremiah 4:19-20, 23-26, 30:7.

Gabriel Opens the “Scripture of Truth”

The rest of the chapter on into Daniel 12:3 (all one flowing message) has four main parts, all dealing with future issues so very important to God’s people.



Part 1 (11:2-20):

Highlights of kingdom rulers to the time of Jesus – covering the 70 weeks of years.

Part 2 (11:21-27):

Papacy – first rise/fall

Part 3 (11:28-45):

Papacy – second rise/fall

Part 4 (12:1-3):

Last scenes of earth's history

Yes – there are significant time gaps between events, people and issues. That is not new to this book.

Key King During the 70 Weeks

“Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than [they] all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those.” Daniel 11:2-4.

Gabriel is about to unfold king/kingdom highlights that lay ahead for the *Jewish people* in Part I. These details would act as *assurance waymarks* for Daniel's people during the 490-year period of probation. But Biblical history fails to show that that ever occurred with this people.

Gabriel begins his instruction in Cyrus' third year. This immediately follows Daniel's wonderful vision of Jesus in chapter 10. Three kings are to follow Cyrus (559–530 B.C.).

1. Cambyses II (529–522 B.C.)
2. False Smerdis (522 B.C.)
3. Darius I (the one who made Shushan the Medo–Persian capital — 522–486 B.C.)

Then a fourth king who was “far richer than they all” would come and fight against the kingdom of Greece. This was a task Darius I left to that fourth king as a followup to the Ionian rebellion during his reign when a Greek fleet was defeated.

4. Xerxes (Ahasuerus of Esther's time) (485–468 B.C.) is that “far richer” king.

“Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus, (this [is] Ahasuerus which reigned, from India even unto Ethiopia, [over] an hundred and seven and twenty provinces:) ... When he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty many days, [even] an hundred and fourscore days.” Esther 1:1, 4.

Xerxes was the king who, at the time of Esther, was used by God to first make and then reverse a death decree against Israel. That brought great respect and security to God's people. ***“The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honor.”*** Esther 8:16.

Because of those dramatic events, the Jews were exalted and feared, and ***“many of the people of the land became Jews.”*** Esther 8:17.

That opened the door for the next king, though not listed in Gabriel's notables. Xerxes' son Artaxerxes I (464–425 B.C.) became the king to issue a decree to restore the *Jewish theocracy*. This began the 2300-year (Daniel 8:14) and 490-year (Daniel 9:25) prophecies of Daniel 8 and 9.

Keep in mind that the purpose of the *chazown* vision is very end-time. But within that framework, Gabriel is now simply beginning a prophetic journey that will soon wind up exactly there – at the very end of time!

“And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.” Daniel 11:3.

Most expositors agree that this describes Alexander the Great (336–323 B.C.) at the rise of the Grecian kingdom. But different from Daniel 2 and 7, the real issue now is *not* kingdoms but waymark *kings*. From Xerxes to Alexander was a leap of 129 years. A sequence of notable nobles is developing to honor the proleptic insight of God – and – inspire hope for God's people as each *sign* unfolds. (Each king is a sign that they are getting closer to the end of the 490-year period.)

“And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those.” Daniel 11:4.

Exactly as the Scriptures point out, as Alexander's kingdom stood up (came into dominance), it was broken, lasting only 13 years. Alexander had

no strong posterity, so the kingdom was divided among others – “plucked up” or removed from his heirs toward the four winds of heaven.”

Four of Alexander’s generals took up territory in four different areas:

Cassander – Macedonia and Greece

Ptolemy I Lagi (Soter) (323–285 B.C.) – Egypt, Palestine and Phoenicia (south)

Seleucus I Nicador (321–316) – Babylon and Syria (north)

Lysimachus – Asia Minor

“And the king of the south shall be strong, and [one] of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion [shall be] a great dominion.” Daniel 11:5.

A new term is introduced here – *king of the south* – as a literal king. In verse 25 that phrase will become a metaphor for another power. This is often associated with the rival *king of the north*. Ptolemy I Lagi (Soter) – *king of the south* – was initially the most powerful of the four. Seleucus I Nicador (315–280 B.C.) of the north even placed himself for a time under his rule. The text was fulfilled exactly as God had predicted. Eventually, Seleucus became the strongest. He then becomes the first *king of the north* mentioned in chapter 11. Eventually he took the lands of Cassander and Lysimachus. He truly was in charge of all northern kingdoms, leaving only a southern kingdom.

“And in the end of years they shall join themselves together; for the king’s daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement: but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in [these] times.” Daniel 11:6.

This is an amazing prophecy. Antiochus II Theos (280–246 B.C.), son of Antiochus I Soter (324–261 B.C.) and grandson of Seleucus I Nicador (north) inherited a state of war with Egypt (the “Second Syrian War”). During the war he was given the name “theos,” meaning “God” in Greek. Peace eventually came “in the end of the years” “they shall join themselves together.” Antiochus II gave up his first wife and half-sister Laodice and married Bernice (yes, as Gabriel had revealed), the daughter

of Ptolemy II of Philadelphus, Egypt (south). Bernice didn’t retain any power or authority because Laodice had Bernice and her son murdered. Thus, Laodice’s son Seleucus II Callinicus took the throne of the north by a “northern declaration.”

“But out of a branch of her roots shall [one] stand up in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail: And shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, [and] with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue [more] years than the king of the north.” Daniel 11:7-8.

A family “branch” of Bernice’s, from “her roots,” her brother Ptolemy III Euergetes now rules Egypt. In revenge at his sister’s death, he takes the fortified northern kingdom and brings back with him 2500 gold and silver idols, precious vessels and prisoners. Exactly the details the Scriptures portray! Laodice was killed in the attack.

“So the king of the south shall come into [his] kingdom, and shall return into his own land.” Daniel 11:9.

If this referred to Ptolemy III, it would be *repeating* information contextually. Here are a few other translations that suggest the King James Version is in error:

“And he shall come into the realm of the king of the south, but he shall return into his own land” (American Standard Version).

“Then the latter shall come into the realm of the king of the south but shall return into his own land” (Revised Standard Version).

“Also [the king of the north] shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land” (New King James Version).

“But the latter will invade the kingdom of the king of the south, then retire to his own country” (Jerusalem Bible).

“The king of the north shall then invade the realm of the king of the South, but he shall retreat to his own country” (Moffatt’s Translation).

The context and flow of ideas invite the insights of these four examples.

Seleucus II Callinicus of the north wanted to get back at Ptolemy III for his military carnage. He tried to take Egypt in 240 B.C. but suffered a major defeat, including loss of his navy and “returned to his own land.”

“But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and [one] shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return, and be stirred up, [even] to his fortress.”

Daniel 11:10.

Seleucus III Cevaunus Soter (226–223 B.C.) and Antiochus III the Great (223–187 B.C.), sons of Seleucus II, decided to continue the revenge against the south to avenge their father’s failure. Seleucus III was killed. Antiochus III took up the northern banner, recaptured the port of Antioch, then set out on a systematic campaign (219 B.C.) to conquer Syria and Palestine from the now new Egyptian head, Ptolemy IV Philopator (221–203 B.C.).

It is noteworthy that God’s people in Judea, at this moment in time, are nearly halfway through their 490-year probation – the 70 weeks. Why is the Bible silent during this period regarding God’s people? One must conclude that the probation was not going well. Apostasy led God to have Palestine crisscrossed with repeated military campaigns between the kings of the north and the kings of the south.

The only prophetic warning God would now give is found right here in Daniel 11. Each military fray and each king was a reminder of a sovereign God who had predicted it all beforehand. Alas, when God came (and Daniel 9 clearly tells when), they didn’t recognize him. This is all a metaphor of exactly what it will be like at the end between the *king of the north* and the *king of the south*. When Jesus comes, He will not have been anticipated by most of those who claim to be His followers.

“And the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, [even] with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand.” Daniel 11:11.

An enraged Ptolemy IV brought 68,000 foot soldiers, 5000 cavalry and 73 elephants against Antiochus III’s – “assembled multitude” of 75,000 men. Antiochus III lost 17,000 of his men and suffered defeat with 4000 prisoners taken: “the multitude shall be given into his hand.” This all culminated at the battle of Raphia in Palestine on June 22, 217 B.C. Ptolemy was the victor.

As these prophetic details unfolded, a book of destiny was developing. Israel is being reminded with the saga of each king that their probation time is running out – 248 years now remain.

“[And] when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down [many] ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened [by it].” Daniel 11:12.

Ptolemy IV (south) was proud of his victory. But in his administrative indolence he failed to secure the empire. He became careless and was not strengthened by his military exploits. This weakened his kingdom. His dynasty began to rapidly decline. Then Egyptians began to rebel against their Greek leaders. In 203 B.C. Ptolemy IV and the queen died mysteriously.

“For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches. And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south:” Daniel 11:13-14 (first part).

Antiochus III the Great (north) sixteen years after Raphia (201 B.C.) took advantage of a weakened Egypt now under Ptolemy V Epiphanes, a ten-year old boy. Antiochus mounted a vicious attack and regained Syria and Palestine and pushed the conquest as far as India.

Internal strife within Egypt against the Greek Ptolemy leaders deepened. Philip of Macedonia joined Antiochus III and threatened to divide the empire. Rome became involved and crushed Philip’s westward push. While that went on Antiochus III pushed hard against a defenseless Egypt and made extensive military gains.

“... also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall.” Daniel 11:14 (last part).

As noted in the commentary under verse 10, this was the time for the final, last-chance probation ever to be given to the Jewish people. Those phrases (vs 14) are a commentary insert to let God’s people know that they are the issue in the heart of this prophecy.

God foretells, in spite of battles and conflicts crisscrossing “their” land, that this would fail to refine, humble and change them. Their leaders were robbing the people of truth, making themselves the ultimate losers of the battle. How did

God react ahead of time? "They shall fall." God's cleaver of justice soon would fall on the Jewish nation – forever – just as we saw in Daniel 9.

"So the king of the north shall come, and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities: and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither [shall there be any] strength to withstand." Daniel 11:15.

Antiochus III seized the fortified cities of Gaza (201 B.C.) and Sidon (198 B.C.). Palestine fell to his control. Rome, Italy, had been invited by Egyptian authorities to help protect the young Ptolemy V. They had warned Antiochus III not to attack – but he did anyway. Rome was contending with Philip of Macedonia and unable to help. During the reign of Antiochus III, the Jewish religion was nearly exterminated.

