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The Two Voices

Who says you're
too bad for Jesus?

Endtime Insights

The rise, reign, and wars
of the Antichrist

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PERSONALLY SPEAKING



Some people live in eternal insecurity. They can never be sure, no matter what they do or don't do, that they will go to Heaven when they die. It's enough to make a nervous wreck out of anybody—and I once read about a man that it did just that to.

He had received Jesus as his Savior and tried his best to live according to Jesus' teachings, but found he couldn't live up to other people's standards, what *they* said was necessary to merit salvation. According to them, every time he made a mistake or had an unholy thought, he lost his salvation and was right back where he had started, a lost sinner.

Finally he wound up a nervous wreck and was hospitalized. While recuperating in the hospital, he spent much of his time reading the Bible. One day he read Ephesians 2:8-9: "By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast"—and he finally got the point. Salvation wasn't dependent on anything that he had done or could do beyond believing that Jesus had died for sinners like himself. He got so excited about this simple truth that he felt better immediately and started sharing his discovery with everybody around him: "Do you know that all you have to do to be saved is *believe*, that's all? Just believe! God's grace plus your faith plus nothing!"

And he was so right! We're saved by grace through faith—not by good works, or by being perfect, or doing penance, or keeping an endless list of dos and don'ts. Jesus has already done it all! And just like you are *saved* by grace, you are *kept* by grace. You don't need to worry about losing your salvation, because you can't! Once saved, *always* saved!

Keith Phillips
Keith Phillips
FOR THE ACTIVATED FAMILY

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homesick for heaven



Science has found that nothing can disappear without a trace. Nature does not know extinction. All it knows is transformation. If God applies the fundamental principle to the most minute and insignificant parts of the universe, doesn't it make sense to assume that He applies it to the masterpiece of His creation—the human soul? I think it does.
—WERNHER VON BRAUN



Death is not extinguishing the light; it is putting out the lamp because the dawn has come.
—RABINDRANATH TAGORE



Think of it—
Stepping on shore,
and finding it Heaven!
Of taking hold of a hand,
and finding it God's
hand.
Of breathing a new air,
and finding it celestial
air.
Of feeling invigorated,
and finding it immortality.
Of passing from storm to
tempest
to an unbroken calm.
Of waking up and finding
it Home.
—ROBERT E. SELLE



Where is there a country without sin, crime, lawlessness, bloodshed, disease, death, sorrow, and heartache? Heaven is a country in which there is the absence of all that is common to any land, for in God's country there are no barriers, no walls or curtains to divide; no race barrier; no soldiers because there are no wars; no policemen because there is no crime or sin; no undertakers because there are no graves; no physicians because germs, fevers, pestilences, diseases are unknown; no thieves because there is no darkness. Who would not yearn for this better and more desirable country in which there are no separations, no drunkards, no prisons, no hospitals, no beggars, no persons who are blind, deaf, dumb, or destitute? What a country! Are you not homesick for Heaven?
—H. LOCKYER



If we really understood Heaven, we would be most unhappy and unsatisfied with life on earth. We would rebel against

our earthly limitations. If we saw Heaven, we could not bear this earth. That's why Heaven is forever: we cannot bear to leave it after we get there.
—CHARLES L. ALLEN



