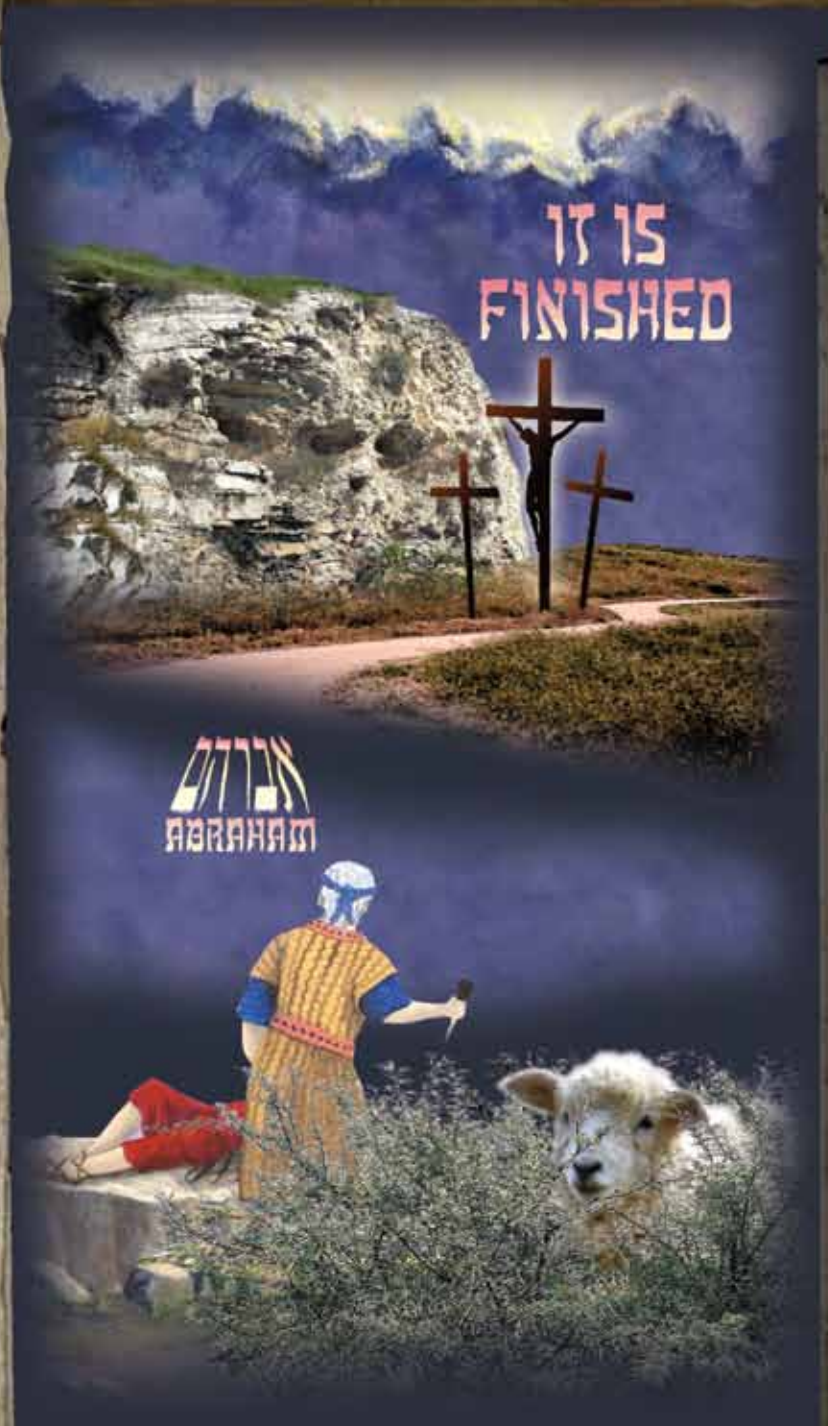


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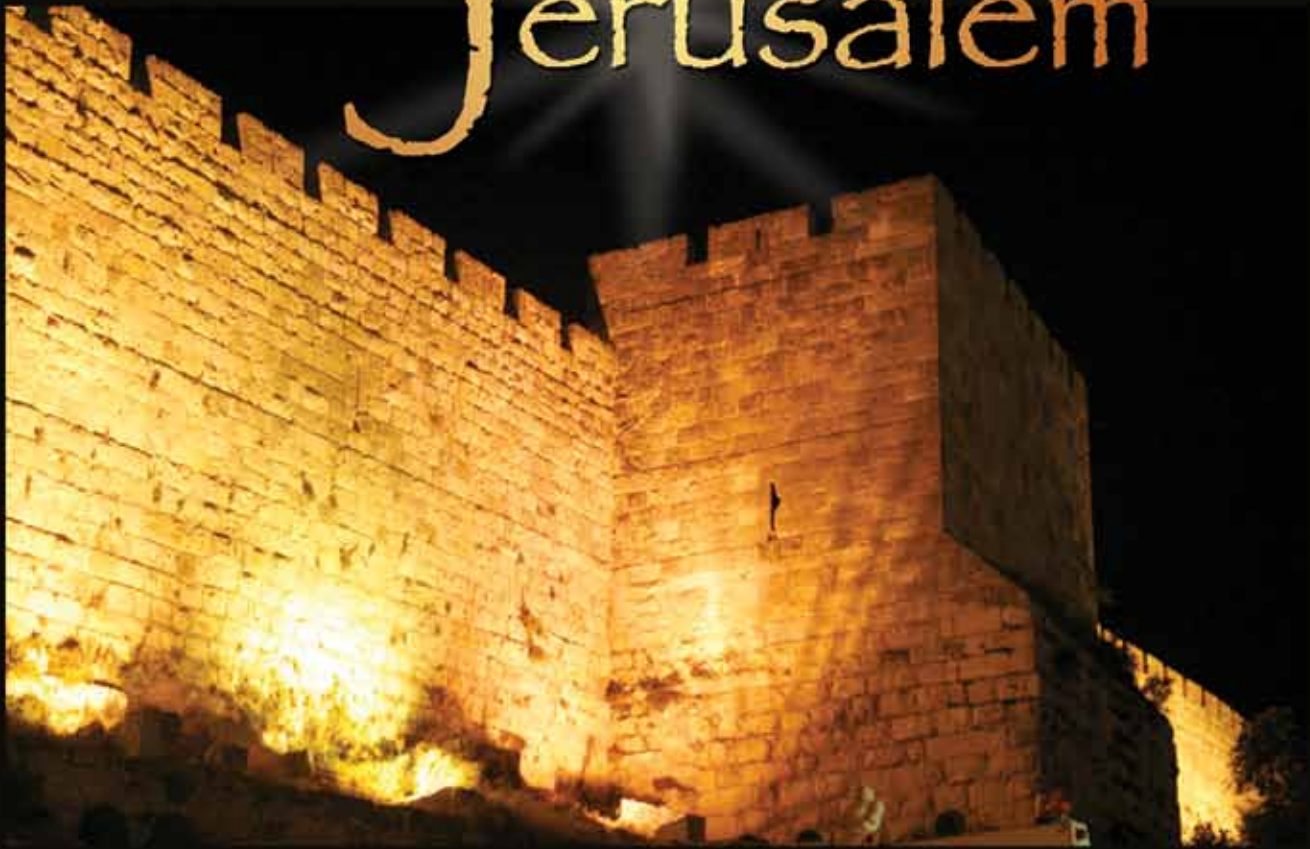