It wasn't long before Antiochus IV (Epiphanes – 175-164 B.C.) ruled Syria (king of north).

In a spirit of deep anger he organized an expedition against Jerusalem. He wanted to destroy the Jews and exterminate all worship of their God. For any Jew who kept the seventh-day Sabbath or who refused to worship his idols, death was imminent. The temple was desecrated by sacrificing and worshiping a pig within its precincts. All these were reminders to God's people that their covenant with Him was being desecrated and their probation time was being squandered. The Jews had been at peace with the Ptolomies. During Ptolemy IV's reign they had translated the Torah from Hebrew into Greek for the royal library at Alexandria. This was called the Septuagint translation.

Of intense providential warning, Antiochus IV murdered any infant found circumcised and its mother – because that symbolized that they were to be a covenant-keeping people. Alas, it was only outward show. Their hearts were far from God.

"But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed." Daniel 11:16.

This began a series of battles instigated by Rome ("he [Rome] that cometh against him [initially, Antiochus III – but more so Antiochus IV]). In 191 B.C. Rome conquered Antiochus III's forces. Rome is now beginning to "do according to his own will." At the battle of Pydnain in 168 B.C. under Antiochus IV, the vestiges of the Greek

empire began to crumble. In 64 B.C. the Roman General Pompey invaded Palestine – "the glorious land." The Hellenistic age was at an end. Rome was now in control.

"He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do: and he shall give him the daughter of women, corrupting her: but she shall not stand [on his side], neither be for him." Daniel 11:17.

The phrase "and upright ones with him" is in question. It appears to represent an administrative stance of Rome where their rule of conquered lands was equitable with the conquered peoples – "Thus shall he do."

Rome continued its world conquest under the command of Julius Caesar. The then king of Egypt, Ptolemy XII Auletes Philadelphus, gave Julius Caesar his daughter Cleopatra VII as a mistress. They never married – "she shall not stand with him, or be for him."

"After this shall he turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many: but a prince for his own behalf shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease; without his own reproach he shall cause [it] to turn upon him. Then he shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land: but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found." Daniel 11:18-19.

"He," Julius Caesar, conquered many islands along the north coast of Africa and Asia Minor, and invaded Great Britain twice.

In his final military exploits to expand the empire into Europe, Julius embarked on brilliant campaigns, conquering northern France, Belgium and Southern Great Britain, subjugating the Celts.

Pompey, who had been a loyal general (*prince*), had remained at Rome during the European campaign. He turned the Senate against Julius (the *prince* who was originally part of "his own behalf" brought "reproach" on him [contextual meaning]). There is dispute among translators as to how this part of the verse should be worded. It appears as though the *prince* will bring reproach against him, but the reproach will be turned against the *prince*. That would describe what occurred with Pompey. They declared Julius an enemy of the state. They ordered Julius to turn over his lands and generalship.

Julius Caesar attacked. Now General Pompey was on the opposite side. In 48 B.C. Pompey was

defeated where he had retreated to – Pharsalus, Greece.

Julius Caesar then turned “his face toward the fort of his own land.” By 46 B.C. the Roman Senate appointed him dictator for life.

Brutus, his adopted son, and his friend Cassius, plotted and killed Caesar in 44 B.C. – “he shall stumble and fall, and not be found.”

“Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes [in] the glory of the kingdom: but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle.”
Daniel 11:20.

The great-nephew of Julius Caesar, Octavius, succeeded him and became Caesar Augustus. Under his leadership the Roman Empire saw its nadir of power and influence.

He brought to that kingdom universal taxes. This helped to fulfill prophecy by bringing Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem for a census (Luke 21:1), where the Messiah of Israel was born.

This now brings us to the point where a major break comes in the prophecy. Many symbolic issues are now to be taken up. Gabriel is about to take another leap of several hundred years to a fearful king – a *vile person* (vs 20).

Once again in this summation prophecy the issue of kingdoms, beast images and powers give way to key world leaders of notable importance to God’s people.

Cyrus – deliverer

Xerxes (Ahasuerus) – deliverer

North and South rivalry – setting

metaphorical picture of what happens

during the final probation

Caesar Augustus – facilitated the way for the

Deliverer and Restorer.

“As in old time Cyrus was called to the throne of the world’s empire that he might set free the captives of the Lord, so Caesar Augustus is made the agent for the fulfillment of God’s purpose in bringing the mother of Jesus to Bethlehem. She is of the lineage of David, and the Son of David must be born in David’s city. Out of Bethlehem, said the prophet, ‘shall He come forth ... that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity.’ Micah 5:2, margin.”¹

Part two of this vision now must begin. Of utmost importance is that God’s people recognize the two rises of the evil power, the papacy. It will be part of the third angel’s message. Its nuances must be clear, its ultimate curse of God understood.

God’s people have been in a probationary time. These kings were *clear* waymarks through this time, revealing God’s sovereign power through prophecy. Daniel 11 should have humbled them to their knees and led them to an unswerving commitment to Daniel 9:24. Their minds were numbed by prejudice and tradition. The Messiah – Immanuel – came, and they knew Him not.

Now we look at the first rise of the papacy – a visible expression of the *mystery of iniquity*.

¹*Desire of Ages*, p. 44.

Chapter 30

THE RISE OF THE PAPACY

Daniel 11:21-27

Introduction

We now enter the part of Gabriel's vision that describes briefly a theme already introduced in chapters 7 through 9. Everything in chapter 11 unfolds what was a preamble in those previous chapters. There are two rises of the papacy! One in chapter 7 and the second in chapter 8. Each is depicted as a *little horn*, but they exist in two vastly different eras of time. God wanted to make certain that Biblical expositors understood this – thus chapter 11. Verse 21 begins the account of the first rise. The rest of the chapter is “just to make sure” that those two rises remain distinct in our thinking.

The reason there are so many differing views of this vision lies in the diverse assumptions that commentators have already formed from chapter 8. Exegetic and contextual clues have been ignored, compounding interpretive errors as the narrative continues. Gabriel made it clear in his introductory remarks that this vision was for the “last days” (*acharyth*) (10:14) – “future days to come.” Micah 4:1-3 reveals that this is when God's people will be exalted and war shall be no more (cf. Isaiah 2:1-4). Daniel already went a step further and said the *acharyth* would be at the very end of time (*eth qets*) (8:17, 19). Yet, in face of this contextual revelation, the *majority* of commentators tenaciously hold to the *vile person* or *little horn* as Antiochus IV Epiphanes who died in 163 BC! That is an interpretative disconnect.

The vision ranges from Daniel's day in the 6th century B.C. all the way to the resurrection (Daniel 12:2). Just preceding this is a period of distress and unparalleled tribulation (Daniel 12:1). Jesus said that that time of trouble would occur just before He returns (Matthew 24:21, 29-30). Thus, we view a vision in Daniel 11 that transects time into key segments, covering more than 2500 years.

The resurrection noted in Daniel 12:1-2 is preceded by the demise of the tyrant *king of the north* – same as the *little horn* and *vile person*. Is the theological “hero” Antiochus Epiphanes going to survive centuries? Jesus said the evil work of the

king of the north would cease at the time of the wonders of the resurrection and when God's people were delivered (Daniel 12:1-2, 7) – at the end of a 1260-day period or 3 ½-year period.

In addition, the Maccabean theory states that the “abomination of desolation” of Daniel 11:31 applied exclusively to the Syrian leader Antiochus Epiphanes (175–164 B.C.). Yet Jesus said the abomination of desolation was one of the “timing signs” just preceding His coming (Matthew 24:15-30). Who's right? Jesus or tradition? Daniel 12 makes it clear that the abomination that leads to desolation would last only 1290 days, ending in the deliverance of God's people.

Correct bonding of Biblical clues reveals not only a beautiful simple picture but Jesus personally involved in the understanding of Daniel's book. When the disciples ask about the end of time, He refers them back to Daniel – of all things!

Another thematic issue reveals the rise and fall of many kings from Daniel 11:2-20. This stops when the vile king emerges. Then something different happens. Daniel 11:21-45 collectively reveals the actions of a single individual – though in two eras. There is no successor recorded at the very end of time or to that individual.

The “power” of that individual parallels the *little horn* of Daniel 8. Also, Gabriel refers to that power there as “he” or “his” thirteen times. In Daniel 9:26-27 is the one who becomes desolate.

Little Horn (chapters 7 and 8) and Vile King (chapter 11)

“And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.” Daniel 11:21.

A vile (*bazah* – contemptible) person, acting against God's will, appears firmly established but without a kingdom. He comes to power peaceably – not through military might. In the end he will have a kingdom through deceit and flattery.

Daniel 11:21-27, in a brief expose', dramatizes the first papal reign of power. How do we know? It

follows the sequential history noted in verses 2-20, ending with Caesar Augustus (with a time gap we have seen frequently in this chapter). Secondly, this power enters the stage of history peaceably through deceit.

“Obtains the kingdom by flatteries” (11:21)

“Mouth speaks great words” (7:11, 20, 25)

“Changes times and laws” (7:25)

The papacy entered the world scene peaceably. Justinian (Flavius Anicius Julianus Justinianus) was a Roman Emperor for 38 years (527–565 A.D.) working out of Constantinople. He had a brilliant career in securing the Byzantine empire, immortalizing Byzantine architecture and developing legal codes. The latter became a lasting legacy to Western Civilization.

His ecclesiastical genius recognized the importance of religious peace to civil order. The Justinian Codes of law had their origins through a commission of ten lawyers he appointed. They drew from the teachings of four economical councils¹ and became “Corpus Juris Civilis.” This, in turn, later guided the development of canon law by the Roman Catholic Church.

Justinian’s general, Belisarios, arranged for Pope Vigilius to be the head of the Roman Church by banishing a competitor, Silverius. This changed the way ecclesiastical leaders were previously appointed by religious councils. Justinian also appointed a bishop in Constantinople who began a schism that fully developed in 1035 A.D. and remains today.

The “papal kingdom” emerged through gifts, endowments and outright transfer of land by Pepin the Short in 754 A.D. In time the papacy had an army and used its military power to suppress its enemies. Its power reached its zenith in the 16th century as part of the Counter Reformation when excommunication, inquisition, bans, index of books and censorship became its *modus operandi*.

