

# BEYOND TODAY

A Magazine of Understanding

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## THE GREAT RESET

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**Scott Ashley**  
Managing editor

# America's Uncertain Future

**A**s this issue of *Beyond Today* was going to press, the last U.S. combat troops were being withdrawn from Afghanistan. Only a token force of several hundred will be left to guard the U.S. embassy compound in Kabul, the Afghan capital.

Perhaps nothing encapsulated the moment more poignantly than the U.S. withdrawal from the sprawling 30-square-mile Bagram Air Base, epicenter of America's war against the Taliban and al-Qaeda for the last 20 years. The base was in reality a sizable city, built from the ground up on a large plain about an hour's drive from Kabul.

It boasted American pizza and fast-food chain restaurants, air-conditioned fitness centers, a library, post office, a 50-bed hospital and a two-mile-long runway capable of handling dozens of U.S. fighter jets, reconnaissance aircraft and huge transport planes ferrying troops, weapons and supplies. At one time it was home for some 100,000 U.S. personnel.

In ironic timing, just before the July 4 Independence Day holiday, the last American occupants of the base shut off the electricity and slipped away into the night. Nearby looters arrived before Afghan soldiers and helped themselves to anything that wasn't nailed down. Among items left behind were thousands of civilian trucks and vans and hundreds of armored vehicles, plus weapons and ammunition the Afghan soldiers would need to fight off the Taliban in battles sure to come.

Strategically, Bagram Air Base was a crucial military asset, located 500 miles from Iran and 400 miles from China, with runways that could handle any U.S. military aircraft of any size. But as is the case with so many critical American strategic assets in recent decades, it is no longer in U.S. hands—and will likely soon be in the hands of America's enemies.

It's the sad end of a 20-year saga that began with a highly coordinated terrorist assault on the United States on Sept. 11, 2001. In righteous indignation America, with a coalition of allies, went to war against terror-supporting governments in Afghanistan and Iraq.

But after 20 years, more than 60,000 U.S. casualties, and a fortune of almost \$6.5 trillion in borrowed money squandered, American forces quietly withdrew, the nation no longer having the will to fight.


If you pay close attention to the news, you may have heard that America is said to now be facing more threatening and dangerous enemies. On June 9 U.S. President Joe Biden declared that *global warming* is “the greatest threat facing America.” Ironically, he said this as he arrived in Europe seeking support from allies against Russian hacking attacks that have devastated U.S. businesses and to combat Chinese secrecy over the origins of Covid-19, which has plagued the entire world.

Meanwhile, America's true geopolitical opponents such as China, Russia, Iran and North Korea grow ever more dangerous. They're not focused on teaching their military a rewritten “woke” version of their nations' histories; they're training their soldiers, sailors and pilots how to destroy and kill their enemies—with the

United States at the top of the list.

The uncomfortable truth is, *America has lost another war*, and appears to not be any wiser. The last significant war America truly won was World War II, *more than 75 years ago*. In Korea the United States fought to a draw and agreed to a truce, leaving tens of thousands of troops there *for two-thirds of a century now*. Vietnam was an ugly defeat at the cost of nearly 60,000 American lives, and after the U.S. withdrawal communists in Vietnam and Cambodia murdered some 1.5 million of their own people. America and its allies did defeat Iraq in the first Gulf War after Iraq invaded Kuwait, but Saddam Hussein was left in power, leading to the second Iraq war and another slow, painful retreat for U.S. forces, to be completed by the end of this year. Folly reigns in the halls of power.

These wars collectively cost trillions of dollars and more than 100,000 American lives, and what do we have to show for it?

Our world is changing before our eyes, and in ways that are highly dangerous for the current world order and the United States in particular. *You need to understand why*. Be sure to read the articles in this issue, and continue to read *Beyond Today* magazine for understanding! 



Afghan soldiers inspect some of the thousands of U.S. vehicles abandoned in the American pullout from Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, in July 2021.



# THE GREAT RESET

## Where Will It Lead?

The world's elites seek to create a new world order—a better world, as they envision it. Yet what is actually developing is a world heading into darkness beyond their imagining. God says to understand and not be part of that world.

by Darris McNeely

**J**eremiah thought he was too young to become a prophet. God had told him before his birth he was destined to carry the words of God to the nations. How could he, a son of a priest from an obscure village, pronounce *God's* word to his own nation of Judah—much less the greater nations beyond?

God told Jeremiah not to look at his age, but rather to focus on God's power to support and fulfill a mission through him. Then God said: "Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant" (Jeremiah 1:9-10).

