

# MESSENGER

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FULFILL YOUR DESTINY

January 2021

**Mankind's Last Best Hope**

# MESSENGER Magazine

*Issue No. 16 | January 2021*

The United States has been blessed above all nations in the modern age in terms of wealth, power and influence, despite the flaws in our national character. Abraham Lincoln expressed the view that the nation might be the "last, best hope of earth," if the nation lived up to its expressed ideals. Yet the Bible warns that troubles lie ahead for the United States and the world. If the United States is not really the last best hope for mankind, what is? Other articles in this issue cover subjects many have wondered about, and some of the information provided may surprise you.

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Messenger Magazine is published by the  
Messenger Church of God.

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# Mankind's Last Best Hope

by Rod Reynolds

In his "Second Annual Message" to Congress of December 1, 1862 President Abraham Lincoln proposed a plan for amendments to the Constitution to end slavery in the United States, with concessions he hoped would bring an end to the Civil War and reconcile the rebel states to the Union. In September of 1862 Lincoln had issued the Emancipation Proclamation, as an executive order which changed the legal status of enslaved persons in states in rebellion against the United States as of January 1, 1863, giving any enslaved persons in those states the status of free men or women under United States law. The Emancipation Proclamation applied only to slaves living in the rebel states, or serving in any segment of the executive branch of the U.S. government. However, it encouraged or required six states to abolish slavery during the war, including three Confederate states which had largely come under control of the Union army, and three Union border states. It also freed slaves living in other rebel areas later to be occupied by the Union. The plan for the Constitu-

tional amendments proposed in 1862 was never acted on.

The plan was different from the thirteenth Constitutional amendment Lincoln championed in 1864-65 to permanently and immediately end slavery in the United States. By late 1864 the defeat of the Confederacy by Union forces was eminent, negating any rationale for concessions in the ending of slavery for political reasons. The thirteenth amendment was passed by Congress in January 1865, about two and a half months before General Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, which effectively ended the Civil War. The thirteenth amendment had been ratified by a sufficient number of states to become law by December 6, 1865.

In his "Second Annual Message," early in the Civil War, when things weren't going so well for the Union army (cf. *Battle Cry of Freedom*, James M. McPherson, pp. 560-561), Lincoln described the United States as "**the last, best hope of earth.**" William Lee Miller, a professor of

ethics, who has taught at several universities, in his book "Lincoln's Virtues," states the following concerning the phrase "the last, best hope of earth":

The whole passage in which the phrase occurs, the graceful three-paragraph ending of this message, is a sober appeal to change our thinking and ourselves, to put aside the "dogmas of the quiet past" because they are "inadequate to the stormy present"; to "rise with the occasion" because "our case is new." This appeal to think and change is addressed, in a most direct, grave and portentous manner, to his fellow national leaders who, with him, cannot escape history, who, with him, must pass through this fiery trial, and who, with him, will be remembered in spite of themselves. "We know how to save the Union," Lincoln said, and the world knows we know. We have – Lincoln interjected for emphasis, "even we



here" have -- the power and responsibility. It is then that the phrase "the last best hope of earth" occurs, as the profound description of that which we here now may by our actions "nobly save, or meanly lose." **The context for the phrase, in short, is Lincoln's appeal, and his warning, to the American leaders of the day not so to act as to "meanly lose" this precious human hope entrusted to them.** (*Lincoln's Virtues: An Ethical Biography*, William Lee Miller, Knopf, 2007, p. 464).

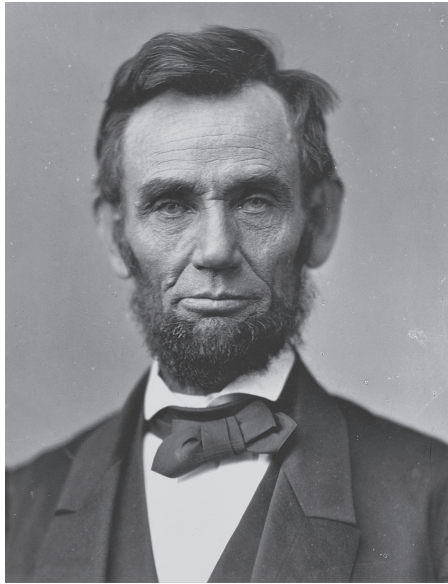
Abraham Lincoln throughout his life believed that slavery as it then existed in the United States was a moral evil. As a politician he had worked diligently to convince the public that slavery was a moral evil, and to prevent the spread of slavery to the new territories that were then being settled by people emigrating from points to the east. His efforts in this regard is the main reason he received the Republican nomination as their presidential candidate in 1860 and why he was elected President in that year.

He knew that many of the founding fathers of the nation, in spite of the fact that some of them were slave holders, also believed that slavery was a moral evil, and that slavery was a blatant contradiction to the premise as expressed in the American Declaration of Independence, "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" (cf. *Lincoln's Virtues*, Miller, p. 377 ff.; "The Founding Fathers and Slavery", wallbuilders.com).

Lincoln believed that the promise of individual liberty embodied in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution could not be adequately realized, as long as slavery was tolerated in the nation. Lincoln credited a beneficent God with the unusual blessings bestowed upon the United States. While he also at the same time allowed for the premise that it was God's will that slavery be removed, and that the sufferings of the nation were Divine retribution for the nation's sins.

In his Proclamation of Thanksgiving, October 3, 1863, establishing an annual national day of Thanksgiving, Lincoln stated:

The year that is drawing to-



Abraham Lincoln fought slavery in the United States, as he sought to preserve the Union as a constitutional republic.

wards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God. In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to foreign States to invite and to provoke their aggression, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere except in the theatre of military conflict; while that theatre has been greatly contracted by the advancing armies and navies of the Union. Needful diversions of wealth and of strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defence, have not arrested the plough, the shuttle or the ship; the axe has enlarged the borders of our settlements, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore. Population has steadily increased, notwithstanding the waste that has been made in the camp, the siege and the

battle-field; and the country, rejoicing in the consciousness of augmented strength and vigor, is permitted to expect continuance of years with large increase of freedom. **No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy.** It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American People. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, **with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience**, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquillity and Union.

In his Second Inaugural Address Lincoln said:

If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which in the providence of God must needs come but which having continued through His appointed time He now wills to remove and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him.



In ascribing to the United States the description “**the last, best hope of earth**,” providing its citizens change their thinking and behavior to reflect the ideals expressed in its founding documents, Lincoln, along with many other Americans, and people from around the world, saw in these ideals escape from the oppression commonly suffered under other forms of human government, and a model for other national governments to imitate.

The United States Constitution has been a notable model for governance around the world. Its international influence is found in similarities of phrasing and borrowed passages in other constitutions, as well as in the principles of the rule of law, separation of powers and recognition of individual rights. (“Constitution of the United States,” [en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org), retrieved November 6, 2020).

**But is the United States the “last, best hope of earth”? And if not, what is?**

We may forget that the abolition of slavery in the nineteenth century was a radical departure from a system of oppression that had been practiced routinely in most of the world up until that time. As pointed out in our article “Proclaim Liberty,” published on our website [cogmessenger.org](http://cogmessenger.org), “In the whole of Europe during the Middle-Ages less than 10 percent of the population were freemen. ‘Serfdom is an institution that has always been commonplace for human society’” (Wikipedia.org, ‘Serfdom’).

The word “serf” comes from a Latin word which means slave. And serfdom is a form of bondage, or slavery, though serfs often had limited rights under the law not afforded to chattel slaves. The condition of serfs under the feudal system of Europe is described as “though not exactly that of slaves, was little removed from it” (“Serfs,” *Encyclopedia Americana*, 1949, vol. 24, p. 591). “By the end of the 17th century the serfs of Russia had become so impoverished, and had given up so many of their former rights, that their status scarcely differed from that of chattel slaves” (“Serfdom,” *Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopedia*, 1979, vol. 21, p. 260). “As with slaves, serfs could be bought, sold, or traded, with some limitations: they generally could be sold only together with land (with the exception of the kholops in Russia and villeins in gross in England who

could be traded like regular slaves), could be abused with no rights over their own bodies, could not leave the land they were bound to, and could marry only with their lord's permission” (“Serfdom,” [en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org), retrieved November 6, 2020). Other forms of slavery were endemic in many parts of the world, as well, virtually throughout human history.

The United States and Great Britain took the lead in banning the international slave trade. “In 1778, with [Thomas] Jefferson's leadership, slave importation was banned in Virginia, one of the first jurisdictions worldwide to do so. Jefferson was a lifelong advocate of ending the Atlantic Slave Trade and as president led the effort to make it illegal, signing a law that passed Congress in 1807, shortly before Britain passed a similar law” (“Thomas Jefferson and slavery,” [en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org), retrieved November 6, 2020). Unfortunately, Jefferson, like some of the other American colonists who abhorred slavery as unjust, was himself a slave holder. Eventually, he did free a few of his slaves. Others he lost control of through indebtedness (cf. “In Defense of Thomas Jefferson,” Mario Alexis Portella, [american-thinker.com](http://american-thinker.com), June 25, 2020; “The Business of Slavery at Monticello,” [monticello.org](http://monticello.org), retrieved November 9, 2020).