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Israel's Messenger is a quarterly publication of Jewish Awareness Ministries, a Christian ministry proclaiming the Messiah to Jew and Gentile, preaching the Word of God, and praying for Israel.

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by Mark Robinson



Cover Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac starts a progression of God providing His Lamb. It continues through the Passover to Messiah, who is "...our Passover sacrificed for us" 1 Corinthians 5:7b.



From the Director's Desk

Dear Friends,

Jewish Awareness Ministries has a great need for a facility that will meet this growing ministry's needs. God has touched hearts and people have given sacrificially to see this happen. It is a blessing to report that the funds have come in that will allow us to build! Praise the Lord!

We anticipate being able to build our new 4,500 square foot administration / ministry building with very little indebtedness. After meeting with our General Contractor, I estimate we have about 90% of the cash needed to complete the building. The general contractor estimates we can build for about \$404,000. This price is based on our doing some of the labor as well as savings we expect from different trades who have either cut their costs or are donating their work. When the building is complete, estimated to be summer, 2013, we will need additional funds to furnish the offices, kitchen, and meeting room. In early February we had our ground breaking. Please see pages 8 and 9 for pictures of this special day, and pray that God would continue to provide so we have no debt at all when the building is completed.

Our next tour to Israel is scheduled for October 16-25, 2013 departing from JFK airport in New York. A trip to Israel can be a highlight of a Bible believing Christian's life. We would be blessed to have you join Stan Rosenthal and myself on this tour. Please call or write us and we will send you a tour brochure. We have limited spots, so get your deposit in early.

This issue of *Israel's Messenger* focuses on Passover. Stan Rosenthal has written an article titled "From Abraham's Lamb to God's Lamb." He looks at the events of Genesis 22 with Abraham and Isaac and shows the parallels to what would take place some 2,000 years later when God the Father gave His Son as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. You should find it an interesting read.

Moshe Gold takes a look at the place of Passover and Easter in the early church. The shift from the celebration of Passover, in relation to the Lord's resurrection, to Easter is informative. Unfortunately, many churches and Christians don't see any purpose for Passover today, embracing Easter as the correct way to remember Jesus' resurrection. Moshe's article will

challenge your thinking.

I have contributed an article on "Elijah and Passover." It is customary for participants at a Seder to have a child open the front door to the home expecting Elijah to join their Seder. Why is this done? And, what amazing prayer is read out of the Passover Haggadah in the Elijah section? I hope you find my article interesting.

Two of our personnel have contributed accounts of their sharing Messiah with Jewish and Gentile people. Dan Bergman continues a report he first gave in the Summer, 2012 issue about Boris. Don't miss this update. Jeff and Arlene Berg share about Helen, a 99 year old resident at the Jewish Home in Pittsburgh. What a blessing to read about Helen accepting the Lord! One is never too old to come to a saving faith in Jesus.



Moshe and Shoshana Gold tell about an interesting opportunity to share Messiah with an Israeli tour guide in their "Apples of Gold" column. Their faithful testimony for the Lord is opening up doors to share Jesus with many Israelis of different backgrounds. Doris is a tour guide that heard about Moshe being a believer in Messiah. Her understanding of Christians is Catholics and Orthodox

Christians, and her guiding of these groups has reinforced her thinking that Christians hate Jews. Yet, she saw a difference in Moshe! Don't miss Moshe and Shoshana's column about this encounter.

Stan Rosenthal takes a look at the "Exponential Growth of Technology" in our lifetime and how it is setting the stage for the coming Tribulation period. The rapid development of new technology is certainly preparing the world for events of the Tribulation. Read Stan's thoughts in our "Shadows of the Tribulation" column.

Please pray for us and our personnel as we serve Him. We live in exciting times!

In Messiah,
Mark Robinson



Elijah and the Passover

by Rev. Mark Robinson



With anticipation the young children look toward the door of the home. It is the time of the Passover Seder when a child goes to the door of the house, opens it, and looks outside to see if Elijah will join us for this Seder. The hope for many of the children is very real. I led one Seder at which the young girl came back with a dejected sigh and proclaimed, "He's not there," all the time anticipating that he would be at the door.

It is hoped that Elijah will come to the Passover, so preparations are always made for him. A place setting is put on the table. An empty chair is placed in front of the setting. His wine cup is filled in anticipation of his presence. Finally, the door is opened.

This tradition is centuries old. Today, it is more of a quaint ritual emptied of all meaning rather than the expectant event it portrays. As many Passover Haggadahs (the book read during the Passover service) point out, it is not the coming of Elijah, in and of itself, that is the focal point of this annual Passover routine. Rather, it is that Elijah will come before Messiah, and he is the herald of this One who will bring peace and redemption to the world.

What If Elijah Came?

Unfortunately, many Jewish people today have lost the hope of the Messiah. For those still clinging to this belief, there is confusion and misunderstanding on the identification and purpose of Messiah.

Elijah's purpose in coming at the Passover is to introduce us to the Messiah, to prepare, as it were, the way of his coming. Through the years many false Messiahs have appeared on the scene. Some religious leaders have trumpeted their "Messiah" as the hope of Israel, only to be disappointed in their Messiah's failure.

The history of Israel is littered with "Messiahs" who left their followers leaderless and disillusioned. One of these was Shimon Bar Kochba who led an unsuccessful revolt against Rome from 132 - 135 A.D. and died at the battle of Betar. He was acclaimed as the Messiah by Rabbi Akiba, the leading rabbi of the day.

Another, David Alroy, proclaimed to the Jews of Babylon that he was the Messiah in 1147 A.D., but was later killed by his father-in-law.

Shabbetai Zvi, born in Smyrna, Turkey, acquired thousands of followers throughout Europe by 1665. He was eventually imprisoned by the Turkish sultan, converted to Islam, and died in exile in 1676.