God indeed fulfilled this during the decades-long ministry of Jeremiah. The powerful Assyrian Empire collapsed. Egypt receded further into a secondary-power status. Judah would fall to Babylon, an empire whose lifeblood would be carried westward to reemerge in the Roman Empire.

The age of Jeremiah was an age of reform and reset. An

era was ending in this ancient world. Men feared for the future. What was familiar was changing. Old ways were being swept away. Kings and leaders sought to recapture past cultures and glories. Assyrian King Ashurbanipal ordered ancient texts to be copied and preserved in his library at Nineveh. There was a nostalgic longing for a return to the past, to a more "normal" time when men were secure in their faith and their identity.

The events of this period of the late seventh century and early sixth century B.C. offer a lens through which we can understand what is happening now in the early decades of the 21st century. Ours is a time of upheaval and change accelerated by the recent global pandemic and growing global unrest. At few times in history have so many currents of civilizational transformation come together in one moment!

### Origins of the "great reset"

The world is being shaken by massive changes in technology, politics, economics, environmental issues

and culture, all reshaping our view of history and reality. These ideas are spreading around the world. The changes we are experiencing are like the shifting of the earth's tectonic plates, creating a seismic movement of events on the world scene.

It's tempting and calming to think this is normal, or that the world will return to normal. But already we are seeing ideas being embraced that aim toward a world far different from the familiar order that has prevailed since the end of World War II in 1945.

Some today are openly calling for a "great reset" of the world order. This terminology has been adopted by the

World Economic Forum. Its founder, Klaus Schwab, published a book last year titled *Covid-19: The Great Reset*. While the book was written in 2020, six months into the pandemic, it forecast a post-pandemic world where nations work more closely to solve problems facing mankind.

The World Economic Forum annually hosts a meeting for elite leaders of business, government and culture in Davos, Switzerland. This meeting has always attracted attention and much suspicion from global conspiracy theorists who look at the gathering as a global summit of people plotting to take over the world.

It's easy to dismiss such theories, and most *should* be dismissed. But the fact is, these leaders of business, media and government *already* run much of the world. They are the influencers, leaders and shapers of entertainment, education and media. They hold immense power, influence and wealth. And many of them are seeking to bring major change to the world.

America is in a most critical moment of its history. It is crippled by national sins and challenged by those working to overturn the present world order.

The fact is, this group *does* exist, and those in it *do* think about ways to create a world that is quite dif-

ferent—more along the lines of a one-world political entity. The word *transnational* is used to describe the world many would like to see emerge in the future. A transnational world with fewer boundaries, less nationalism and a singular governmental structure is, in their mind, the path to equity, peace and brotherhood throughout the earth.

Transnationalism is nothing new. It's been around for a long time. Since the end of World War II and the creation of the United Nations, the global transnational reset has been relentlessly moving forward. The World Health Organization, the World Bank and the International Court of Justice at the Hague and many other global bodies have been formed to promote unity, peace and stability, preventing a return to the global warfare that ravaged the world twice in the 20th century.

Apart from Donald Trump, most United States presidents and their administrations in this period have been supportive of the transnational worldview to varying extents. The U.S. State Department has worked to foster close integration between American policy and the goals of the international community. President George H.W. Bush was a significant promoter of the global world order. His actions after the fall of the Iron Curtain and collapse of the Soviet Union set the stage for the global order we see today.

### Reordering the world and how we live

What matters about the world's richest, most powerful men is that they are interested in resetting the world and the way we live. What they say in this regard is significant. We should pay attention to that. With

this in mind I read Mr. Schwab's book, cowritten with economist Thierry Malleret. *Covid-19: The Great Reset* is vague, light and short on detailed plans for a "reset." It's not exactly a detailed manifesto for a global order to take over the world.

The lens through which this book, and others espousing the same idea, should be viewed is the fundamental understanding that the global elite are transnationalists with no national loyalty. They see nation-states and boundaries as obstacles that need to be removed.

In their view, national governments are relics of a bygone era needing to be swept away. Nation-states are convenient places where global operations like Coca-Cola, Amazon or Apple exist to serve the global community.

References to the "social contract" between the individual and the state argue that the state has failed to secure justice, equity and freedom for all peoples and races. Citing the Black Lives Matter movement and the sexual gender revolution as examples, the authors make a case that existing governments have not delivered on their promises and that they lack the ideas and policies to meet the challenges of revolt and demonstrations in the streets of America and other countries. Implied is the need for a new social contract but without specifics defining what that would be.