Banning the international slave trade was one thing. Putting an end to the institution of slavery itself was a much more intractable problem. Britain passed the Slavery Abolition Act in 1833. And in the United States it took the Civil War and an amendment to the Constitution to officially bring an end to slavery. These measures served to free millions from a certain form of chattel slavery. They were accomplished through the determined efforts of men and women, such as Abraham Lincoln, and many others, against considerable obstacles and with great sacrifice. It was a significant achievement in the history of the world.

But they did not put an end to human slavery, as documented in our article, and many other sources. Human slavery remains a significant problem in the world today, including illegal human trafficking in the United States and many other countries. And national, ethnic and class hatred and strife are commonplace in today's world, much as they have been throughout history.

The path to slavery actually began with the first parents of mankind.

Through the influence of Satan the Devil, they and their progeny became enslaved to their lusts and passions, enslaved to sin, and captives of Satan through his deceit and oppression (2 Timothy 2:26; Revelation 12:9).

Jesus said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin” (John 8:34).

### Hope For Mankind

God actually gave the world hope, however, for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness from the very beginning, right after the enslavement of mankind under Satan's cruel wrath began. “So the Lord God said to the serpent: ‘Because you have done this.... I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel’” (Genesis 3:14-15).

We will see how this is to be fulfilled – in part – as we proceed. Meanwhile, the whole world has continued to be enslaved to sin, and virtually throughout history many have been in bondage to other humans.

Approximately 4000 years ago, God revealed himself to Abram, whose name was later changed to Abraham, and gave him promises that would be passed on to his descendants in due time. Among those promises were blessings of abundance in material goods, power over their enemies, and other national blessings.

Because of his obedience, God said to Abraham, “Blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice” (Genesis 22:17-18).

These blessings were to be passed on through Abraham's son Isaac, and his grandson, Jacob, or Israel.

After Abraham's death, God spoke to Isaac, “Dwell in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; for to you and your descendants I give all these lands, and I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. **And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; because Abraham obeyed My voice**

and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws" (Genesis 26:3-5).

In his old age Isaac blessed his son Jacob. "Therefore may God give you Of the dew of heaven, Of the fatness of the earth, And plenty of grain and wine. Let peoples serve you, And nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren, And let your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, And blessed be those who bless you!" (Genesis 27:28-29).

"Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, and said to him: 'You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padan Aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father; and take yourself a wife from there of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother. May God Almighty bless you, And make you fruitful and multiply you, That you may be an assembly of peoples; And give you the blessing of Abraham, To you and your descendants with you, That you may inherit the land in which you are a stranger, Which God gave to Abraham'" (Genesis 28:1-4).

Awhile later God spoke to Jacob in a dream. "And behold, the Lord... said: 'I am the Lord God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. **Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed**'" (Genesis 28:13-14).

But before these blessings were to come to pass, God told Abraham that his descendants would wander as strangers in lands not theirs for four hundred years, and eventually would become slaves.

"Then He said to Abram: 'Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions'" (Genesis 15:13-14).

This did not mean that they would be afflicted or enslaved for four hundred years, but they would wander as strangers for four hundred years, and during a part of that time they would be enslaved and afflicted. As it turned out, the descendants of Abraham



were strangers in Canaan and Egypt for a total of four hundred thirty years.

"Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years – on that very same day – it came to pass that all the armies of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt" (Exodus 12:40-41).

For a period of time during that four hundred thirty years of sojourning the Israelites were enslaved. "So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor. And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage – in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve was with rigor" (Exodus 1:13-14).

#### Deliverance For Israel

In due time God set his hand to deliver them. "And God spoke to Moses and said to him: 'I am the Lord. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name Lord I was not known to them. I have also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, in which they were strangers. And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel whom the Egyptians

keep in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant. Therefore say to the children of Israel: "I am the Lord; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the Lord your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the Lord'" (Exodus 6:2-8).

By this time the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel had grown into a nation of several million, perhaps two or three million. God brought them into the land he had promised to give them as an inheritance. And God told them they would be blessed with abundance **if they would keep the laws of his covenant** with them.

"Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the



Lord your God: Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country. Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks. Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out. The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways. The Lord will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you. The Lord will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the Lord your God and walk in His ways. Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of you. And the Lord will grant you plenty of goods, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your ground, in the land of which the Lord swore to your fathers to give you. The Lord will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. And the Lord will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe them. So you shall not turn aside from any of the words which I command you this day, to the right or the left, to go after other gods to serve them" (Deuteronomy 28:1-14).

But if they would not obey, God told them the blessings would be taken away. God warned Israel, "I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies. Those who hate you shall reign over you, and you shall flee when no one pursues you. And after all this, if you do not obey Me, then I will **punish you seven times more** for your sins" (Leviticus 26:17-18).

A "time" in Bible prophecy is a year. A prophetic year is 360 days, or 12 months of 30 days each (compare Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 11:2,3; 12:6,14). "A time, times and half a time" is three and a half years, or 1260 days, or 42 months of 30 days per month.

### Blessings Delayed

Before they were brought into the "promised land," after God brought them out of slavery in Egypt, Israel was punished for forty years, **a year for each day** they spied out the land, because they had repeatedly rebelled against him in the wilderness, and refused to enter the land when he told them to. "According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for **each day you shall bear your guilt one year**, namely forty years, and you shall know My rejection" (Numbers 14:34).

On the same **principle of a day for a year**, as they were warned, Israel was to be rejected for seven times, or **seven times 360, or 2520 years** for their continuing disobedience, after they had entered the land of promise. **The bulk of the physical blessings of the covenant with Abraham for his descendants were to be delayed until near the time of the end of this age.** The northern ten tribes of ancient Israel, including the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, were defeated and carried into captivity in stages over a period of about twenty years by the Assyrians, their capital falling around 721 B.C. (Many sources place the date of the fall of Samaria in 722. Herman Hoeh, in a revised analysis, places it at 718. Floyd Nolen Jones places it in his analysis at 721, cf. *Unger's Bible Handbook*, Merrill F. Unger, Moody, 1966, pp. 233-234; *Compendium of World History*, vol. I, Herman L. Hoeh, 1962, pp. 300-301; *The Chronology of the Old Testament: A Return to Basics*, Floyd Nolen Jones, Master Books, 2019, pp. 167-168).

"Now the king of Assyria went throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria and besieged it for three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria and carried Israel away to Assyria, and placed them in Halah and by the Habor, the River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. For so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and they had feared other gods, and had walked in the statutes of the nations whom the Lord had cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made.

.....

**"And they rejected His statutes and His covenant that He had made**

**with their fathers**, and His testimonies which He had testified against them; they followed idols, became idolaters, and went after the nations who were all around them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them that they should not do like them. So **they left all the commandments of the Lord their God**, made for themselves a molded image and two calves, made a wooden image and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire, practiced witchcraft and soothsaying, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger. Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them from His sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah alone" (II Kings 17:5-8, 15-18).

Jacob, or Israel, before his death had blessed the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh. "He [Manasseh] also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother [Ephraim] shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a **multitude of nations** ["family of nations," Bible in Basic English version]. So he blessed them that day, saying, 'By you Israel will bless, saying, "May God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!"' And thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh" (Genesis 48:19-20).

In Genesis 49 are enumerated blessings for the end times for the descendants of the tribes of Israel. While all the tribes were to be blessed **in the end times**, the blessings on the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, **were to be greater** in measure than those of any of the other tribes. "Moreover I have given to you one portion above your brothers" (Genesis 48:22). To the sons of Joseph were the **birthright blessings of the first-born**. "The blessings of your father Have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers" (Genesis 49:26; cf. Genesis 35:22; 46:8; 48:5; 49:3-4; I Chronicles 5:1).

From a historical perspective, the peoples of the descendants of Joseph remained more or less together during the period of their wandering. But they would separate at the end time as each of the tribes fulfilled its destiny under the birthright promises to Israel and his descendants. Ephraim was to become a powerful globe straddling company of nations. And

Manasseh was to follow and become a powerful nation in its own right.

2520 years after the exile of the ancient nation of Israel, with its ten tribes, including Ephraim and Manasseh, about the year 1800, Britain emerged as the world's dominant nation, eventually ruling over a quarter of the earth's surface, and undisputed mistress of the world's oceans for more than a hundred years. The British Empire, which became a company, or "family," of nations, was the greatest empire in world history. Following on the heels of Britain, the United States, predominantly Anglo-Saxon and related peoples, emerged as the world's richest and most powerful nation by the mid-twentieth century.

For more information on what happened to the "lost tribes of Israel" after their exile, you can refer to, among others, such sources as *The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy*, Herbert W. Armstrong; *The 'Lost' Ten Tribes of Israel...Found!*, Steven M. Collins; *The Story of Celto-Saxon Israel*, W. H. Bennett.