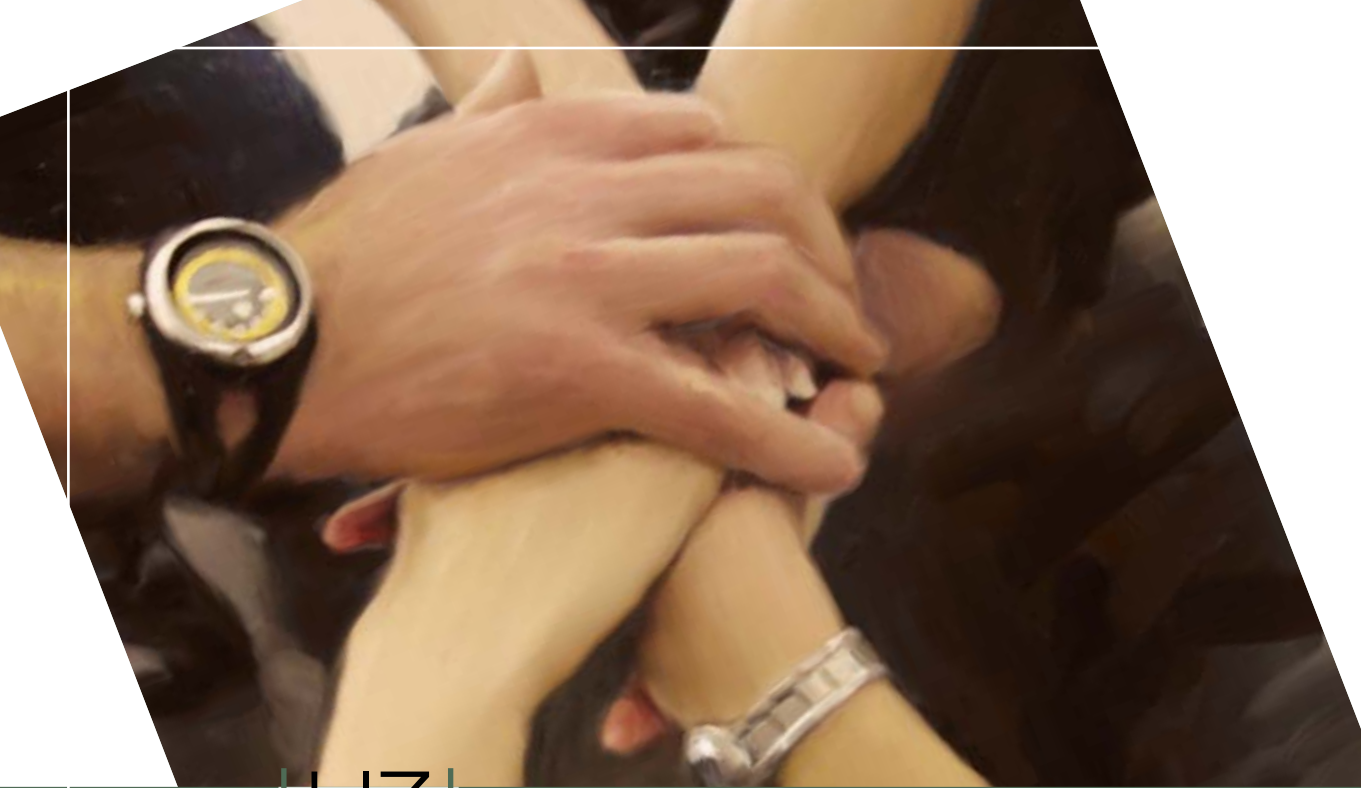
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Your body is not the real you. It's just the physical house you live in. The real you is your spirit, which will live on forever.
—DAVID BRANDT BERG



I am the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.
—JESUS, JOHN 11:25–26, KJV



LIZ

BY REUBEN RUCHEVSKY

■ Liz was a pretty, diminutive woman—my mom’s best friend. I knew her from the private tennis club where we were members and where I also worked in the pro shop after school and on the weekends. Her taking time to chat as peers earned Liz high marks with me.

Times changed and so did I. Once a conservative, shy, middle-class kid, university in the late '60s saw me morph into a searching, lost, and very intense hippie dropout. On one of my many quests to find meaning in life, I visited all those who had influenced my life for good. Of course, this included Liz. Knocking on their door unannounced, she and her husband, quiet “Big John,” received this wild-eyed, ragged

acquaintance from the past without prejudice or alarm. I sat and presented them—an older, upper-middle-class couple—with all my far-out theories and trippy ideas of the youth rebellion. If they rolled their eyes or winked at each other, I didn’t notice.

Providence had a hand on me, as about a year later I found what I was searching for. A friend told me how he had prayed and received Jesus as his Savior, and I did likewise. I decided to dedicate my life to Jesus, and a few years later He showed me to leave the U.S. and reach out to the young people of New Zealand and Australia. Moving back to the West Coast to make preparations for this mission, I remembered Liz. I had recently heard that she was suffering from a terminal disease and was on her deathbed. As I was visiting my mother at the time, she and I made arrangements to see Liz.