“And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant.” Daniel 11:22.

The use of the word “flood” (*sheteph*) suggests judgment or wrath. Here is depicted a scene where going before this *vile person* is the judgment of

wrath, crushing those before him. Who are “they” that are “broken” (*shabar*) or crushed? The explanation of Gabriel makes it clear that it is God’s people because he says, “Yea, also the prince of the covenant.” The prince is the Messiah [the same as the “prince of the host” (8:11), the “Prince of princes” (8:25) and “Messiah the Prince” (9:25-26)]. In those verses the *little horn* stands up against the *Prince of princes*. The *little horn* and the *vile person* both represent the papal system.

When did the wrath go before the papacy to crush God’s people and Jesus? The Dark Ages stands as a rebuke to the fiendish hatred of the Roman Church – the papacy – towards them.

The “arms” (a symbol of power) came through civil governments, dotting to the hateful commands of the papacy.

“And after the league [made] with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people.” Daniel 11:23.

The word for league (*chabar*) means an agreement based on charm. Many countries bowed to the wishes of the papacy. In fact, many emperors and kings felt a guilt obligation to render allegiance to papal Rome – especially in France, Germany and Spain.

Indeed, this verse expresses what is apparent all along – “he shall work deceitfully.” The Hebrew word for “allegiance” is the same word for “craft” in Daniel 8:25. How is this league formulated? By the use of civil powers to enforce its dogma. In Revelation 13 the sea-beast also represents the papal power. The “image to the beast” symbolizes those ecclesiastical agencies that copy this papal technique by manipulating civil power to further its ends. There it is the country representing apostate Protestantism, shown as the earth-beast – the false prophet of Revelation.

Does the papacy use “a small number of people?”² Its ecclesiastical administrative body, the Holy See, has always been small.

“He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do [that] which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers’ fathers; he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches: [yea], and he shall forecast his devices against the strong holds, even for a time.” Daniel 11:24.

¹<http://cappsfamily.hypemart.net/justian.htm>

²Quoted by Robert Wood, *Prophecy Research Initiative document*, p. 15.

This continues a description of the horrible practices of the papacy. Always in an air of peace and pompous godliness, the papacy comes even to wealthy people or areas doing what church fathers dared not do; taking among themselves the riches, spoils and even people from their *exploits* as they cause the martyrdom of millions of God's people. This added to the wealth of the church and became land known as "papal states."

This verse ends with an insightful statement. The *vile person* will forecast (*chashab*), meaning contrive his devices (*machashabah*) or his cunning plans against the strongest. Yet, it would only continue for "a time." What time? Daniel 7:25 says for a "time and times and the dividing of time." This is seen to represent 1260 years. It's machinations would be time-limited by God's sovereign will.

"And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand: for they shall forecast devices against him." Daniel 11:25.

The *vile person* stirs up his power against the *king of the south* with a great army. Egypt, as *king of the south*, became a historical issue long ago. This now brings new meaning to the "king of the south." How did the papacy enter into military exploits and by default now become the *king of the north*?

In the 7th century A.D. Arab Muslims conquered Palestine. During the 11th century the fierce Seljuk Turks from central Asia invaded the near east and became conquerors of the Byzantines (Battle of Manzikert in Asia, 1071 A.D.), capturing many areas, including Palestine, from the Arab Muslims. They blocked all Christian pilgrimages to the area.

The Byzantine Emperor Alexius Comnenus (1048-1118 A.D.) asked Pope Urban II of the Catholic Church for help in fighting the Muslim Turks. Urban II was competing with a rival "pope" and thought this a unique way to consolidate his power and prestige.

In the autumn of 1095 A.D. he met with church leaders in Clermont, France, and appealed to his

European parishioners to unite and fight to regain Palestine. He offered spiritual and physical rewards, including forgiveness of sins, if they joined this crusade.

From 1096 A.D. through 1270 A.D. "Crusades" against the Turks were conducted. Knights and princes, the common people and the wealthy joined. This added greatly to the trade and economic growth of Europe. Their immediate goals were reached. With a "very great and mighty army," Palestine was retaken. The Biblical prophecy was fulfilled. But the Ottoman Empire continued to resist. Their control of the "glorious land" was regained and then lost again. By 1453 A.D. the Byzantine Empire fell and the Muslim Turks were permanently in charge.³

The battle between the Christian world and the Muslim world is a type of what will occur at the end of time as the latter verses of this chapter unfold. That will reveal, once again, a battle between the Christian world and the Muslim world.

The *little horn* of Daniel 8, representing the end-time papal power, "waxed exceeding great, toward the south and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land." Palestine will once again be a focal point of the Christian world and papal power (the latter owns most of the land of Christian *shrines* already). As this manuscript is being written, not only is the Vatican negotiating with Muslims and Jews regarding "peace" in the "pleasant land," the whole evangelical world believes Palestine is part of the prophetic end game before the "rapture." The "glorious land" is clearly seen in prophecy (Daniel 11:41, 45) – but not depicted as they believe – as will unfold later.

"Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him, and his army shall overflow: and many shall fall down slain." Daniel 11:26.

This verse introduces an important note from history. The Crusades were successful initially, especially the first one. But Palestine was recaptured by the Muslims. The subsequent history through nine crusades shows many local victories and defeats. The "Christian" crusaders not only plundered Muslim areas during this time but freely massacred Jews.

³The World Book Encyclopedia, 1996 Edition (World Book Inc, a Scott Fetzer Company; Chicago, London, Sydney, Toronto), 1995.

But the Muslims repeatedly showed their resiliency. Their goal was to conquer the Christian world. The Crusades were, in part, an attempt to turn back those conquests. But they were by and large poorly organized, without a central leader and, ultimately, suffered defeat.

Who shared with the papacy the same interest in defeating the Islamic world? Initially France, then Spain and, later, Germany – then back to France. They all “fed” with the papacy the religious cause of the Crusades, bearing the symbol of the “cross” in their exploits. But the text says that those who were part of the *vile person* “destroyed him.” His support and defense was “overflowed” (*shataph* – inundated, under judgment) or came under wrath, and many were slain.

This occurred in 1798 when General Louis A. Berthier, upon Napoleon’s orders, sent him from Paris to take Rome. A Roman republic was established, and Pope Pius VI was taken captive. He later died in France. “They that feed” with him “shall destroy him.” That would be called later in Revelation 13 a “deadly wound.”

“And both these kings’ hearts [shall be] to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper: for yet the end [shall be] at the time appointed.” Daniel 11:27.

The *vile person* was destroyed in the previous verse but is now alive. This verse is a commentary insert adding additional information to the previous verses (20-26).

Because of the continued fighting the Crusaders and Muslims entered into treaty after treaty to bring peace or peaceful coexistence. But the Muslims wanted to control and coerce.

The armies on both sides repeatedly experienced defeat and victory with land being gained and lost. In the meantime tens of thousands of people were slain.

The *vile person’s* representatives and Muslim leaders spoke lies by conveying interest in peace. Those “mischievous treaties” were for their survival and temporal convenience only. They did “not prosper” or last.

The final part of verse 27 brings in an interesting turning point. At the *appointed time* (*mowed*) the end (*gets*) will occur. Does this suddenly refer back to 8:17 and 19? Context is everything to our understanding. This is the end of the *vile person*. Daniel 7:25 makes it clear that the *little horn* power

was predestined to end at the termination of 1260 years. That end or *gets* was at an appointed time. Why the use of the Hebrew word *mowed* for the appointed time here – a word often denoting a sacred appointment? It was a sacred decree appointment in God’s calendar. Thus, there are two appointed times in Daniel – one that deals with the end of the 1260 years, the other the 1260 days (the two times the papacy was in power). The next three verses clarify what occurred.

A significant turning point now comes in the vision that goes right to the end of the chapter. It begins to describe the *vile person* as having great riches and against the *treaty of God* – the “holy covenant.” Something has changed, and new imagery is being introduced. This begins to describe the second period when the papacy will be a world power.

What happened in the interim between these rises? The papacy struggled and maintained its ecclesiastical authority. Its secular rule was taken away through a series of vacillating moves on the part of France and later by the Italian people. On March 17, 1860. Italy became a full-blown “kingdom” state and by September 20, 1870, Rome fell to Italian troops, and the papal states became part of Italy. The “kingdom” of the papacy came to its end. The papacy was reined into 109 acres within Rome – the Vatican.

It is to be noted that at this time some of the most treacherous ecclesiastical decisions were made that defied the God of heaven. It was also during this period that the first Vatican Council was convened (1869) by Pope Pius IX. It was then that the doctrine of papal infallibility was adopted through coercive pressure of the pope on the delegates.

In the next chapter we will begin to deal with the final history of the *vile person*. There, the *king of the north* will be adopted. Why the change? God is helping us to see that the same power continues to be presented – but now in a different era. The north was where God, the great King, was tabernacled on Mount Zion (Psalms 48:2). Satan aspired to exalt his throne above the stars of God to that “mount of the congregation.” “I will be like the most High” (Isaiah 14:13-14). The *king of the north*, as Satan’s representative, attempts to do this at the end of time. Thus, the name is apropos and descriptive.



When Was Jesus Born?

Christ's birth, death and resurrection have influenced human history more than any other event. Millions of pages recording the impact of Christ's life have been written. That God would become a man, allow beings He created to kill Him and then translate that event into a pathway of salvation is the most astonishing story ever told. Yet, *when* those events occurred remains in dispute.

To understand several prophetic timing messages requires that we know when those events occurred. In turn, that helps us to grasp key end-time events that relate to the great Jewish holidays – festivals.

Here's the challenge: The Passover lamb was to be killed on the 14th of the Jewish month of Nissan (Abib), prepared and eaten that night (after sundown, Nissan the 15th, when a new day began). This date must occur at a full moon. That, in turn, is predicated on a subjective beginning of the month stated by observers when the new moon (first sliver of its crescent phase) was seen. Jesus, the Passover Lamb, was killed on Friday (the preparation day), which would have to be Nissan 14 at full moon.

Since the beginning of the month could be off one to two days and since no one can tell with certainty which year a Jewish "leap" month was added 2000 years ago (a 13-month year), scholars have defended A.D. 27, 30, 33 and 36 as crucifixion dates.

Adding complication to this conflict are the many calendars used to date time. Often an event was dated by the year a king was in power. The Julian calendar was introduced by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C., chosen after consultation with the Alexandrian astronomer Sosigenes. That calendar had a year of 12 months and a "leap year" every four years – not a leap month.

