

CHANGE YOUR LIFE. CHANGE YOUR WORLD.

aCTIVATED

Vol 10 • Issue 5

FAST FORWARD TO THE FUTURE

From now to eternity

The Safest Place

Peace of mind in precarious times

Responsible Earthlings

Save our planet!



PERSONALLY SPEAKING

If we haven't lived the drama, we've seen it depicted in movies and on TV. The patient in the intensive care unit hovers between life and death while anxious family and friends fidget and pace in the waiting room and hallway, praying for the best, preparing for the worst, scanning the faces of the doctors and nurses as they shuffle in and out of the ICU, and hanging onto their every guarded word. Will the patient survive? If so, will there be permanent damage? Will life ever be the same?

That scene is being played out today on the big stage, and we're all players. The patient on life support is our world, and the financial policy makers are the medical professionals. The rest of us watch and wait. A near-fatal blow to the economy would have been hard enough to recover from, but looming complications worsen the odds. Will terrorism, nationalism, and base egoism proliferate like viruses in a compromised immune system? Will society's moral fabric suffer a complete breakdown? With all that going on, can multiple ecological threats be held at bay? Can international relations take the strain? What's the prognosis?

There is both good news and bad news, as it turns out—bad news in the short term, but good news in the long term. According to numerous passages in the Bible that foretell future events, things are going to get much worse before they get better; but when they get better, they will get unbelievably better!

We can't stop the bad from happening, but we can prepare for it. To be forewarned is to be forearmed, so the first thing we should do is find out what to expect. The next thing we should do is equip ourselves to go through those things, to come out on top, and to be able to help others do the same. This issue of *Activated* will get you thinking and moving in the right direction. Be a survivor. No, be a victor!

Keith Phillips
For *Activated*

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THE END AROUND THE BEND

BY CURTIS PETER VAN GORDER



“YOU HAVE TO HEAR about this book I just read!” My normally laid-back friend was quite worked up. “I tell you, it’s happening soon!”

“*What’s* happening soon?”

“The end of the world as we know it!” My friend launched into a series of facts and statistics to try to convince me. “Did you know that over the past 20 years, the Arctic Ocean has been warming eight times faster than it did over the previous 100 years?”

I nodded. Global warming is in the news almost every day.

“World oil production has just about reached its peak, but demand is steadily growing, especially from the rapidly developing giants of China and India. Unless sufficient new reserves are discovered, we could run out of oil within a few decades. Then what? And overpopulation, along with deforestation, slash-and-burn farming, and other misuses of the world’s resources could eventually

cause famines and droughts of apocalyptic proportion.”

My friend was obviously full of his subject, but in fact I didn’t need to be convinced that the global outlook is grim. I believe we’re living in the era referred to in the Bible as the “time of the end” or the “last days,” and in the holy books of Islam, Hinduism, and other religions by various other names.

Jesus said that just as we can tell what kind of weather to expect by observing the sky, we can know what is about to happen in the world by watching world events and trends.¹ Current economic and environmental crises are sure signs that dire change is heading our way.

A generation ago, mentions of impending doom were routinely accompanied by cartoons of a disheveled, bearded crackpot holding a sign that read “THE END IS NEAR!” But that iconic doomsday character rarely makes

an appearance these days because his message is no longer a laughing matter or a fringe opinion. A growing number of prominent scholars, scientists, climatologists, and economists are now saying the same thing, and they have data to back it up.

In telling us to watch for signs of the end, Jesus wasn’t trying to strike fear or dread into our hearts, but rather to prepare us for what’s around the bend. No matter what happens, we have the assurance of His presence: “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you,” He promises. “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”²

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¹Matthew 16:2-3

²John 14:27



THE SAFEST PLACE

BY DAVID BRANDT BERG

WHEN THE WORLD goes to pieces, the best place to be is in the charmed circle of God's protection. "He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, 'He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I will trust.' Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence. He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler. You shall not be afraid of the terror

by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day, nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday. A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you."¹

Even if there's turmoil and confusion all around, you can have inner peace through the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ.² He never fails those who trust Him. So that's the secret: Live close to the Lord, in touch and in tune with Him and in step with His Word. It is His Word that makes you strong spiritually.³

One encouraging passage of Scripture regarding God's ability to protect and keep those who believe in and trust Him is the story of the harlot Rahab and the ancient city of Jericho. Because Rahab had faith and assisted two spies who were acting as God's agents, even at great peril to herself, when Jericho was later besieged by an invading army and destroyed, the only part of Jericho's city walls that didn't fall was the small section on which Rahab's house was built. She and her relatives survived and were spared by the conquerors.⁴

¹Psalm 91:1-7

²John 16:33; Isaiah 9:6; 26:3

³See Acts 20:32; Romans 10:17; 2 Timothy 3:15-17.