My old friend, who had been tolerant of an unannounced radical hippie visitor a few years back, was on guard at meeting an announced “true believer.” She had Parkinson’s disease, in the latter stages. Lying on her chaise longue, with her husband and mother attending, she listened as

mercy prevails

According to a Jewish legend, before creating Adam, the first man, God took into His counsel the angels that stood about His throne.

“Create him not,” said the Angel of Justice, “for if You do, he will commit all kinds of wickedness against his fellowman. He will be hard and cruel and dishonest and unrighteous.”

“Create him not,” said the Angel of Truth, “for he will be false and deceitful to his fellowman, and even to You.”

“Create him not,” said the Angel of Holiness, “for he will follow that which is impure in Your sight, and dishonor You to Your face.”

Then the Angel of Mercy, God’s most beloved, stepped forward and said. “Create him, Father, for when he sins and turns from the path of right and truth and holiness, I will take him tenderly by the hand and lead him back to You.”



I chatted with her and filled her in on what had transpired in my life since our last meeting. She was amazed that someone had made so many changes in such a short time—“nice” young man, to bizarre hippie, to full-time volunteer ready to go overseas. But she was embittered toward religion and hard as nails concerning any mention of it beyond hearing me out about my experiences.

Seeing her tire, I knew it was time to go. Since I probably wouldn’t be able to see her again, after sending a short “telegram” to Heaven in the form of a prayer for help, I felt led to take the plunge and ask Liz if she would like to say a short prayer with me. After what seemed like a long period of silence, to the amazement of everyone present—including me—she simply said yes.

Kneeling beside her, I took her hand and we closed our eyes. First I felt my mother’s hand join ours, then Liz’s mom’s. Just as I started to pray, I felt Big John’s hand clamp down on ours as well. Not only Liz, but all repeated the simple salvation prayer, inviting Jesus to come into their hearts. When we finished, not one eye was dry.

Liz lived for several more months before moving on to Heaven. During that time her life completely changed. She avidly read her Bible, and thus was full of joy and faith, trusting God to heal her or take her Home—whatever His will was. Being an accomplished artist, she continued her painting, lying on her chaise longue—and she sent the proceeds from her sales to me in New Zealand. It helped us establish our work for the Lord there, which continues to this day.

Heaven is a place populated by those you invite to join you there. Looking forward to seeing you, Liz!

REUBEN RUCHEVSKY IS A FULL-TIME VOLUNTEER WITH THE FAMILY.

JESUS IS knocking

When William Holman Hunt (1827–1910) unveiled his now-famous painting *Christ, the Light of the World*, one critic thought he detected an oversight. “You forgot something,” he remarked. “There’s no knob on the door.”

“I thought of that,” said the artist, “but this is the door to the human heart. It can be opened only from the inside!”

Jesus is the very picture of patience, calmness, love, gentleness, and longsuffering. He’s the picture of tenderness, gently wooing like a dove. He goes where there are open, receptive, hungry hearts. He seeks out the humble and contrite hearts, but resists the proud. He waits lovingly and meekly at your heart’s door, not forcing Himself on you, not pushing the door open, but waiting for you to simply open your heart and invite Him to come in.

Jesus promised, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him” (Revelation 3:20). When you open your heart’s door to Jesus, He always comes in. He likes to fill every place that’s made for Him. If you will just open your heart, His Spirit of love will flow in.

If you haven’t yet received Jesus as your Savior, you can right this minute by asking Him to come into your heart with His love, life, liberty, truth, peace, plenty, and happiness here, now, and forever. Simply pray:

Jesus, I believe You are the Son of God. Please forgive me for my mistakes and shortcomings, come into my heart, and give me Your gift of eternal life. Amen.

