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If you don’t know much about him, you should. He was the father of modern Israel: the indefatigable David Ben-Gurion.
Steve Herzig

Villain of the Ages
The world has seen its share of evil rulers, and more will arise before the Lord raptures His church. Then the vilest of all will appear—the one called Antichrist.
Richard D. Emmons

The Ultimate Con
Satan thinks he has everything figured out, and he plans to deceive the whole world with his unholy trinity.
Tom Simcox

The Final War Against Israel
Russia, Iran, Syria. They all threaten Israel today. But their threats are nothing compared to what the Jewish people will face with the Antichrist.
David M. Levy

Consumed and Destroyed
Not everything is gloom and doom. Here’s how the Antichrist and his evil kingdom will meet their well-deserved demise.
Mike Stallard
Why are so many people willing to believe a lie? They would rather believe they evolved from monkeys than that they were created by almighty God, who loves them. They would rather believe there’s no such thing as absolute truth and that the Bible is nothing more than fables and myths.

People believe such lies because they appeal to humanity’s greatest weakness: pride. Most individuals don’t want to acknowledge God because they want to do what they want to do. So they delude themselves into thinking their behavior has no consequences and that there is no God before whom they will have to stand in judgment and give an account of their lives.

Joseph Goebbels, Adolf Hitler’s Svengali when it came to creating anti-Semitic propaganda and manipulating the masses, said, “The bigger the lie, the more it will be believed.”

He also said, “A lie told once remains a lie. But a lie told a thousand times becomes the truth.” “The lie can be maintained only for such time as the State can shield the people from the political, economic and/or military consequences of the lie. It thus becomes vitally important for the State to use all of its powers to repress dissent, for the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie.”

Goebbels also said, “What does Christianity mean today? National Socialism is a religion. All we lack is a religious genius capable of uprooting outmoded religious practices and putting new ones in their place. We lack traditions and ritual. One day soon National Socialism will be the religion of all Germans. My Party is my church. . . . That is my gospel.”

And last, “Whoever can conquer the street will one day conquer the state, for every form of power politics and any dictatorship-run state has its roots in the street.”

So here are his principles: Make the lie big. Repeat it constantly. Repress dissent. Create a religion that eliminates God. Control the masses.

These same methods will be used by the most lying, tyrannical, evil dictator who will ever live: the Antichrist. Satan is alive and well, and it behooves us to know his plans so we can warn people and teach them the truth. We pray God will use this issue of Israel My Glory for His honor and glory to deliver many people “from the power of darkness” and transfer them “into the kingdom of the Son of His love” (Col. 1:13). As Jesus said, “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (Jn. 8:32).

Waiting for His Appearing,
Lorna Simcox
Editor-in-Chief
In the book of Deuteronomy, God told the Israelites to teach His Word diligently to their children—when they were in their homes, when they went out, when they were lying down, and when they rose up so that all may be well with them (6:1–7). The psalmist said the Word of God will guide us in truth; it is a lamp to light our path (Ps. 119:105).

The value of Scripture in teaching us how to live and guiding our way through life is undeniable. It is the Book of immeasurable value upon which we should base our faith and order our conduct. It promises a better life to those who fear it and obey. No country seems to appreciate that truth more than Israel. Please allow me to explain.

Each spring, as part of its Independence Day celebration, Israel hosts the International Bible Quiz at the Jerusalem Theater in Israel's capital. Broadcast on state television throughout the country, the International Bible Quiz has become an immensely popular component of Israel's annual celebration. People everywhere gather around televisions to see who will win the year's contest.

According to the website of the Jewish Agency for Israel, the International Bible Quiz focuses the attention and awareness of many of the world's Jewish people ages 14 to 18 on how important the Bible is to their Jewish identity and heritage. Thousands of Jewish teenagers participate in the international quiz each year.

What begins with local quizzes followed by country-wide quizzes culminates in the finals that involve teens from around the world. The top contestants are brought to Israel for the final rounds of the international competition on Independence Day.

One of the goals of the International Bible Quiz is to increase the number of Jewish youth, both in Israel and abroad, who study the Bible. Through the Quiz, Israel also aspires to bring Jewish youth closer to loving Israel—the people, the land, and the heritage—and to add a spiritual dimension to the celebrations on Israel's Independence Day.

The Quiz tests contestants on their knowledge of the Bible. This year 4,000 teens participated from 41 countries, competing for a chance to go to Jerusalem to win the Bible Quiz championship of the world. The title this year went to Azriel Shilat, 17, from Hatzor Haglilit, a village in northern Israel.

Why does a small country of merely 7 million Jewish people hold a Bible quiz for its youth, not only for those living in Israel but also for those who live in the Diaspora?

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu explained: “Because the Bible is the rock of our existence.” The Quiz is important to Israel because the Bible is foundational to the nation’s identity and existence. It is intricately woven into the fabric of the Jewish nation. Israel’s very right to exist and live in the Land of Promise is based on the Word of God.

At this year’s Quiz the prime minister remarked, “The verses of the Bible cause a great spirit to flow into our national existence in the homeland. . . . From there we received our strength. And this strength returned and beat within us when we returned to our land. Not to a foreign land did we come. We returned to our homeland, to the inheritance of our forefathers. Here lie our roots, God willing, forever.”

Israel’s International Bible Quiz sends a clear message about the importance of teaching God’s Word to youth and its value for guiding their lives. It is one of the ways Israel is living out God’s command in Deuteronomy 6.
Universities have become a hotbed of anti-Israel, anti-Semitic activity. Students call Israel a “terrorist state” and encourage others to engage in “intifada” and violence. Professors compare Israel to Nazi Germany and peddle the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement, while university officials turn a blind eye to the left-leaning bias and politicization that fill their halls of academia, all under the guise of academic freedom.

When you read about anti-Semitism in higher education, I’m sure a number of big, American universities come to mind. But the schools I’m talking about aren’t in America; they’re in Israel. That’s right, the same anti-Israel propaganda infecting American, Canadian, and European universities is also corrupting Israeli campuses.

Last year Hebrew University scrubbed Israel’s national anthem, “Hatikvah,” from its graduation ceremony. When a student asked why, a Humanities Department employee responded that it was to avoid offending Arab students. Israel’s national anthem begins with the words “As long as within our hearts, the Jewish soul sings.” Some believe “Hatikvah’s” lyrics offend non-Jewish Israeli citizens.

Israeli politicians from all sides of the aisle spoke out against Hebrew University’s egregious decision. Even Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu weighed in, saying, “This is the worst kind of groveling. It is the opposite of national pride.” Education Minister Naftali Bennett reminded school officials that Hebrew University is a publicly funded institution and should respect the state that funds it.

Another public university, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU) in Beersheba, received attention when it was discovered that 85 percent of the curriculum in the Department of Politics and Government harbors anti-Israel sentiments, while only 15 percent of the material reflects a Zionist or pro-Israel agenda. These statistics would make David Ben-Gurion, Israel’s first prime minister and the school’s namesake, roll over in his grave.

Oren Yiftachel, professor of Geography and Urban Studies at BGU, converts his courses into political rants against Israel. Yiftachel scowls at the Jewish nature of the State of Israel, teaching his students that Israel is not a democracy; it’s an ethnocracy that’s active in the “Judaization” of Israel and the Palestinian territories. He’s been quoted as saying, “Israel is almost the most segregated society in the world.”

Yiftachel’s so-called ethnocracy argument is built on his “progressive” Left agenda and not the fundamental truth that Arabs, Muslims, Christians, and other non-Jewish minorities have equal rights and participation in the Zionist dream of Israel. While Yiftachel teaches that Israel is an oppressive ethnocracy, it’s a simple fact that Israel is the only functioning democratic state in the Middle East.

Im Tirtzu is the largest Israeli nonprofit organization advancing a pro-Israel voice on Israeli campuses. Founded in 2006 to reinvigor ate the founding principles of Zionism for Israelis, it helps university students defend Israel’s Jewish democratic values against the barrage of anti-Israel rhetoric. Im Tirtzu was responsible for publishing reports highlighting the Left’s politicization of BGU and the University of Haifa. These reports helped raise awareness in the Knesset of the indoctrination happening in Israel’s higher education.

After reviewing these reports, Naftali Bennett requested an academic code of ethics be drawn up to prevent higher education from becoming politically slanted in either direction. Israel’s new academic ethics code essentially bans professors from promoting their political views in the classroom. “At the gates of academia, we set politics outside,” Bennett said.

Would an academic code of ethics benefit higher education in America, Canada, and Europe? Statistics show that liberal professors outnumber conservative ones by nearly 12 to 1 in America, which explains why campuses are often full of protests, safe spaces, and trigger warnings—while conservative speakers need security guards.

The Left’s politicization of our colleges could also be one of the reasons 25 percent of university students encounter hostility toward Israel while on campus. Maybe the West should take some cues from Israel on how to provide a balanced education in our public universities and colleges by making sure academics do more teaching and less indoctrinating.

by Chris Katulka
U.S. QUITS UNHRC ‘CESSPOOL’

After more than a year of warnings, the Trump administration has followed through on a pledge to withdraw the United States from the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), calling it a “cesspool of political bias” that singles out Israel for condemnation while ignoring atrocities in other countries.

U.S. Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley, who visited the 47-member UNHRC’s headquarters in Geneva in June 2017, had insisted on two specific reforms: keep the worst human rights abusers from obtaining seats on the Council and remove Agenda Item Seven, which deals with the so-called human rights situation in “Palestine” and other “occupied Arab territories.” Both of her demands were ignored.

Agenda Item Seven, adopted in June 2007, singles out Israel for perpetual censure. Israel is the only country that has a dedicated agenda item at Council meetings, and Haley has repeatedly called out the UNHRC’s “chronic bias against Israel.”