### "Jacob's Trouble"

Now, Britain and her sister nations, and the United States, are in decline, and beset by a host of problems that will lead inevitably to further decline. Eventually, both nations, who despite God's blessings have continued in the path of rebellion against God's laws, will be defeated by their enemies, and will endure another captivity. It is a time referred to in Scripture as "Jacob's trouble." "Alas! For that day is great, So that **none is like it; And it is the time of Jacob's trouble**, But he shall be saved out of it" (Jeremiah 30:7). It is also called the "great tribulation." "For then there will be **great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be**" (Matthew 24:21). There cannot be two periods of tribulation greater than any other. These Scriptures are referring to the same period of tribulation.

How long it will be before all these things fully come to pass we don't know. But when they do come to pass, as they surely will, it's not the end of hope. The best days for mankind, and the earth, are yet ahead.

"And unless those days were shortened, **no flesh would be saved**; but for the elect's sake **those days will be shortened**" (Matthew 24:22).

**Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, children who deal corruptly! They have forsaken the LORD, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged. Why will you still be struck down? Why will you continue to rebel? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but bruises and sores and raw wounds; they are not pressed out or bound up or softened with oil. Your country lies desolate; your cities are burned with fire; in your very presence foreigners devour your land; it is desolate, as overthrown by foreigners. (Isaiah 1:4-7, ESV)**

### Deliverance From Destruction

**Jesus Christ is going to intervene to save mankind from destruction.** Satan's work of oppression and slavery is coming to an end. "He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, **that He might destroy the works of the devil**" (1 John 3:8).

"And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you" (Romans 16:20).

Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, **He led captivity captive**, And gave gifts to men" (Ephesians 4:8). When Christ returns, the captives will be freed. **No longer will human beings be enslaved to sin.**

"Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:14-15).

"He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David" (Luke 1:32).

"Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:1-6).

"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' They answered Him, 'We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can you say, "You will be made free"?' Jesus answered them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed'" (John 8:31-36).

The **last, best hope of mankind** is not the United States, despite its expressed ideals, despite all of its blessings from on High. When we look at what has happened and is happening in this nation, we can be thankful for that. The last, best hope for mankind is something far greater, and more permanent! **It is the Kingdom of God under our Savior, Jesus Christ.**



# MELCHIZEDEK MYSTERY

by Rod Reynolds



**A character appears in the book of Genesis who has been the subject of mystery, of wonder, of speculation. His name as given in Scripture is Melchizedek. Who is Melchizedek, and why should his identity matter to you?**

In Genesis 14 is an account of a war that occurred during the life of Abraham, sometime in the nineteenth century B.C. A number of kingdoms and city states were involved in the fighting, and finally the leaders of the cities around the Dead [or Salt] Sea area, Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Bela, also called Zoar, went out to defend against four kings representing kingdoms to the north. The kings of the Dead Sea area were defeated, and the victorious kings took goods and provisions from the cities in the flatland around the Dead Sea, and also took captives, including Abraham's nephew, Lot, and his fam-

ily.

Abraham, on hearing the news, took a company of more than three hundred men, and attacking by night, with God's intervention caused the northern army to flee. Abraham and his forces recovered the property that was taken, and probably additional spoils that had been left behind, and also recovered the captives, including Lot and his family.

The king of Sodom went out to meet Abraham as he was returning from the battle. They met at a valley, probably the Kidron valley, also called the King's valley, in the area of Salem, later called Jerusalem.

"Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was **the priest of God Most High**. And he blessed him [Abraham, then called Abram] and said: 'Blessed be Abram

of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.' And he gave him a tithe of all" (Genesis 14:18-20).

## **Speculation versus Biblical Revelation**

The difference is stark in what the Bible says about this Melchizedek as opposed to the opinions of various religious commentators and so-called scholars about him. According to the speculation of various commentators Melchizedek was Shem, or a Canaanite prince, or Canaan himself (*Gills Commentary*). These are some of the theories about him.

What does the Bible reveal about Melchizedek? Was Melchizedek a pagan priest, was he a mere man who was a type of Christ? Or was he



in fact the Eternal God?

### Melchizedek King of Righteousness

The Bible identifies Melchizedek as a king. In fact, the name Melchizedek means "King of Righteousness." And he is also called "king of Salem." "For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated 'king of righteousness,' and then also king of Salem, meaning 'king of peace'" (Hebrews 7:1-2).

Is anyone else identified as "king of righteousness"? There is none righteous but God. As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). But Jesus Christ lived a sinless life. "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: **Who committed no sin**, Nor was deceit found in His mouth" (1 Peter 2:21-22). Speaking of Jesus Christ, it's written, "For we do not have a **High Priest** who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, **yet without sin**" (Hebrews 4:15).

Again in reference to Jesus Christ: "But when He again brings the first-born into the world, He says: 'Let all the angels of God worship Him.' And of the angels He says: 'Who makes His angels spirits And His ministers a flame of fire.' But to the Son He says: 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; **A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness**; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions'" (Hebrews 1:6-9). Note that Jesus Christ is referred to here as God.

In a Psalm speaking of the Messiah, "**Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne**; Mercy and truth go before Your face.

Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound! They walk, O Lord, in the light of Your countenance. In Your name they rejoice all day long, And **in Your righteousness** they are exalted" (Psalms 89:14-16).

"The Lord reigns; Let the earth rejoice; Let the multitude of isles be glad! Clouds and darkness surround Him; **Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne**" (Psalms 97:1-2).

"In mercy the **throne** will be established; And One will sit on it in truth, in the tabernacle of David, Judging and **seeking justice and hastening righteousness**" (Isaiah 16:5).

Another Messianic prophecy proclaims, "'Behold, the days are coming,' says the Lord, 'That I will raise to David a **Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth**. In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**'" (Jeremiah 23:5-6).

Others have blasphemously called themselves "Lord of Righteousness," or by similar titles, as did an Amorite king of Jerusalem mentioned in Joshua chapter ten. But only God is perfectly righteous. "So He said to him, 'Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments'" (Matthew 19:17).

If Melchizedek is the king of righteousness, and Jesus Christ is the king of righteousness, each a priest of God, are the two then the same person?

### Melchizedek King of Peace

Melchizedek is titled "king of salem," or "king of peace." The Hebrew word "salem" means "peace." But humans don't inherently know the way of peace. Paul wrote in Romans 3 that all human beings capable of sinning (Jesus Christ excepted, as we've



**Jerusalem is about 40 km (25 miles) from the north end of the Dead Sea.**

seen) are guilty of sin, "And the way of peace they have not known" (Romans 3:17).

The Messiah is the **Prince of Peace**. "For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; **And the government will be upon His shoulder**. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, **Mighty God**, Everlasting Father, **Prince of Peace**" (Isaiah 9:6).

Note this prophecy of the Messiah tells us the Son of God is to be head of government, he is God, and he is the Prince of Peace. Who then but the Messiah, Jesus Christ, could be "King of Peace"?

"The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the Lord's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. Many people



shall come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; **They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore**" (Isaiah 2:1-4).

### Melchizedek Priest of the Most High God

Melchizedek was a king, and he was a priest, not a priest of some pagan deity, as has been alleged by some supposed scholars, but a "priest of the Most High God." Abraham identified this God. "But Abram said to the king of Sodom, 'I have raised my hand to the **Lord, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth**'" (Genesis 14:22).

The word "Lord" used here is from the Hebrew *Yahweh*, which means the Eternal, the ever living, self-existing God. He is the "Most High," or "Supreme" God. The Almighty, the possessor, or owner, of heaven and earth. The Hebrew word translated "Possessor" could also be translated "Creator." In other words, the creator and owner of all that exists, the owner of the Universe.

Later on, Aaron, the brother of Moses, was appointed to be High Priest of the Levitical priesthood. They, too, were priests of the same God. But a distinction is drawn between priests of the order, or rank, of Aaron, and the order, or rank of Melchizedek. Aaron was a descendant of Levi, one of the sons of Jacob (Exodus 2:1-10).

But Melchizedek was "without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, **remains a priest continually**" (Hebrews 7:3). In other words, Melchizedek was not born of human parents, he had no beginning, and no

end of life. In short, he is **eternal**. He remains a priest **continually**. And he is like the Son of God. "And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, 'This [Jesus Christ] is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased'" (Matthew 3:17).

Abraham paid a tithe of all the goods recovered from the battle to Melchizedek. The contrast between the Levitical priests and Melchizedek is explained, "Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives" (Hebrews 7:8). In other words, Melchizedek is not mortal, it is witnessed that "he lives," he is eternal.

Now someone might argue that Jesus Christ died. He did die, only because the second person in the godhead emptied himself of his divine glory and became a human being so that he could die, to pay the penalty for our sins, which is death.

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation [Greek: 'emptied himself,' as in a number of English translations], taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:5-11).

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the **Word was God**. He was in the beginning with God. **All things were made through Him**, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1:1-4).

The "Word" is speaking of Jesus Christ, the second person of the godhead through whom all things that are created were created.

"He [God] has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. **For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.** And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the **firstborn from the dead**, that in all things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross" (Colossians 1:13-20).

"He was in the world, and the **world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him**. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And **the Word became flesh and dwelt among us**, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:10-14).

"Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but **with the precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. **He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world**, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so

that your faith and hope are in God" (I Peter 1:18-21). Having fulfilled his mission as the Savior of mankind through giving his life as a ransom for all who would come to have faith in him, Jesus was resurrected to immortality, the immortality that he had before his sojourn on earth.

Did Christ have an end of life? He died, his life was interrupted, but it did not end, as he is alive today. So though he died a physical death, that death was not an end to his life, as he was soon resurrected.

"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know -- Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, **because it was not possible that He should be held by it**" (Acts 2:22-24).

Verses from Psalms 110 are quoted concerning Jesus Christ, "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool'" (Psalms 110:1; quoted in Hebrews 1:13). And "The Lord has sworn And will not relent, 'You are a **priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek**'" (Psalms 110:4, quoted Hebrews 7:17).

### Jesus Christ is Melchizedek

So Jesus Christ is a priest, not after the order of Aaron, but of the order, or rank, of Melchizedek. The priesthood of Melchizedek is greater than that of Aaron (Hebrews 7:4-10). Aaron and the other Levitical High Priests died. Jesus Christ lives and is immortal. He has an eternal priesthood. Melchizedek is Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ is Melchizedek, King of Righteousness, King of Peace, High Priest of God.

Paul wrote of Jesus Christ, "He who is the blessed and **only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality**, dwelling

in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power" (1 Timothy 6:15-16).

Only God the Father outranks Jesus Christ, and **none other is his equal** in authority. "For '**He has put all things under His feet**.' But when He says 'all things are put under Him,' it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself [Jesus Christ] will also be subject to Him [the Father] who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all" (I Corinthians 15:27-28).

### New World Government of Righteousness and Peace

Because Jesus Christ is the King of Righteousness, we can have faith that no matter how much evil is in the world, no matter how corrupt and evil governments become, they are going to be replaced by a government of righteousness.

"Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, knowing this first: that **scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, 'Where is the promise of His coming?'** For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.' For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. **The Lord is not slack concerning His promise,**

**as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.** But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, **what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God**, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? **Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.** Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless" (II Peter 3:1-14).

A prophecy of the Messianic age: "... the Lord shall endure forever; He has prepared His throne for judgment. **He shall judge the world in righteousness**, And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness. The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, A refuge in times of trouble. And those who know Your name will put their trust in You; For You, Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You. Sing praises to the Lord, who dwells in Zion! Declare His deeds among the people. When He avenges blood, He remembers them; He does not forget the cry of the humble" (Psalms 9:7-12).

And another prophecy of the coming age: "Say among the nations, 'The Lord reigns; The world also is firmly established, It shall not be moved; He shall judge the peoples righteously.' Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; Let the sea roar, and all its fullness; Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it. Then all the trees of the woods will rejoice before the Lord. For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. **He shall judge the world with righteousness**, And the peoples with His truth" (Psalms 96:10-



13).

Through his power and his righteous rule, Jesus Christ will establish peace on the earth, as the king of peace. "Of the increase of **His government and peace There will be no end**, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Isaiah 9:7).

"Give the king Your judgments, O God, And Your righteousness to the king's Son. **He will judge Your people with righteousness**, And Your poor with justice. The mountains will bring peace to the people, And the little hills, by righteousness. He will bring justice to the poor of the people; He will save the children of the needy, And will break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear You As long as the sun and moon endure, Throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the grass before mowing, Like showers that water the earth. **In His days the righteous shall flourish, And abundance of peace**, Until the moon is no more. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth. Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before Him, And His enemies will lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles Will bring presents; The kings of Sheba and Seba Will offer gifts. Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; All nations shall serve Him. For He will deliver the needy when he cries, The poor also, and him who has no helper. He will spare the poor and needy, And will save the souls of the needy. He will redeem their life from oppression and violence; And precious shall be their blood in His sight" (Psalms 72:1-14).

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, **your King is coming to you**; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey. I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; The battle bow shall be cut

off. He shall speak **peace to the nations**; His dominion shall be 'from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth'" (Zechariah 9:9-10).

We have a God and King in whom we can trust, who is also our High Priest, to whom we can go for forgiveness, mercy and strength in time of need.

"Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:14-16).

Rejoice! For in Jesus Christ we have the King of Righteousness, the King of Peace, coming to bring peace and righteousness to the earth. And we have a faithful High Priest who is ever living and ever ready to make intercession for us.

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## Jesus in Revelation

John the Apostle received a Revelation from Jesus Christ, "**which God gave Him to show His servants--things which must shortly take place**" (Revelation 1:1).

The events described in the prophecy of the book of Revelation begin with things which were then occurring, and stretch out to the end of this age and beyond into eternity. The Revelator, Jesus Christ (not John), is seen in the vision given to John as "One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band" (Revelation 1:13).

The "Son of Man" is a reference to the Messiah, "one like the Son of Man" (Daniel 7:13), a Divine being, yet also to become a man, sent from heaven to be "given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His

dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed" (Daniel 7:14).

The vesture, or garment, Jesus wears in the vision of John, "down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band," denotes his princely and priestly office, a "robe of righteousness" (Isaiah 61:10), symbolic of the nature of his office and rulership. He was "girded about the chest with a golden band," the breast plate of the high priest, on which are engraved the names of "the sons of Israel," i.e., the children of God (Exodus 18:8-9; Romans 8:14; 9:6-8; cf. Isaiah 59:17; Ephesians 6:14).

He is the one "who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades [the grave] and of Death" (Revelation 1:18). On his garment is a name written, "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (Revelation 19:16). He is "Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war" (Revelation 19:11).

A the sound of the seventh trumpet, there will be "loud voices in heaven, saying, '**The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!**' And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying: 'We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth.' Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail" (Revelation 11:15-19).

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# CAN ANYTHING BE DONE ABOUT THE WEATHER?

BY ROD REYNOLDS



Many, perhaps the majority, of people in our land think little about the real source of the tremendous blessings we have enjoyed in the U.S.A. over the past 200 plus years. Similar blessings have been enjoyed by Great Britain and countries settled by the British, and other nations inhabited predominantly in modern times by the descendants of Abraham.

**These blessings have spilled over into many other countries as well, and through blessings promised to Abraham and his descendants, all nations have been blessed. This is true not only from a spiritual standpoint, but to a degree, it includes physical blessings as well.**

**One blessing in particular, that we need to take notice of, is favorable weather. It's been said that people are always talking about the weather, but nobody does anything about it. Yet the question remains, "Can anything be done about the weather?" As we will see, the answer is yes, there is something we can do about the weather.**

Even though many may take their blessings for granted, there is a God in heaven who, despite our sins and weaknesses, has blessed the United States and Great Britain, and nations springing from British settlement, in particular, making it possible for us to enjoy the unprecedented wealth, conveniences, and power that these nations have enjoyed over the past 200

plus years.

God promised Abraham that his descendants would reap great blessings because of Abraham's faithfulness and obedience (Genesis 12:2-3; 17:1-2; 22:16-18; 26:4-5).

God said to Abraham (or Abram, as he was named at the time): "I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. **I will bless those who bless you**, And I will curse him who curses you; And **in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed**" (Genesis 12:2-3).

Note that God said those who blessed the nation God would raise up out of Abraham would themselves be



blessed. And those who curse that nation would be cursed. And in recent historical times, this has happened.

After Abraham passed a supreme test of faith, God said: "...I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is on the sea shore; and **your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because you have obeyed my voice**" (Genesis 22:17-18; cf. Hebrews 11:17-19).

The blessings of Abraham were passed on to his descendants through Abraham's son, Isaac.

"...I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; **because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.**" (Genesis 26:1-5).

Note that the blessings were to be given not because of the righteousness of Abraham's descendants, namely the people of Israel, but because Abraham obeyed God's commandments.

The blessings promised to Abraham were passed from Isaac through Jacob (or Israel) and his descendants. In part, the blessing included **"the dew of heaven,** Of the fatness of the earth, And plenty of grain and wine" (Genesis 27:28). These were specific physical blessings that were promised to Abraham's descendants.

The "dew of heaven," of course, in this context, implies sufficient water to produce abundant crops.

Later, God warned the descendants of Israel about their conduct and attitudes upon receiving the blessing in store for them because of Abraham's obedience. He warned them not to "say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gained me this

wealth.' And you shall remember the Lord your God, for **it is He who gives you power to get wealth**" (Deuteronomy 8:17-18).

Among the blessings promised, as indicated above, were agricultural blessings, and the blessing of favorable weather leading to abundant produce from fields and pastures. If they would be faithful to his covenant, God promised the descendants of Israel: "And the Lord will grant you plenty of goods ...in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your ground, in the land of which the Lord swore to your fathers to give you. **The Lord will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season**" (Deuteronomy 28:11-12).

In a prophecy for the "last days," Jacob (or Israel) prophesied of the descendants of Joseph, who comprised the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh:

"Joseph is a **fruitful bough**, A fruitful bough by a well; His branches run over the wall.

.....

"By the God of your father who will help you, And by the Almighty who will bless you With **blessings of heaven above...**" (Genesis 49:22, 25).