In 525 A.D. Dionysius Exiguus invented, at Pope John I's request, B.C. (before Christ) and A.D. (Anno Domini – Year of our Lord). He did not accurately know when Christ was born. In addition, in transferring from 1 B.C. to 1 A.D. he failed to put in a "zero."

It took nearly 400 years for this system to be adopted. In combination with the Julian calendar (which determined the beginning of the months and years), Dionysius' system continued until 1582 A.D.

In 1582 A.D. Pope Gregory XIII set about to deal with growing inaccuracies of the Julian and Dionysius systems. Because a year is not exactly 365 days long, seasons were beginning to occur at different times of the year. The rules he set up were exactly like the Julian calendar except for a leap-year system. This was done by bringing the vernal equinox back to March 21.

Although software can handle dates as far back as 4700 B.C., it is not totally objective. Various countries adopted these calendars at vastly different times. Thus, their records are often inaccurate. Astronomers can show in detail the sequence backward of the new and full moons, but can't be certain when Friday, Nissan 14 occurred because of problems in Jewish timing. Since prophecy is tied to the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus, some system of dating must exist to guide our Biblical understanding. It is possible to take astronomically the yearly sun and moon cycles and set a "yearly" sequence of these celestial objects. Tying that to the simple fact that the movement from A.D. to B.C. and vice versa must include the year zero, an accurate *numerical sequence* can be made. Then one can plug in *historical events*, with all the clues God has given to date Biblical messages. He knew that "timing" issues would be a challenge.

That is why *so much* of the prophetic Scripture is *time-* and *event-*related!

Clues that Matter

Jesus' baptism was during the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar (Luke 3:1, 21). That is historically determined to be 27 A.D. This was prophesied over 500 years previously in Daniel 9:25 by the end of the 69 weeks when Messiah the Prince would make His debut.

The "commandment" to "restore and to build Jerusalem" to "Messiah the Prince" was issued in 457 B.C. That "decree" related to the reestablishment of the Jewish theocratic nation. It was given by Artaxerses I (Longimanus). It was a *spiritual decree* as the word *Jerusalem* was used spiritually. This prophecy relates to the restoration of a people, God's church, a holy nation. To Messiah the Prince would be 69 Sabbatical Sabbaths or 483 years. Sabbatical Sabbaths were the issue involving captivity (II Chronicles 36:21) and restoration (Daniel 9:24).

Calculations:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 483 \text{ years of prophetic timing} \\
 - 457 \text{ B.C.} - \text{ year of restorative decree} \\
 \hline
 26 \text{ A.D.} \\
 + \underline{1} \text{ year for the missing year of "zero"} \\
 \hline
 27 \text{ A.D. in the Gregorian calendar}
 \end{array}$$

Now we have developed two ways to determine 27 A.D. – Daniel's 9:25 prophecy and the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar. This becomes a key for additional timing issues.

This year is *when* Jesus is baptized, anointed of God and enters His 3½-year ministry. His work as the Messiah began then. Luke 3:23 notes that Jesus was "about 30 years of age" at this time. This would coincide with the age a male in Israel would enter the priesthood (Numbers 4:3).

This information would mean that Jesus was born in 3 B.C.

Calculation:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 30 \text{ years of age} \\
 - 27 \text{ A.D.} \\
 \hline
 3 \text{ B.C. (includes B.C. 0 - 1 - 2 - 3} \\
 \qquad \qquad \qquad \begin{array}{ccc} | & | & | \\ 1 & 2 & 3 \end{array}
 \end{array}$$

The Gospels tell us that Herod, king of Judea, died shortly after Jesus' birth (Matthew 2:15). A traditional view holds this to be 4 B.C. More recently W. E. Filmer,¹ Ernest L. Martin² and Ormond Edward³ have argued that 4 B.C. was too early. Josephus had noted that Herod died between a lunar eclipse and the Feast of Passover. The *traditional* date assumed an eclipse of March 13, 4 B.C. There was also a spectacular total eclipse on September 10, 1 B.C., which Josephus also mentions. This would allow for Jesus to be born in the fall of 3 B.C.

Four early Christian writers additionally reported that Jesus was born in 3/2 B.C. (Irenaeus – 2nd century, Clement of Alexandria – approximately 200 A.D., Tertullian – early 3rd century and Africanus – early 3rd century).

Luke's account says: "There went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city." Luke 2:1-3. Some translations say "census," others "registration." This fulfills the prophecy of Daniel 11:20.

The census of Caesar Augustus was during the time of Cyrenius (Latin Quirinius). The Syrian province at that time *included* Judea where Herod the Great was still its head.

"Cyrenius was, however, not an ordinary governor; he was a Roman *procurator* who had powers directly from Augustus, which in contemporary terms means a powerful 'man-Friday', a *Legatus Augusti* [Justin Martyr said that Roman records showed Quirinius as the *procurator* of Syria: *Apol. I, 34. The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. X, pg. 216, has this revealing

comment on the role of a Roman *procurator*: 'Each *province* had its equestrian procurator who in the eyes of the provincials was almost as important as the governor himself {see Tacitus, *Agric.*, 15}. These procurators were appointed by the Emperor quite independently of the *legatus* {governor} and the relations between the two were frequently none too friendly'."4

In 3 B.C. Quirinius was special governor during the time of the Syrian governorship of Saturninus, who was responsible for conducting the special census, preparing for the *Pater Patriae* for Augustus.

The *Pater Patriae* was the title of "Father of My Country," conveyed to Augustus by the Roman Senate. This was given on February 5, 2 B.C. when he was 60 years old and at his silver jubilee. The census and taxation was all part of the *preparation* for this time of celebration. All people were to sign an oath to Rome at that time.

There are other documents that substantiate the timing of this census.

"The Armenian historian, Moses of Khorene, said that the native sources he had available showed that in the second year of Abgar, king of Armenia (3BC), the census brought Roman agents 'to Armenia, bringing the image of Augustus Caesar, which they set up in every temple.'"5

"One Orosius, who lived in the fifth century and quoted early sources, wrote: '[Augustus] ordered that a census be taken of each province everywhere and that all men be enrolled ... This is the earliest and most famous public acknowledgment which marked Caesar as the first of all men and the Romans as lords of the world, a published list of all men entered individually ... This first and greatest census was taken, since in this one name of Caesar all the peoples of the great nations took oath, and at the same time, through the participation in the census, were made a part of one society' [VI, 22 and VII, 2; he also identified the year as 3BC]."6 Josephus mentioned that an oath of allegiance was demanded by Augustus about twelve or fifteen months before the death of Herod.7

Death of Christ

Evidence suggests that Jesus was born in the fall of the year at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. This would be beautifully symbolic and draws on the meaning of His name Emmanuel – God with us – He now tabernacles with us.

Daniel's 70 weeks of years prophecy noted that Jesus the Messiah – the Prince – would be cut off in the midst of the last week. That week of seven years would be divided in half, making a 3½ (1260 days) and 3½ (1260 days) time division.

Jesus begins His ministry at about 30 years of age (fall of 27 A.D.). Three and a half years later, 31 A.D. in the spring, at the time of the Passover, He is killed. This had to be, by divine directive, Nissan 14, Friday, the preparation day at full moon. Many have challenged this because of "astronomical data" (which allegedly shows a full moon cannot be on Friday, Nissan 14, *except in 30 or 33 A.D.*). That is why we did not use the Jewish calendar in this analysis. There are too many problems in looking backward through this time.

Based upon clear Biblical data and historical documents we can clearly state that Jesus was born 3 B.C., anointed or baptized 27 A.D. and died 31 A.D. At this season when anti-Christian voices are rising, we can welcome the celebration of Jesus' arrival on planet earth as Biblically true, historically factual and as a "God with us" and "for us!"

References:

- 1 Filmer, W. E.; Martin, Ernest L. and Edward, Ormond; "The Chronology of the Reign of Herod the Great," *Journal of Theological Studies* 17 (1966): 283-298.
- 2 Martin, Ernest L., *The Birth of Christ Recalculated*, 2d ed. (Pasadena, CA: Foundation for Biblical Research, 1980).
- 3 Ormon Edwares, "Herodian Chronology," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* (1982): 29-42.
- 4 www.versebyverse.org/doctrine/birthofchrist.html (emphasis added).
- 5 *History of the Armenians*, trans. R. W. Thomson, Book II, 26.
- 6 Josephus, Flavius; *Antiquities*, VI, 22 and VII, 2.
- 7 Josephus, Flavius; *Antiquities*, XVII, 41-45.