{ IT'S FREE }

■ Salvation is by faith—pure and simple! Salvation is the result of believing: “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31 NIV). If you get an emotional high or some other physical manifestation—a “feeling” of any kind—that is a bonus and beside the point. You are saved by *faith* in God’s Word, because He promised you salvation if you would meet His simple, single condition: believe. You’re not saved by your *feelings*.

It doesn’t matter how you feel, because God’s Word is unchanging and is not affected by that. It’s your faith that counts. If you believe the Word, regardless of how you feel, you’re saved! Eventually you probably will have some feeling, but it is not the “experience” or the feeling that saves you; that is a result of your being saved.

God’s plan from the beginning is based on free choice—*your* choice. God gave us free will to either choose to receive Jesus or to reject Him. Salvation is there for you. It’s yours, ready for the taking, but you must make the decision.

Salvation is there, and it is a free gift. All you have to do is reach out your hand of faith and receive it. Salvation is a miracle of God, but it’s yours for the asking. All you have to do is

receive Jesus into your heart. He’s there, waiting to come in.

Believe and you’re saved. Period! Plus nothing! The Word plus faith plus nothing! That’s it! If you believe the Word and receive Him, it’s done! Of course, if you are thankful for Jesus’ love and the gift of salvation, your life will show it (James 2:17–18). But the instant you believe, it’s done, before you even have a chance to thank Him or show Him how much you love Him in return.

Salvation is not a reward. It’s not payment for anything good you may have done or anything bad you may have *not* done. It is a *gift* that you don’t earn and *can’t* earn by any kind of works of your own. “By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Ephesians 2:8–9).

All *you* have to do is receive it. That’s what He means by “not of yourselves.” The one thing you have to do, *anybody* can do, even a little child: Receive it. You don’t have to work up some emotional experience. You don’t have to pray it down or work it up. You just have to receive Him, that’s all. Plus nothing!

DONE DEAL

You don’t need to worry about whether or not you are going to lose your salvation or how you are going to manage to *stay* saved, because eternal salvation by grace means once saved, always saved. Once you’ve received Jesus Christ as your Savior, there are no ifs, ands, or buts about it—you are a saved child of God! “He who believes in the Son *has* everlasting life” (John 3:36). That one verse should be enough to end all your worries. You *have* eternal life right now, and you can’t lose it.

Besides, you can’t keep yourself saved any more than you could save yourself in the first place. Even though you’re not perfect and you’re bound to make mistakes, God is going to save you anyway. Salvation is forever. He’s already given it to you, and He’s not going to take it back. It’s yours!

THE

TWO

A Message from Jesus

VOICES



■ Please know that I love you, and I will *always* love you. As you go through life, that is probably going to be one of your biggest tests—to be able to believe in My love for you.

Many people are tested so strongly on that point that they lose all faith. They become so confused by the spiritual struggle that is going on inside them that they feel the only way they can go on, the only way they can cope, is to tell themselves that I don't exist, that it is all just fantasy. Of course, it is not simply them telling themselves that; it is the enemy of their soul, the Devil, telling them that. He has usually been attacking their faith for a long time, trying to destroy what faith they had, and finally he is able to come along and put what he believes

are going to be the last nails in the coffin, convincing them that I am not even real and that My Word is just a myth.

But I *am* real! Even these who have reached such depths of discouragement know that I am real and that I am ever present. The trouble is that they feel I could no longer possibly love them, and that My Word would never again work for them. That thought is so painful that in self-defense they have hardened their hearts and found it much easier to go along with what the Devil and others are telling them—that I am a lie.

But am I a lie? Is My love a lie? You know that I am *not* a lie and that My love is true. I know that at times you may feel that I can no longer love you, and that perhaps you

don't deserve for Me to even be concerned with you or what you are doing. You may at times find it hard to believe that My Word will work for you or that you can claim My promises, but that isn't true.

I am just as real for you now as I ever was. I'm married to you—forever. There will be no bill of divorcement. Even if the Enemy tells you that you've written up the divorce papers yourself and signed them, I will never sign. I will always be your Husband, your Protector, your Savior, your Guardian. I will never leave you comfortless.