In announcing the U.S. decision to leave, Haley called the UNHRC a “hypocritical and self-serving organization” that displays “unending hostility” toward Israel. “Earlier this year, ... the Human Rights Council passed five resolutions against Israel—more than the number passed against North Korea, Iran, and Syria combined. This disproportionate focus ... is clear proof that the council is motivated by political bias, not by human rights,” Haley said.

The UNHRC was established in 2006 to replace the UN Commission on Human Rights, which faced widespread criticism for allowing countries with poor human rights records to become members—and for its relentless bias against Israel. At the time, the Bush administration boycotted the UNHRC, arguing that, like the old commission, the new council had admitted nations with questionable human rights records. In 2009, the Obama administration reversed course and sought membership out of a belief “that working from within, we can make the council a more effective forum to promote and protect human rights.”

Yet the United States was unable to halt the barrage of anti-Israel resolutions. Of the 311 country-specific resolutions passed in the last 12 years, 76 deal with Israel, 27 with Syria, 20 with Myanmar, 18 with Sudan, and only eight with Iran.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu hailed the U.S. move: “For years, the UNHRC has proven to be a biased, hostile, anti-Israel organization that has betrayed its mission of protecting human rights. ... [It] obsessively focuses on Israel, the one genuine democracy in the Middle East.”

The UN has remained defiant. The day before Haley announced the withdrawal, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein said his office would publish a “blacklist” of companies doing business in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights.

The UNHRC, which mandated the creation of such a list in March 2016, said business activity with Israeli entities in the so-called occupied territories could be considered a crime under international law.

“It is outside the competence and the authority of the Human Rights Council to deal with blacklisting,” said Israel’s Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva, Ambassador Aviva Raz Shechter. “This is part of the bias to try to delegitimize Israel.”

The UNHRC has also vowed to step up its “war crimes” probe into Israeli actions on the Gaza border. It approved the probe on May 18, two days after a Hamas official admitted that 50 of the 62 Palestinians killed during Gaza protests on May 14 and 15 were members of the Islamist terrorist group.

PHOTO: ALBIN LOHR-JONES/SIPA USA/NEWS.COM

by Soeren Kern, a senior fellow at the Gatestone Institute, a nonpartisan foreign-policy think tank based in New York City

PHOTO: Nikki Haley at the UN.
INDIA—India’s Jharkhand state has recently become the sixth state in India to implement a new, draconian “anti-conversion” law that authorities are using to target and imprison Christians under the false accusation of trying to forcibly convert people.

The law, ironically called the “Freedom of Religion Act,” penalizes a person guilty of trying to convert others by “use of force or allurement or fraud.” Punishment consists of three to four years of imprisonment or a hefty fine.

Police in Jharkhand state recently arrested a Christian couple as they were preparing for their wedding ceremony, along with the officiating pastor and an attendee. The arrest took place after the bride’s father, Somaru Manjhi, filed a false complaint that Christians beat him and threatened to kill him if he refused to convert to Christianity.

“My father was drugged with alcohol that day, and the Sarna tribals, including the village president, abetted him to submit the false complaint in the police station pending the wedding so there wouldn’t be a Christian wedding in the village,” Manjhi’s 18-year-old daughter Tripti, the bride’s younger sister, told Morning Star News. “He is now repentant for what he has done, but it is too late.”

Everybody in the bride’s family of six, except her father, had become Christians and left Sarnaism, a tribal religion that worships nature. Manjhi was mad his daughter had refused to marry a Sarna, so he complied with the law enforcement’s request.

Biyari Devi, the pastor’s wife and Manjhi’s niece, told Morning Star News the wedding was planned according to the bride and groom’s wishes. “They both come from Sarna families but have accepted Christ, and it is obvious that they would want a holy matrimony. Somaru Manjhi . . . has always been against Christ and the church since the house church was established in 2008. But he never became violent or aggressive with us until the question was about his daughter’s marriage,” Devi said.

Tripti said her family has been pleading with her father to drop the charges. “We have been pleading with my father to testify in court that he was instigated by the Sarnas and that the allegations are false. My younger brother and I keep asking him, ‘How can you go against your own daughter? She is in jail because of you. Why are you doing this?’” she said.

Her father responded that the village president and elders commanded him to sign and file the false complaint they had written and that he regrets his decision. He said he would advocate for the Sarnas to free his daughter but not her fiancé.

Sadly, this incident is not an isolated one. Alliance Defending Freedom-India reported that 15 other Christians have been accused under Jharkhand’s anti-conversion act since it was signed into law in September 2017. The alliance also reported that 76 acts of violence have taken place against Christians in India in the first four months of 2018 alone.

Hindu radicals carry out the majority of the nation’s violence against Christians and dominate India’s central government in New Delhi. Christians make up only 4.8 percent of the population of India, which ranks 11th on Open Doors’ 2018 World Watch List of the 50 countries where Christians experience the worst persecution.

by Morning Star News
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THE MAN WHO BELIEVED IN MIRACLES

A look at the father of modern Israel, the indefatigable David Ben-Gurion

BY STEVE HERZIG
A Jewish woman praying in front of an entrance to the Temple Mount on Tisha B'Av.

Right: David Ben-Gurion with his family, 1920s.
David Ben-Gurion, volunteer in the Jewish Legion, in 1918 during World War I.

If you hold an American passport and were born in Jerusalem, this might be the time to get your document updated.

Perhaps now, 70 years after Israel gained its independence, the U.S. State Department will finally print “Jerusalem, Israel” (instead of merely “Jerusalem”) on your passport as your place of birth.

The words Jerusalem, Israel, could be seen everywhere—including on official American symbols—during the U.S. Embassy’s dedication ceremony in the city on May 14, a silent tribute to a man who refused to give up the fight for a Jewish state in the land of his forefathers.

On May 14, 1948, 30 years of British rule in Palestine came to an end, and the new State of Israel was born. David Ben-Gurion, Israel’s first prime minister, made the historic declaration,

“We extend our hand to all neighboring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighborliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land.

The State of Israel is prepared to do its share in a common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East.

Neighborliness, however, has not been the hallmark of the Middle East. Consequently, though Congress authorized the embassy to be moved from Tel Aviv to Israel’s capital when it passed the Jerusalem Embassy Act in 1995, no president until Donald Trump has moved it.

Ben-Gurion once said, “If an expert says it can’t be done, get another expert.” He also said, “In Israel, in order to be a realist, you must believe in miracles.” Ben-Gurion would have known: He was a realist who became part of the miracle of Israel.

I got to know the late Ben-Gurion better in February after my wife, Alice, and I visited his home, now a museum, in Tel Aviv. His contribution to the establishment of the Jewish state is inestimable. Some even believe there would have been no Israel without him.

I first saw his bust as I went through customs on my first trip to Israel in 1982. His face was striking, a cross between Winston Churchill and Albert Einstein. But walking through his home and seeing his books and the original furnishings, photographs, and artifacts gave me great insight into David Ben-Gurion the man, husband, father, and Israeli defense minister and prime minister.

**Family Man**

His house (you can view pictures by going to bg-house.org) and its furnishings are considered

We regard it as our duty to declare that Jewish Jerusalem is an organic and inseparable part of the State of Israel, as it is an inseparable part of the history of Israel, of the faith of Israel.
modest by today’s standards, a testament to Israel’s informal style of living and the Israeli way of doing more with less.

In the living room, a picture of his wife, Paula, hangs prominently alongside photographs of his three children: Geula, Amos, and Renana. He and Paula, an American, were married for more than 50 years.

In the small kitchen stands a tiny table with two simple wooden chairs. Each morning Ben-Gurion would sit at the table and eat his “kooch-mooch,” a concoction Paula invented consisting of yogurt, white Israeli cheese, applesauce, and raspberry sauce. The guide told me Ben-Gurion hated it but ate it every day because Paula told him it was good for him.

After she died in 1968, when he could have stopped, he continued to eat it each morning. When his daughter, who knew he hated it, asked him why, he said it was because it reminded him of Paula.

**Avid Reader**

A flight of stairs leads to Ben-Gurion’s small bedroom and four rooms containing his massive library of 20,000 volumes. These rooms contain the key to understanding David Ben-Gurion.

The books cover such topics as the history of the State of Israel, the history of ancient peoples, philosophy, classical literature, general and military history, and various cultures and religions. There are also many Bibles written in several languages.

Though not religious, Ben-Gurion loved to read the Bible and often quoted Scripture in his speeches. He called the Bible “the single most important book in my life” and believed it to be the key to understanding Israel’s past, present, and future.

The Prime Minister’s Bible Study Circle met in the library, open to a select group of scholars. He wanted Israelis, especially young Israelis, to read the Bible and understand it. In 1961 he supported Professor Haim Gevaryahu’s suggestion to hold a Bible competition for youths in Israel. He directed that the competition be held each year on Independence Day.

As my wife perused his library, she came across an amazing find: *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ* by Jakob Jocz. It is a book that connects, in a small way, The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry to David Ben-Gurion. Jocz was a Jewish believer in Jesus who served with us in London for a time when Dr. Victor Buksbazen was our executive director. I couldn’t help but think of Ben-Gurion turning the pages of a book that clearly points to Jesus as the Jewish Messiah and wonder what he thought.

**Fervent Zionist**

“I can hardly remember a time,” Ben-Gurion said, “when the idea of building what we used to call ‘Eretz Israel,’ or the Land of Israel, wasn’t the guiding factor of my life.” Born in Poland (Czarist Russia) on October 16, 1886, he was raised as a strong Zionist.