⁴Read the full story in Joshua chapters 2 and 6.

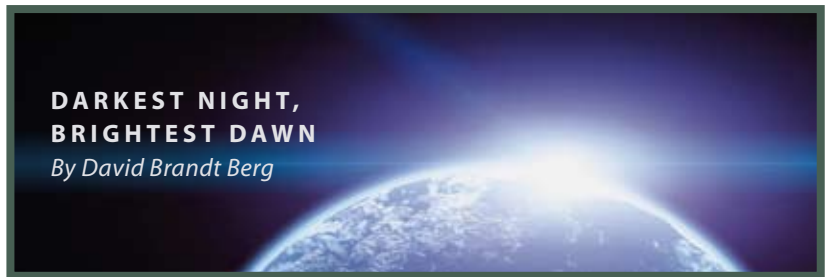
All things work together for good to those who love God.

When disaster strikes, whether it's natural or manmade, those who have been doing their best to live as they know God would have them live may find they receive His supernatural protection. "The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations."⁵ That doesn't mean that He won't ever allow them to be harmed. He promises deliverance, but sometimes He knows that the best and most loving form of deliverance is to end their suffering by taking them home to heaven. So if you've received Jesus as your Savior, the "worst" thing that can happen to you is that you die and go to heaven that much sooner. You really don't have anything to worry about, because either way, whether here or there, you're in His loving care.

And remember, whenever anything bad happens to those who love God, He can and wants to bring about some good through it. "All things work together for good to those who love God."⁶ Don't worry when times of trouble and testing come, thinking that God doesn't love you or that He's finished with you. What you feel is God's

tender hand upon you, using the situation to make you into the person He knows you can be, or working other things in your favor. As hard as it may be to see the good that will come out of it, that's His goal and His promise to you.

You're in His hands, so "be confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."⁷ These tests are only for a time, and meanwhile you are safe with Him! ✠



AFTER THE DARKEST NIGHT in world history, we are going to have the brightest dawn. The fast approaching night is going to be the nightmare of the great tribulation (a 3 ½-year period during which the world will be ruled by an iron-fisted dictator known as the Antichrist), and the dawn, the coming of Christ. Things have got to get worse before they can get better, but in spite of the horrors of the growing darkness of this world, we know that it's all going to work out right in the end. The darkest hour is just before dawn, and the faster it gets worse, the sooner it's going to get better!

We have to go through a dark place of trials and tribulations, but then we're going to come out into the sunshine on the other side and all of these things will be blotted out like an evil dream! One of these days Jesus is going to stop the world and we're going to get off, away from all this suffering and confusion and into the peace and quiet and beauty and love and wonder of that wonderland beyond in heavenly places with Him! Just a little longer, then dawns His glorious morn! ✠

⁵2 Peter 2:9

⁶Romans 8:28

⁷Philippians 1:6

FAST FORWARD TO THE FUTURE

From Now to Eternity

BY SCOTT MACGREGOR

Have you ever been reading a suspenseful book and peeked at the last page to find out how it ended, or have you ever fast-forwarded a movie to see how the plot was going to develop? Have you ever wished you could do that with time itself—fast forward to find out what’s in store for this world of ours? Well, you can.

The Bible contains hundreds of prophetic glimpses into the future that describe specific people, places, times, events, and world conditions.¹ Many of these prophecies are about the time in which we are now living—a period referred to as the end time.

Here is a brief summary of what the Bible indicates is ahead, in chronological order:

Where we are now

1. Signs of the times

The Bible gives numerous signs to watch for so we will know when Jesus’ return is drawing close. These signs include the gospel being preached throughout the world,² dramatic increases in international travel and scientific knowledge,³ and a great falling away from the true God⁴ as ungodliness and perversions proliferate.⁵ All of this results in “distress of nations,” with “men’s hearts failing them from fear” of the future.⁶ Clearly these signs are being seen today.