Blessings of heaven above indicates that **favorable weather** would be among the blessings given to the descendants of Joseph, or Ephraim and Manasseh.

"The blessings of your father Have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers" (Genesis 49:26).

Or, as translated in Green's Literal Translation: "The blessings of your father are **above the blessings of my offspring**, to the limit of everlasting hills; may they be for the head of Joseph and for the crown of the leader of his brothers."

Without going into the details, various lines of evidence indicate that Ephraim is represented in modern times by the British descended peoples of Great Britain and her former colonies, including Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, and other smaller ones. Of course, that doesn't mean every citizen of those countries is a descendant of Ephraim. But the British did colonize those countries, and they became key components of the British Empire and later the Commonwealth.

In a similar manner, the descendants of Manasseh are represented in modern times by the United States. Massive immigration in recent decades into Britain and the United States of other peoples from various parts of the world has diluted the percentage of the population in those countries representing the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.

This was prophesied to happen. "Ephraim mixed himself among the peoples. Ephraim is a cake not turned. [Indicating something weak or worthless; once the most powerful and influential nation in the world, Britain has become relatively weak and impotent.] **Strangers [foreign peoples] have eaten up his strength**, yet he does not know. Yea, gray hairs are sprinkled here and there on him, yet he does not know." (Hosea 7:8-9).

South Africa, it might be noted, has never been predominately British in terms of population numbers. Nevertheless, the Union of South Africa was formed in 1910 by the uniting of four previously separate British colonies. Territories of which it was composed were largely dominated for two centuries or more by the British, as well as to an extent descendants of Dutch settlers and French Huguenots. South Africa was rich in mineral resources and despite its relatively dry climate was agriculturally productive. South Africa remained part of the British Empire until 1961.

So God promised abundant blessings to the Israelites, and especially to the

descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh in the last days, the period leading up to the return of Jesus Christ. Included in these were blessings of produce, crops and livestock dependent on **favorable weather**.

In their heyday, these nations were dominant in agricultural production. And to an extent they still are. More than half the cultivatable, temperate-zone lands in the world came into the possession of Great Britain and the United States after 1800.

At the height of their dominance the nations of the British Empire or Commonwealth and the United States produced well over half the world's supply of sheep and wool, and about a quarter of the world's supply of foodstuffs including milk, cheese, butter, and beef. (*United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy*, Herbert W. Armstrong, 1967, pp. 177-178).

### Climate a Key Factor

There are several factors that have made this dominance in agricultural output possible, but one of the key factors is **climate and favorable weather**. Nations that suffer prolonged periods of drought, or a succession of devastating floods, or weather that is unseasonably cool for too long, or widespread disruptive weather disasters such as hurricanes, will suffer in lost agricultural production, and other calamities, that may in extreme cases lead to famine and ruin.

Despite drought stricken areas here and there, periods of too much rain or too little, occasional hurricanes, wildfires, etc., the world's climate in recent history has been relatively stable and predictable.

Paul Ehrlich, who made a career of issuing dire predictions of disaster relating to over population and famine, among other subjects, stated in his book, *The Population Bomb* (Ballantine Books, 1971), "the world is rapidly running out of food" (p. 18). He predicted that hundreds of millions of

people would starve to death in the 1970s and 80s. What he predicted did not happen, as with other predictions of imminent catastrophe that he's made (cf. "Fifty Years On From Paul Ehrlich's 'The Population Bomb': So How Come We're Not All Dead, Yet?", James Delingpole, [breitbart.com](http://breitbart.com), 1-17-2018, retrieved 3-29-2019).

The world as a whole is not facing a food crisis at the present time. In fact, in recent decades the world's food supply is outpacing the growth in population by a significant percentage. In 1996, for example, the world was producing 24% more food per person than in 1961, based on United Nations statistics ("The Dwindling World Food Supply," [www.pregnant-pause.org](http://www.pregnant-pause.org), 9-10-2000; retrieved 10-12-2018).

"Starvation is not imminent. The average citizen of the world today is better fed than at any time in recorded history. And the situation is getting better and better every year. Chicken Little and Al Gore are wrong" (*ibid.*).

Currently, in 2018, measured in economic value, the world's largest food producer is China, followed closely by the United States. Then India followed by Brazil.

Having much larger populations, China and India consume a much larger percentage of the food they produce than does the United States. A much larger percentage of the population is employed in food production in China (18%) and India (43%), than in the United States (2%), as well (2017 figures, [worldbank.org](http://worldbank.org)). The United States is the world's largest food exporter, and much of its agricultural economy is geared to exports. ("4 Countries That Produce the Most Food," Sean Ross, [investopedia.com](http://investopedia.com), October 4, 2018, retrieved 10-12-18).

### Climate Change Fraud

In discussing what can be done about the weather, I think I would be remiss if I did not discuss the controversial subject of "climate change."

Weather is defined as the "State of the atmosphere at a particular place during a short period of time" (*Britannica Concise Dictionary*). Climate is defined as, "Condition of the atmosphere at a particular location over a long period of time (from one month to many millions of years, but generally 30 years)." (*Britannica Concise Dictionary*).

It's been hysterically reported in the media now for several decades that "climate change" is a direct threat to mankind, and that drastic measures must be taken to avoid catastrophe within a certain number of years that keeps changing. For example, Al Gore predicted in 2006 that "unless drastic measures to reduce greenhouse gases are taken within the next 10 years, the world will reach a point of no return" ("Gore asked about failed '10-year tipping' point," [www.climatedepot.com](http://www.climatedepot.com), 1-22-2017; see also "Al Gore's 10 Global Warming Predictions, 13 Years Later — None Happened!", [humansare-free.com](http://humansare-free.com), retrieved 2-25-2019).

Wieslaw Maslowski, a U.S. government research professor with the Department of Oceanography, declared in 2007 that Arctic Ocean summers would likely be ice free by 2013 ("Arctic summers ice-free 'by 2013'" [news.bbc.co.uk](http://news.bbc.co.uk), 12-7-2007; retrieved 2-26-2019). But in fact, there was virtually the same amount of summer ice in the Arctic in 2013 as there was twenty years earlier ("Arctic Ice Nearly Identical To Twenty Years Ago," 8-22-2013, [stevengoddard.wordpress.com](http://stevengoddard.wordpress.com); retrieved 2-26-2019). A more recent hysterical report by the IPCC says we now have only twelve years (to about 2030) to save the world from the ravages of climate change due to carbon dioxide emissions ("Climate Alarmists: 'ACT NOW IDIOTS,' You Only Have 12 Years to Save the World," [www.breitbart.com](http://www.breitbart.com), 10-9-2018, retrieved 2-25-2019).

It's been claimed by Al Gore, many media outlets, and other supporters of the climate change agenda that virtually all scientists have agreed with their conclusions that the climate is



changing in a way that requires drastic action now to avoid catastrophe, because it's the burning of fossil fuels, the raising of livestock, and other such actions of mankind that is responsible for the putative climate change.

Anyone who dares question such claims is attacked as a "denier," and may be punished in other ways.

The fact is, like the weather from day to day and week to week, the climate is in a constant state of flux. In other words, it's always changing, sometimes warming, sometimes cooling. But is the burning of fossil fuels and grazing of cows threatening the environment with disaster, and millions of human beings with untimely deaths, as the alarmists claim?

As far as cows are concerned, the pasturing of ruminant animals has been going on for thousands of years. Interesting that no one until very recently thought of cows and sheep as threatening catastrophe due to "climate change." Same with growing rice. They weren't then, and they aren't now.

It is true that rice paddies and ruminant animals release some methane into the atmosphere (where it doesn't stay for long before being broken down into simpler molecules or absorbed by bacteria). Many of the same people who are predicting doomsday because of rice paddies and cows, promote expanding wetlands, and forests, both of which produce methane. There is only a tiny amount of methane in the atmosphere, in any case, and it absorbs radiant energy in a very narrow band, making it irrelevant as a "greenhouse gas" (cf. "The Methane Cycle," "New Research finds methane virtually irrelevant as a greenhouse gas," [farmcarbon.co.nz](http://farmcarbon.co.nz)).

Christopher Booker, author of the book *The Real Climate Change Catastrophe*, wrote an article published in the *London Sunday Telegraph* on Oct. 25, 2009.

In the article he summarizes the history of "climate change" alarmism over a thirty year period. Although it's often claimed that the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) represents the research of "thousands" of the world's top climate experts, Booker comments, "One of the more startling features of the IPCC is just how few scientists have been centrally involved in guiding its findings."

Near the end of the article Booker states: "... no one has put the reality of the situation more succinctly than Prof Richard Lindzen of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, one of the most distinguished climatologists in the world, who has done as much as anyone in the past 20 years to expose the emptiness of the IPCC's claim that its reports represent a 'consensus' of the views of 'the world's top climate scientists'.

"... Prof Lindzen wrote: 'Future generations will wonder in bemused amazement that the early 21st century's developed world went into hysterical panic over a globally averaged temperature increase of a few tenths of a degree and, on the basis of gross exaggerations of highly exaggerated computer predictions combined into implausible chains of inference, proceeded to contemplate a rollback of the industrial age.'