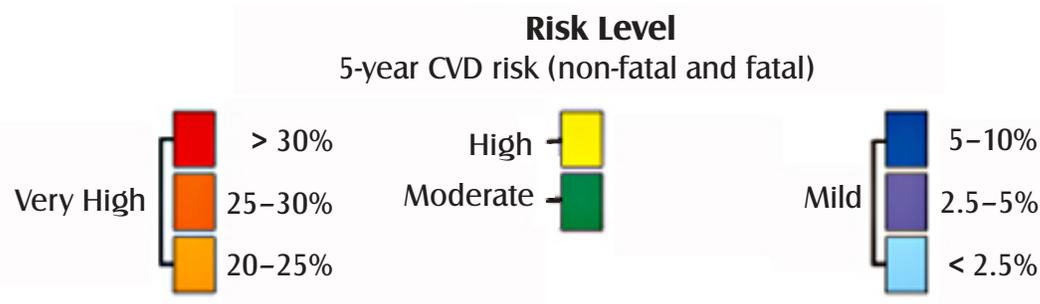
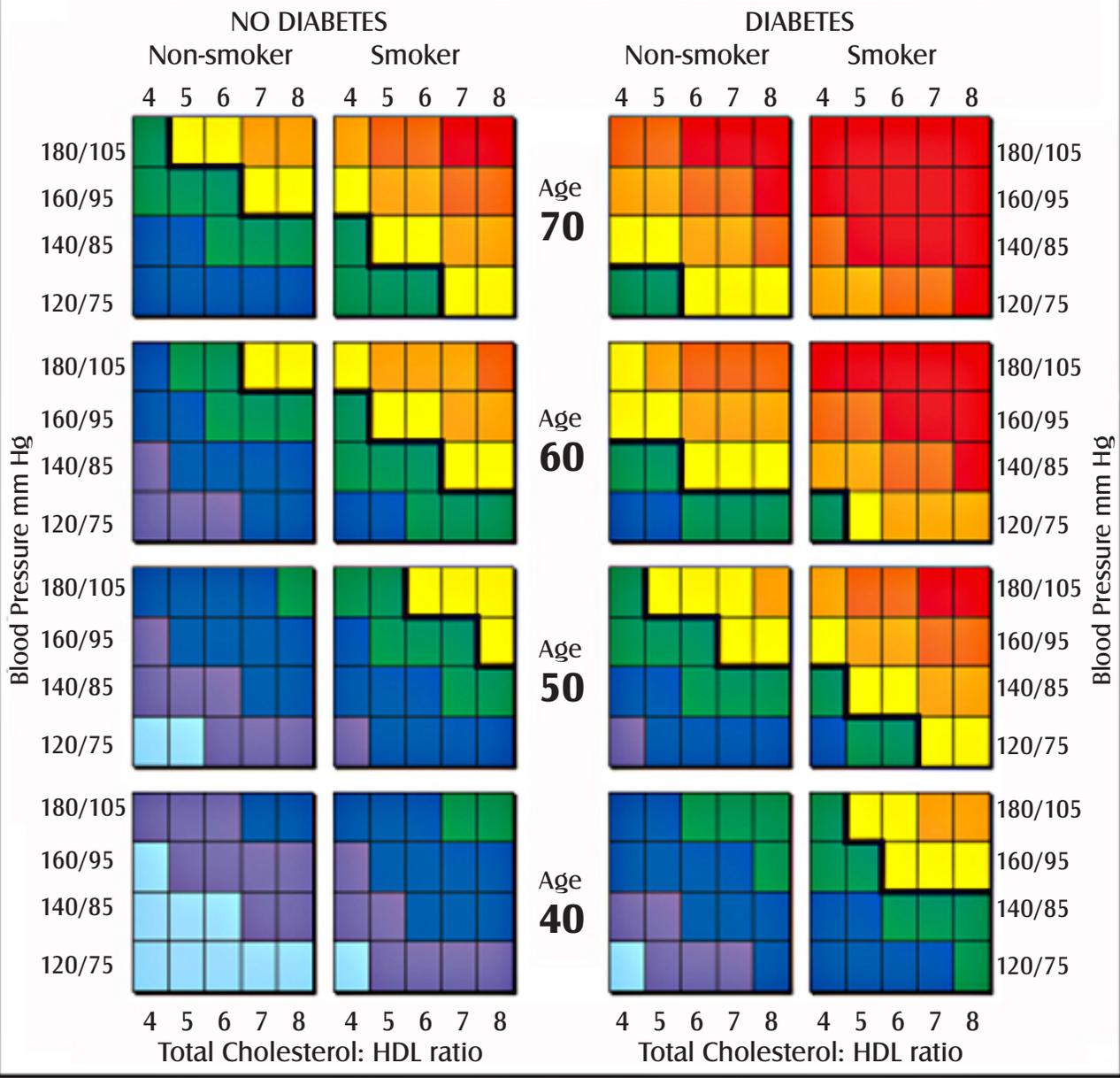
HEALTH QUEST

New Health Risk Data

Franklin S. Fowler Jr., M.D.

See following pages.

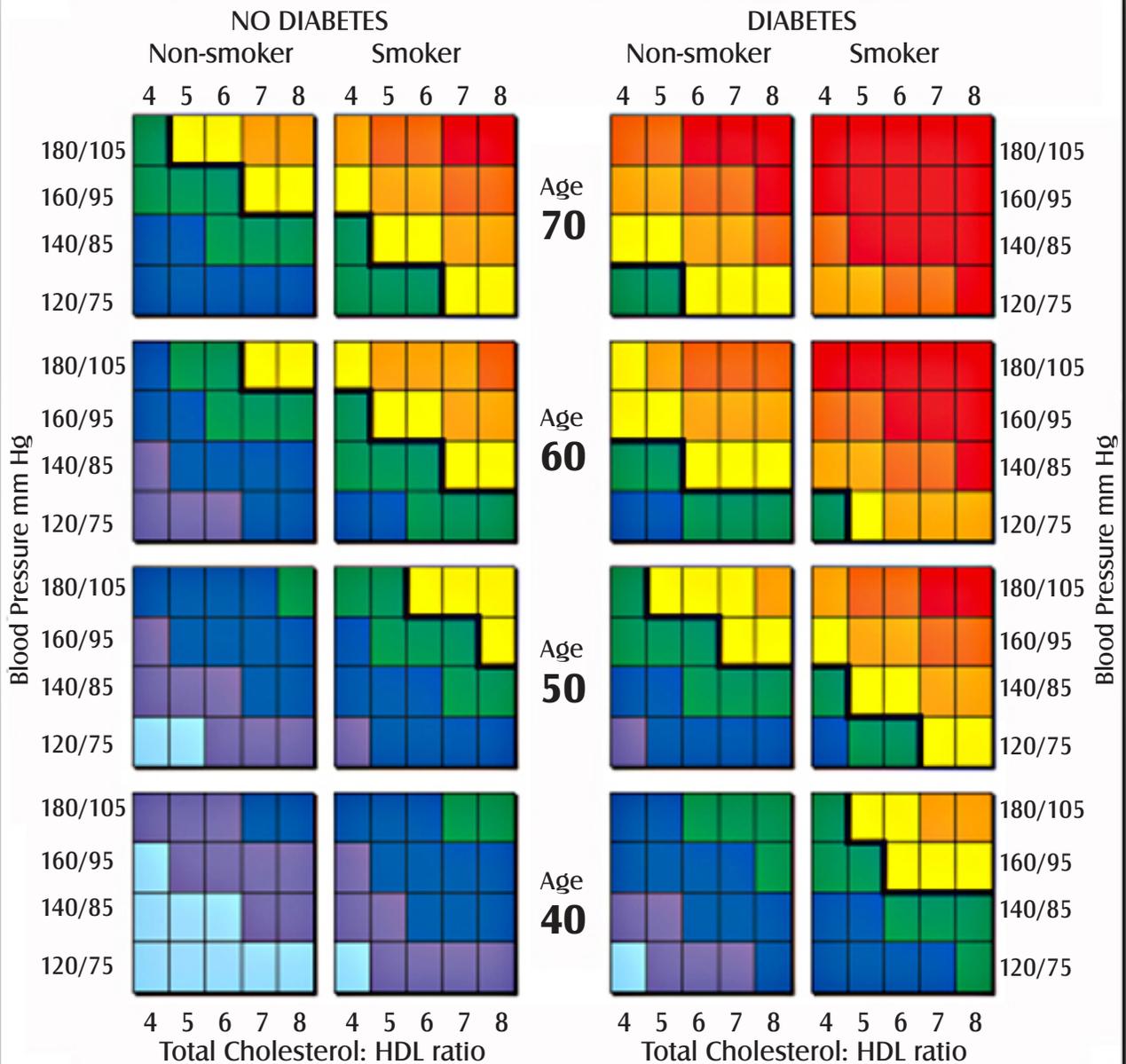
Risk Level – Women



How to use the Tables

- Identify the table relating to the person’s sex, diabetic status, smoking history and age. Within the table choose the cell nearest to the person’s age, blood pressure and TC:HDL ratio.
- When the systolic and diastolic values fall in different risk levels, the higher category applies.
- For example, the lower left cell contains all non-smokers without diabetes who are less than 45 years and have a TC:HDL ratio less than 4.5 and a blood pressure less than 130/30 mm HG. People who fall exactly on a threshold between cells are placed in the cell indicating higher risk.

Risk Level – Men



Risk Level: 5-year CV risk (fatal and non fatal)	Benefits: NNT for 5 years to prevent one event (CVD events prevented per 100 people treated for 5 years)		
	1 intervention (25% risk reduction)	2 interventions (45% risk reduction)	3 interventions (55% risk reduction)
30%	13 (7.5 per 100)	7 (14 per 100)	6 (16 per 100)
20%	20 (5 per 100)	11 (9 per 100)	9 (11 per 100)
15%	27 (4 per 100)	15 (7 per 100)	12 (8 per 100)
10%	40 (2.5 per 100)	22 (4.5 per 100)	18 (5.5 per 100)
5%	80 (1.25 per 100)	44 (2.25 per 100)	36 (3 per 100)

Based on the conservative estimate that each intervention: aspirin, blood pressure treatment (lowering systolic blood pressure by 10 mm Hg) or lipid modification (lowering LDL-C by 20%) reduces cardiovascular risk by about 25% over 5 years

Intervention According to Cardiovascular Risk Assessment

Cardiovascular Risk	Lifestyle	Drug Therapy	Treatment Goals	Follow-up
CVD risk clinically determined More than 20%	Intensive lifestyle advice on a cardioprotective dietary pattern with a dietician, physical activity and smoking cessation interventions. Lifestyle advice should be given simultaneously with drug treatment	Aspirin, if not contraindicated, a beta blocker, statin and an ACE-inhibitor (after MI) or aspirin, statin and a new or increased dose of a blood pressure lowering agent (after stroke)	Efforts should be made to reach optimal risk factor levels	Cardiovascular risk assessments at least annually, risk factor monitoring every 3 to 6 months
CVD risk calculated More than 20%	Intensive lifestyle advice on a cardioprotective dietary pattern with a dietician, physical activity and smoking cessation interventions. Lifestyle advice should be given simultaneously with drug treatment	Aspirin and drug treatment of all modifiable risk factors (blood pressure lowering, lipid modification and glycaemic control)	Risk factors treated to a level that will lower 5-year cardiovascular risk to less than 15% (by recalculating risk)	Cardiovascular risk assessments at least annually, risk factor monitoring every 3 to 6 months
15 to 20%	Specific individualized lifestyle advice on a cardioprotective dietary pattern, physical activity and smoking cessation. This lifestyle advice should be given by the primary health care team for 3 to 6 months prior to initiating drug treatment	Aspirin and drug treatment of all modifiable risk factors (blood pressure lowering, lipid modification and glycaemic control). Drug therapy indicated for people with extreme risk factor levels	Risk factors treated to a level that will lower 5-year cardiovascular risk to less than 15% (by recalculating risk)	Cardiovascular risk assessments at least annually, risk factor monitoring every 3 to 6 months
10 to 15%	Specific individualized lifestyle advice on a cardioprotective dietary pattern, physical activity and smoking cessation. This lifestyle advice should be given by the primary health care team	Non-pharmacological approach to treating multiple risk factors	Lifestyle advice aimed at reducing cardiovascular risk	Further cardiovascular risk assessment in 5 years
Less than 10%	General lifestyle advice on a cardioprotective dietary pattern, physical activity and smoking cessation	Non-pharmacological approach to treating multiple risk factors	Lifestyle advice aimed at reducing cardiovascular risk	Further cardiovascular risk assessment in 5 to 10 years