¹Amos 3:7

²Matthew 24:14

³Daniel 12:4

⁴2 Thessalonians 2:3

⁵2 Timothy 3:1–4,13

⁶Luke 21:25–26



The coming world government

2. The Antichrist

One of the most momentous signs of the end time will be the rise of a godless world government, led by a man whom biblical prophets described in various terms but who is now commonly referred to as the “Antichrist.”⁷ At first many will regard him as a savior because he will appear to solve some of the world’s most pressing problems, such as the inequitable distribution of wealth and consumption of resources; long-standing hostilities between nations, ideologies, and religions; exploitation of the poor; and economic instability. He will come to power through intrigue and nonbelligerent means,⁸ but is in fact a man of war.⁹ He will be in league with Satan, and in the end will become the embodiment of evil.¹⁰

⁷2 Thessalonians 2:3–4; 1 John 2:18

⁸Daniel 11:21,24

⁹Daniel 8:23–25

¹⁰2 Thessalonians 2:9; Revelation 13:4–8

¹¹Daniel 9:27a

¹²Revelation 11:15

3. The covenant

The Antichrist will either initiate or be directly involved in an agreement—a “holy covenant,” as the Bible calls it—that will temporarily bring a measure of peace and security to the world.¹¹ The signing of this covenant will signal the start of the last seven years of man’s dominion.¹²

Approximately three and a half years into the agreement, after surviving what sounds like an assassination attempt,¹³ the megalomaniacal Antichrist will break the covenant, declare himself God, and abolish all other religious worship.¹⁴

4. The image of the Beast

When the Antichrist breaks the covenant, the mysterious “abomination of desolation” will be erected in the precincts of the rebuilt Jewish temple.¹⁵ In the book of Revelation, the

¹³Revelation 13:1,3

¹⁴Daniel 9:27b; 11:23,28,30b,32,36

¹⁵Daniel 11:31

abomination of desolation is called the “image of the Beast,” and it has “power to both speak and cause those that do not worship it to be killed.”¹⁶ However, those who willingly comply will be doomed along with the Antichrist upon Christ’s return.¹⁷

Could this image be some sort of cybernetic representation of the Antichrist that is endowed with artificial intelligence?

Big trouble ahead

5. The great tribulation

Jesus said, “When you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place ... 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.”¹⁸ We know from other passages that the great tribulation will last for three and a half years, or 42 months, or 1260 days (measuring months and years by the ancient standard used in the Bible’s original manuscripts: 30 days per month; 360 days per year).¹⁹

A monetary system will be put in place under which no one will be able to buy or sell without a personal account number, the “mark of the Beast,” in their hand or forehead—the infamous “666” of the Bible’s book of Revelation.²⁰

This system could have been in place earlier, but it’s at this time that participation is made mandatory, perhaps tied in with a universal ID system. The mark of the Beast could be issued in the form of a microchip implant containing the individual’s personal data, similar to those already being used to tag people in high security jobs.

The Antichrist will become possessed by Satan, and his government will persecute those who refuse

to yield to his dictates.²¹ But God will help those who resist the Antichrist, and in their defense will unleash horrific pestilences and plagues on the Antichrist and his followers.²² Two of God’s end time prophets will perform miracles and publicly defy the Antichrist,²³ and other believers could have similar powers.²⁴

6. Nuclear war

At some point, probably near the end of the great tribulation, the Antichrist and 10 “kings” who join forces with him will destroy the mysterious “Babylon the great” in what sounds like a nuclear holocaust.²⁵ Scripture indicates that this Babylon is not the ancient city or empire by that name, but rather the worldwide capitalistic and materialistic system.²⁶ Today that system is epitomized and led by the USA. Visions received by the prophet Daniel indicate that the 10 kings who join with the Antichrist emerge from the ancient Roman Empire and thus could be from Europe.²⁷

Reversal of fortunes

7. The second coming of Jesus Christ

At the end of the great tribulation—“immediately *after* the tribulation of those days”—Jesus will return “on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” to rescue those who have received Him as their Savior, commonly referred to as “the saved.”²⁸ The Antichrist’s forces will be shocked as they see the saved from ages past resurrected in new immortal bodies,²⁹ and “then we [saved] who are alive and

¹⁶Revelation 13:14–15

¹⁷Revelation 14:9–10

¹⁸Matthew 24:15,21

¹⁹Daniel 12:7; Revelation 13:5; 11:2–3; 12:6,14

²⁰Revelation 13:16–18

²¹Daniel 7:25; Revelation 12:17

²²Revelation 9:1–6

²³Revelation 11:3,5–6

²⁴Daniel 11:32b

²⁵Revelation 17:3,5,12–13,16–18

²⁶Revelation 18:2,8–11,19

²⁷Daniel 2:40–43; 7:24

²⁸Matthew 24:29–31; Revelation 14:14–16

²⁹1 Corinthians 15:51–52

remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”³⁰ This event is known as the “rapture.”