The Rebbe, Menachem Schneerson, was the acclaimed leader of the Chabad Lubavitch sect of ultra-orthodox Judaism. He

was born in 1902 and died on June 12, 1994, at the age of 92. Living for many years in Brooklyn, NY, Schneerson never set foot in Israel. Yet, billboards in Israel, paid for by his followers, were plastered with the message proclaiming he was King Messiah. Many of his followers, some to this day, believed he was the promised Messiah.

After centuries of being misled, Israel truly needs an authoritative voice to speak to this issue. Even more, we are all in need of an impeccable source whereby we can substantiate the claims of the one asserting he is the Messiah.

How would Elijah accomplish this goal if he appeared at the Seder? How would he point us to the Messiah? I believe the answer to this is clear. He would point us to the writings of the Hebrew prophets and their prophecies of the Messiah.

The Jewish Bible has many Messianic prophecies that allow us to examine any Messianic claimant and determine if he fulfills the criteria laid down by the prophets of Israel.

For example, Elijah could mention that Micah said the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. *"But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."* Micah 5:2.

Or, he could reference the Hebrew prophet Daniel who foretold with precise accuracy in Daniel 9:24-27 the time of the Messiah's coming. *"And after 62 weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary..."* Daniel 9:26.

Daniel 9:25-26 stated that the city of Jerusalem and the Temple would be rebuilt, and the Messiah would come during this same time period - the period of the **Second** Temple. It is interesting that his prophecy also told us that the second Temple would be destroyed after the coming of the Messiah, by the *"people of the prince."* This was accomplished in 70 A.D. when General Titus, the son of the Roman emperor Vespasian, led his people (the Roman armies) in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. Messiah had to come before the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., according to Daniel.

Additionally, Elijah could mention Isaiah's prophecy that Messiah would be born of a virgin. *"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel,"* Isaiah 7:14.

The Hebrew word used in Isaiah 7:14 for virgin is *almah*. *Almah* is used seven times in the Jewish Bible (Genesis 24:43; Exodus 2:8; Psalm 68:25; Proverbs 30:19; Song of Solomon 1:3, 6:8; and Isaiah 7:14) and always refers to a young woman who is



a virgin. Even Rashi, the highly-revered French Talmudic scholar of the thirteenth century, believed this verse indicated a virgin birth. He said, "Behold the 'Almah' shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel. This means that our Creator shall be with us. And this is the sign: the one who will conceive is a girl who never in her life had intercourse with any man. Upon this one shall the Holy Spirit have power."¹

Convincingly, Elijah could appeal to the "pinnacle" of Messianic prophecies, Isaiah 53. Among many details of the life of Messiah, Isaiah said the Messiah would die, be buried, and rise from the grave for the sins of the people, vs. 8-10.

These and many other prophecies are how Elijah would point us to the Messiah of Israel.

Elijah and the Wrath of God

Many Passover Haggadahs have a prayer in the section of the Haggadah where Elijah is introduced whose origin and purpose is uncertain. It seems to be out of place with the entire evening. Passover is a festival of rejoicing, singing, and praises to God for His goodness and mercy. This prayer comes from Bible verses and calls for the present destruction of the heathen. Here is the prayer.

"Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name. For they have devoured Jacob and laid waste his dwelling-place (Psalm 79:6-7). Pour out thy indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them (Psalm 69:24). Persecute and destroy them in anger from under the heavens of the LORD (Lamentations 3:66)."

Chaim Raphael in his book "A Feast of History: The drama of the Passover through the ages" comments on the prayer of wrath at this point in the Seder.

"There is a moment in the Seder that no one is quite sure about. The banquet is over, but before resuming the ceremonies, with the songs in the offering, there is a break. The front door of the house is opened 'for Elijah', and with the door standing open, a 'prayer' is recited, entirely out of keeping with everything else at the Seder. The rest of the Seder is joy and thankfulness, but these three sentences - all from the Bible - are like a burst of anger: 'Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known Thee...'²

Although this prayer might be incongruous with the rest of the Haggadah, it is very consistent with the teaching of the Word of God. If Elijah would show up at the door of today's Seder, he would not be proclaiming a suffering Messiah as Isaiah 53 told us about. He would not be proclaiming Messiah as the Servant of God. Nor would he be proclaiming Messiah as the Lamb of God.

The Bible teaches two comings of the Messiah! The first coming is when He appears as the Savior of the world. The One who dies for the sins of Jew and Gentile alike. The second coming is when He returns as the King of kings and Lord of lords. At His second coming He will establish the long awaited Davidic kingdom on earth.

When Elijah appears again, it will be "before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD," Malachi 4:5. Messiah will come not as the suffering Messiah, but the Lord of glory. He will come not as the Savior, but as the Sovereign of the universe. He will come not as the Lamb of God, but as the Lion of Judah, the King of kings.

When Messiah comes again He will do exactly as these verses state. He will pour out his wrath upon a world who has rejected Him. He will destroy the anti-Semitic world who have all come together to wipe the Jewish people and Israel off the map (Zechariah 12:1-3, 8-10; Revelation 12:13). The final, climatic

Tribulation period will take place and the heathen nations of the world will be destroyed by God, just as this prayer requests.

Elijah's Challenge

Elijah's challenge about the Messiah would be the same challenge made by Bible believing Christians today. The Word of God is the key that unlocks the identity of the Messiah. Believe the writings of the Hebrew prophets, not the teaching of Rabbis or other men. Elijah would proclaim, based on the Word of God, that Messiah has come! And, He is coming again in judgment! His name is Jesus!

Jesus challenged the Jewish people of His day in the following way. "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me," John 5:39. The only Scriptures at this time was the Hebrew Bible, or what Christians refer to as the Old Testament. The

Messianic prophecies found from Genesis to Malachi (the Jewish Bible) clearly identify Jesus as Israel's Messiah and the Savior of the world

Passover is about redemption. For the nation of Israel, yes. But, also for you as an individual. But only if you heed the proclamation of Elijah. Jesus is the Lamb of God "which takes away the sin of the world." Believe on Him and you will find redemption through God's Passover Lamb!



Endnotes

1. Rashi, Mikraoth Gedoloth, Isaiah 7:14, from "The Prophet Isaiah," Victor Buksbazen, page 156
2. Chaim Raphael, "A Feast of History: The drama of the Passover through the ages", pg. 136, Gallery Books, 1972



Passover, Easter and the Early Church

by Moshe Gold



I remember being asked by a pastor, who was looking for an innovative way of celebrating Easter, how I celebrated it. I told him that for me, Passover was Easter. For although I have participated in Easter Sunday celebrations, for many, like myself, who were raised in a Jewish culture, Passover provides the same sense of commemorating the resurrection as does Easter for others. He quickly suspected that perhaps I was becoming sympathetic towards the Messianic Jewish movement which instructs its followers that they must keep only the Jewish festivals. After reassuring him that my statement was not a validation of this movement, which I believe to be heretical and divisive, he became curious about my choice of celebrations.