Of course, there are conditions to My promises of blessing and protection. Those who do their best to stay close to Me and to do what they know to be right will receive



You can never be too bad for Jesus. That's like saying, "I am too sick to go to the doctor. I need to get better first."

more help and support and blessings in all they do.

I am not giving you a license to go and do as you please with a devil-may-care attitude and think that you'll still be able to count on My abundant blessings. Those who follow that kind of lifestyle will have a big price to pay, much more than you could possibly imagine, as so many have already found out. They paid the price for their short-lived pleasures. Still, I promise that no matter what happens, I will never leave you. I'll always be ready to stand by your side when you want Me. Nothing can take you away from Me—nothing! Nothing will separate you from My love. Please know that that is true.

Sometimes the voice of My Spirit will be warning you, chiding you, cautioning

you, and you must heed this voice. Other times you will hear voices that simply tell you thoughts of woe—that you are no good, that things are hopeless, that nothing will ever work out for you, that no one loves you, and so forth. The Devil will seek to put thoughts and feelings of misery, despondency, condemnation, and even depression within your mind. These thoughts will often swarm about you at the same time as the fears and doubts that I don't love you, that I don't care, that I'm not there for you at all. These are all lies of Satan and part of his spirit of misery and depression.

Please reach out for Me and call on Me when these feelings come upon you, because if you start to accept and believe the Devil's lies, even about yourself

and your abilities, then he can keep working on you until you're convinced you're a total failure, no good, and that no one and nothing can help you—not even Me. Don't believe him when he tells you no one loves you, because *I* do. Don't believe him when he tells you that your life is hopeless, because it is *not*. Don't let him tell you I have forsaken you, because I will *never* forsake you.

Wherever you go, I will go; you will never have to be alone. I will always be there for you. I will always love you. I am always waiting for you to come to Me and pour out your heart to Me. Please don't think that you are too bad for Me or that I will no longer speak to you. It's up to you. If you want Me close to you, I will be there. I promise.

Dancing with Jesus

BY ROBIN MATTHESON

What happened was so out-of-this-world

that it is hard for me to put it into words.

It's even harder for most people to believe.

My husband and I had recently moved to a new country with our six children, ages three to 16, and quickly fell in love with our adopted home. Between our work, caring for our children, trying to learn the language, and homemaking, my husband and I were plenty busy but also very happy.

When I became pregnant again, I was genuinely happy but also a little nervous about coping with the usual discomforts of early pregnancy when there was already so much else to be done. I'm normally healthy and active, but as this pregnancy progressed I got weaker and weaker and had to rest a lot more than I was used to. That gave me more quiet time with the Lord, but instead of seeing the blessing in that, I viewed my weakness as a big problem.

One evening, as I was helping to lead a Bible study at a friend's home, I suddenly started having strong cramps and hemorrhaged. I was rushed to the hospital. Tests showed that the baby was fine, but I had lost a lot of blood. I would need to stay in the hospital until my condition stabilized and I regained some strength.

The next morning I hit an all-time low physically and emotionally. I couldn't sit up or feed myself or do anything without help. It was embarrassing, frustrating, and humiliating. I hid under my blanket so no one would see me, and I started to cry. I made it through that first day, but what a day!

Then that evening the most amazing thing happened. I looked up and saw Jesus standing by my bed, smiling down at me! He

took me by the hand, and said He wanted to spend some time with me. My spirit left my sick, tired body behind, He led me out of the hospital room, and suddenly we were in Heaven together! We didn't have to travel—we were just there.

There were beautiful plants all around, stars overhead, and soft, glowing lights. We were in a sort of outdoor pavilion surrounded by tall marble pillars, with a wide railing all around it. Beautiful, slow, romantic music was playing, and He held me in His arms. For the longest time we rocked back and forth, like we were slow dancing. I didn't even want to talk. I just wanted to rest on His shoulder. His hair was soft, and I kept running my fingers through it. It felt so good to be with Him! I think we talked a little, but I don't remember what was said. He made me feel relaxed and calm, and I was overwhelmed by His love.