8. The marriage supper

Immediately after the rapture, the grandest celebration ever, “the marriage supper of the Lamb,” will be held in heaven.³¹ The “Lamb” is Jesus,³² and His “bride” is the saved from all ages—those He has just rescued and those He has resurrected, collectively.³³ At the judgment seat of Christ, they will each be rewarded according to what they did with their lives.³⁴

9. The wrath of God

While the marriage supper of the Lamb is happening in heaven, a number of devastating plagues described in the Bible as the “wrath of God” will be happening here, and the Antichrist and his forces will be the targets.³⁵

10. The battle of Armageddon

Then, on a plain in what is now northern Israel, the Antichrist will muster his armed forces for his final campaign against the nations that still oppose him. This is the famous “battle of Armageddon,” in which Jesus will return with His heavenly army to defeat and utterly destroy the Antichrist’s forces and deliver those who have opposed his tyranny.³⁶

The Antichrist and his leading henchman, the False Prophet, will both be cast alive into the lake

of fire, a place of punishment,³⁷ and Satan will be imprisoned in the “bottomless pit.”³⁸

Order restored

11. The millennium

Jesus will set up His kingdom on Earth and rule for 1,000 years over those who have survived the battle of Armageddon and the cataclysms surrounding it—people who were neither followers of the Antichrist nor saved and rescued by Jesus at His return.³⁹ The resurrected saved from throughout the ages will govern with Jesus,⁴⁰ and restoration of the war-damaged world will begin. All wars will cease,⁴¹ the world will at last be governed justly,⁴² love for God and others will be the rule of the day,⁴³ and Garden of Eden-like peace and harmony will be restored.⁴⁴ This period is known as the “millennium.”

Judgment day

12. The battle of Gog and Magog

At the end of the millennium, Satan will be released from the bottomless pit.⁴⁵ There will not have been any unbelievers during the millennium, because everyone will have been able to see Jesus,⁴⁶ however, there will be those who refuse to receive Jesus as their Savior and submit to His benign but

³⁰1 Thessalonians 4:16–17

³¹Revelation 19:6–9

³²John 1:29

³³Romans 7:4

³⁴Matthew 16:27; Romans 14:10b,12; 1 Corinthians 3:13–15; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Peter 5:4; Revelation 2:10b

³⁵Revelation 11:18; 15:6; 16:2–4,8–12,17

³⁶Zechariah 14:3–5; Revelation 16:14,16–17; 19:11,14,16

³⁷Revelation 19:19–21

³⁸Revelation 20:1–3

³⁹Daniel 2:44; Revelation 11:15

⁴⁰Daniel 7:18,22,27; Revelation 20:4,6

⁴¹Isaiah 2:4_ ⁴²Psalms 67:4; 72:3–4; 98:8–9

⁴³Matthew 22:37–39

⁴⁴Isaiah 11:6–9; 14:7; 65:25; 43:19–20; Hosea 2:18

⁴⁵Revelation 20:3

⁴⁶Habakkuk 2:14; Hebrews 8:11

firm rule,⁴⁷ and they will join Satan in an open rebellion that will culminate in the catastrophic battle of Gog and Magog. There the rebel forces will be obliterated,⁴⁸ and Earth's entire surface and atmosphere will be purified by fire.⁴⁹

13. The great white throne judgment

Then all of the people from the beginning of time who did not know about or believe in Jesus will be resurrected to stand before God's throne and be judged. They will be either rewarded or punished according to their works, and will be assigned to their respective stations in the hereafter.⁵⁰ Satan will be cast into the lake of fire.⁵¹

Eternity!