The Resurrection and Passover

The Scriptures are clear that the Last Supper was in fact the last earthly Passover that Jesus celebrated. At its core the celebration is conducted in an orderly manner, called a Seder, using ritual food items as symbols that tell of the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. In the 2nd Temple days, Passover, which is celebrated on the 14th of Nisan, had become an eight day celebration that included the Feast of Unleavened Bread (beginning the 15th) and the Feast of Firstfruits (16th).¹ In that day (as today) the Seder was filled with messianic references and it was hoped that the Messiah would appear at that time. These references amplify the prophetic portion of each of these feasts concerning what is called in Judaism the greater redemption - the spiritual redemption.

Looking beyond the physical historic deliverance of Israel, the feasts were a reminder that reinforced hope in the glorious expectation of the restoration of the people of Israel to their God. The Passover began to represent spiritual righteousness and the coming of the kingdom; Unleavened Bread, an emblem of sanctification or being set apart by and for the Lord, represented the new beginning; while Firstfruits, as the guarantee of a harvest to follow, prefigures the resurrection of the righteous. All of which find reality in Messiah Jesus who offered His body as the final sacrifice for sin. His resurrection proved the acceptance of that sacrifice and through it the New Covenant could be established. He is the One who has gone before us to open the way for the greater redemption to begin; and for those who believe in His substi-

tionary sacrifice, His death, burial and resurrection², He has become our Passover, our Sanctification and He is the Firstfruits.³

The crucifixion of Jesus took place on the first day of the Passover week, the 15th of Nisan, which is also the first day of Unleavened Bread. Like the matzah He broke the night before, His body was broken so that we might be made whole! Later that day, at about the time that Jesus died, the first fruit of the barley, the first of the Firstfruits offering, was cut off. At about the time that He was laid in the tomb the firstfruits of the barley were gathered into the Temple. The next day an omer⁴ of fine flour made from the barley was offered before the Lord, which opened the way for other firstfruits to be accepted by God and marked His guarantee of a harvest to follow. Jesus remaining among the dead for three days is proof that He was truly dead. During that time He declared freedom to those who had died in faith and, in effect, He led captivity captive when, on the third day of Passover, He rose from the dead.

The early church, following the instructions of the Lord⁵, used the afikoman and third cup from the Passover Seder to commemorate the death, burial and resurrection of Messiah Jesus, His institution of the New Covenant, and His promised return. This was done as often as a church chose. However, once a year a special celebration of these events was held on the day of Passover regardless of which day of the week that happened to be in any particular year. This was the tradition handed down by the Apostle John and attested to by Phillip the Evangelist and several of his daughters⁶. It may have also been the teaching of Paul since he alludes to the Corinthians keeping

the feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover)⁷. It was certainly the tradition followed by the majority of churches in the east including those in the area of the Levant (the countries bordering on the eastern Mediterranean Sea from Turkey to Egypt) Turkey, and Greece.



The Resurrection and Sunday

In time another tradition, observed with equal reverence and joy, became popular among the churches of Europe and North Africa. Those who promoted it believed it to be more scriptural than the apostolic tradition of a Passover commemoration. The resurrection of Jesus occurred on the third day of Passover, the first day of the week - Sunday. Desiring to show deference to the actual day of the resurrection and consistent with their weekly worship, these churches chose to celebrate on the Sunday

To God Be the Glory!



Stan Rosenthal, Field Director of Jewish Awareness Ministries, Clayton Bogard, General Contractor of LARC Design and Build, Ron Scarborough and Jeff Vaughan, Board members, Phil Golden, Chairman of the Board, and Mark Robinson, Executive Director of Jewish Awareness Ministries.

For two years Jewish Awareness Ministries has prayed, waited on the Lord, and looked forward to His provision for a new headquarters for this ministry. People and churches have stepped forward in support of this need. God has provided abundantly and on Saturday, February 9, 2013 we had our ground breaking for our new building.

God has provided over 90% of the cash needed to build our administration/ministry facility. Our prayer is that God might provide 100% of the funds needed before the building is completed so as to have no debt. Lord willing, we anticipate being in our new facility by the end of the summer. Please pray with us that the rest of the finances will be provided and the building will be completed to His glory! If you would like to help with the remaining financial need please use the envelope in this magazine or call us to use a credit card.



Prayer of dedication of the property and building process to God



Mark Robinson, Phil Golden, Pastor of Bible Baptist Church in Carnegie, PA, R. Jay Waggoner, Pastor of Fellowship Baptist Church in Willow Springs, NC, and Stan Rosenthal. Their churches gave generous gifts to the building fund.



God gave us a great day, fellowship, and food for our ground breaking.



Mark Robinson sharing a devotional thought from 2 Chronicles 6.



Jewish Awareness Ministries land where the administrative/ministry facility will be built.



Close to 50 people joined us for the ground breaking ceremonies.



Thank you for helping us do the work of the Lord!



On the right is the architect's rendition of the finished building. Above is the floor plan of the building.



Continued from page 7

following the beginning of the Passover. This tradition found a champion in the Bishop of Rome.

After the destruction of Jerusalem (AD 70) the Jerusalem Council began to lose its authority as arbiter of the faith and guardian of church tradition. Power began to shift westward, eventually to Rome, the capital of the Empire. This process was completed in the aftermath of the failed Second Jewish Revolt against Rome (AD 132-135) that ended the long line of Jewish-Christian leadership in the east. During this time there arose a controversy that pitted the western churches against those of the east. On which day was it most appropriate to commemorate the resurrection? In AD 155 Polycarp, AD 69-156, Bishop of Smyrna, the disciple of the Apostle John, met in Rome with Anicetus, Bishop of Rome, to resolve this matter. Neither would budge from his position and it is reported by Eusebius⁸ that Irenaeus (ca. AD 125-202), Bishop of Lyon and a student of Polycarp, implored both men to part in peace as brothers, respecting each other's tradition. This they did, even partaking of communion together.

With the final collapse of Jewish influence in AD 135, the subject was again raised by Victor, the Bishop of Rome, who was vested with the authority that once resided in Jerusalem. Around AD 190 Victor attempted to standardize the celebration of the resurrection. He addressed a letter to Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus and disciple of Polycarp, arguing that all eastern churches follow the west by adopting, as a closer link to Scripture, the Sunday during Passover custom. The eastern churches refused, indicating that they would keep the Passover tradition of the Apostles, and Victor attempted to excommunicate them. This led to a protest from many western bishops and a fragile unity was restored. In the end, Victor failed and the desire for a universal Sunday celebration would not be resolved until the days of Emperor Constantine (AD 272-337).