By age 18 Ben-Gurion was already a member of Poale Zion (Workers of Zion), and at age 20 he moved to Palestine, then occupied by the Ottoman Turkish empire. He changed his name from David Gruen to David Ben-Gurion (lion’s cub) and served as a laborer and watchman in the Jewish settlements of Rishon Lezion and Petah Tikva.

Almost immediately he took up positions of leadership. Later he became the general secretary of the Histadrut, the Zionist labor federation. However, his Polish passport made the Turks uncomfortable, and they expelled him from the land.
That is when Ben-Gurion moved to New York, where he met Paula. In 1918, shortly after their marriage, he left his pregnant wife in New York to return to Palestine to fight on the side of the British against the Turks. The Zionist cause eclipsed everything else in his life. He became chairman of the Jewish Agency, the executive body of the World Zionist Organization, through the critical years of rising Arab nationalism, Nazism, World War II, and the postwar diplomatic struggle between Britain and the Jews of Palestine.

Part of Ben-Gurion’s genius was to explain complicated situations simply. When faced with Great Britain’s infamous White Paper, which limited Jewish immigration to Palestine even as the Nazis were threatening the extermination of European Jewry, Ben-Gurion declared, “We will fight the war as if there were no White Paper, and we will fight the White Paper as if there were no war.”

Thinking back to that fateful day of May 14, 1948, New York Times writer Homer Bigart wrote a piece in December 1973, the month Ben-Gurion died, titled “Ben-Gurion, Symbol of the Tough State of Israel, Achieved a Lifelong Dream.” In it he said the following:

This was his moment of supreme test. For on that same day, May 14, 1948, the Arab armies began their invasion of the fledgling state. Jerusalem was besieged by Transjordan’s Arab Legion. In the Judean hills and in Galilee, Jewish settlements were under attack by Syrian and Iraqi forces, while Egyptians invaded from the south. Exhilarated by the challenge, the 62-year-old leader put on battle dress and assumed the direction of military operations. He was de facto Premier and Minister of Defense.

To Mr. Ben-Gurion fell most of the credit for having won the first Jewish campaign since that of Judas Maccabaeus 2,000 years before. He became an almost mystical figure to many Zionists: the wise patriarch who embodied all the traditional virtues and who would ultimately lead Israel to triumph over the ring of Arab enemies.

David Ben-Gurion was indeed a realist, and he was a crucial participant in the miracle that birthed the State of Israel. His passion for Zionism and dedication to reading God’s Word influenced him to say, “We regard it as our duty to declare that Jewish Jerusalem is an organic and inseparable part of the State of Israel, as it is an inseparable part of the history of Israel, of the faith of Israel.”

On May 14, 2018, America finally agreed. I find it gratifying and am most thankful that two evangelical pastors took part in the embassy ceremony. One opened in prayer, and one gave the benediction. The presence of Christians standing with and supporting Israel and the Jewish people in what the U.S. government now officially recognizes as Jerusalem, Israel, was heartwarming, to say the least. To hear the audience shout “Hallelujah!” put a smile on my face. I think Ben-Gurion would have smiled too.

We know the road from this point on will not be easy. Israel’s journey has never been easy. But we continue to pray for the peace of Jerusalem and to ask God to raise up leaders who will seek His face and who believe in miracles.

Steve Herzig is the director of North American Ministries and a Bible teacher for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry.
VILLAIN OF THE AGES
THE WORLD HAS SEEN ITS SHARE OF EVIL RULERS, AND MORE WILL ARISE BEFORE THE LORD RAPTURES HIS CHURCH.

THEN THE VILEST OF ALL WILL APPEAR—THE ONE CALLED ANTICHRIST.

BY
RICHARD D. EMMONS
any people want to know about leaders on the world scene—the men and women whose faces they see regularly online and on television. What are these people really like? Are they kind, caring, and patriotic? Or are they cold, calculating, and self-serving?

The Bible describes a future ruler who will be the most heinous world leader in the history of the universe. Studying the passages in chronological order progressively unfolds for us the person and character of the Antichrist.

**HIS ARROGANCE**

In the first year of the reign of Babylonian King Belshazzar (553 BC), God gave the prophet Daniel a vision of five world empires: Four are represented by beasts from the sea; and the fifth is the Messiah’s Kingdom, given to “One like the Son of Man” (Dan. 7:13) for “the saints of the Most High” (v. 18).

The latter phase of the fourth kingdom will be controlled by an arrogant, blasphemous king who is represented by a “little horn.” Daniel saw “another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words” (v. 8). The vision emphasizes the arrogant behavior of the fourth kingdom and especially its final king (v. 20).

After watching this ruler prevail in his war against the saints (v. 21), Daniel asked an angelic bystander (probably Gabriel, 8:16) to explain the meaning of this beast and the little horn. He was told this kingdom “shall be different from all other kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, trample it and break it in pieces” (7:23). Scripture seems to indicate this fourth kingdom will be a revived form of the Roman Empire.

This final Gentile king “shall subdue three kings. He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time” (vv. 24–25).

This king is the Antichrist, and he will rule the entire earth for the final three and a half years of the future seven-year Tribulation. His blasphemous arrogance will far exceed that of any other figure in history and is especially directed at God Most High. He will persecute Daniel’s people (the Jewish people) until his worldwide dominion is taken away by God Himself.

God then gives worldwide dominion, in the form of an everlasting Kingdom, to Israel—the saints of the Most High.

**HIS DECEITFULNESS**

In addition to being arrogant, the Antichrist will be deceitful. In 551 BC, two years after receiving the first vision, Daniel received a second vision that amplified the first. Again, a “little horn” arose, but this one appeared in the third Gentile empire (Greece, 8:21). Daniel was told “the vision refers to the time of the end” (v. 17). This Greek little horn is intended as a prototype of the little horn in the previous vision. He is also arrogant, but this vision emphasizes his deceitfulness.

The angel Gabriel described this ruler as “having fierce features, who understands sinister schemes. His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; he shall destroy fearfully, and shall prosper and thrive; he shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people. Through

Interestingly, the New Testament indicates potential antichrists exist in every generation.
his cunning he shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; and he shall exalt himself in his heart” (vv. 23–25). Ascribed to this prototype of the Antichrist are the words sinister, cunning, and deceit.

He is further described in a message to Daniel in 536 BC (10:21—12:4) as “a vile person” who will “seize the kingdom by intrigue” (11:21). Also, “after the league is made with him he shall act deceitfully, for he shall come up and become strong with a small number of people” (v. 23). He and the kings who serve with him “shall be bent on evil, and they shall speak lies at the same table; but it shall not prosper, for the end will still be at the appointed time” (v. 27).

History reveals this description applies to Antiochus IV Epiphanes, a notoriously cruel and despicable ruler who massacred thousands of Jewish people and desecrated Israel’s Temple more than 360 years after Daniel received the message. The revelation underscores the reliability of God’s prophetic word to Daniel and gives us a historical example of what the little horn of Daniel 7 (Antichrist) will be like.

**HIS LAWLESSNESS**

The Antichrist is introduced at the outset of the Tribulation as a type of knight in shining armor who goes out “conquering and to conquer” (Rev. 6:2). He rides on a white horse and receives a crown and will probably be hailed by Israel and the world as a hero when he makes a covenant with Israel (Dan. 9:27).

But halfway through the seven years his true nature emerges. In addition to being pompous, arrogant, and deceitful, he will be “the man of sin” (“lawlessness,” NASB; 2 Th. 2:3).

“Lawlessness” (Greek, anomia) describes people who reject God and His principles (rules and laws) and do as they please. Daniel was told this man will “intend to change times and law” (Dan. 7:25). The apostle Paul said he “opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God” (2 Th. 2:4). This rejection of God and His laws has already begun, but it will be exacerbated when the Antichrist rises to power.

Interestingly, the New Testament indicates potential antichrists exist in every generation (1 Jn. 2:18–19). Since Satan does not know God’s timetable, he always has a candidate available. When Christ opens the first seal of judgment and the Antichrist rides in (Rev. 6:1–2), the Day of the Lord will begin (chaps. 6—19). It is an extended period of time that includes the seven years of Tribulation, return of Jesus to judge the earth and reign for 1,000 years, and the final judgment of Satan and all unbelievers.

**HIS SELF-DEIFICATION**

Revelation 13 provides the final description of this man of lawlessness. The features are similar to the little horn of the fourth empire in Daniel’s first vision. But here the horn becomes the beast. He is given authority for 42 months (“time and times and half a time,” Dan. 7:25; cf. Rev. 12:6, 14).

It is here, at the Tribulation’s midpoint, that the true nature of the rider on the white horse is revealed. He is the ultimate tool of Satan: “The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority” (13:2; cf. 12:3, 9, 13).

The Antichrist arrogantly blasphemes God, persecutes the saints, and plies his deceits. Now he will go a step further: He will set himself up as God, utilizing the authority of Satan and the deceptive work of the second beast—the false prophet (13:11–18).

Like Antiochus Epiphanes, the Antichrist will try to force everyone to worship him (v. 8). A seemingly fatal wound will be healed, an image constructed in his honor will be animated, and every person on Earth will be compelled to receive his “mark” (vv. 12–16). This unholy trio will attempt to deceive the entire world and compel universal worship of the Antichrist and Satan.

The Antichrist’s arrogance, authority, and lawlessness will grow throughout the Tribulation, through deception at first. But his character will become increasingly obvious as he consolidates control. While he rules, the Lord will heap judgment upon judgment on the earth until the planet is nearly destroyed and one half of earth’s population perishes. Then God will “consume” the Antichrist himself “with the breath of His mouth and destroy [him] with the brightness of His coming” (2 Th. 2:8). God ultimately judges evil and gives the kingdom of the saints of the Most High to its rightful King, the Lord Jesus Christ—forever.