Some very sweet music began playing and He took a step back, as though He wanted to watch me dance for Him, so I did. Then He said the sweetest thing. Leaning against a pillar with His arms folded, watching me and smiling, He said tenderly, "I just love to watch you!" It didn't matter that I was over 40, pregnant, and not a particularly good dancer. He couldn't have loved me more! He was so natural and easy to be with, and I was having such a wonderful time.

Then suddenly it was over and I was back in the hospital bed, still tingling all over and thinking, Wow! It had been unbelievable, yet so real!

“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him. But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God” (1 Corinthians 2:9–10).

I didn't tell anyone else about that experience for fear that they would think I had lost my mind. But after that, my outlook on my present circumstances became a lot more positive. The whole hospital experience stopped looking so grim, and I began to feel a lot more at peace.

The next day I was lying in bed and listening to a tape when Jesus suddenly appeared again. “I know you love to dance,” He said, “so come on!” I grabbed His hand, and off we went. It felt so good to be out of bed!

We were in the same pavilion, but this time there was a band playing the most gorgeous live music. There were also singers all around, singing all sorts of songs and harmonizing. We weren't just rocking back and forth this time, but we were really dancing. I was shocked at what a good dancer He was! I guess I had never thought about that before, but He was just great!

At first we danced to some old ballroom numbers, and He knew all the steps. He held me close and laughed and seemed to be enjoying Himself a lot. We talked away, but He could also read my thoughts and would sometimes laugh at what I was thinking, like my being surprised that He could dance so well. When He laughed, it was never condescending but more like He was enjoying the things

I was thinking. He had such a great sense of humor! I was very excited, and we were having so much fun.

At one point I remember thinking, Wait a minute! I am dancing with Jesus. He's taking all this time with me, but He's supposed to be running the whole universe! He must have a lot more important things to do!

He chuckled again, drew me closer, and whispered in my ear, “Remember, I can be in more than one place at a time!” Then He looked at me and smiled and added, “That's one of the advantages of being the Son of God!” He was so funny! I laughed and laughed at some of the things He said.

He was so human and understanding. I never felt condemned in the slightest, even though He and I both knew how imperfect I was. He just patiently explained things, and then we would laugh and dance some more. When the dances got faster, He cut loose. Everybody around just loved to watch Him.

When I became enthralled by the music, He paused and said, “That's why the kind of music you listen to is so important. It's very important that it glorifies Me, because it's a vehicle!” And I understood that He meant that music could actually transport us. I don't fully understand it now, but it made perfect sense at the time.

At another point, a huge crowd had assembled to sing His praise, literally, and everyone was very excited that He had come to hear them. Up till then, the other people had all been in the background and I'd had Jesus pretty much to myself. I knew it wasn't right to feel that way, but a wave of jealousy swept over me. He read my thoughts again, and gave me the biggest hug. He reminded me that I had spent the past 20 years trying to teach others to love Him too, and now I could see how wonderful it was that everyone there in Heaven did love Him. Again, He wasn't the slightest bit condescending or judgmental—just wonderfully understanding. Suddenly

I didn't feel jealous at all. I stepped back and enjoyed watching others perform for Him and Him joining in. He soaked up their praises, as they soaked up His love.

Then another song began to play—very majestic! We all stepped back and He began to rise into the air. The song filled the air, louder and louder, and Jesus began to glow and became larger and larger, filling the sky. He was shining and was every inch the Son of God, Lord of lords, and King of kings. We were all singing, looking up at Him and marveling that while He is a Man and understands us so well, He is also King over all creation and sits at the right hand of God! It was overwhelming!

Tears were streaming down my cheeks when—boom!—I was back in my hospital bed.

I was flabbergasted. I had been to Heaven! I lay there, thanking the Lord over and over, and thinking about it again and again, trying to relive it. When my husband came, I was still so excited that I had to tell him about it—and he took it very well.

That was the last time it happened, but throughout the rest of my hospitalization and recovery, whenever I was tempted to get down, I would remind myself that all the pain and discomfort I was experiencing was worth it, because I had danced with Jesus. My bleeding eventually stopped, I began to feel stronger, and another ultrasound showed that the baby was fine. After five days in the hospital, I was able to go home.