14. A new Earth

Earth's surface and atmospheric heavens, which were burned up in the battle of Gog and Magog, will then be beautifully recreated, even better than before—truly heaven on earth, “in which righteousness dwells.”⁵²

15. The heavenly city

God's golden heavenly city, the dimensions of which are an astonishing 2,200 km [about 1,400 mi] square at the base and 2,200 km high, will then descend to the recreated Earth.⁵³ It is referred to in the Bible as the “mountain of God” and the “tabernacle of God,” suggesting that it is pyramidal.⁵⁴ God and Jesus will dwell in that city with those who love and serve Them.⁵⁵ Read the Bible's grand finale, Revelation chapters 21 and 22, for a full description.

And that is the happy ending! Although there are dark days in the near future, we can take heart in knowing that God is in control and a bright, beautiful, eternal tomorrow is not very far away.

FOR MORE DETAILED EXPLANATIONS OF THE END TIME AND BEYOND, ORDER *THE FUTURE FORETOLD*, *THE RISE AND FALL OF THE ANTICHRIST*, AND *FROM THE END TO ETERNITY* FROM ONE OF THE ADDRESSES LISTED ON PAGE 2. ☞

A BRIGHT, BEAUTIFUL, ETERNAL TOMORROW IS NOT VERY FAR AWAY.



⁴⁷Isaiah 26:10

⁴⁸Revelation 20:7–9

⁴⁹2 Peter 3:10–12; Revelation 6:14

⁵⁰Revelation 20:11–13; 21:5–6a

⁵¹Revelation 20:10

⁵²2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1

⁵³Revelation 21:2; 15–17

⁵⁴Zechariah 8:3; Revelation 21:3a

⁵⁵Revelation 21:3,7,22; 22:3



THREE DOWN, ONE TO GO

BY MARTIN McTEG

WHY HAVEN'T I EVER heard about these things before? I wondered. *Why isn't this common knowledge?* It was soon after I had accepted Jesus as my Savior, and I was hearing about Bible prophecy, the book of Revelation, the end time, and the Antichrist all for the first time.

The most fascinating class, “The 70 Weeks of Daniel,” explained a prophecy foretelling these four events:

1. That the prophet Daniel’s people, the Jews, who had been conquered and taken captive by the Babylonians in 586 BC, would be allowed to return to and rebuild Jerusalem, which the Babylonians had destroyed

2. That the Messiah would be killed 483 years (measured in ancient years of 360 days, equal to 476 modern years) after the wall was built

3. That the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem would be destroyed after the death of the Messiah

4. That the Messiah would return seven years after a despot, identified elsewhere in the Bible as the “Beast” and the “Son of Hell” but more commonly called the Antichrist, masterminds an accord involving Jerusalem and possibly Middle East peace

As I listened to this class, I learned that:

1. The Jews were allowed to return to Jerusalem, after 70 years in captivity.
2. The Messiah, Jesus, was killed (and rose from the dead) in the very year Daniel had prophesied.
3. The rebuilt temple was destroyed by the Roman army 40 years after Jesus’ death.

Daniel gave this prophecy in 538 BC, almost 100 years before any part of it was fulfilled. All of the fulfillments thus far are well-documented historical fact—Bible prophecy fulfilled with 100% accuracy! It stands to reason, therefore, that the last of the four events—the seven-year reign of the Antichrist—will also be fulfilled just as accurately.

If Daniel had told a skeptic about his prophecy, I imagine their conversation going something like this:

“Our people will return to and rebuild Jerusalem.”

“It will never happen!”

“This is when the Messiah will be killed.”

“I don’t believe you!”

“After that, the temple will be destroyed again!”

“You’re crazy!”

Now whenever I hear a skeptic say he doesn’t believe that a dictatorial leader known as the Antichrist will come to power and rule the world for the last seven years before Jesus returns and puts a stop to him, I just smile and say, “You will when it happens!”

Unlike the already fulfilled parts of Daniel’s prophecy that foretold exact dates, we don’t yet know what year the Antichrist will come to power, but when he initiates a seven-year peace accord, those who are in the know will recognize him for who he is, if they haven’t already. When that happens, it will be seven years until Jesus returns to put a stop to the Antichrist and establish His own righteous rule on earth.

Three down, one to go.

(LEARN MORE ABOUT “THE 70 WEEKS OF DANIEL CHAPTER 9” AT: [HTTP://ACTIVATED.ORG/BOOKS/CHAPTER.PHP?ID=18.15](http://ACTIVATED.ORG/BOOKS/CHAPTER.PHP?ID=18.15))

MARTIN McTEG IS A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL IN THE U.S. ☛

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

FAQs about the end time



Q: Is it really the end time? People have been saying that the end is near for thousands of years, but we're still here.