The Resurrection and Easter

In the years between Victor and Constantine more churches began to adopt the Sunday tradition espoused by Rome and by now called Easter. Those who maintained the Passover evening celebration were mainly the original churches founded by the Apostles. Where the tolerance for diversity of commemoration once preserved the unity among the churches, now this diversity was seen as a threat to unity under the leadership of Rome. This schism and contention between the churches reflected the division within the Empire itself. In the days of Constantine, the Roman Empire was ruled by four people, two Emperors and two Caesars, one pair in the east and one in the west. Over time Constantine was able to unify the Empire under his sole control and sought to bring that same unity to the Christian church, which he had elevated to privileged status⁹. In AD 325 he called for a council of church bishops at Nicaea¹⁰, located in northeast Turkey, where east meets west, to solve the major issues separating the churches. The major resolutions of the conference concerned the deity of Christ and the essence of the Godhead,

along with a formula to settle the Easter/Passover dispute.

Perhaps the best known edict of the council concerned the nature of God and is known as the Nicene Creed. Less known is the decree that all churches in the Empire were to celebrate the resurrection on Sunday, and not on Passover. However, it would no longer be the first Sunday after the 14th of Nisan (the beginning of Passover). Easter was officially removed from its traditional place as part of the Passover. The council made the celebration of Easter the first Sunday after the full moon following the vernal equinox. Constantine elevated this to an official decree of the Empire. In a letter to the churches he encouraged the total separation of Christianity from Judaism. He referred to Jewish people as beyond salvation, in league with darkness, and as the killers of the Lord¹¹. What began as a difference in tradition became legislated as a rule, that in time produced a new set of customs, but never produced unity between the eastern and western churches. It also helped to further fracture the relationship between Christians of Gentile and Jewish heritage.

The Resurrection and You



I do not suggest some new way of celebrating the resurrection nor do I suggest a return to the tradition of the Apostles. I suggest we agree that there are two ordinances given to the New Testament Church, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and that anything beyond these is tradition. Once this is understood there will be less judging and attempts to legislate traditional practice according to personal or cultural preference, knowing that there is freedom to wisely choose how one celebrates (Romans 14:5-6; Colossians 2:16).

More important than dates or symbols is remembering why you commemorate the resurrection. The resurrection is proof that the sacrifice Jesus made for you was accepted. When you trust in Him as your savior, you can know that your sin is forgiven. Because

He rose from the dead you can have a new and better life where even death cannot separate you from God. Someday when He returns you will rise to meet Him!

He is risen! He is risen indeed!



Endnotes:

- 1 Leviticus 23:5-14
- 2 1 Corinthians 15:2-4
- 3 1 Corinthians 5:7-8; 15:20-23
- 4 1 omer = 5.1 pints
- 5 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
- 6 The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI, 1982, V:XXIV
- 7 1 Corinthians 5:5-8
- 8 The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI, 1982, Book V Chapters XXIII-XXV
- 9 Council of Milan 313 AD
- 10 The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI, 1982, Appendix: Historical View of The Council of Nice
- 11 The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI, 1982, Appendix H: Another Letter of Constantine, pages 51-54

From Abraham's Lamb to God's Lamb



by Rev. Stan Rosenthal

One of the most amazing biblical narratives leaping off the pages of the Hebrew Scriptures pertains to the great friend of God, the patriarch Abraham. Some 4,000 years ago, Jehovah Almighty plumbed the very depths of Abraham's faith. God tried the very limits to which Abraham's commitment would extend. He did so in order to verify if, indeed, he was the choice servant He was seeking. Was he willing to make God preeminent in his life (Genesis 22:1-19)?

Previously, Abraham had revealed he was ready to cling to and follow the one and only true living God. He left behind his pagan idolatrous background, his country and even his father to travel to an undisclosed destination (Canaan/Israel) in obedience to God (Genesis 12, 15, 17). But now the supreme test confronted Abraham. Would he go as far as turning his only son Isaac, whom he loved, into a "sacrificial lamb" to be offered to God? Furthermore, would he be that obedient to God that he himself would actually step up to the altar and carry out such an overwhelming and disastrous command?

The answer is a resounding yes! And as a result, Abraham is found to be very consequential in the New Testament. In fact, he is mentioned some 250 times within 230 verses highlighting his importance. It is imperative to recognize that he, Abraham, was not only known as the father of the Jewish people, but is also biblically designated as the father of faith for all (Jew and Gentile alike) who individually place their trust in God by personally embracing Yeshua HaMashiach (Jesus the Messiah). One only need review the Epistles to the Church in Rome, specifically chapter 4 and Galatians chapter 3:28-29 to appreciate the value of the Genesis 22 narrative.

Marvelous Truths Foreshadowed

There are numerous passages in the Tenach (Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament) that can be identified as typological in nature, in that they prefigure, parallel, or portray personages or events yet to take place. For the most part, they look ahead to great redemptive truths spelled out in the New Testament. The specifics tied to this historical event of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac resonates with anyone who has knowledge of God's sacrificing His own Son on the cross of calvary approximately 2,000 years later.

The abundant number of parallels that spring from this story is striking. There are least 14 similarities that can be detected. For this reason, we will only garner a few to examine for now. However, there is a chart provided listing these similarities on page 12.

Comparisons Abound

The heart of the matter under examination has to do with God's reinforcing His redemptive program for mankind. Before the foundations of earth were established, God knew

that mankind would need to be bailed out from their terrible and horrendous dilemma called sin. The voluntary choice of mankind to disobey God would bring about eternal separation from their creator; hence, the intervention of God to remedy the situation by purchasing back those whom He created in His image.

The payment price for this bail-out had to be definitive in grandeur if it were to be efficacious. It had to be able to satisfy the righteousness and holiness of a just God. There was one and only one possibility to accomplish this monumental task. It demanded none other than Deity to act in humanity's behalf since they are incapable of ransoming themselves. This atonement or reconciliation process manifested itself in the vicarious substitutionary sacrifice of God the Father's only Son. One of God's references to this precious gift to mankind was the "*Lamb of God*."

It is only from this background that one can absorb and appreciate all of the nuances found throughout Scripture relating to the significance of this specific "*Lamb*". This truth of the "*Lamb of God*" is revealed from Genesis to Revelation.