Those spiritual experiences changed my life. I wish I could say that now I am everything I would like to be—unfailingly loving, kind, patient, and all sorts of great things—but that hasn't happened. I'm still me and still have my share of faults. But it has helped me to look at things in a different way. Jesus is nearer and dearer than ever. I know He loves me in spite of my shortcomings, and that one day He and I will dance again!

JESUS— THE WAY TO SALVATION

God loves us and wants us to have salvation.

Matthew 18:11–14
John 3:16
2 Peter 3:9

Jesus' death paid the price for our sins, so we can be saved.

John 3:17
Romans 5:6–11
1 Timothy 1:15
1 John 3:5
1 John 4:14
Revelation 5:9b

We are saved by believing in Jesus.

John 3:16
John 5:24
John 6:47
John 11:25–26
Acts 16:31
Romans 10:9–10
1 John 5:1a

Salvation is ours by grace (undeserved mercy), not works.

Romans 3:20a
Romans 11:6
Romans 6:23
Ephesians 2:8–9
2 Timothy 1:9
Titus 3:5

By receiving Jesus we can have a personal relationship with God and Jesus.

John 13:20
John 17:2–3
1 John 4:15
Revelation 3:20

Once saved, you can never lose your salvation.

Psalms 37:24
John 6:37
John 10:28
Romans 8:38–39
Hebrews 13:5b

THE RISE, REIGN, AND WARS OF THE ANTICHRIST

Daniel 11, Part 1

■ The prophecies of Daniel chapter 11 cover events that span more than 2,000 years—all the way from Alexander the Great to the coming would-be world dictator known as the Antichrist. Much of this chapter is very clear, such as its descriptions of certain characteristics of the Antichrist and his government, but other parts, such as the descriptions of the wars the Antichrist will wage to try to seize and hold power, are still mysteries. As with some other passages of Bible prophecy concerning the Endtime, we may not fully understand these until the events happen or are about to happen. We can speculate now, but we need to be careful to not get dogmatic. We need to leave ourselves open to other interpretations, as the Lord reveals them.

Daniel chapter 10 sets the stage for chapter 11. In about 538 BC, during the reign of Cyrus the Great, king of Persia, Daniel had been fasting for three weeks when an angelic messenger appeared to him (Daniel 10:1–6). “I have come”—the messenger is speaking—“to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days”—the Endtime—“for the vision refers to many days yet to come” (Daniel 10:14).

The part of the vision that has to do with the Endtime begins at Daniel 11:21: “[There] shall

arise a vile person, to whom they [the predecessors of the coming world government] will not give the honor of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue.”

The Antichrist is described here as a “vile person” because that is how God sees him. At this point, however, he will have the people of the world duped into believing that he is wonderful—their savior. What “they will not give [him] the honor of royalty” means is unclear, but it could be that he will exercise absolute rule in the style of ancient kings, but without the title. He rises to power peaceably, by means of intrigue—clever plotting and politics. The King James Version of the Bible uses the term “flatteries” in the place of “intrigue.” This would seem to indicate that he will use diplomacy and charm to weasel his way to power.

DANIEL 11:22—THE FIRST ANTICHRIST WAR?

Verse 22: “With the force of a flood they [the Antichrist’s adversaries] shall be swept away from before him and be broken, and also the prince of the covenant.”

The Antichrist rises to power peaceably, but then uses force to crush his opposition and strengthen his position. This could be war, the threat of war, or the preponderance of arms,

but “the force of a flood” sounds a lot like war.

The phrase “and also the prince of the covenant” means that the Antichrist is also the prince of the covenant, *not* that the prince of the covenant is also broken. We know from Daniel 9:26–27 that the Antichrist makes a peace covenant (see below), and therefore the prince of the covenant is clearly the Antichrist.

Verse 23: “After the league [covenant, pact, or treaty] is made with him [the Antichrist, the prince of the covenant] he shall act deceitfully, for he shall come up and become strong with a small number of people.”