"Such is the truly extraordinary position in which we find ourselves. Thanks to misreading the significance of a brief period of rising temperatures at the end of the 20th century, the Western world (but not India or China) is now contemplating measures that add up to the most expensive economic suicide note ever written. How long will it be before sanity and sound science break in on what begins to look like one of the most bizarre collective delusions ever to grip the human race?"

Dr. Vincent Gray, a member of the UN IPCC Expert Reviewers Panel since its inception, wrote a letter objecting to its deceptive methods, published March, 2008.

In it, he makes these statements:

"...I have been forced to the conclusion that for significant parts of the work of the IPCC, the data collection and scientific methods employed are unsound. Resistance to all efforts to try and discuss or rectify these problems has convinced me that normal scientific procedures are not only rejected by the IPCC, but that this practice is endemic, and was part of the organisation from the very beginning. I therefore consider that the IPCC is fundamentally corrupt. The only 'reform' I could envisage, would be its abolition."

.....  
 "The two main 'scientific' claims of the IPCC are the claim that 'the globe is warming' and 'Increases in carbon dioxide emissions are responsible'. Evidence for both of these claims is fatally flawed."

In the year 2007 over 400 scientists disputing man-made global warming claims were identified in a U.S. Senate report. A summary of the report stated:

"Over 400 prominent scientists from more than two dozen countries recently voiced significant objections to major aspects of the so-called 'consensus' on man-made global warming. These scientists, many of whom are current and former participants in the UN IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), criticized the climate claims made by the UN IPCC and former Vice President Al Gore.

.....  
 "Many of the scientists featured in this report consistently stated that numerous colleagues shared their views, but they will not speak out publicly for fear of retribution. Atmospheric scientist Dr. Nathan Paldor, Professor of Dynamical Meteorology and Physical Oceanography at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, author of almost 70 peer-reviewed studies, explains how many of his fellow scientists have been intimidated.

"Many of my colleagues with whom I spoke share these views and report

on their inability to publish their skepticism in the scientific or public media,' Paldor wrote." (Mark\_Morano@EPW.Senate.Gov, 12-20-2007).

In December 1997, a UN sponsored conference on global warming in Kyoto, Japan was held, where a number of nations signed an agreement to limit emissions of "greenhouse gases." Under the agreement, thirty-five agreed to limit emissions, while more than 150 nations were exempted, including China, India and South Korea, each major emitters of such gases. Shortly thereafter, in 1998, another "global warming" conference was held in Buenos Aires that called on leading industrial nations to reduce their use of energy and their standard of living. In response, nearly 17,000 scientists from the United States signed a petition to the United States to reject the Kyoto global warming treaty. Since that time many more scientists have signed the petition, which by the end of the year 2018 included the names of more than 31,000 scientists ([www.petitionproject.org](http://www.petitionproject.org)).

The petition states, in part: "We urge the United States government to reject the global warming agreement that was written in Kyoto. ...The proposed limits on greenhouse gases would harm the environment, hinder the advance of science and technology, and damage the health and welfare of mankind."

"There is no convincing scientific evidence that human release of carbon dioxide, methane, or other greenhouse gases is causing (or will in the foreseeable future cause) catastrophic heating of the earth's atmosphere and disruption of the earth's climate. Moreover, there *is* substantial scientific evidence that increases in atmospheric carbon dioxide produce many beneficial effects upon the natural plant and animal environments of the earth."

The Kyoto treaty was signed by President Clinton but the treaty was never submitted to the Senate for ratification. Its ratification was precluded by

a resolution passed by the Senate 95-0 in 1997 that expressed disapproval of any such agreement that did not require "developing countries" to make emissions reductions and that would seriously harm the economy of the United States.

It was also reported by Boston *Globe* columnist Jeff Jacoby (11-5-1998): "More than 100 climate scientists have endorsed the Leipzig Declaration, which describes the Kyoto treaty as 'dangerously simplistic, quite ineffective, and economically destructive.' The endorsers include prominent scholars, among them David Aubrey of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute; Larry Brace of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center; meteorologist Austin Hogan, who co-edits the journal *Atmospheric Research*; Richard Lindzen, the Sloane Professor of Meteorology at MIT; and Patrick Michaels, a University of Virginia professor and past president of the American Association of State Climatologists." ("Boston Globe: Scientists don't agree on global warming," 11-5-98, [sitewave.net](http://sitewave.net)).

The Science and Public Policy Institute (SPPI) published a paper in 2007 in which a thorough analysis of the IPCC's claims was made. Among the points covered was an observation concerning chapter nine of the IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report published in 2007. Chapter nine was the key chapter because it attributed a change in climate to human activity. The conclusion of the review is: "Just four reviewers, including one government appointed team or individual, explicitly endorsed the entire chapter in its draft form - not thousands of scientists, but FOUR!"

"The claim that the IPCC's 4th Assessment Report carries the imprimatur of having been reviewed by thousands, or even hundreds, of expert and independent scientists is incorrect, and even risible [laughable]. In actuality, the report represents the view of small and self-selected science coterie teams that formed the lead authoring teams."

"More independent scientists of standing (61) signed a public letter to the Prime Minister of Canada cautioning against the assumption of human causation of warming than are listed as authors of the 4AR [IPCC Fourth Assessment Review] Summary for Policymakers (52). More than 50 scientists also reviewed the Independent Summary for Policymakers, the counter-view to the IPCC's summary that was published by the Fraser Institute of Canada." ("Fallacies about Global Warming," John McLean, September 2007, [scienceandpublicpolicy.org](http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org), pp. 6-7).

In an article published November 5, 2007, Piers Corbyn, astrophysicist and climate scientist of Weather Action Long Range Forecasters is quoted: "The global warming and climate crisis industry is not science fact but science fiction and the 'actions' they propose will not change weather events or climate one jot." ("Climate Scares Based On Desire To Control World Energy," [nzclimatescience.net](http://nzclimatescience.net)).

There is a great deal of technical information behind these statements, but the bottom line is that the "climate change" alarmist rhetoric having to do with fossil fuels and cows is false. It's highly misleading and potentially very destructive.

In short, "Mistakenly, water vapour is not included in any assessments of GHG effects by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a crucial omission. The IPCC concentrates mainly on anthropogenic (human) emissions, and ignores natural contributions of the GHGs from the planet and the ubiquitous water vapour, both of which also must be included in any sensible consideration of the effects on world temperature"

.....  
 "...many scientific assessments specify that water vapour is the most important GHG and responsible for 80% to 90% of the greenhouse effect."

"The IPCC dismisses any possible role of variations in solar output, such as the solar wind interacting with the earth's magnetic field or variations in



sunspot activity.

.....

"There has been no significant increase in the world's temperature in the last couple of decades, the well-known and accepted 'pause'. Over this short time there has been about one-third of all human GHG emissions ever, and the concentration of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> has increased more than 10%. Apart from some variation up and down, the mean temperature has not shifted much, certainly not at the rate suggested by the IPCC models. This is good evidence that CO<sub>2</sub> is not the main driver of the world's temperature and/or does not have a major effect on the world's temperature" ("Greenhouse Gases – A More Realistic View," Jock Allison and Thomas P. Sheahen, 9-2018, *The Journal*, nzpim.co.nz, retrieved 4-1-2019).

The claim embraced by the IPCC, many politicians and much of the media that there is a "consensus" of agreement among scientists with the alarmist "climate change" agenda is also a lie. "Probably the most widely repeated claim in the debate over global warming is that '97 percent of scientists agree' that climate change is man-made and dangerous. This claim is not only false, but its presence in the debate is an insult to science" (Introduction, *Why Scientists Disagree About Global Warming*, Craig D. Idso, Robert M. Carter, S. Fred Singer, second edition, 2016; may be downloaded free of charge at heartland.org).

Despite its lack of scientific rigor and objectivity, many politicians have latched onto the "climate change" agenda, in part to use it as leverage to gain or maintain their power and control over people's lives. There's already talk of politicians forcing people to reduce consumption of meat through taxes and other means. "Reducing meat consumption might be achieved by a mix of education, taxes, subsidies for plant-based foods and changes to school and workplace menus..." ("Huge reduction in meat-eating 'essential' to avoid climate breakdown," *theguardian.com*, 10-10-2018).

A freshman congresswoman who espouses socialism and a U.S. Senator, with the backing of a number of Democrat politicians, has unveiled a bizarre proposal called the "Green New Deal," that would seek to ban within ten years all internal combustion engines, including cars, airplanes and boats powered by such engines using as fuel gasoline, diesel, natural gas or any other fossil fuel. Banned would be power plants using any fossil fuel or nuclear power (which together includes plants currently producing 88 percent of the electrical energy used in the United States).

All this based on alarmist rhetoric such as the statement, "The climate crisis is a serious threat to the survival of humanity and life on Earth" ([gp.org/gnd\\_full](http://gp.org/gnd_full); retrieved 2-25-2019). For a critical assessment of the "Green New Deal" see "The Ten Most Insane Requirements of the Green New Deal" ([thefederalist.com](http://thefederalist.com), 2-7-2019). Critics contend that even if such a plan were adopted in the United States, it would have little or no impact on "global warming" ("5 Things Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez doesn't want you to know about the Green New Deal," *foxnews.com*, 1-6-2019).