Isaac a Lamb and Jesus the Lamb

While the thrust of Genesis 22, which occurs before the dispensation of Law, is about the faith and trust that Abraham exhibited toward God, it does so by preparing the reader for the coming "*Lamb of God*". Moses shares with his readers that Abraham was instructed to place Isaac, his son, on the altar and there slay him as a sacrifice, a burnt offering to God (vv. 2, 9, 10, 12). Furthermore, and of great importance, Isaac recognizes that the sacrificial offering is to be a lamb. Note that in verse 7 he asks "...where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" In verse 8, his father Abraham confirms that the sacrificed offering is to be a lamb. He declares "...God will provide himself a lamb for the burnt offering."

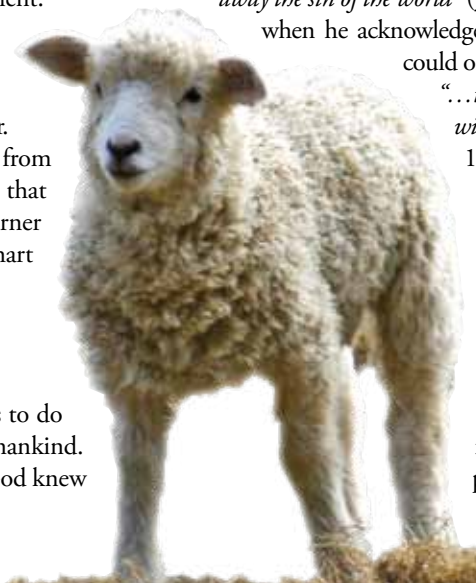
Approximately 2,000 years into the future, a similar declaration is made about Jesus, who is actually the true "*Son of God*" (John 1:18, 34). He is pronounced to be "...the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29, 36). Peter minced no words

when he acknowledged that for lost humanity, redemption could only be accomplished when it is through "...the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19).

Sons of Promise

Prevalent within this storyline of Genesis 22 is the continued promise vocalized by God in the Garden of Eden. It was there that God made the first promise of a coming redeemer for lost mankind (Genesis 3:15). This promise was not only reiterated to Abra-

Continued on
page 12



ham, but insists that it will pass through to his promised son Isaac.

“And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham...and said, *“By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, That in blessing I will bless thee...And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice”* (Genesis 22:16-18; cf. Genesis 15:2, 4; 17:18-21).

It is imperative to understand that the promise of society’s coveted prize, eternal life, must come through the lineage of Isaac. The reason for this comes directly from the Abraham and Isaac historical account. It is for this precise reason that Abraham made the bold statement that God will provide himself the lamb (Genesis 22:8). It explains the lack of concern on Abraham’s part throughout the entire narrative. According to the author of Hebrews, Abraham believed that should God not intervene and stop him from sacrificing his son Isaac, then He, God, would by necessity have to resurrect him from the dead. And this was because he believed unswervingly so, that God could not, nor would not go back on His promise, that all the nations of the world to be blessed through the lineage of Abraham which included Isaac, his son (Hebrews 11:17-19).

Now note the similarity. Jesus was also a promised son. *“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign, Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel”* (Isaiah 7:14). The Apostle Paul wrote to the church in Galatia using four verses of Scripture to emphatically explain that the promises made to Abraham concerning his seed leading to Christ, would not be disannulled by the Mosaic Law which came 430 years later (Galatians 3:16-19). Hence, Jesus was also a son of promise in the same manner as Isaac (Galatians 3:16-19).

The Irony of the Sacrifices

“And he said, take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest... and offer him there for a burnt offering...” (Genesis 22:2).

It is hard to believe - it seems to be an oxymoron - an only beloved son voluntarily being slain as a sacrificial offering. Yet that is the scene for both Isaac and Jesus.

Upon examination of this text, we find that the Hebrew word *yachid* is a very potent choice by Moses to express that Isaac was Abraham’s only son. It carries the idea that there is none other, strongly negating plurality. This word reflects absolute singularity, unlike *“echad”* which Moses utilized in what is commonly referred to as the Shema from Deuteronomy 6:4. *“Hear oh Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD”* which often involves a plurality within a oneness.

It is important to clear up any ambiguity that one might see here because of Abraham’s son Ishmael which he fathered with Hagar, Sarai’s Egyptian maid (Genesis 16:3-4). Genesis 17:18-21 clears the air on this matter. God underscored the fact that Ishmael was not the promised son, but Isaac was to be the continuation of God’s covenant established with Abraham. Isaac, the son of both Abraham and Sarai (Sarah) would be the line through which the Messiah would come. He then is understood to be the only son, the son of promise; there is none other to be considered.

The heavenly scene of God the Father willingly offering His Son as a sacrificial offering, not only parallels the story of Abraham and Isaac, but fulfills the type. *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life”* (John 3:16).

When John baptized Jesus, he heard God the Father declare, *“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”* (Matthew 3:17).

The similarities just keep piling up. As it was indicated, Isaac was uniquely the only son, so it is with God’s Son. Jesus is the only unique Son of God who brings to fruition the blessings promised to the whole world via His vicarious atonement for our sins.

The Scripture pointedly tells us, *“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved”* (Acts 4:12).



PARALLELS OF ISAAC IN GENESIS 22 AND JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

<p>Mount Moriah in Jerusalem Genesis 22:2, 2 Chronicles 3:1 ☆ Luke 23:33, 44-46</p> <p>Son of promise Genesis 22:2, Genesis 17:18-21 ☆ Galatians 3:16-18</p> <p>Beloved Son Genesis 22:2 ☆ Matthew 3:17; Mark 9:7; 2 Peter 1:17</p> <p>Offering of Son Genesis 22:2, 9, 10 ☆ John 3:16; Romans 8:32</p> <p>Only Son Genesis 22:2, 12, 16 ☆ John 1:18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9</p> <p>Neither were lawbreakers deserving execution Genesis 22:2 ☆ Matthew 27:24</p> <p>Willingness to offer Son without hesitation Genesis 22:3, 6 ☆ John 3:16</p>	<p>Death & Resurrection of the Son Genesis 22: 5, 11-12 ☆ Romans 6:4; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4</p> <p>Passiveness of the Son Genesis 22:6-10 ☆ Matthew 26:39; 27:12-14</p> <p>Carried the Wood for the Sacrifice Genesis 22:6, 9 ☆ John 19:17</p> <p>Human Sacrifice Genesis 22: 8, 13 ☆ Matthew 1:1-21; Hebrews 10:5</p> <p>A Lamb is God’s Choice of Sacrificial Offering Genesis 22:7, 8, 12 ☆ John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:19</p> <p>Substitutionary sacrifice Genesis 22: 8, 13 ☆ Romans 5:8</p> <p>Redemption for the World Made Possible Genesis 22:16-18 ☆ John 1:29, 3:16</p>
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Sowing the Seed Reaping the Harvest

A Mighty Tall Order for God by Jeff and Arlene Berg

For years we have conducted a bi-monthly worship service at the Jewish Home. Since there are a good number of non-Jewish residents, the rabbi, who is the Director of Pastoral Care, had asked us to coordinate a Protestant worship service. Throughout the years, several Jewish people have attended these services and come to faith in their Messiah.