Three applications stand out from this study: (1) Since the Antichrist will not be revealed until the beginning of the Day of the Lord, it is fruitless to try to identify him today. (2) Since Jesus will rapture His church before the Day of the Lord begins, it is foolish to worry about the Antichrist. (3) And since world events are never beyond God’s control or outside His plan, no matter how bad things get, it is faithless to fret over wrongs that are not yet righted. God will take care of everything in His time. And His time is always perfect. ♦

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**ENDNOTE**

1 The actual word Antichrist appears five times in Scripture: 1 John 2:18 (twice); 2:22; 4:3; 2 John 1:7.

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SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2018 19
Satan thinks he has everything figured out, and he plans to deceive the whole world with his unholy trinity.
If you had visited “Dr.” Malachi Love-Robinson in his medical offices in Florida a few years ago, you would have met a nice-looking young man sporting a white lab coat, stethoscope draped around his neck, who would have examined you with apparent concern for your health. However, things aren’t always as they seem.
If you want to see Love-Robinson today, you’d have to visit him in prison where he is serving time for fraud and practicing medicine without a license, a con the now 21-year-old began when he was only 17. He also has to repay $80,000 that he bilked from his “patients,” according to Florida’s Sun-Sentinel.

Unfortunately, the world is littered with con artists and so-called snake-oil salesmen who make it their life’s work to masquerade as something they are not. But none of them can equal the greatest con artist of all time, Satan, whom Jesus calls “a liar and the father of it” (Jn. 8:44). Satan’s biggest con is yet to come and will be unleashed on unsuspecting humanity in the person of the Antichrist.

**HIS RECEPTION**

After God raptures His church, not a single believer will exist anywhere on Earth. All true followers of Jesus Christ will have been transported to heaven to be with the Lord (1 Th. 4:15–17), making the entire planet fertile territory for the father of lies—at least for a while—until some people recognize the truth and trust Christ as their Savior.

Satan’s vehicle for achieving world domination will be the Antichrist—the “man of sin” and “son of perdition”—descriptions that characterize his embodiment of damnation, eternal punishment, and utter destruction (2 Th. 2:3). Antichrist’s first deception will be to broker a major peace treaty or initiative: “Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week [seven years]” (Dan. 9:27). The accord with “many” presumably will involve Israel.

This man will seem like a great leader, someone who can help solve all the woes plaguing the post-Rapture world, and people will receive him with open arms. In actuality, however, he could not care less about peace or humanity. He will be evil, ruthless, and utterly self-centered; and his ultimate objectives will be to rule the world and be worshiped as God.

Unfortunately, he will fool billions. He will use “power, signs, and lying wonders” that he’ll accomplish “according to the working of Satan” (2 Th. 2:9). To make matters worse, God will send people a “strong delusion, that they should believe the lie” (v. 11).

Ever willing to believe a lie, however, the masses will flock to him and view him as a savior; and he will con them all: “All the world marveled and followed the beast [Antichrist]. So they worshiped the dragon [Satan] who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast” (Rev. 13:3–4). The scope and authority of the Antichrist’s reign will cover “every tribe, tongue, and nation,” including the Jewish nation (v. 7).

**HIS DECEPTION**

The Jewish people, in fact, will be the most vulnerable to the Antichrist’s promises because, throughout their history, they have wanted little more than to live in peace—and peace is exactly what he will offer them.

To encourage them to trust him, he may use the outcome of the battle of Gog and Magog. The prophet Ezekiel foretold of a future attack from Gog of the land of Magog.
Ever willing to believe a lie, however, the masses will flock to him and view him as a savior; and he will con them all.

that probably will take place early in the post-Rapture era. Gog and its allies “will go up against a land of unwalled villages . . . to a peaceful people, who dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates . . . against a people gathered from the nations . . . who dwell in the midst of the land” (Ezek. 38:11–12).

God speaks of Israel as being “gathered” from the nations: “When I have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, . . . then they will dwell in their own land which I gave to My servant Jacob” (28:25). So Israel is probably the victim.

Gog will attack while the nation enjoys something it has longed for: safety, without the necessity of walls, bars, or gates. In other words, Israel will have let down its defenses.

God will stem the invasion, but it seems the Antichrist will claim the credit. He will appear to bring peace and seduce the Jewish people into placing their confidence in him. However, then he will demand they worship him as God. He will oppose and exalt himself “above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God” (2 Th. 2:4).

**HIS PSEUDO RESURRECTION**

Satan will also deceive the Gentile nations. His pseudo messiah will somehow suffer a mortal wound but will appear to be astonishingly resurrected from the dead, “and all the world marveled and followed the beast” (Rev. 13:3). In his obsession to be like God, Satan will construct a fake, unholy trinity: he will play the part of the father, with Antichrist as the son and the False Prophet as the spirit.

The Antichrist will rule for seven years—a period the Hebrew Scriptures call “the time of Jacob’s trouble” and the New Testament calls the Tribulation (Jer. 30:7; Mt. 24). At the midpoint, Satan is cast to Earth “as a profane thing” (Ezek. 28:16), and everything on Earth deteriorates further. It appears Satan will enter the mortally wounded Antichrist and indwell him, deluding the vast majority of surviving humanity into thinking their world ruler actually came back to life—an attempt to emulate Jesus’ resurrection.

This con will continue as Satan installs and controls yet “another beast” (Rev. 13:11), the False Prophet, who will exercise great power and authority and try to force everyone to worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed. Through Satan’s power, he will perform miracles and direct people to construct an image of their ruler (v. 14), which he somehow will animate, “that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed” (v. 15).

Then the False Prophet is directed by Satan to seal “both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name . . . His number is 666” (vv. 16–18).

Today people speculate the mark could involve smart-chip technology. The number seven is almost always associated with God, and the number six is traditionally associated with man—close to seven, but neither perfect nor complete.

Satan employs all of this trickery in hopes of realizing his greatest ambition: to be God. He wants the glory that belongs to the Most High, and he wants the Kingdom: “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High” (Isa. 14:13–14).

But he will not. He will be brought down “to the lowest depths of the Pit” and eventually be cast into the Lake of Fire forever (v. 15; Rev. 20:10). And so will end the story of Satan and his evil quest to rule the world through the Antichrist. ✽
THE FINAL WAR AGAINST ISRAEL

BY DAVID M. LEVY
RUSSIA, IRAN, SYRIA. THEY ALL THREATEN ISRAEL TODAY. BUT THEIR THREATS ARE NOTHING COMPARED TO WHAT THE JEWISH PEOPLE WILL FACE WITH THE ANTICHRIST.
Throughout history, demonically inspired, hate-filled fanatics like Haman (see the book of Esther) and Adolf Hitler have attempted to exterminate the Jewish people. Anti-Semites want to remove every vestige of them from history.

Jewish people reflect on their history in sober silence—stunned, shocked, and numbed by the unmitigated brutality their eyes have seen and their minds find difficult to believe. Why? they wonder. Why us?

Only the Bible can answer that question. The Bible teaches that very crucifixion (Heb. 2:14). Clearly, Jesus is the “male Child” who will “rule all nations with a rod of iron” (Rev. 12:5). Since Satan was unable to destroy the Messiah, he has focused his attack on the woman (Israel) in hopes of preventing Jesus from returning to Earth—which would spell Satan’s defeat.

Satan knows that before the Lord can fulfill the Messianic Kingdom promises He made to Israel, Israel must repent of sin and be reconciled to its Messiah. If Satan could destroy Israel, he could prevent God’s theocratic Kingdom from coming to fruition.

After he is cast out of heaven, Satan will realize his activities are limited and his time is out his evil agenda—one that began thousands of years ago.

Long before Israel existed, Scripture foretold that Satan would try to cut off the “woman” (Israel) and her “Seed” (the Jewish Messiah; Gen. 3:15). Satan tried to prevent the Messiah’s coming by cutting off Jesus’ lineage through influencing Cain to murder his brother Abel (4:8). When that tactic did not work, he tried to pollute the godly line of Seth (chap. 6); produce a pseudo son of promise in Ishmael (chap. 16); destroy Israel in Egypt (Ex. 1) and in Persia (Est. 3:8–15); devour Jesus at His birth (Mt. 2:16; Rev. 12:4) and later in Nazareth (Lk. 4:28–29); and influence the people to crucify Him (Mt. 27:20–22, 35–50).

But Christ (meaning, “Messiah”) defeated Satan through that very crucifixion (Heb. 2:14). Clearly, Jesus is the “male Child” who will “rule all nations with a rod of iron” (Rev. 12:5). Since Satan was unable to destroy the Messiah, he has focused his attack on the woman (Israel) in hopes of preventing Jesus from returning to Earth—which would spell Satan’s defeat.

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short. Thus he will pour out his unmitigated hatred through the Antichrist and try to annihilate the Jewish people (v. 12).

PERSECUTION BY THE ANTICHRIST

The prophet Daniel prophesied of the Antichrist’s relationship with Israel during the seven-year Tribulation: “Then he shall confirm a covenant with many [Israelis] for one week [seven years]; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate” (Dan. 9:27).

The signing of the covenant will begin the seven-year period. During the first three and a half years, Israel will continue to worship in a rebuilt Temple while the Antichrist protects it from aggressive invaders.

At the same time, God will raise up two witnesses, dressed in sackcloth, who will prophesy for 1,260 days (Rev. 11:3). Revelation describes them as “two olive trees” and “two lampstands standing before the God of the earth” (v. 4). God will give them a prophetic message through the power of the Holy Spirit, endow them with power to work miracles, and protect them from death until their ministry is completed.