Detail provided on the summary document of the evidence-based, best practice guideline, *The Assessment and Management of Cardiovascular Risk*. It is available for download at www.nzgg.org.nz
<<http://www.nzgg.org.nz>> – click on ‘Guidelines/Publications’ then ‘Cardiology’

How To Calculate 10-year Risk of Coronary Events

1 DETERMINE THE PATIENT'S TOTAL POINTS

AGE (YEARS)	POINTS	
	Men	Women
20-34	- 9	- 7
35-39	- 4	- 3
40-44	0	0
45-49	3	3
50-54	6	6
55-59	8	8
60-64	10	10
65-69	11	12
70-74	12	14
75-79	13	16

TOTAL CHOLESTEROL (MG/DL)	POINTS									
	AGE 20-39		AGE 20-39		AGE 20-39		AGE 20-39		AGE 20-39	
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
< 160	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
160-199	4	4	3	3	2	2	1	1	0	1
200-239	7	8	5	6	3	4	1	2	0	1
240-279	9	11	6	8	4	5	2	3	1	2
≥ 280	11	13	8	10	5	7	3	4	1	2

SMOKING STATUS	POINTS									
	AGE 20-39		AGE 20-39		AGE 20-39		AGE 20-39		AGE 20-39	
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
Nonsmoker	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Smoker	8	9	5	7	3	4	1	2	1	1

HDL (MG/DL)	POINTS - MEN AND WOMEN
≥ 60	- 0
50-59	0
40-49	1
< 40	2

SYSTOLIC BLOOD PRESSURE (MM/HG)	POINTS			
	IF UNTREATED		IF TREATED	
	M	W	M	W
< 120	0	0	0	0
120-129	0	1	1	3
130-139	1	2	2	4
140-159	1	3	2	5
≥ 160	2	4	3	6

2 DETERMINE THE PATIENT'S TOTAL 10-YEAR RISK

PATIENT'S POINTS		
Age		_____
Total cholesterol		_____
Smoking		_____
HDL		_____
Systolic blood pressure		_____
Total points		_____

POINT TOTAL	10-YEAR RISK (%)	
	Men	Women
< 0	< 1	< 1
1-4	1	< 1
5-6	2	
7	3	
8	4	
9	5	
10	6	
11	8	
12	10	
13	12	
14	16	
15	20	
16	25	
17	< 30	
18	> 30	
19	> 30	
20	> 30	
21	> 30	
22	> 30	
23	> 30	
24	> 30	
≥ 25	> 30	

ADAPTED FROM EXPERT PANEL ON DETECTION, EVALUATION, AND TREATMENT OF HIGH BLOOD CHOLESTEROL IN ADULTS. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE THIRD REPORT OF THE NATIONAL CHOLESTEROL EDUCATION PROGRAM (NCEP) EXPERT PANEL ON DETECTION, EVALUATION, AND TREATMENT OF HIGH BLOOD CHOLESTEROL IN ADULTS (ADULT TREATMENT PANEL III). JAMA 2001, 285:2486-2497.

Updated American Heart Association Goals to Lower Risk of Heart Disease and Stroke

Smoking

Quit completely
Avoid secondhand smoke

Blood pressure

< 140/90 mm Hg
< 130/85 if renal insufficiency or chronic heart failure is present
< 130/80 if diabetes is present

Diet

Overall healthy eating pattern
Saturated fats < 10% of calories
Cholesterol < 300 mg/day
Salt < 3 g/day
Alcohol X 2 drink/day in men and < 1 in women

Aspirin use

Low dose in people at high risk for coronary heart disease or with a 10-year risk > 10%

Lipid levels

With one risk factor:
LDL-C < 160 mg/dL, non-HDL-C < 190 mg/dL
With two or more risk factors and 10-year coronary heart disease risk < 20%:
LDL-C < 130 mg/dL, non-HDL-C < 160 mg/dL
With two or more risk factors and 10-year coronary heart disease risk > 20% or with diabetes:
LDL-C < 100 mg/dL, non-HDL-C < 130 mg/dL
Triglycerides < 150 mg/dL
HDL-C > 40 mg/dL (men) or > 50 mg/dL (women)

Exercise

At least 30 minutes of moderate intensity most days of the week

Weight management

Body mass index 18.5–24.9 kg/m²
If body mass index is > 25 kg/m², waist circumference < 40 (men) or < 35 (women)

Diabetes management

Fasting (preprandial) plasma glucose level 90–130 mg/dL
Postprandial plasma glucose < 180 mg/dL
Hemoglobin A_{1c} level < 7%

Chronic atrial fibrillation

Normal sinus rhythm
If atrial fibrillation is chronic, warfarin to maintain the international normalized ratio at 2.0–3.0

HDL-C = high-density-lipoprotein cholesterol, LDL-C = low-density-lipoprotein cholesterol

ADAPTED FROM PEARSON TA, BLAIR SN, DANIELS SR, ET AL. AHA GUIDELINES FOR PRIMARY PREVENTION OF CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE AND STROKE: 2002 UPDATE. CIRCULATION 2002, 106:388–391.



LIBERTY

IN THE

BALANCE

[Religion Today
September-October]

Religious Freedom Watchdog Cites China's Repeated Offenses. The head of the U.S. Department of State's Office of International Religious Freedom says China continues to oppress Christians and other religious groups, and that is why the Communist nation remains on the department's list of "countries of particular concern." The release of the sixth annual State Department Report to Congress on International Religious Freedom has cited a number of repeat offenders on its list of governments that violate citizens' basic human right to religious liberty. China is one of five nations that has been among those offending nations for quite some time. John Hanford, Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, notes that the conditions reported in China warrant that regime's inclusion on the list of countries of particular concern. For years the Communist government in China has continuously engaged in the repressive treatment of Christians and other religious groups, Hanford explains. "Protestants are forced to belong to the government-sanctioned church," he says, "and if they don't and they try to meet in house churches, then they risk arrest and, in some severe cases, beatings and torture."

'Save the Seal' Petition Drive Launched in Los Angeles County. A petition circulating in Los Angeles County aims to keep the county seal just as it has been since 1957. The seal currently includes a small Christian cross, which recognizes the role of missionaries in establishing Los Angeles. The American Civil Liberties Union, offended by a religious symbol in a

government emblem, demanded that the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors redesign the seal, omitting the cross. The board was expected to formally adopt a new seal at Tuesday's meeting. The petition drive to overturn the county's agreement with the ACLU would keep the seal as it is. It also would remove the county board's power to change the seal. That power would rest with voters — where it belongs, advocates say. Attorneys with the Thomas More Law Center helped write the petition, which needs more than 341,000 valid signatures of registered voters by March 1, 2005. "This revised petition will prevent the ACLU from bypassing the voters and striking private deals with the county board to change the seal," said Richard Thompson, president and chief counsel of the Law Center. The Thomas More Law Center, a national public interest law firm, also is representing Ernesto Vasquez, a Los Angeles County employee, who previously filed suit to block the removal of the cross from the county seal. Vasquez says removing the cross sends a government-sponsored message of hostility toward Christians, in violation of the United States Constitution. The Law Center says the county's decision to redesign the seal has outraged Christians and non-Christians alike who do not want the history of Los Angeles rewritten in order to satisfy the prejudices of the ACLU. The petition initiative would establish that the original seal designed and approved in 1957 is the official seal of Los Angeles County. The petition also acknowledges that the original seal was unanimously approved and is part of Los Angeles

County's identity. The Thomas More Law Center describes itself as a defender and promoter of religious freedom, time-honored family values, and the sanctity of human life through education, litigation, and related activities.

One Iranian Pastor Still Jailed. Protestant church leaders in Iran learned this morning that one of 10 evangelical pastors reportedly released from detention by police authorities on September 12 is still being held incommunicado. An Assembly of God Pastor, Hamid Pourmand, 47, has not returned to his home in Bandar-i Bushehr, nor has he been in touch with any of his relatives or friends. He is presumed to remain under police arrest in the Karaj-Tehran area, where he was initially detained with other church leaders on September 9. Eighty leaders of Iran's Assemblies of God Church had convened for their annual general conference in Karaj when police swarmed into the church-owned center on the morning of September 9. All were blindfolded and taken away to be fingerprinted and interrogated. Although most were released by evening, the 10 pastors among them were held for questioning for four days. It was not until yesterday morning that the Assemblies of God leadership discovered that in fact Pourmand was still missing. A former Muslim who converted to Christianity nearly 25 years ago, Pourmand pastors a congregation in Bandar-i Bushehr, along the Persian Gulf in southern Iran. He and his wife, who is of Assyrian Christian background, have two children.

Missionaries Abducted and Falsely Accused of Robbery in India. Five Gospel for Asia (GfA) missionaries were recently abducted and falsely accused of robbery. On July 25, Lokesh, Yesuraj, Kumar, Anil and Ramesh were kidnapped by a group of anti-Christians in the area of Karnataka. The native evangelists were blamed for committing a robbery that took place in the community. Although they had received threats twice previously, the missionaries continued sharing their faith. Ramesh managed to escape, but the other four missionaries were beaten and their Christian literature was torn up.

"Kindly pray for these brothers," a GFA leader said, "that no harm will be done to them and that the authorities will come to know the truth." Elsewhere, on July 17, a mob of 15 local Hindu farmers desecrated a Protestant church under construction in the tribal village of Rohiyal Talal, located in the northwest state of Gujarat, Compass Direct reported. The group demolished walls, iron gratings and window-panes of the independent congregation. No arrests have been made, but police officials have reportedly identified the assailants, some of whom are local leaders of the extremist Hindu organization Vishwa Hindu Parishad. Militants belonging to the pro-Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party, which lost ground in India's recent national elections, have distributed thousands of anti-Christian pamphlets accusing believers of forcibly converting impoverished Hindus to Christianity.