Helen, a 99 year-old non-Jewish resident, has been attending the services for a couple years. She comes from a very liberal denomination. God's great love for her and Jesus' death for her personally were completely new to Helen. Her mind is very sound, and she is a very intellectual person. She would listen very intently in the services, and one could see that she was trying to grasp what the Scriptures said, especially the whole concept of the gospel. She looked very contemplative and puzzled.

We would take Helen back to her room after the services ended and challenge her to come to Jesus. "Helen, God loves you so much that He sent Jesus to die on the cross for your sins, for you personally. In the New Testament, John 3:16 says, *'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'* Helen, Jesus died for you personally, for your sins, so that you can be forgiven and go to heaven." Helen, with a questioning look on her face, responded, "Well, that's a mighty tall order for God!" "Helen, nothing is too hard for God!"

When we visited her another time, we read John 14:1-6 and emphasized about having a home in heaven. Helen bowed her head and held it. She looked like she was disconnected spiritually and mentally. It appeared as though she was in great mental pain. "I can't take it! I feel like my head is going to explode! It's all too much for me to comprehend!"

We visited Helen many times, pleaded with her to come to Jesus, and left her gospel literature.

Recently, as usual, we visited Helen after she attended the worship service. We noticed that her spirit was softer. Once again, we challenged her to come to Jesus. This time she did not give us the same responses. She did not question Jesus' death on the cross for her. We saw that her whole demeanor was changed. God's Spirit had been working in her heart! "Helen, would you like to ask Jesus into your heart and life to forgive you for your sins and make you ready for heaven?" Helen responded "Yes." God's Spirit had prepared her heart, and it was like ripened fruit. We prayed with her, and what a thrill it was to hear her ask Jesus into her heart to forgive her for her sins. She followed in prayer like a child.

How we praise God for saving a 99 year-old lady! Since then, we have seen a positive change in Helen's attitude and spirit. No

longer do we see the confused look on her face in the worship services. She attended the Christmas Eve service and looked very joyful as she sang the Christmas carols. No longer does Helen say, "That's a mighty tall order for God!"



To Russia With Love Continued by Dan Bergman

What began as an acquaintance has transformed into a sincere friendship, and what started as a formal tutoring session in the Russian language has become a weekly discussion about the Bible.

Boris is still teaching me Russian, but the language studies have now taken a back seat to our discussions about Judaism and Christianity. Our discussions cover a range of topics, such as creation versus evolution, Bible prophecy, and most importantly, discussion about the biblical teaching of Messiah.

Boris is an Israeli born Russian Jew. There are many things that we disagree on during our talks. He isn't very willing to accept what I tell him, but he is open to listen. I am able to open my Bible and share with him the truths of Scripture.

There are many times when Boris and I just sit down and talk about life. That makes it real when I speak to him about the Messiah. People can sense when we care for them. If we do nothing but preach at them, we will lose the opportunity to show them Jesus. We must show them the truth of the gospel without sabotaging it with our actions of unconcern and apathy toward them. Boris has heard it from me, and he knows that I am sincere. That is the opposite of what the Jewish people have felt from "Christianity" (mostly Roman Catholicism) throughout the centuries. He asks me to come back again and again. Please continue to pray that Boris will see Christ in me, accept what I am sharing with him, and trust Jesus as his Messiah.

I believe that there are many Jewish people in this country who, just like Boris, have never been shown true biblical Christianity. A godly life lived before them and biblical truth patiently presented to them from the Scriptures in a real and comprehensible way would likely see many more Jewish people come to a saving knowledge of the Messiah!



Apples of Gold



A Panorama of Time

by Moshe and Shoshana Gold

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me," Matthew 25:40b.

Doris is a tour guide we met while we were in ministry to Christians visiting Israel. Knowing she lived in our vicinity, we offered to share our ride with her to meet the group. During our journey we engaged in light conversation when suddenly she changed the subject and asked if we really believed in Jesus. We hoped our affirmative answer would lead to more dialogue but it led instead to silence as she opened her newspaper and began to read. From that moment she treated us cordially and professionally from the safety and comfort of an invisible wall she erected between herself and us.

We did, however, notice her scrutinizing us while we ministered to the Pilgrims, at times listening to our conversation with them in more than a passive manner. This particular group filled six buses, and among the other guides was a new believer that has allowed Moshe to guide him in his new faith. There were also several guides who trusted us to answer questions of faith for them. The way we were received by these guides seemed to bother Doris and she began to withdraw from them, even taking her meals separately. However, she had no choice but to hear what Moshe spoke about at sites where all of the buses were gathered together for a special message from the Bible. At those times we both noticed that she was a bit puzzled by how he presented the Word of God. We wondered about her reactions to us and put it up to prayer.

Toward the end of the tour, we all were invited to dinner at an adjacent hotel. By the will of God, Doris was seated across from us. Pleasantries were exchanged but little

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eye contact maintained as she busied herself with her food. Then, with a shrug of her shoulders, she looked at us and in a low voice said the following, "I have been watching you and see that you are different than the Christians I usually work with, but I don't understand how you can be comfortable siding with people who for two thousand years have hated, hunted, and killed us for killing Jesus." As if prepared for this moment, she produced a newspaper article critical of a book circulating in Eastern Europe, one that reminded Christians that it was Jewish people who killed Christ, and because of that heinous crime could not be trusted. Working among Catholic and Orthodox groups mostly from Romania she knew firsthand that these old charges against Jewish people were on the rise again in that region. Finally she had revealed what troubled her about us, and, finally, we had the opportunity to enter into a spiritual conversation with her.

We showed her the testimony of the New Covenant, that in the words of Jesus, He volunteered to be the sin sacrifice, and how Luke in the Acts of the Apostles declares the whole world guilty of the death of Jesus. At this she asked, "Why would the world be guilty?"

This gave us the privilege of speaking about sin, the penalty for sin, and God's remedy for sin. The next day she asked for the New Testament references of the verses we spoke about. Doris had been victimized by those who use the Scripture for their own ends. She had developed resentment towards all Christians based on her negative experience leading tours of some Christians in Israel. We were happy to show her that not everyone who calls themselves Christian follows the Scriptures, or the example of Jesus and the Apostles, with regard to Jewish people. We hope that she will begin to differentiate between the Messiah and His message and the messengers of hate who use His name to disseminate their own message.