Then the Antichrist will show his true colors and his hatred of Israel by murdering them. But after lying dead in the street for three and a half days, the witnesses will miraculously resurrect and ascend into heaven while their enemies watch (vv. 5–12). This event will take place halfway through the Tribulation. The Antichrist will stop the sacrificial system and begin his savage persecution of the Jewish people (Mt. 24:9–14).

Before His death, Jesus prophesied, “Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand), . . . there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be” (vv. 15, 21).

What is the abomination of desolation? It is the pollution of the “holy place” (Holy of Holies). In 167 BC, Antiochus Epiphanes desecrated the holy place by erecting an altar to Zeus in the Jewish Temple and sacrificing a pig on it.

Jesus said Daniel’s prophecy of the abomination of desolation will be fulfilled in the middle of the Tribulation in two stages. First, the Antichrist will seize the Temple halfway through the seven-year period and enthrone himself as God (Mt. 24:15; 2 Th. 2:4).

Satan’s anger will intensify as he realizes he is unable to destroy Israel.
Second, an image of the Antichrist will be erected in the Temple, and people will be commanded to worship him as God; refusal to do so will mean instant death (Rev. 13:8, 11–15).

Jesus also said the abomination of desolation will be a sign for Jewish people to flee from the Antichrist’s rule in Jerusalem. He instructed the Judeans to flee to the mountains and said those on their housetops and in the fields should not return home. He warned of the hardships pregnant and nursing mothers will face during that time and instructed them to pray their flight will not be on the Sabbath or during the winter (Mt. 24:16–22).

During winter in Israel, rain and flash floods make travel extremely difficult; and on the Sabbath, public transportation is not available, so many will be trapped in Jerusalem.

The last three and a half years of the Tribulation will run its full course, but it will be shortened in the sense that it will not extend any longer. For if it lasted longer, not even the elect Jewish believers would survive (v. 22).

Once Satan is cast from heaven, he will devote his full attention to annihilating every trace of the woman (Israel) who produced the male child (Jesus Christ; Rev. 12:9, 13). But God will place His hand on Israel, providing a way for the nation to survive: “But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent” (v. 14).

Some people interpret this passage to mean a massive airlift will fly Jewish people to safety, similar to the May 1991 Operation Solomon, when El Al Israel Airline flew 14,400 Ethiopian Jews to safety in Israel within 36 hours. However, Scripture also uses the term eagles’ wings to describe ancient Israel’s flight from Egypt (Ex. 19:4). The phrase simply indicates Israel’s flight to safety will be swift and supernatural.

Since Scripture doesn’t identify the location of “the wilderness” where God will protect and nourish this remnant (Rev. 12:14), many believe it will be in Edom, an area that will remain unaffected by the Antichrist’s wrathful destruction (Dan. 11:41). Edom is a good possibility because Christ will come to Edom on His return to take vengeance on it and deliver a remnant of Jewish believers (Isa. 63:1–6).

Satan, in his last effort to annihilate Israel, will spew “water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman” to destroy her (Rev. 12:15). But God will deliver Israel by sending an earthquake to swallow the flood (v. 16).

The text indicates the water will be like a flood, making it difficult to tell if the flood should be interpreted literally or figuratively. While Israel has been spared from water twice—at the Red Sea (Ex. 14:13–31) and at the Jordan River (Josh. 3)—this flood probably refers to Satan dispatching a huge army to destroy the fleeing Jews near the midpoint of the Tribulation.
Satan’s anger will intensify as he realizes he is unable to destroy Israel, causing him “to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 12:17). This remnant will be the 144,000 Jewish people who will become believers during the Tribulation (7:4–8).

These believers will be scattered worldwide to testify of their faith in Jesus the Messiah, and other Jewish people will be saved through their preaching. They will be victorious over the Antichrist’s attempt to destroy them (14:1–5).

Although the Antichrist will be unable to exterminate Israel, two thirds of the Jewish population will be killed during the Tribulation (Zech. 13:8). Satan’s final attempt to destroy Israel will take place at the Battle of Armageddon in the Valley of Megiddo, when all the nations of the world will come against Israel. The Jewish people will be on the brink of annihilation when Messiah Jesus, in all His glory, will descend from heaven at His Second Coming to defeat Satan, destroy his forces, and save Israel (cf. Joel 3:9–16; Rev. 16:14, 16; 19:11–19).

Jesus will consume the Antichrist with “the breath of His mouth and destroy [him] with the brightness of His coming” (2 Th. 2:8; cf. Rev. 19:11–16).

PROTECTION BY THE ARCHANGEL

Scripture describes the archangel Michael as “the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your [Daniel's] people [Israel]” (Dan. 12:1; cf. Jude 9).

Throughout history, Michael has fought against Satan to protect the Jewish people (Dan. 10:13). Scripture reveals he will also fight against the Antichrist in the future to protect Israel from the Gentile nations bent on its annihilation (Rev. 12:7).

God will supernaturally intervene during the Tribulation to preserve a remnant of one third of the Jewish population (Jer. 30:7, 11; 31:35–37; Mt. 24:22; Rev. 12:6). Not only will these people survive, but they will come to salvation in their Messiah (Zech. 12:10; Rom. 11:26–31). They will enter the Millennial Kingdom to enjoy life with Jesus the Son of David, who will sit on the throne of King David of Israel in Jerusalem for 1,000 years. Afterward, the eternal state will begin.

Today Satan’s strategy to spread anti-Semitism is like a wound that never heals. Like the prophets of old, we must warn Israel and the world of their impending travail and stand in solidarity with the Jewish people as they approach the birth pains of the Tribulation. And, like the prophets of old, we must tell the comforting message that there is hope and victory in Jesus, the Messiah who loves them.
CONSUMED AND DESTROYED

A LOOK AT HOW THE ANTICHRIST AND HIS UNRIGHTEOUS KINGDOM WILL MEET THEIR DEMISE

BY MIKE STALLARD
Y
ears ago, my boss at the office where I worked asked me about the Antichrist: “Does the Bible teach that the Antichrist will be destroyed? Or does he win in the end?” His question came following the release of The Omen in 1976, a movie that revolves around the idea that one of the film’s characters—a young, adopted boy—might be the Antichrist.

The film apparently scared my boss. But he needn’t have worried. The Bible is clear about Jesus’ victory in the end-times battle between Christ and Antichrist.

Several passages speak of the Antichrist’s demise. In Daniel 7, Daniel described a vision of four beasts representing four world empires—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Some people claim Daniel did not identify the beasts or kingdoms, especially Rome. But that is not true.

A parallel passage in Daniel 2 clearly identifies the first beast as the Babylonian Empire. Daniel 8 says the second and third empires are Medo-Persia and Greece, respectively. And Daniel 11:30 refers to the ships of Kittim (Hebrew, “western coastlands”), which became a designation for Rome. Consequently, Jewish translators of the Greek Septuagint (250 BC–150 BC) used the Greek word for the Romans in that passage.

Daniel 7:8 describes the Antichrist as a little horn emerging from the fourth world empire, or Rome. His pompous ascent will end as described in the courtroom scene where the Ancient of Days judges him:

I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; . . . I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame (vv. 9, 11).

The passage describes the final destruction of the empire or beast, along with its leader, the little horn. It is hard to imagine a clearer description of complete destruction. The later interpretation of Daniel’s vision reiterates this powerful portrait of the Antichrist’s demise: “And they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it forever” (v. 26).

The 70-weeks prophecy of Daniel 9:24–27 also adds to our understanding of the Antichrist’s absolute defeat. Verse 27 reveals that his abominable behavior toward Israel and the world during the seven-year Tribulation will be followed by his annihilation: “And on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate” (NASB).

The “one who makes desolate” is the Antichrist. He will perform his horrible deeds until he is completely destroyed. God has decreed the Antichrist’s irreversible demise and judgment. His ruin will be absolutely final. Daniel 11:45 reinforces this truth, claiming the Antichrist “shall come to his end, and no one will help him.”

**THE END**

The New Testament also describes the Antichrist’s destiny. Second Thessalonians 2:1–12 provides information about the rise of Antichrist, who is called the “man of sin” (or “man of lawlessness”) and “son of perdition” (v. 3).

The title son of perdition identifies him with his own destruction. His demise is clearly in view: “And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming” (v. 8). This verse implies two things: First, Christ will destroy the Antichrist simply by speaking (“consume with the breath of His mouth”). Jesus needs no weapons of warfare. Second, his destruction will take place at the Lord’s Second Coming.

The book of Revelation completes the biblical picture. Revelation 13 describes the Antichrist as a beast from the sea (v. 1). Later, chapter 17 describes him as one on his way to perdition, or destruction (vv. 8, 11).

However, the clearest depiction of the Antichrist’s destruction is the awe-inspiring prophecy of the brilliance of Christ’s Second Coming in Revelation 19:11–20. It states Jesus will return riding a white horse and brandishing a sharp sword in His mouth with which He will strike the nations.

The phrase out of His mouth goes a sharp sword (v. 15) resembles the phrase the Lord will consume [the lawless one] with the breath of His mouth (2Th. 2:8). Revelation 19:15 says Jesus will merely speak the word and thereby strike the nations during the final war of the Tribulation. The late theologian Harry A. Ironside eloquently described the future scene:

*The kings of the earth, with all their hordes, are hurrying to the fray, all combining in one last desperate effort to make successful war against the Lord Jesus Christ and everything that is of God. . . . It is an awful picture—the climax of man’s audacious resistance to God; a picture too that may fill the heart with gladness as it tells of the end of unrighteous rule on this planet, and the ushering in of the Golden Age for which all nations have sighed.*

Furthermore, as part of the consequence of Christ coming in judgment, the Antichrist and his false prophet will be cast into the Lake of Fire:

*Then the beast [Antichrist] was captured, and with him*
Mike Stallard is the director of International Ministries and a Bible teacher for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry.