Five Afghan Christians Martyred. Five Afghan men who had converted to Christianity have been killed in separate incidents since late June near the borders of eastern Afghanistan. All five men were stabbed or beaten to death in summary executions by Taliban adherents who accused them of abandoning Islam and then "spreading Christianity" in their communities. The first stabbing death was reported on July 1 by Reuters news agency, which received a telephone call from a Taliban spokesman identifying himself as Abdul Latif Hakimi. The caller declared that a group of Taliban fighters had killed Mullah Assad Ullah the previous day in Ghazni province's remote Awdand region, a known Taliban stronghold and traditional seat of Islamic learning. "A group of Taliban dragged out Mullah Assad Ullah and slit his throat with a knife because he was propagating Christianity," Hakimi told Reuters. "We have enough evidence and local accounts to prove that he was involved in the conversion of Muslims to Christianity." Hakimi went on to accuse a number of foreign aid agencies of involvement in spreading Christianity among Afghanistan's overwhelmingly Muslim population. At least 33 foreign aid workers have been killed by the Taliban in the past 18 months.

Pakistani Christian Tortured To Death By Police; 40 Christian Protestors. A young Christian man died in prison on August 19 — four days after being beaten and tortured by officers in two different police stations. When local Christians sought to have the police brutality investigated, 40 of the protesting Christians were arrested. According to Barnabas Fund, Nasir Masih went to join in the celebrations for Pakistan's Independence Day on 15th August. He got into a fight with local Muslims who beat him severely and then had him arrested on false charges of theft. At Police Station B-Division, Sheikhpura District, Nasir was beaten again and then handed over to Saddar Police Station, also in Sheikhpura District. Here he was tortured to the point where he lost consciousness. Nasir was given no treatment for his injuries and died in prison on 19th August. A crowd of hundreds of Christians began to shout protests and blocked the traffic at the prison. Eventually the police Deputy Inspector General agreed to register a case against the police. The police registered cases against 40 of the protestors, who were arrested at their work places on 21st August, the day after the protest. They have since been released, but the case against them is still pending.

Foreign Islamists attempt to incite Muslims against Christians. Foreign Islamists have reportedly infiltrated the northern provinces of the western African nation in an attempt to incite Muslims against Christians. According to the World Evangelical Alliance Religious Liberty Commission, Garga Aoudou, a community activist with a Dutch development organization, told Inter Press Service (IPS) last month that Garoua, the capital of North Province, has been "literally inundated with fliers inciting Muslims towards a hatred of Christians," Assist News Service reported. "Religious fanatics exhort Muslims to increase the number of marriages between young Muslim men and Christian girls in order to convert them to Islam, to refuse to rent houses or sell land to Christians or to get them to move by raising the rent," Aoudou said. Yves Steven, the bishop of the town of Makolo told IPS: "Several Chris-

tian families have come to me to complain. They were subjected to physical violence. Some of them were forcibly evicted from their homes with bats and at knifepoint before they could collect their property." Lele Lafrique, the chief of police in the North Province, fears the situation may get worse. "We're calling upon ... all Cameroonians not to fall prey to those seeking to create the chaos we've so often witnessed in neighboring countries," Lafrique said. (<http://www.charismanow.com/>)

Nigeria Stops Christian Crusade. Religious passions flared in Nigeria following the decision of the Kwara state government to stop a series of evangelistic meetings organized by German evangelist Reinhard Bonnke with the support of all churches in the city of Ilorin. The state government of Kwara dispatched policemen to stop the five-day program after its second day on Thursday, August 19, claiming that if the meetings were allowed to continue, Muslim militants would attack Christians at the meeting grounds the following day. The assistant to Kwara state's governor said at a press conference in Ilorin on Friday, August 27, that the government's action stemmed from the need to prevent bloody religious crisis in Ilorin, the state capital. Muslim militants protested the evangelistic meetings the weekend before Bonnke arrived in Ilorin on Tuesday, August 17, his first trip to Kwara state in 14 years. After the announcement that ended the meetings, thousands of Christians mounted a protest against the government's action. They were heading towards the Government House before anti-riot policemen shot sporadically into the air to disperse them. Christian leader Dr. Olusola Ajolore accused the government of pandering to the whims of Muslims in the state. He described the program's cancellation as ill-motivated and preconceived.

Iowa Middle School Teacher loses Job. An Iowa middle school teacher has been terminated from his job over his refusal to remove items from his office that symbolize the Christian faith. School officials told music teacher Luke Miller having faith-based posters, gospel tracts, and a picture of the Lord's Supper was an

unconstitutional endorsement of religion. Miller, who has been a teacher for 10 years, says administrators knew about the items in his office for a long time, but chose to confront him about them one week before classes started. He feels the school's decision was not about him, "but it's about God," he says. Last year, Miller was told by school officials to take down a Ten Commandments poster in his classroom. After he moved it to his office, he was ordered to remove it from the building entirely. School officials claimed allowing him to have the items in his office violated the so-called separation of Church and State. Miller says unless God leads him otherwise, he will probably leave public education for good. According to him, the situation is unlikely to be any different anywhere else in the U.S.

Christian Group Fights for Equal Access in Public School. A Christian club has filed a temporary restraining order (TRO) against a California school district that contends state law requires it to discriminate against religious groups. Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) sponsors after-school clubs known as Good News Clubs, which teach elementary-age students morals and character development from a Christian viewpoint. The organization has now filed a TRO against the Bear Valley Unified School District, located in the mountains northeast of San Bernardino, because it has been prevented from using school facilities for a Good News Club. California law requires that public school facilities be open to the public for after-school use. However, district officials have established a usage fee in which religious groups are charged, but secular groups are not. Mat Staver, president of Liberty Counsel, says the U.S. Supreme Court has already settled the issue in a similar case. "In that case [Good News Club v. Milford Central School District], the court rejected the same argument by a New York school district that said it was required to discriminate based on state law," Staver explains. As the Liberty Counsel attorney points out, the First Amendment forbids policies like those being imposed by the Bear Valley district. The lawsuit asks for an emergency hearing

seeking a court order allowing CEF to use the facilities beginning this school year.

Three Imprisoned Protestant Pastors transferred to Unknown Location. Three prominent Protestant pastors detained for months have been transferred from a police station jail in the capital of Asmara to an unknown location. Haile Naizgi and Kiflu Gebremeske, leaders of the Full Gospel Church, have been imprisoned since May 23, and Tesfatsion Hagos, who leads Rema Evangelical Church, has been jailed since May 26, Compass Direct reported. Police had previously allowed the pastors' families to bring them food and clothing while under detention, but face-to-face contact has been denied. No reason has been given for their imprisonment and the three have not been charged with any legal offense. Meanwhile, pastor Mengse Tweldemedhane and popular Christian singer Yonas Haile managed to escape from the Sawa Military Center and flee together to Sudan in late June. Christian vocalist Helen Berhane, jailed since May 13, remains under severe confinement in a shipping container at the Mai Serwa military camp, located just north of Asmara. Although the eastern African nation's constitution guarantees freedom of religion for all citizens, President Isaias Afewerki closed down the country's independent Protestant churches in May 2002, forbidding the 20,000 members of 12 banned denominations to worship even in their homes, Compass reported.

Families in Mexico forced to flee from village. Seven Christian families from the village of 20 de Noviembre in Chiapas were recently forced to flee their homes by an angry mob. On June 22, the group, who were armed with sticks, stones and machetes, threatened to hang the Protestants from the rafters of their houses, Compass Direct reported. According to "Cuarto Poder," a Chiapas newspaper, community bosses, or local caciques, incited the mob to attack the evangelicals because the Christians had asked government officials to ensure that "freedom of worship be respected" in the village. The mob was composed of traditional-

ist Catholics who oppose the spread of evangelicalism in Chiapas. The displaced families join an estimated 300 to 400 Tojolabal Christians expelled from their farms in the Las Margaritas Township in the past 11 months, Compass reported. "When the brothers leave, the government washes its hands of the matter," said Chiapas religious rights attorney Esdras Alonso. "They say, 'Ah, they must have left because they wanted to.' But they go because the danger is great and there's nobody who is going to assure their safety."

Uzbekistan: Protestant Students Harassed. Two Christian students were expelled last month from a medical institute for being members of an "illegal" Protestant church. Aliya Sherimbetova and Shirin Artykbayeva are part of the Church of Christ in the town of Nukus, located in the autonomous region of Karakalpakstan, Forum 18 News Service reported. Six other local Protestant students have been harassed in Nukus this year. A Tashkent Medical Institute teacher reportedly raided the apartment of Sherimbetova, Artykbayeva and two other students in April, confiscating Christian literature and forcing them to move to communal lodgings where they could be more closely scrutinized. Sherimbetova is a second

year student and Artykbayeva is in her third year of medical study. Karakalpakstan is a region where it is almost impossible for Christian churches of any denomination to gain official registration, making it illegal for believers to meet for worship, Forum 18 reported. Uzbekistan's religion law bans unregistered religious activity. Charisma News Service.

Iraqi Christians Fleeing to Jordan, Syria. A quiet but steady hemorrhaging of Iraq's ancient Christian presence is underway and little is being done to stem the flow. Written threats, kidnappings, bombings and murder by Muslim extremists are driving thousands of Iraq's minority Christian population out of their ancestral homeland, fleeing for safety to neighboring Jordan and Syria. "The Christians are experiencing an absence of leadership," explained Hala Hikmat, a recent arrival from Baghdad who has joined thousands of her countrymen in Syria. "We have no leaders who are communicating our urgent needs to the authorities, so consequently each person has to take care of themselves." Their urgent needs, as expressed by Hikmat, are for protection and for a stand to be taken on Christians' behalf.

The Garden Patch



By David E. Stottlemyer, M.A.
Staff Research Associate
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Avocado Breeding Program

Pest Control

“In the Garden...

If possible, the home should be out of the city, where the children can have ground to cultivate. Let them each have a piece of ground of their own; and as you teach them how to make a garden, how to prepare the soil for seed, and the importance of keeping all the weeds pulled out, teach them also how important it is to keep unsightly, injurious practices out of the life. Teach them to keep down wrong habits as they keep down the weeds in their gardens.” – *Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students*, p. 124.

“In the natural world, give up a field to itself and you will see it covered with briars and thorns; but if it yields precious grain or beautiful flowers, care and unremitting labor must be applied.” – *Maranatha*, p. 229.