As we've seen, misinformation, wild speculation, and irrational arguments are all too characteristic of climate alarmism. The truth is, "climate change" hysteria has little to do with science, and nothing to do with sound scientific method, but a great deal to do with politics. It is part of a powerful movement to impose a supra-national, authoritarian government on the world.

The following is a quote from Canada's former environment minister, Christine Stewart, "No matter if the science is all phoney, there are collateral environmental benefits.... climate change [provides] the greatest chance to bring about justice and equality in the world" ("Global Warming Quotes," *c3headlines.com*, retrieved 3-28-2019; many similar statements from alarmists are found at the same source). "European offi-

cials have admitted Kyoto is about establishing 'global governance' and is designed to 'level the playing field' for business" (*The Politically Incorrect Guide to Global Warming and Environmentalism*, Christopher C. Horner, Regnery Publishing, 2007, p. 271).

Americans must decide if they are willing to hand over their long standing freedoms to a socialist dictatorship of flawed and corrupt humans that seeks to control every aspect of their lives, on the promise of salvation from a concocted global climate "crisis," and plenty of "free" stuff.

### **What Can Be Done to Ensure Favorable Weather**

One of the ironies is, however, that by raising a straw man, so to speak, of catastrophic "climate change" due to fossil fuel consumption and grazing of cows, people are being diverted from the things they actually ought to be doing to ensure favorable weather.

The fact is, as stated above, the climate is always changing (as are concentrations of "greenhouse gases," which, by the way, are essential to biological life on earth). There are dry years and wet years, and always have been. Famines and years of plenty have occurred throughout history, along with insect plagues, floods, droughts and other problems. There have been "ice ages," when the climate was much colder in wide areas, and other periods where the climate was much warmer than at present in much if not all of the globe. In human history, warmer has proven much more tolerable than colder. In no case, did human activity have much if anything directly to do with historical hemispheric or global changes in climate.

Greenhouse gases are only one factor in climate temperature, and human produced carbon dioxide, methane, etc., which account for a very small percentage of the total emissions, and an even smaller fraction of total greenhouse gases, are of negligible consequence. One of the major factors, if not the major factor affect-

ing temperatures on the earth, is varying intensity of the sun's radiation.

It's doubtful that "global warming" can be reliably measured in terms of historical comparisons (cf. "Fallacies about Global Warming," John McLean, 9-2007, [scienceandpublic-policy.org](http://scienceandpublic-policy.org)). But to the extent that it can, the indication is, "Global warming results not from the emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, but from an unusually high level of solar radiation and a lengthy – almost throughout the last century – growth in its intensity" Habibullo Abdusamatov, head of space research laboratory, Pulkovo Observatory, St. Petersburg, Russia; cited in "The Climate Change Debate," 3-3-2010, [pmpaspeakingofprecision.com](http://pmpaspeakingofprecision.com), retrieved 3-28-2019). When the sun's intensity weakens, Abdusamatov predicts a gradual global cooling.

It is true that some human activities, overgrazing, for example, or other poor land management practices, can have an effect on the climate and weather patterns, such as amount of rainfall, in the area affected. But the effect of such activities is limited and is not global in scale.

However, driving your car less, doing without electricity, eating only vegetables, is going to do nothing to change the climate in any significant way. None of those things will make the weather better, nor will they prevent weather related disasters. "... in contrast to IPCC's alarmism, we find neither the rate nor the magnitude of the reported late twentieth century surface warming (1979–2000) lay outside normal natural variability, nor was it in any way unusual compared to earlier episodes in Earth's climatic history" (*Why Scientists Disagree About Global Warming*, p. 106).

We, that is, humans, have no direct control over the weather. In order to understand what we can do about the weather, we need to understand who actually does control the weather.

Sometimes, Satan is allowed to influ-

## TEN MOST INSANE REQUIREMENTS OF THE GREEN NEW DEAL

(SOURCE: THEFEDERLIST.COM)

BAN AFFORDABLE ENERGY

ELIMINATE NUCLEAR ENERGY

ELIMINATE 99 PERCENT OF CARS

GUT AND REBUILD EVERY BUILDING IN AMERICA

ELIMINATE AIR TRAVEL

A GOVERNMENT GUARANTEED JOB FOR EVERY-  
ONE

FREE EDUCATION FOR LIFE

EVERYONE TO RECEIVE 'HEALTHY FOOD' FROM  
THE GOVERNMENT

GOVERNMENT PROVIDED HOUSING FOR EVERYONE

FREE MONEY (FOR THOSE WHO DON'T WANT TO  
WORK)

BONUS INSANITY: BAN MEAT

ence the weather. In the book of Job we read where God allowed Satan to tempt Job, to try his faith. "...[a messenger] came [to Job] and said, 'Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, and suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you!'" (Job 1:18-19).

So here was a weather related disaster that struck the household of Job, caused directly by Satan. But while Satan has a limited power to influence the weather, he can do nothing that God does not allow, because God himself has ultimate control over the weather.

Yes, God uses the natural laws he made to govern climate and weather. But God can also intervene when he

desires to, for example, withhold rain, or send rain.

As we've seen, God told Abraham that his descendants would be blessed with favorable weather, as part of the covenant promise to Abraham. On the whole, we've enjoyed a relatively stable climate and favorable weather conditions during our modern history in the United States and British descended nations, and many other nations have been similarly blessed.

But God also told the people of Israel, the covenant nation, that continued favor would depend on their obedience to his laws.: **"If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them, then I will give you rain in its season,** the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. Your threshing shall last till the time of vintage, and the vintage shall last till the time of sowing; you shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely" (Leviticus 26:3-5).

But God warned them: **"But if you do not obey Me,** and do not observe all these commandments, and if you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors My judgments, so that you do not perform all My commandments, but break My covenant, I also will do this to you....

.....  
**"I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze.** And your strength shall be spent in vain; for your land shall not yield its produce, nor shall the trees of the land yield their fruit" (Leviticus 26:14-16, 19-20).

From time to time in Israel's history God sent drought and famine upon Israel to correct them, that they might return to him in humility and faith.

When Ahab was king of Israel, practicing evil and leading the nation into rebellion against God, Elijah the prophet was sent to inform Ahab of God's judgment: "As the Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these



years, except at my word" (1 Kings 17:1).

And so ensued a drought that led to famine in the land: "And it came to pass after many days that the word of the Lord came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, 'Go, present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the earth.' So Elijah went to present himself to Ahab; and there was a severe famine in Samaria" (1 Kings 18:1-2).

So Elijah and Ahab met, after which Elijah destroyed the false prophets, the prophets of Baal, out of Israel. Then: "...Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees, and said to his servant, 'Go up now, look toward the sea.' So he went up and looked, and said, 'There is nothing.' And seven times he said, 'Go again.' Then it came to pass the seventh time, that he said, 'There is a cloud, as small as a man's hand, rising out of the sea.' So he said, 'Go up, say to Ahab, "Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you.'" Now it happened in the meantime that the sky became black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain." (1 Kings 18:42-45).

Solomon understood that God could and would send punishments upon Israel at times because of their disobedience. In a prayer to God at the time of the dedication of the temple Solomon prayed to God, and said: **"When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You**, when they pray toward this place and confess Your name, and turn from their sin because You afflict them, then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, that You may teach them the good way in which they should walk; and send rain on Your land which You have given to Your people as an inheritance." (1 Kings 8:35-36).

God is the one who has the power to send rain when he wills, or to withhold it, as it pleases him. "But as for me, I would seek God, And to God I would commit my cause -- Who does great

things, and unsearchable, Marvelous things without number. **He gives rain on the earth, And sends waters on the fields.**" (Job 5:8-10).

"You visit the earth and **water it**, You greatly enrich it; The river of God is full of water; You provide their grain, For so You have prepared it. You water its ridges abundantly, You settle its furrows; **You make it soft with showers, You bless its growth.** You crown the year with Your goodness, And Your paths drip with abundance. They drop on the pastures of the wilderness, And the little hills rejoice on every side. The pastures are clothed with flocks; The valleys also are covered with grain; They shout for joy, they also sing." (Psalm 65:9-13).

"Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving; Sing praises on the harp to our God, Who covers the heavens with clouds, **Who prepares rain for the earth**, Who makes grass to grow on the mountains." (Psalm 147:7-8).

**"Are there any among the idols of the nations that can cause rain?** Or can the heavens give showers? Are You not He, O Lord our God? Therefore we will wait for You, Since You have made all these." (Jeremiah 14:22).

In the city of Lystra in Asia Minor, Paul advised the people to forsake their idols. He said to them: "...you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, **gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons**, filling our hearts with food and gladness." (Acts 14:15-17).

Favorable weather, rain to make food to grow, are a testimony to God's goodness, and his mercy. Jesus said: "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of

your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and **sends rain on the just and on the unjust.**" (Matthew 5:44-45).