Note, the Antichrist will be cast into the Lake of Fire alive; he will not suffer physical death before Christ sends him to his final judgment.

Many Christians during World War II thought Adolf Hitler was the Antichrist. Hitler’s location in Central Europe, his attempt to conquer much of the world, his alliance with Rome and Italy, his hatred and persecution of the Jews, and his pagan views against Christ and Christianity led reasonable believers to wonder about his identity. But Adolf Hitler was not the Antichrist, although he went to his complete destruction much like the real Antichrist will do when Jesus returns.

The Bible is clear: The Antichrist’s plans for the world will not succeed. His hatred of the Jewish people and his lust for power will come undone. Like Babylon’s King Nebuchadnezzar of old, the Antichrist will have humility forced on him by the God of heaven. He will be brought low.

Yet unlike Nebuchadnezzar, the Antichrist will not repent and return to power. God through Christ will destroy him and his kingdom and establish Jesus the Messiah’s Millennial Kingdom, centered in Israel, followed by the eternal state and a new Earth.

Our good and holy God will win in the end. Victory is certain and decisive, and the Antichrist will meet his deserved destruction.

ENDNOTE


How should time-related terms like shortly, the time is near, and quickly in the book of Revelation be interpreted?

These words refer to prophecies related to Christ’s Second Coming, and they often leave people perplexed. It has been 2,000 years since the apostle John wrote the book of Revelation, and these prophecies have not been fulfilled. So how should such words be interpreted?

Some critics use these words to cast aspersions on the veracity of Revelation, saying it is not from God and John wrongly predicted Christ’s soon coming.

Others believe John wrote Revelation around AD 65. So they believe shortly and the time is near (Rev. 1:1, 3) were fulfilled when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70. This position is not tenable, however, because adequate evidence proves Revelation was not written until approximately AD 95 and therefore cannot apply to the destruction of Jerusalem, which occurred 25 years earlier.

Still others interpret shortly (1:1) to mean that prophecies predicting Christ’s coming will be fulfilled on an unknown day; but when Christ comes, it will be sudden or quick and without delay when the prophecy is fulfilled. That is, Christ’s coming will be according to God’s timetable, not man’s. They believe this interpretation is reinforced by the phrase the time is near (v. 3), meaning at hand or ready and could happen at any moment.

Finally, there are those who believe the day in which John was writing was considered the “last hour” (1 Jn. 2:18) because that was how he identified it. The emphasis is not on a specific day or time but, rather, on the characteristic of the “last hour” leading up to the time of the Great Tribulation.

For 2,000 years the church has been living in light of the time is near for Christ’s coming. In other words, such time-related terms do not refer to a specific day but, rather, to the return of Christ at any time.

Since no one in any generation knows the day of Christ’s coming, it will always be imminent until He comes. Jesus commanded each generation to be ready, for the end is always near. Matthew wrote, “Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming” (Mt. 24:42). This view seems the truest to the text.

BY DAVID M. LEVY
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The Gift That
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JOSEPH IN HIS EGYPTIAN CONTEXT

Some Bible critics claim Joseph was the invented hero of an Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) literary drama written years after the purported event. But ancient Egyptian records support the biblical account. Joseph’s legitimacy is important because it is the historical and theological bridge between the Hebrews’ spiritual decline in the land of Canaan and their spiritual rise to national status in the Exodus and subsequent conquest of Canaan.

During their Egyptian bondage, the Israelites knew Joseph had said, “God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. . . . And you shall carry up my bones from here” (Gen. 50:24–25). His words strengthened their faith, and Moses instructed them to bring Joseph’s bones as they left Egypt (Ex. 13:19).

Joseph’s story also demonstrated God’s power to deliver His people from famine (Gen. 50:20) and served as a faithful witness through 430 years of suffering, reminding the Israelites of God’s promise to restore them to their land.

Some critics claim the Bible’s writers invented Joseph from existing materials from ANE, Egyptian, and Israelite traditions to create a history of Israel in retrospect. They point to the Egyptian Tale of Two Brothers, for example, which contains similarities to Joseph’s experiences of being falsely accused and imprisoned. But close scrutiny reveals sufficient differences.

Though some scholars have attempted to identify Joseph with a known figure in Egyptian history, a more reliable means of confirming historicity is by comparing the biblical account with Egyptian manners and customs, especially those from the Middle Kingdom, the time that best aligns with the biblical chronology.

For example, a section of Papyrus Brooklyn 35.1446 (late 19th century BC) lists 95 servants, half of whom are specified as coming from Canaan. Those with foreign names were given Egyptian names, just as Pharaoh gave Joseph an Egyptian name (41:45). Even more significant is the fact that 10 of those mentioned in the papyrus have uniquely Hebrew names.

Moreover, this document confirms that private landowners, not merely pharaohs, could purchase servants, as Potiphar purchased Joseph (37:36). Egyptian documents also reveal that servants purchased by Egyptian officials often supervised agricultural slaves. Genesis 39:5 says everything Potiphar owned prospered under Joseph’s hand, including his possessions in the field. The mention of Joseph’s responsibility in the field reveals a touch of authentic detail.

In prison, Joseph met two prisoners: the king’s cupbearer (NASB, 40:1) and baker. Both positions existed in the Middle Kingdom. Joseph interpreted their dreams, as well as Pharaoh’s, leading to his great elevation in government (40:8–20; 41:8, 25). An Egyptian book on dream interpretation (ca. 1300 BC) corroborates the biblical story, revealing ancient Egyptians believed dreams were allegorical and could predict the future.

Joseph also had to shave before entering Pharaoh’s presence, in accordance with Egyptian protocol, as Egyptian monuments certify (41:14). The Egyptian name Pharaoh gave Joseph, Zaphnath-Paaneah, also aligns with ancient names used during the Middle Kingdom (v. 45). Since names are time-dependent, it would have been impossible for a writer to invent Joseph’s story much later and know that name.

Joseph’s position of second-in-command also matches Egyptian documents that call the position “Overseer of the Royal Estates” (vv. 40–41). Also, the Leningrad Papyrus 1116A (ca. 1450 BC) states that ancient Egyptians used immigrants as compulsory labor in public building projects, which is what happened to the Hebrews (Ex. 1:8–11).

Many more archaeological details support the Bible, but these evidences are sufficient to remind us again that God’s Word reveals to us real history and teaches us lessons we can apply to our faith today.

ENDNOTES

2 Charles F. Aling, Egypt and Bible History: From Earliest Times to 1000 BC (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1981), 36.

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CHURCH LIFE 1 THESSALONIANS 5:12–22

The apostle Paul often addressed the church as a family. He called members brothers and sisters and encouraged them to love one another. To function properly, a church—like a family—must have structure, order, respect for its members, and accountability. Paul exhorted the Thessalonian believers to guard their Christian walks as they waited for the Lord’s return (1 Th. 5:1–11).

First Thessalonians 5:12–22 provides us with practical guidance in three areas: responsibilities of church members to leaders (vv. 12–13), responsibilities of members to one another (vv. 14–15), and instructions on Christian living (vv. 16–22).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHURCH MEMBERS TO LEADERS

Paul urged church members to respect church leadership: “And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. Be at peace among yourselves” (vv. 12–13).

Believers are to understand the role of leaders within the church. The word recognize means to know, respect, and appreciate the positions of pastor, elder, and deacon. Paul said leaders “labor among” the church members, meaning they work strenuously, both mentally and physically; and they become weary. They deserve the congregation’s loyalty. Anyone who has pastored a church can testify to the role’s demands.

Paul explained that leaders serve “over you in the Lord” (v. 12). The word over speaks of the leader’s position regarding spiritual guidance and discipline. Leaders also are required to “admonish” congregants, rebuke, correct, and warn them when needed.

Consequently, the church has an obligation “to esteem them [their leaders] very highly in love for their work’s sake” (v. 13). The word esteem means to value, respect, and highly regard. Paul told the Thessalonians to respect their leaders because of their worth and work within the congregation. He emphasized they must esteem them “in love,” from a self-sacrificing, surrendered heart. Why? “For their work’s sake” because their ministry is a good work from the Lord.

Paul ended verse 13 with the command, “Be at peace among yourselves.” He gave this command not because of any disharmony between Paul and the church but, rather, because he knew that without peace, a church will not grow spiritually or obtain a good testimony in the community. This command applies to congregants and clergy alike.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHURCH MEMBERS TO ONE ANOTHER

Paul said congregants and leaders should be involved in six areas of ministry: “Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all. See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all” (vv. 14–15). The first three exhortations speak of a continual, ongoing church ministry.

1. “Warn those who are unruly” (v. 14). The word unruly refers to someone who is disorderly, disruptive, or out of place. The term was often used of soldiers who failed to carry out their duties or got out of rank. It was also used of advancing armies that were in disarray.

In regard to the church, it speaks of members who are undisciplined, irresponsible, idle, or derelict in carrying out their daily duties, manifesting bad habits that present a bad testimony to others. Church members, whether congregants or leaders, should confront and correct the unruly.

2. “Comfort the fainthearted” (v. 14). The word fainthearted describes one who is discouraged, worried, emotionally disturbed about a personal problem or a sin, or unable to live the Christian life. Such a person needs personal care, comfort, encouragement, and biblical counseling.

3. “Uphold the weak” (v. 14). The phrase the weak could mean those physically, spiritually, mentally, or morally without strength. The weaker believer consistently lacks the psychological, spiritual, and sometimes moral strength to handle issues in his or her life and often needs counseling and care.