Pest Prevention and Control

I hope you have noticed as we have gone through this series how many are the spiritual lessons to be learned while working in the garden. You can expect that your garden will face various pest problems from time to time, but if you carefully and prayerfully look for and apply solutions, your pest problems will be reduced and sometimes even eliminated. We will start first with plant pests (weeds) and then in the next article move on to insects and other pests.



David Stottlemyer

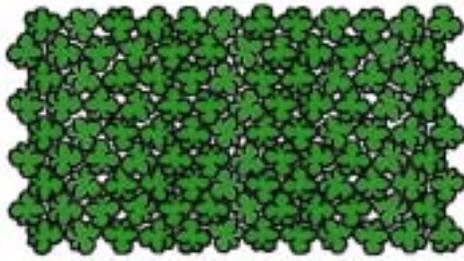
Plant Pests and Weeds

“Prevention is the best medicine” is certainly true when considering how to control weeds in the garden. And the key to preventing weeds is to remember that most weed seeds need light to germinate. Thus, if you can “shade” the soil, you can prevent many weed seeds from ever germinating. There are several ways of doing this. By spacing your plants using the intensive method, the plants will grow into each other and shade the soil. When the plants are young, you will have to do some hand weeding, but as the plants mature, the weed problem is greatly reduced. Using mulches is another good way to shade the soil and prevent weeds. Mulch is any material placed on the soil to conserve moisture and prevent weeds. It includes such things as: straw, grass, compost, wood chips, leaves, newspaper, woven plastic, carpet, and aluminum foil. To the right is a raised bed with woven plastic mulch used with tomatoes. The woven plastic allows water to soak into the soil, but blocks light, thus preventing weeds. It also prevents the tomato from touching the soil and thus reduces rot problems.



Planting Methods

Although we have already talked about the advantages of intensive planting methods, it might be good to review the weed prevention aspect at this point. Initially, the intensive method is a



little more work because of the hand weeding needed around the plants, but as the crop matures and fills in the bed, the soil is shaded, preventing most weed seeds from germinating.

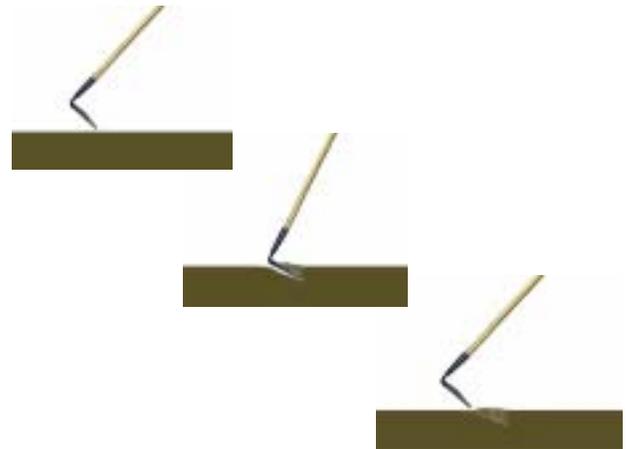
Weeding – Using the Hoe

Even the best prevention methods will not stop every weed. And for those that remain, I often employ the hoe. I use it both in the walking paths, and in the beds where the plants are spaced far enough apart to safely get between them. But like any tool, the hoe must be used properly to avoid causing damage to the plants. First of all, in the rows or walking paths, I simply scrape the weeds off, leaving the roots behind. This works best if one weeds on a regular basis. The roots will send up more leaves, but I scrape them off again. Since the weeds need both roots and leaves to grow, continually removing the above ground portion of the plant eventually causes it to die. The walking areas of a large garden can be quickly weeded using this method.

Using the hoe in a bed where you are growing a crop is a little trickier proposition. It is best done when the plants are small, and with plants that are spaced far apart (10 inches or more). The key is to stay far enough away from the plant to avoid root damage to your crop. With most crops, the roots will extend out a little beyond the edge of the leaves so that can serve as a good guide. I also prefer to use a hoe with a narrow blade (mine is about 4 1/2 inches), which makes it easier to get in between plants.

One also uses a different stroke when weeding in the bed as opposed to in the path. In the bed, the idea is to cut into the soil as one might cut into a piece of cake – one slices into the cake, and removes the knife carefully, doing as little damage to the cake as possible. So with the hoe, one slices into the soil and back out again, lifting and loosening the soil while cutting weed roots. Since most weeds do not like to have their roots disturbed, hoeing will kill many of the weeds outright. Those that remain are usually stunted and weak. The loose soil makes it easy to remove any surviving weeds by hand.

The hoe should cut into the soil like a knife. Slicing into the soil, it lifts and loosens the soil while cutting weed roots. The hoe should return back to the starting point the same way it went in.



Conclusion

A final quote from the pen of inspiration:
“The soil will not produce its riches when worked by impulse. It needs thoughtful, daily attention. It must be plowed often and deep, with a view to keeping out the weeds that take nourishment from the good seed planted. Thus those who plow and sow prepare for the harvest. None need stand in the field amid the sad wreck of their hopes.” – *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 89.

Weeding need not be a chore, nor does one have to resort to chemicals to control weeds in the garden. By using some of the strategies mentioned here you may reduce the weed problem to a manageable level.



Focus on the *Sabbath*

[This section is devoted to news, articles, special messages, laws, sermons and political events that draw attention to the Sabbath. We are especially interested in how the Christian world views a weekly “rest day” – a pivotal prophetic end-time issue.]

The World Seen From Rome

EUROPEAN BISHOPS EYE WAYS TO RE-EVANGELIZE CONTINENT

POPE STRESSES NEED FOR CHRISTIAN WITNESS IN NEW EVANGELIZATION

(ZENIT Code: ZE04100405 Date: 2004-10-04)

LEEDS, England, OCT. 4, 2004 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)). – Catholic leaders from 34 European countries have met for the first time in England to discuss the role of Christianity in Europe.

The event – a four-day assembly of the Council of the Bishops’ Conferences of Europe (CCEE) at Hinsley Hall, Leeds – has been the largest gathering of senior Catholic bishops in Britain since the Synod of Whitby in 664, more than 1,300 years ago.

In a message to the meeting, John Paul II said he would pray that “you will guide your respective peoples to rediscover their common spiritual roots and the enduring wisdom of their Christian heritage.”

The Holy Father also said he knows that “your commitment to a new evangelization is an act of faith in the perennial value of the Gospel, which in the history of the peoples of Europe has produced abundant fruits of holiness, education, culture and civilization.”

The main issues discussed by the meeting included Christianity’s significance in Europe today; ecumenism; the Churches and the European Constitution; a third Ecumenical Assembly; cooperation between bishops’ conferences; and CCEE projects, particularly in the areas of evangelization and pastoral strategy.

Looking at the reality of today’s Europe and the role played by the United Kingdom, Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O’Connor, president of the

bishops’ conference of England and Wales and CCEE vice president, said in his opening remarks: “We come from countries, some of which have lived comfortably alongside the state; others, for years, oppressed by it. We each witness to the same faith but with different backgrounds, experience and testimony.”

Liverpool Archbishop Patrick Kelly, vice president of the British-Welsh bishops’ conference, said: “In 1794 we were assured freedom of worship, of cult; in 1825 we were guaranteed by law complete emancipation, freedom of religion. I am convinced one of the most searching issues across this country, the whole of Europe, the Middle East is: What does freedom, not only of cult but of religion, mean for people of all faiths?”

Bishop Amédée Grab, CCEE president, set the tone for the discussions with two questions: How do others see us? And how do we see ourselves?

He argued that if the answers were very different, it posed a serious communications challenge for the Church. The Church is often perceived as being in competition with secular culture, he said. It has a vision of life opposite to the ethical values embodied today by medical research and the tendency of faith to be confined to the private sphere rather than public belief, the prelate said.

Bishop Grab, 74, added: “We are fully, but not exclusively, citizens of this world. This world’s values are not enough for us — yet we do not

despise them or look down on our culture. Our culture is the context for our mission, and the more we understand and respect it, the less of a problem there will be with our work for this culture and for those who live it. Our challenge: to belong to two societies at one and the same time.”

Archbishop Jean-Pierre Ricard of Bordeaux introduced the main theme: the significance and role of Christianity in Europe today.

He pointed out that there are moral toxins which Europe has to fight and reject for the sake of its harmonious development: the slide into secularization, with the phenomena of individualization and mass production; the tendency to consider religion as a hindrance; and the rise of fundamentalism and terrorism.

Archbishop Ricard, 60, also spelled out the ways in which the presence of the Church can enrich European society: in defending the dignity of each and every person and family, and especially those most in need, such as the poor; creating a distinct and proper relationship between politics and religion; forming a truly ecumenical and interreligious dialogue; and bringing about a culture of solidarity in a Europe truly open to the world.

Three practical engagements were formulated: to strengthen the dialogue with contemporary culture; to look for a closer dialogue with the Islamic communities in Europe, especially in universities; and to *campaign for the defense of Sunday as a day dedicated to God*.

One of the highlights of the four-day meeting was the visit of the Anglican archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams. In his introductory remarks to that discussion, Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor spoke about the positive ecumenical

experiences in England and Wales, particularly in the field of theological dialogue on themes such as the Eucharist, ministries and authority. He said there was “no going back” on the ecumenical path. “It is a road without an exit.”

Dr. Williams placed the onus on the importance of “spiritual ecumenism” which comes from recognizing that we all belong to the Body of Christ and seeing one another as “a gift.”

He spoke of the drive within the Church of England for a “mission-shaped church,” dedicated to evangelizing and giving a new shape to society. The Anglican said churches have a responsibility to contribute to the development of society. He said the Anglican and Catholic churches need to develop together a theology and a culture of service.

On the future of the ecumenical movement, the archbishop of Canterbury affirmed that there are uncertainties about the institutional form of unity the churches will reach, but still the journey has to go on.

Meanwhile, the presidents of the bishops' conferences living in countries where the Orthodox Church is the majority faith pointed out a mixture of “light and dark.”

On one side, divisions still exist between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches, including persisting mutual ignorance, proselytism and incomprehension.

But on the other side, there is growing trust that unity is a gift of God; a new ecumenical commission is being built in Russia; and consciousness is increasing about sharing common challenges, such as violence and terrorism.

The assembly ended Saturday with a Mass in Leeds' cathedral, followed by a reception.