The Antichrist is also referred to as the prince of the covenant earlier, in Daniel 9:26–27: “The prince who is to come ... shall confirm a covenant with many for one week [one seven-year period].” The signing of this covenant signals the start of the last seven years before Jesus’ Second Coming and the Rapture.

This league or covenant appears to be a peace accord, as well as some sort of religious pact—possibly one that tackles the thorny issue of coexistence between Jews, Muslims, and Christians in the Mideast, and by which Jerusalem could be declared an international city with free and equal access

guaranteed to people of all faiths. This covenant could also clear the way for the Jews to finally be able to rebuild their Temple on Jerusalem's Mount Moriah and resume animal sacrifices on its altar—something that hasn't happened since the last Temple was destroyed in 70 AD. (In Daniel 11:31, the Antichrist puts a stop to the daily sacrifices, so obviously they must be resumed between now and then, and the signing of the covenant seems a likely time for that.)

Although the first war of the Antichrist appears to take place before the seven-year covenant is signed (verses 22–23), it does not specify who the Antichrist is warring against. If this war is centered in the Mideast, as some speculate, it is likely to involve Israel and the large U.S. military presence in the region.

“He [the Antichrist] shall act deceitfully.” He will be very clever and deceptive, “for he shall come up and become strong with a small number of people”—or “a small people,” as the Hebrew *ma'at* is translated in the King James Version. This could mean that the Antichrist rises to power through his popularity with the “small” or poor people of the world, the masses, due to his political and economic policies, or that he does it with the help of a “small” elite group of insiders.

Verse 24: “He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province; and he shall do what his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers: he

shall disperse among them the plunder, spoil, and riches; and he shall devise his plans against the strongholds, but only for a time.”

“He shall disperse among them the plunder, spoil, and riches” sounds like he will distribute the wealth to win the support of the poor in the countries he conquers. So does the phrase found in verse 39, where it says he will “divide the land for gain”—possibly meaning political gain. “He shall do what his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers.” Throughout history, very few conquerors have distributed the wealth or divided the land among the poor. The notable exception is communism. Perhaps he will ride the wave of a resurrected move toward world communism.

DANIEL 11:25–26—THE SECOND ANTICHRIST WAR?

The Antichrist's military adversary comes into the picture in verse 25: “He [the Antichrist] shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the South with a great army. And the king of the South shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army, but he shall not stand, for they [the Antichrist and his forces] shall devise plans against him.”

It sounds like the king of the South has an even greater force than the Antichrist at this point. Again, if this war is centered in the Mideast, it is likely to involve Israel and the U.S. forces in the region.

Verse 26: “Yes, those who eat of the portion of his delicacies shall destroy him; his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain.”

The tide of battle turns when the king of the South is betrayed by some of his own people, perhaps as a result of the Antichrist's plans mentioned in the previous verse.

This war probably takes place after the signing of the covenant (verses 22–23), but before it is broken and the Great Tribulation begins (three and a half years after the covenant is signed), since those events don't happen in this account until verse 31.

Verse 27: “Both these kings' hearts shall be bent on evil, and they shall speak lies at the same table; but it shall not prosper, for the end will still be at the appointed time.”

Apparently the Antichrist fights one war to get into power and makes the covenant (verses 22–23), fights another war with the king of the South (verses 25–26), and then the two sides go through the motions of making peace—possibly reaffirming allegiance to the covenant.

Verse 28: “While returning to his land with great riches, his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant; so he shall do damage [“exploits” in KJV] and return to his own land.”

The Antichrist doesn't break the seven-year covenant at this point, but he is about to, ostensibly because others aren't keeping it.

(To be continued)

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I see your struggles and I want to help. Life *is* often a struggle, but it is made so much easier when you spiritually connect with Me. I have all the love and comfort and peace and solutions you seek. I can transform turmoil, emptiness, and disappointment into peace, plenty, and love.

I am right here at your side, waiting patiently for you to reach out to Me so I can relieve your troubled mind, dry your tears, and show you how much I love you. You just need to connect with Me. You can do it anytime, anywhere, and I will supply the needs of your spirit, whatever you need most then.