4. “Be patient with all” (v. 14). This is a difficult command to obey. Notice, Paul said to be long-tempered with all, not merely with those who are easy to get along or work with. Too often we operate on a short fuse, show irritability, and exhibit unforgiving spirits, rather than show patience toward others when they offend us.

5. “See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone” (v. 15; cf. Mt. 5:38–42; Rom. 12:17). The word renders means to pay back or take revenge against someone who has wronged us. Christians should never retaliate by physically hurting those who have committed evil against us. Such behavior provides
a bad testimony to believers and unbelievers alike.

6. “Always pursue what is good for yourselves and for all” (1 Th. 5:15). We should pursue, or follow after, good in any hostile situation we face and actively return blessing. The phrase both for yourselves and for all refers to Christian brothers and unbelievers alike. We must love and bless them. Doing so provides a great witness for the truth of Christianity.

INSTRUCTIONS ON CHRISTIAN LIVING

Paul concluded this section with eight succinct commands on how to live out one’s faith: “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies. Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil” (vv. 16–22).

The first group of commands pertains to the Christian’s inner life (vv. 16–18). To “rejoice always” (v. 16) is the duty of every believer. Even under uncomfortable circumstances and extreme persecution, Paul constantly rejoiced (cf. Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:16–18; 6:10; 12:10; Col. 1:24).

“Pray without ceasing” (1 Th. 5:17) does not mean we must pray nonstop, 24 hours a day. It means we should maintain a spirit of prayer throughout the day, intermittently and incessantly praying to God—even when we have busy schedules.

“In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in

The word quench means to suppress, stifle, or snuff out, like extinguishing fire with water. Within context, it could refer to quenching the Spirit in oneself or others or despising prophecies in a church meeting, as mentioned in verse 20.

“Do not despise prophecies,” Paul said (v. 20). Scripture mentions two types of prophecies: foretelling and forthtelling. Foretelling involves using God-given knowledge to predict an event before it happens. It uses direct, divine revelation never before revealed to humankind.

Forthtelling involves giving the church a message for instruction, guidance, or edification. No new divine revelation is being given today via Scripture or foretellers, but forthtellers continue to build up the church today through illuminating God’s divine revelation in Scripture.

The phrase do not despise means not to view something being said with contempt. Paul commanded believers not to shut down prophecies without first examining them in light of Scripture to see if the messages were from God.

The remaining verses of this section provide three positive commands: “Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil” (vv. 21–22).

Test means to prove, try, or examine whether something is true. We should test all things according to God’s Word. Paul didn’t say some things, but all things. We must examine every teaching and practice in light of Scripture (cf. 1 Jn. 4:1).

The word good (1 Th. 5:21) here refers to something of intrinsic worth, like a coin that is tested and found to be real and not counterfeit. In other words, “hold fast,” or habitually cling to, right behavior and the genuine principles and practices in God’s Word.

The word evil (v. 22) refers to demonic activity and to pernicious moral or doctrinal practices harmful or destructive to one’s life. We are to abstain from every external appearance of evil—not merely some. The word abstain means to hold oneself back. Paul instructed believers to abstain from any sort of practice that would harm or destroy their spiritual lives and testimonies.

These sobering commands in 1 Thessalonians 5:12–22 call for us to take inventory of our lives. Christian growth requires not only the appropriation and practice of principles from God’s Word but also the total rejection of evil. What better time to take inventory of where we stand than now?

by David M. Levy, director of Education and Ministry Relations and a Bible teacher for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry

PAUL TOLD THE THESSALONIANS TO RESPECT THEIR LEADERS BECAUSE OF THEIR WORTH AND WORK WITHIN THE CONGREGATION.

Christ Jesus for you” (v. 18) emphasizes our obligation to be thankful in “everything.” Paul told the Roman believers that God works all things—even difficult circumstances and suffering—together for good “to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:28). So whatever happens in our lives is according to God’s purposes.

Notice, Paul said, “For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Th. 5:18). Thus it is God’s will we continually rejoice, pray, and give thanks in all circumstances (vv. 16–18).

The second group of commands tells us how to live in relation to one another within the church. “Do not quench the Spirit” (v. 19). The word Spirit refers to the Holy Spirit, not the individual’s spirit. When someone is born again, the Holy Spirit indwells that person and will never leave.
CULTIVATING CONTENTMENT

A story is often told about a Jewish man in Hungary who complained to his rabbi, “Life is unbearable. Nine of us are living in one room. What can I do?”

The rabbi answered, “Take your goat into the room with you. Do as I say and return in a week.” The man was incredulous but obeyed. He went home and brought his goat into the room. Now there were nine people in one room, plus a goat.

A week later, the man returned to his rabbi more distraught than ever. “We can’t stand it!” he said. “The goat is filthy!”

The rabbi replied, “Go home and let the goat out, and come back in a week.”

A week later, the man returned radiant. “Life is beautiful!” he declared. “We enjoy every minute of it now that there is no goat. There are only nine of us in the room.”

Sometimes we need a goat experience to teach us contentment. Often we lose perspective and focus on the wrong things. As a result, our lives get turned upside down. We become ungrateful and start to complain; and we concentrate on life’s difficulties, rather than on the One who holds our very breath in His hand and loves us.

Jeremiah Burroughs, a 17th-century Puritan preacher, wrote, “Christian contentment is that sweet, inward, quiet, gracious frame of spirit, which freely submits to and delights in God’s wise and fatherly disposal in every condition.” Contentment is learning to trust God’s administration. As the apostle Paul wrote,

> Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil (1 Tim. 6:6–10).

The Greek word for contentment is autarkeia. It’s a combination of two words: autos, meaning “self,” and arkeo, meaning “to be sufficient” or “to be full.” So contentment means being satisfied within ourselves. It does not mean we cannot take self-improvement classes or explore the possibility of job advancement. But it means those things should not drive us. We should be satisfied with our circumstances.

Paul wrote we should be content if we have food and clothing, since “we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out” (v. 7). In North America, most of us have plenty of food and more than enough clothes. Yet we tend to covet what others have. We allow society’s marketing ploys and television advertisements to make us discontent by constantly telling us what we own is not as up-to-date as it could be. But Scripture tells us to be content. So how do we become content?

**LEAN ON GOD’S GRACE**

God told the apostle Paul, “My grace is sufficient for you” (2 Cor. 12:9). The word for “sufficient” is the same word for “content.” God’s grace is enough. Contentment is seeing yourself as having enough, as being sufficient where you are.

Paul wrote, “I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need” (Phil. 4:12). The verb translated “have learned” is the Greek word memeymai, which means “to be initiated.” Paul had been initiated into contentment, as opposed to being instructed about contentment. How does that work? Paul explained:

> Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in
perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation? (2 Cor. 11:23–29).

That was quite an initiation. God placed Paul in many situations where he had to decide whether to be content—to trust God’s overall management of his circumstances—or to complain about how unfair life is.

Paul experienced persecution, peril, illness, and sleeplessness. Sooner or later, we experience hardships that can initiate us into contentment, if we let them. We must ask ourselves, Am I going to live above my circumstances? Can I let God take my possessions away from me? Will I be content when that happens?

In some ways, life’s events are like puzzle pieces. When we first dump a jigsaw puzzle onto a table, we don’t understand how the pieces will fit together. We may even pick one up and say, “No way will this piece ever fit. I’ll never figure out where it goes.” But with patience, we start to assemble the puzzle and eventually see where the piece belongs.

Similarly, we need to trust the fact that God, as the Administrator of our lives, knows how all the pieces fit together. We need to say, “All right, Lord. I have no idea how this piece fits or how it’s going to work. But I know You’ve made some promises to me. I know You’ve said all things work together for good [Rom. 8:28]. I know You’ve said no weapon formed against me will stand [Isa. 54:17]. I know You’ve said You will supply all of my needs through Christ Jesus [Phil. 4:19]. So, I’m going to trust You. I’m going to leave what I’ve been fretting about in Your hands. And at some point, I’ll see how this piece fits into the jigsaw puzzle.” That’s what it means to be content.

**PRACTICE CONTENTMENT**

Many people like to quote Philippians 4:13: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” But I rarely hear it quoted within its proper context.

It follows verse 12, which is about contentment. Paul was saying, “I can be content no matter what the circumstances are because I can do it in Jesus.” So while we must make the effort to practice contentment, we cannot do it alone. We need Jesus’ strength.

But we must decide to be content. We must decide to praise God for all the good things He’s done and decide to trust Him, despite what may be difficult circumstances. As we focus on who Jesus is and His plan for our lives, we can be content through Christ, who strengthens us.

We can also focus on the profit that comes from others. Paul wrote,

> Even in Thessalonica, you sent aid once and again for my necessities. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God (vv. 16–18).

Paul was thankful for the gift that came, but he was more focused on how the givers would benefit and be blessed by God because of their selflessness. Likewise, we gain contentment by focusing on what God is doing in our lives and in the lives of others.

Joni Eareckson Tada is a great example of contentment and what it means to focus on others. Though she became a quadriplegic at age 17, she allowed God to use her disability to initiate her into contentment and uses her platform to advocate for others with disabilities. Mrs. Tada once said, “Contentment is an internal quietness of heart that gladly submits to God in all circumstances.”

Do you gladly submit to God in all circumstances? Or are you fighting with God, saying, “I’m not happy where I am. I refuse to submit to God’s sovereign plan for my life”? Let’s decide to learn contentment. Let’s study the Scriptures, reaffirm God’s sovereignty, praise Him for the blessings He has already given, allow our experiences to initiate us into contentment, and then practice contentment with Jesus’ help. That’s how to lead a productive, happy Christian life.