A: TRUE, BUT WE'RE NOW SEEING some signs of the end that weren't seen in previous generations. For example, technology has suddenly advanced to the point that implementing and enforcing the mark of the Beast are within the realm of possibility. Only now is it possible that every sign of the end that hasn't already been fulfilled could be fulfilled in a matter of years.

Q: What practical steps can I take to prepare for what's ahead?

A: THE GREATEST ASSET in times of crisis is strong faith in God, because faith gives you the confidence that God will help you through whatever life throws at you.¹ Where do you get faith?—From God's Word. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."²

Make it a habit to read and study the Bible and Bible-based publications, like *Activated*, for example, for 15–30 minutes each day, or more if you can. Making time for that may be difficult at first, but the more you do it, the more you'll want to do it and the easier it will become.

God has promised many times in His Word to work on the behalf of those who turn to Him in time of need, but most of His promises are contingent on us doing our part. So the next thing you can do to prepare for the future is learn to use those promises. Become familiar with them, first of all, by making that one of the focuses of your daily Word time. Make note of the promises you come across, and even memorize the ones that stand out to you most. (See "Feeding Reading" on the opposite page for a starter list.) Then practice fulfilling the conditions of those promises. As you do, you'll see God work and your faith will grow. Then

when you need bigger faith to meet bigger challenges that are to come, you'll have it.

Take Psalm 91:15, for example: "He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble." If you're in the habit of trying to sort out your own problems, start making a conscious effort to take your problems to Jesus in prayer and receive His solutions. Tap into His power, which is infinitely greater than your own.

Or take Isaiah 26:3 for another example: "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You." Practice turning your thoughts toward Jesus and His promises whenever you feel stressed or confused, and it will be much easier to find that place of inner peace when the situation around you gets even worse. ✝

¹Mark 9:23; 10:27

²Romans 10:17

PRINCE OF PEACE

“LET NOT YOUR HEART be troubled,” Jesus tells us. “You believe in God, believe also in Me.”¹ “In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”²

He wants to be with you always, through every disappointment and every hardship. He wants to protect you from harm. Even when there is trouble on every side, you won't need to worry or fear.

Jesus will be your closest and dearest friend. You will be able to talk to Him anywhere, anytime, and He will answer. He will speak to your heart and guide you through the storms of life.

Jesus, the Prince of Peace,³ will not only give you peace in your heart here and now, but when this life is over, He will bring you to His heavenly kingdom where there will be no more oppression or war or poverty or pain or sickness or suffering or sorrow or death, but only peace and plenty for all. There evil and darkness dare not go!

Jesus is reaching out to you now. Won't you take His love?

If you have not yet personally received Jesus' gift of eternal love and life, you can do so now by praying the following prayer:

Dear Jesus, I want to receive Your gift of love and feel Your peace in my heart. Please forgive me for my sins and come into my life as my Savior. Amen. ✠



¹John 14:1

²John 16:33

³Isaiah 9:6

FEEDING READING Help in times of trouble

Material supply

Psalms 34:10

Matthew 6:33

Romans 8:32

Philippians 4:19

Protection

Deuteronomy 33:27a

Nahum 1:7

Psalms 46:1

Psalms 91:9–10

2 Timothy 4:18a

Freedom from fear

Isaiah 12:2

Isaiah 41:10

Psalms 23:4

Psalms 27:1

Psalms 112:7

Inner strength

Psalms 84:5a,7

Isaiah 40:31

Philippians 4:13

Comfort

Psalms 71:21

Isaiah 51:12a

Psalms 103:13–14

Psalms 138:7a

2 Corinthians 1:4

Guidance

Isaiah 42:16

Isaiah 30:21

Proverbs 3:5–6

Jeremiah 33:3

James 1:5

Miracles

Matthew 17:20b

Mark 9:23

John 14:12

John 14:14



RESPONSIBLE EARTHLINGS

BY RICHARD JOHNSTON

THE ISSUE OF climate change is a charged one, but also one that can't be ignored. We can debate the causes and culprits till the cows come home, but the fact remains that this planet is our collective home for now, and we each share in the responsibility for it.