But if we continue in our sins, the day will come when the rains will fail. The weather will not cooperate, and crops will fail or be destroyed. Animals and people will starve as crops wither, or be drowned in floods. And these will be only the beginning of catastrophe for Israel and the peoples of the world.

It may not be until God's kingdom is established that we can count on "rain in due season" and similar blessings consistently, and abundance for everyone. **"Then He will give the rain for your seed** With which you sow the ground, And bread of the increase of the earth; It will be fat and plentiful. In that day your cattle will feed In large pastures." (Isaiah 30:23).

"Then the Lord will be zealous for His land, And pity His people. The Lord will answer and say to His people, 'Behold, I will send you grain and new wine and oil, And you will be satisfied by them; I will no longer make you a reproach among the nations.

.....  
"Fear not, O land; Be glad and rejoice, For the Lord has done marvelous things! Do not be afraid, you beasts of the field; For the open pastures are springing up, And the tree bears its fruit; The fig tree and the vine yield their strength. Be glad then, you children of Zion, And rejoice in the Lord your God; For **He has given you the former rain faithfully, And He will cause the rain to come down for you-- The former rain, And the latter rain in the first month.** The threshing floors shall be full of wheat, And the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil." (Joel 2:18-19, 21-24).

Meanwhile, it's important that we learn the lesson. We can do something positive about the weather. We can obey God.

# Did Jesus Fulfill the Law?

by Rod Reynolds



**Question: Didn't Jesus fulfill all of the Law and all of the Feasts through His coming to earth, going to the cross, and being raised on the 3rd day? He has sat down at the right hand of God and continually makes intercession for us. He is our High Priest. Or am I not reading my Bible correctly?**

Answer: Jesus fulfilled the law in the sense of perfect obedience to it, as he did not sin (Matthew 3:15; cf. Acts 13:22; Romans 2:27; Galatians 5:16; 6:2; 1 Peter 2:22).

Note that Paul was sent as a steward of the gospel, with the responsibility to "fulfill the word of God," in the same sense in which Christ fulfilled the law (Colossians 1:25). Robertson (*Word Pictures in the New Testament*) comments on the verse as follows: "to fill full or to give full scope to the Word of God." Paul prayed for the Christians in Thessalonica, that they would "fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power" (2 Thessalonians 1:11).

James wrote, "If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' you do well" (James 2:8; cf. Matthew 22:26-30). By "fulfill" the law, referring here to the commandments of God, he means keep it, obey it (James 2:10-12).

So when Jesus said "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy

but to fulfill" (Matthew 5:17), he did not mean what some mistakenly suppose. A common idea is that in fulfilling the Law and the Prophets (the Bible, cf. Matthew 5:18; Luke 24:44; John 1:45), Jesus somehow did away with the commandments and our obligation to keep them.

Such convoluted reasoning is the precise opposite of Jesus' own teaching. He went on to say in the same context, "Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:19-20). The saints are described as "those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12). We are told of the New Jerusalem, "Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:14).

Jesus went on in the "sermon on the mount" to magnify the commandments, showing that they must be kept not only in the letter, but in the spiritual intent as well. He said not only are we not to murder, for example, but not to be angry without a cause, and to strive to be reconciled with those against whom we have

sinned (Matthew 5:21-26; cf. 1 John 3:15). He said, "whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:28).

Jesus spoke of the "New Covenant" (Matthew 26:28), which had been written about by the prophets (Jeremiah 31:31). Under that covenant Jeremiah prophesied that the laws of God would be written in the heart and mind, not merely on tablets of stone (verse 33). Jesus had foretold of the destruction of the Temple, and an end to the physical Temple centered worship based on the law of the Levitical priesthood (Matthew 24:1-2, John 4:21, 23; cf. Hosea 3:4). He had prophesied that the Kingdom would be taken from the Jews and given to a "nation" -- the Church -- bearing the fruits thereof (Matthew 21:42-43; 1 Peter 2:6-10).

Paul understood that works are necessary to salvation. Paul said that in obedience to the command of Jesus Christ, he "... declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance" (Acts 26:20). He wrote to the Romans that God...

'will render to each one according to his deeds': eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and im-



mortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness--indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God. For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law (for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified...) [Romans 2:6-13].

But he also understood that works apart from faith are of no value (Galatians 2:11-17). Galatians 2:14, "live as Jews," means observing Jewish customs such as not eating with uncircumcised Gentiles in accordance with Jewish traditional law (cf. Acts 10:28; Galatians 2:11-13). It should be clearly understood that this was a Jewish Pharisaical law, or tradition, and is not a Biblical law.

Galatians 2:16 is commonly mistranslated, as in the New King James Version: "knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified."

The usual mis-translation makes it seem to the English reader that faith and works of the law are unconnected, and virtually the opposite of one another, in Paul's teaching. The phrase translated "works of law but by faith in Christ" in the Greek text reads: "ἐργῶν νόμου εἰν μὴ διὰ πίστεως ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ" (*ergon nomou ean me dia pisteos iesou christou*).

The correct translation of the phrase is "works of law except through faith

of Jesus Christ." The Greek εἰν μὴ (*ean me*) means "if not," or "except."

So Paul is telling us that we are not justified by our own works apart from faith in or of Christ, especially works founded on the laws or traditions of men (cf. Mark 7:1-13). But we are justified by works done through the faith of Jesus Christ living in us (cf. Romans 2:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:11; James 2:14-26; Revelation 2:13; 14:12). With this understood, we see that Paul's teaching agrees perfectly with James' statement, "You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only," pointing out that supposed "faith without works is dead" (James 2:20, 24). Compare Matthew 23:23. Romans 1:5; 15:18; 16:26. Through the genuine faith of Jesus Christ abiding in us the heart is changed (Galatians 2:20; cf. Romans 8:1-14).

Does this mean we "earn" salvation through commandment keeping? Absolutely not! Salvation cannot be earned, because it is a gift, but it is a gift that requires repentance and obedience (Acts 2:38-40; 3:19; 11:18; 26:20; Romans 6:22-23; 16:26; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Corinthians 7:19; Colossians 3:1-17; 2 Peter 3:9; Revelation 2:5; 3:19; 22:12).

Moreover, while Jesus did fulfill some of the prophecies of the Old Testament during his sojourn on earth, including his death and resurrection, he by no means fulfilled all of them. His fulfilling of the "Law and the Prophets," in the sense of bringing to fruition all that is prophesied in the Scriptures, is still a work in progress. For example, the prophecies about Christ ruling all nations from his throne in Jerusalem await their fulfillment upon the second coming of Christ, a subject often referred to in the New Testament (Isaiah 2:1-4; 24:23; 66:10-18; 23-24; Daniel 7:27; Matthew 25:31-34; Revelation 11:15).

As far as the feasts of God proclaimed in Scripture are concerned, they all have prophetic significance, some of which has been fulfilled to one degree or another. But much of

what is pictured by the feasts, which reflect God's plan of salvation for mankind, has yet to be fulfilled. Jesus through his death fulfilled what is pictured by the Passover, where the passover lamb was killed and its blood provided deliverance from death for those under its protection (Exodus 12:3-7, 13). Jesus is our passover (1 Corinthians 5:7).

The weekly Sabbath, in part, pictures the millennial "rest" of God's kingdom, which is yet future (Hebrews 4:1-13). As explained in our article about the Feast of Tabernacles, that feast also pictures the millennial kingdom of God ("Feast of Tabernacles Observance", [cogmessenger.org](http://cogmessenger.org)). And the other feasts also have prophetic significance of their own as well.

We are not told to quit keeping any feast of God because it has been fulfilled. The New Testament Church was keeping Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was given in a special manifestation of God's grace and power, as recorded in Acts 2. And they continued to keep it afterward (Acts 20:16; 1 Corinthians 16:8). The Church continued to keep the Passover as a memorial of Jesus' death (though without the animal sacrifice), as he instructed (Matthew 26:26-28; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-28; see chapters 9-10 of our free publication, *When Is the Biblical Passover* for more about the history of the Christian Passover). In the millennium, even as it is being fulfilled, the Feast of Tabernacles will be kept by all nations (Zechariah 14:16-19).

Yes, the Levitical priesthood was a type of the priesthood of Jesus Christ, and he is our intercessor at the right hand of the Father in heaven (Hebrews 1:3; 4:14-16; 8:1-13; 9:1-28). However, in due time he will come back to earth to restore it and rule it bodily, as prophesied (Acts 3:21; Revelation 19:15).

For more on this general subject, see our articles: *Applying God's Laws Under the New Covenant*; *Were the Commandments "Nailed to the Cross"?*



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**Melchizedek Mystery** – A character appears in the book of Genesis who has been the subject of mystery, wonder, and speculation. Who is Melchizedek, and why should his identity matter to you?

**Jesus in Revelation** – An introduction to how Jesus Christ is portrayed in the book of Revelation.

**Can Anything be Done About the Weather?** – Who really has control over the earth's climate and weather? How can human behavior affect the climate in a way that is truly beneficial for mankind?

**Did Jesus Fulfill the Law?** – If so, what does it mean to “fulfill the law”? Does it mean obey the law, or get rid of law? Find out what the Bible really says about these questions.

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