**Sooner or later, we experience hardships that can initiate us into contentment, if we let them.**

**by Richard D. Emmons,**
professor emeritus in the School of Divinity at Cairn University in Langhorne, Pennsylvania, and senior pastor of GraceWay Bible Church in Hamilton Township, New Jersey.
DANON TO UN: “YOU ARE THE AMMUNITION FOR HAMAS’S GUNS”

“You are the ammunition for Hamas’s guns; you are the warheads for its missiles,” Israel’s UN Ambassador Danny Danon told the UN General Assembly when it recently condemned Israel for responding to Gaza’s violent border protests.

The UN resolution, ironically called “Protection of the Palestinian civilian population,” was proposed by Algeria and Turkey and passed 120 to 8, with 45 abstentions, JNS.org reported. It condemned the “excessive, disproportionate and indiscriminate force by the Israeli forces against Palestinian civilians,” JNS.org said.

However, it never mentioned Hamas or its actions, such as flying firebomb kites into Israel, hurling explosives and grenades over the border, rolling burning tires into Israeli soldiers and throwing rocks at them, firing rockets, using children as human shields, and organizing a violent mob to try to storm through the border.

Even Hamas official Mahmoud al-Zahar admitted in an Arabic interview with Al Jazeera Network that the protests were violent and that language of a “peaceful protest” is used only to deceive the public: “This is not peaceful resistance. Has the option [of armed struggle] diminished? No. On the contrary, it is growing and developing. That is clear. So when we talk about ‘peaceful resistance,’ we are deceiving the public.”

The translation was released by the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI).

Israeli soldiers responded with tear gas and rubber bullets to reduce the number of casualties, resorting to live ammunition only when necessary to protect Israelis near the border. Most of the people killed by Israeli forces were Hamas militants, according to the terror organization itself.

From news reports

PA SPOKESMAN AT BETHLEHEM CONFERENCE: “JESUS WAS A PALESTINIAN”

“Jesus was a Palestinian,” and Palestine was “the birthplace of Jesus,” Palestinian Authority Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki said at Bethlehem Bible College’s recent Christ at the Checkpoint conference, an annual pro-Palestinian Christian seminar known for vilifying Israel and Christian Zionism.

The Christians hosting the conference, themed “Christ at the Center,” applauded al-Maliki’s revisionist approach to Scripture and ignored the many passages that clearly present Jesus as Jewish and born “in Bethlehem of Judea” (Mt. 2:5).

Speakers advocated for the anti-Israel Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement; criticized the recent move of the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem; emphasized the so-called struggle of Arabs under Israeli “occupation”; denounced Christian Zionism; and used the Bible to stir up evangelicals to side with them in their battle against Israel, IsraelToday.co.il reported.

The organizers did, however, invite one pro-Israel voice to speak: Dr. Michael Brown, a prominent evangelical Jewish-Christian author, radio host, and advocate of Israel. Brown explained God’s future for the Jewish people and the nation of Israel, emphasized the dangers of Replacement Theology, clarified the purpose of the checkpoints to protect Israelis, and rebuked the conference organizers and speakers for failing to mention the Palestinian Authority’s and Hamas’s encouragement of terrorism.

“I wonder how many speakers here will decry the hundreds of millions of dollars that Hamas has spent on building terrorist tunnels to kidnap and kill Israelis, including kindergarteners,” Brown said. “If you care about justice, if you care about putting Jesus at the center, surely you have to renounce these things with me today. The least you could do as followers of Jesus is stand with me in denouncing your government’s celebration of terrorism.”

From news reports
**Knesset Introduces ‘Pay to Slay’ Bill**

The Israeli Knesset has introduced legislation that will reduce the amount of money the Palestinian Authority (PA) receives each month from Israel in tax revenue by approximately $42 million (NIS 150 million) unless the PA can prove it is no longer paying terrorists and their families monthly stipends.

The proposed legislation came two months after the PA released its 2018 budget, which allocates $340 million to pay terrorists convicted by Israeli courts and their families. “The law will correct an injustice of historic proportions. Passage of this law will reduce terrorism, and perhaps more importantly, restore the most basic moral values necessary in every civilized society,” Knesset member Elazar Stern said.

**Poland Retracts Holocaust Law**

Poland has decided to remove the criminal provisions of its controversial Holocaust speech law in response to international outcry. The law had called for criminal penalties for anyone accusing Poland of complicity in the Holocaust.

**Iranians Defy Regime, Support Israel**

Thousands of Iranians recently defied their anti-Israeli government by tweeting their support and love for Israel on Quds Day, an annual day established by the Iranian regime to condemn Israeli control of Jerusalem.

The hashtag #WeStandWithIsrael was featured in tens of thousands of tweets written by Iranians campaigning to separate their opinions of Israel from that of their government, according to Israel’s Foreign Ministry. “Most of the Iranian people oppose the regime and its policies towards Israel, and Iranians are always writing to us that they love Israel—that they do not want their regime to use their money to bolster Hamas and Hezbollah,” said Sharona Avginsaz, the ministry’s Persian-language, digital-media manager.

The supportive tweets came days after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu released a video promising to help Iranian farmers learn Israel’s cutting-edge water technologies in the midst of Iran’s severe drought. “The Iranian people are victims of a cruel and tyrannical regime that denies them vital water. . . . The hatred of Iran’s regime will not stop the respect and friendship between our two peoples,” Netanyahu said.

**Jews, Christians Gather to Support Israel**

More than 1,500 South African Jews and Christians gathered recently in Cape Town, Johannesburg, and Durban to learn how to strengthen pro-Israel communities and counter the growing anti-Israel sentiments in their country.

The initiative, sponsored by the Israeli Ministry of Strategic Affairs and Public Diplomacy and the Zionist Federation of South Africa, included panels on how to raise support for Israel and counter the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement trying to destroy Israel.

“The reality in South Africa is deeply disturbing, given the increasing prominence of the BDS movement within the country and the solidarity by the ANC [African National Congress Party] towards terrorist organizations,” said Strategic Affairs Minister Gilad Erdan. “I decided to focus my ministry’s efforts on activities in South Africa in order to strengthen the local pro-Israel community and their fight against BDS and terrorism.”

**Israel Unveils New Kamikaze-Like Drone**

Israel Aerospace Industries recently demonstrated its newest, high-tech, kamikaze-like drone designed to enhance Israel’s land warfare proficiencies by destroying enemy targets.

The drone, called Rotem, is a lightweight, multirotor, lethal assault drone with vertical takeoff and landing capabilities, making it suitable for intelligence, reconnaissance, surveillance, and tactical missions. It carries a 2.2-pound warhead, covers up to 6.2 miles in range, can hover for 30 to 45 minutes before diving down at a speed of up to 58 miles per hour, and can be deployed in one minute by a single soldier.
Recently in Israel, we celebrated the holiday of Simchat Torah, which means “Rejoicing of the Law.” God gave the Law to Moses to give to Israel.

It was a good thing that we received the Law, but it was not a good thing that we failed to obey it. In Leviticus 26:3–13, God gave us certain blessings that were contingent on our obedience. But Israel chose to disobey and look for a “better” law. In doing so, the people created another golden calf.

I had a conversation on Simchat Torah with people who were celebrating the holiday. Though they rejoiced, I wanted to weep. “Come and dance with us!” one yelled. “You are dancing around the golden calf!” I replied. My comment made them angry, so they circled around me and looked as if they wanted to eat me alive. “How can you say this?” one demanded. “Tell me,” I asked, “do any of you keep the Law?”

“Of course! You see we are celebrating it right now,” one answered. “You hold the Torah in one hand and a bottle of vodka in the other,” I said. “But vodka gives us joy,” one replied. And so began an interesting conversation. The Scriptures tell us to warn those who are far from the truth (cf. Ezek. 33:7–11).

“How can you be happy on this great day without even enjoying the aroma from this bottle?” one asked me. I replied, “What will you say when this bottle that has such a great aroma brings you to kill your brother or commit other sins? Will you take responsibility or blame it on the vodka?”

“Would you rather we mourn on this great day of joy?” he responded. So I read for them Isaiah 25:9: “And it will be said in that day: ‘Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.’” I explained to them we can rejoice in Him without the bottle.

“Do you believe what is written in

by Zvi Kalisher
“I have not come here to compete with you,” I told them. “I came here only to tell you the truth about the Law.”

in the faith,” one answered.

So I told him to read Psalm 105:3: “Glory in His holy name; let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord!” Then I told them about the story of Hannah—how she prayed fervently to the Lord for a son, and how she rejoiced when God answered her prayer (1 Sam. 1:8—2:10).

“She did not rejoice in a bottle of vodka, but in the Lord,” I told them. They began to look at me with much suspicion. Some even seemed as though they were afraid to speak with me.

“If you are so smart, we will call for our rabbi to come here,” one said.

“I have not come here to compete with you,” I told them. “I came here only to tell you the truth about the Law. You should not dance around the golden calf as our fathers did.”

“We came here to be happy and celebrate, and you have come to make us unhappy. Our rabbi is coming. We will see what he has to say,” one said.

When the rabbi came, we recognized each other. “What do you have to say now?” he asked me. “Are you talking about This Man [Jesus] again? The thought of that makes me very unhappy on this holiday,” he said.

“That is because you are so far away from keeping the Law,” I said. “You are following other gods. And what does the Lord say? ‘You are My servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.’” Then I read for them Isaiah 49:3–6.

Afterward, they began to talk to me like we were best friends. Our conversation brought great fruit. I pray they will come to know the One about whom I spoke.

—The Friends of Israel Archives, November 2003

Zvi Kalisher (1928–2014) was a Holocaust survivor who was known for his unwavering faithfulness to the Lord and his bold witness in Jerusalem. He was with The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry for more than 55 years.
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