I've read articles by several Christian writers who have, I think, taken a sensible and scriptural

approach: God has appointed us stewards over His creation, and it is our responsibility to care for it and manage its resources.¹ On the other side, I have read what I think is an irresponsible approach, based on a skewed application of certain other Bible passages. It goes like this: Earth's surface and atmosphere will one day be destroyed in a global conflagration, and God will create a new and better world on the

remains of the old,² so it doesn't matter what we do to it now; it's all going to burn up anyway. Why bother ourselves with trying to preserve it if God has other plans?

Yes, God is going to give our planet a makeover, but not until after the millennium, the 1,000-year period of relative heaven on earth that follows Jesus' second coming. And according to both biblical forecasts and present-day pundits, the world that Jesus will take over when He returns will be in a sad state indeed. By then, the problems we are creating today will have been compounded by a reign of global terror known as the great tribulation, led by the devil-man known as the Antichrist, which will be followed by the apocalyptic battle of Armageddon. Jesus will put things right, but the cleanup won't happen magically or all at once. It will be a better world right from the start, because one thing that does more damage to the environment than almost anything else—war—will be banned,³ but there will be much physical cleanup work to be done, and Jesus isn't going to do it all Himself.

"That's not my problem," some say. "I'll be home safe. Jesus will take me to heaven when He returns, and all will be forgiven because I've received Him as my Savior." Yes, everyone who has received Him, either dead or alive, will rise to meet Jesus in the air at His coming and be whisked away to heaven, and yes, everyone's sins will be forgiven,

Those who have proved themselves responsible will hold positions of responsibility



but there is something else to consider: In heaven, each will be rewarded according to his or her deeds in this life. "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."⁴

As much as I, old egalitarian that I am, like to speak of the equality of all humankind, heaven is not going to be a classless place. Those who have lived by the precepts of loving God and loving others as best they could⁵ are going to be at the top of the heap, while those who have lived me-first lives are going to find themselves with pretty meager rewards in the next life. They get into heaven because salvation is an irrevocable gift not based on merit, but they may not get very far past the door.

It won't surprise me if many of those people end up helping with the monumental restoration projects that will be carried out during the millennium, after the battle of Armageddon and other prophesied catastrophes. There

will still be mortals, the people who managed to live through the great tribulation and its aftermath, and they will be busy doing what mortals do, trying to make a life for themselves and their families. But the immortals, all the believers, both those who were dead and those who were alive when Jesus came back for them, will also have a role to play. "They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."⁶ The Bible is clear that those who have proved themselves responsible will hold positions of responsibility, while others who have not proven themselves worthy of such trust will have to help out in more menial ways. As in the parable that Jesus told about the nobleman who turned his wealth over to his servants while he journeyed to a far country to claim his kingdom, authority will go to those who have earned it. "Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities."⁷

Earth will eventually get a complete renovation, but before that happens we still have a little over 1,000 years to try to make it a happy, healthy place. Live responsibly. ✠

¹Genesis 2:15

²Psalm 102:25–26; 2 Peter 3:7–12; Revelation 21:1

³Isaiah 2:4

⁴2 Corinthians 5:10. See also Daniel 12:2–3; 1 Corinthians 3:11–15.

⁵Matthew 22:37–39

⁶Revelation 20:6

⁷See Luke 19:11–27.



My miracle-working power is yours

FROM JESUS WITH LOVE

I have promised miracles to those who love and follow Me, and I can deliver on that promise. My power is limitless. According to your need and the situation, I will do wondrous things for you and through you.

In order to see these manifestations of My power, only one thing is required of you: faith. You must believe that I am able to work the miracle and ask Me to do it, and then expect that I will. When you ask in faith, I am bound by My word to give you what you need. It might not always be what you *think* you need, but I will always rescue, protect, supply for you, or resolve the problem some other way, as I know is best. Sometimes it will be an overt miracle, where there is no doubt that I have answered your prayer, but other times it won't be so obvious.

I manifest My power most freely on behalf of those who follow Me closest, who do their best to live according to the principles of My Word and what they believe is My will for them personally, but anyone who calls on Me in faith will get the help they need, according to My will.

Remember this when the days darken and you find yourself in what seem like hopeless situations: Nothing is impossible for Me, so anything is possible for you when you ask in faith for Me to intervene. I always reward faith, My power is always at the ready, and I put Myself at your beck and call—all because I love you.