Shadows of the Tribulation

Exponential Growth of Technology by Rev. Stan Rosenthal

It is no secret that technology is advancing faster than we can keep up with. Most reading this article are very much aware of the rapid increase of technology. The facts are, the more technology that is invented or absorbed into our knowledge, the more will be created. It is not just linear, but is rather exponential in nature. In other words, its growth expands via multiplication, and in turn enables knowledge to experience hyper growth. The more we know, the faster we know more, doubling and redoubling over time.

In his article “*Knowledge Doubling Curve and You*” Martin Gover related that in the year 2004, once the World Wide Web was in place, knowledge was doubling approximately every 18 months, according to the American Society of Training and Documentation (A.S.T.D.). He also stated that according to patents and academic publications, knowledge doubles at different rates for different sectors, ranging from 2 years for nanotechnology to 21 years for other sectors. His article even included a prediction from IBM “that in the next couple of years, information will double every 11 hours” (Enzine Articles.Com).

Entire new fields of science are being created. These new fields include: synthetic biology, biocomputing, biotechnology, nanotechnology, neuroprosthetics, biomedical engineering, robotic engineering as well as the science of artificial intelligence. One of the outcomes of this advancement is resulting in man and machines becoming interchangeable. I suggest reading the article titled “*Paralyzed woman controls a robotic arm with her mind*”, by Ian Sample, science correspondent, *The Guardian*, Sunday 16 December 2012. Also suggested, is the article on the “*Humanoid Robot*” found at ScienceDaily.com dated January 9, 2013.

Besides the many benefits which shall serve mankind immeasurably, from the aforementioned advancements there are serious negative results waiting in the not too distant future.

The lie Satan foisted upon Eve in the Garden of Eden affects the whole stream of humanity, especially those living during the end days. This will be ever so evident in the seven year Tribulation period.

“*For God (Elohim) doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods (or God/Elohim)...*” (Genesis 3:5). (Parentheses added).

There has not been a time in man’s history comparable to this hour that we are rapidly approaching. Man’s abilities and achieve-

ments are entering the zone of remarkability, to the point that one might even say god like. Humanity has already begun to believe that they are becoming their own gods and hence can dismiss the concept of a Sovereign Deity.

In her article “*When Technology Turns Against Us*”, Jan Markell hit the “proverbial nail on the head” when she stated that “Technology will drive the final generation. In a sense, it already is. Everything in Revelation 13 depends on technology: The electronic money system, electronic control of the media, electronic control of commerce and even electronic control of the one-world religion” (www.RaptureReady.com).

There is yet one more major technological feat that must be added to this list. And it must be achieved no later than the middle of the Seventieth Week of Daniel, the 7 year Tribulation. I am making reference to the unique technological creation referred to as the image of the Antichrist. The False Prophet commands those having the proper skills within humanity to construct this idol which will function as a representative of the Antichrist. It must be ready when the abomination of desolation occurs (cf. Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15, 21, 29; 2 Thessalonians 2: 3-4; Revelation 13:11-16).



“And I beheld another beast (False Prophet) coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast (Antichrist) before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed” (Revelation 13:11-15). (Underscoring and parenthesis added)

Early accomplishments in the technological areas required to achieve this satanically inspired task, reveal that the scientific world is moving humanity rapidly towards a head on collision with their sovereign creator, Almighty God.



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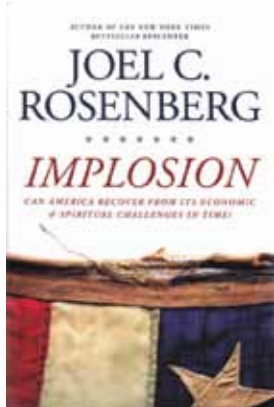
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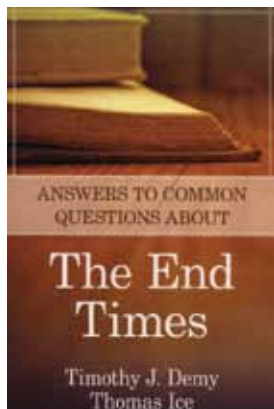


Implosion by Joel Rosenberg

Bestselling author and international political expert Joel C. Rosenberg tackles the question: Is America an empire in decline or a nation poised for a historic Renaissance? America teeters on a precipice. In the midst of financial turmoil, political uncertainty, declining morality, the constant threat of natural disasters, and myriad other daunting challenges, many wonder what the future holds for this once-great nation. Will history's greatest democracy stage a miraculous comeback, returning to the forefront of the world's economic and spiritual stage? Can America's religious past be repeated today with a third Great Awakening? Or will the rise of China, Russia, and other nations, coupled with the US's internal struggles, send her into a decline from which there can be no return? Implosion helps readers understand the economic, social, and spiritual challenges facing the United States in the 21st century, through the lens of biblical prophecy.

Prophecy in the New Millennium by John Walvoord

All the attention on rapidly changing world and technological affairs at the close of the twentieth century, has renewed speculation about the future—a future waiting to unfold in unprecedented prophetic fashion. Because many biblical prophecies have been fulfilled in recent decades, there now exists a world situation which fits precisely with the biblical description of end times. Ongoing tension in the Middle East, unification of the European continent, and theological and moral apostasy in the church all point to the soon return of Jesus. But the question still remains, how and when will it happen? This look at biblical prophecy remaining to be fulfilled and current events is written by one of America's most recognized end-times experts. In addition to a review of major unfulfilled prophecies in Scripture and an explanation of prophecies by category, Prophecy in the New Millennium also presents a fresh look at Israel, the Antichrist, the Rapture, the Second Coming, and the New Heaven and New Earth.



The End Times by Timothy Demy and Thomas Ice

Helpful and intelligible answers to your most common questions can be found here. The Bible has a lot to say about prophecy and the end times, and experienced Bible teachers Timothy Demy and Thomas Ice sort through all extraneous notions and far-fetched speculations to present what the Bible actually teaches. In this book you will find answers to the most common and important questions concerning the end times, including: How should Bible prophecy be interpreted? What is the rapture? What does the Bible teach about Tribulation? What will happen after the second coming of Jesus Christ? Where is heaven and does it exist now?

The Rapture and Beyond by John Whitcomb

The Rapture and Beyond unfolds God's revealed plan for the future of the church, Israel, all mankind, and the entire universe. From the rapture of believers and their heavenly rewards, to the amazing events of the tribulation, to the coming kingdom with its temple, these studies focus on important themes of biblical prophecy, their proper interpretation, and their relevance to Christians today.