### America's time as world leader is up

One theme does come through very clearly in this book: *America's time as the leader of the world is coming to a close*. One quote makes this point: "American power and prosperity have been built and reinforced by the global trust in the dollar and the willingness of customers abroad to hold it, most often in the form of US government bonds. This has enabled the US to borrow cheaply abroad and benefit from low interest rates



at home, which in turn has allowed Americans to consume beyond their means.”

This was written just after the first wave of government money voted by Congress to address the economic fallout of responses to the pandemic. Since then trillions more have been handed out, ballooning America’s debt to nearly \$30 trillion dollars.

Schwab and Malleret rightly point out that this is unsustainable. Governments and international banks trusting that America can make good on this debt have their limits. They conclude: “This unsustainable path will worsen in the post-pandemic, post-bailout era. This argument suggests that something major will therefore have to change, either through a much-reduced geopolitical role or higher taxation, or both, otherwise the rising deficit will reach a threshold beyond which non-US investors are unwilling to fund it.”

A fundamental idea underlying any “reset” would be the replacement of America in its role of global leadership. This book certainly envisions such a global future. And it’s a consistent feature in most efforts advocating a global reset.

To be clear, the United States *does* have many problems—all are serious, and any one of these could lead to a collapse in its current world role. One such example is soaring national debt. America is currently on an unprecedented spending binge that is unsustainable. Inflation is rising as a glut of cheap dollars chases fewer goods and services. The debt the United States is accumulating is being financed by other nations. A day of reckoning will come. The question is a matter of *when*.

Until that day comes, America still has the strongest economy in the world, along with the most powerful military. Its navy keeps the peace along the world sea lanes.

But currently America is bitterly divided politically and culturally. Decades of social drift have resulted



in an entrenched ideology seeking to rewrite the social contract of America. Efforts to recast its founding as being solely on the basis of slavery and injustice have taken root. Teaching of critical race theory seeks to divide people, reshaping their views through the lenses of malicious race ideas.

### A shift already underway

The idea of a great reset is already at work and well advanced in the United States. It’s just that other tags and terminology are used. If the ideas pushed in education, government and media take the nation to the desired result, within a few years the nation would be unrecognizable. This is not a conspiracy theory, but observation of reality that comes with a reading of the websites of the various organizations involved in this push to reset America.

Readers of *Beyond Today* should grasp what’s going on. America is in a most critical moment, perhaps the most dangerous of its history. While still the leading nation in nearly every category, it is crippled by its own grave national sins while facing a changing world led by challengers who wish to overturn the present world order and take the lead. China is a leading contender while other countries like Russia meddle in criti-

cal ways that pose imminent dangers (like cyberhacking, which China is also accused of). Other regional powers such as Turkey and Iran seek to shape the future of the Middle East.

Current movers behind the idea of a great reset have their own end in mind, to shape a new global order. To counter U.S. influence, they lend support to China’s long-held goal of becoming the dominant world power, attaining its supposed rightful position as the superior culture. Meanwhile, the European Union (EU) has a similar mission to shape a world in line with its historic culture and vision.

Our world is poised to see a change of power relationships in the coming years—perhaps the very near future. The Covid-19 pandemic will likely be seen as the initial opening into this new world. Historically, pandemics have reset the world order. The plague that ravaged Constantinople in the mid-sixth century is such an example. Its impact determined the future of Europe and the Middle East in the period after the collapse of the Roman Empire in the West.

What experts, leaders and those who seek to create a new world order do not know nor understand is the biblical worldview revealed in the Bible. The inspired Word of God lays out His plan through the ages—

which includes not only the story of salvation but the map of world history from its beginning to its conclusion. A thorough understanding of what begins in Genesis and concludes in the book of Revelation brings the critical missing dimension of divinely guided history, otherwise known as prophecy.

Historians and political thinkers examine history and make predictions based on national power and

There is purpose by which you can understand why empires have risen and fallen through the ages and why today's world is on the verge of a reset beyond the imagination of those working hard to create one. The Bible shows why there is injustice, racism and failed governments that keep their people enslaved to systems that deprive them of freedom, adequate education, economic opportunity, proper health care and

saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.”

Here is described a moment when world leaders give up their national sovereignty to a supranational government that will secure the world order in a moment of crisis that threatens to bring everything down.

A leader with ideas and a plan will emerge at the front of this geopolitical alliance and offer a promising future to the world's citizens. He will help them

through these troublesome times. Life as everyone wants it will go on. This is the biblically prophesied great reset foretold through Jesus Christ.

Since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and government response to it we have been watching and seeing the outlines of such a final world system taking shape. A careful analysis and understanding of what Scripture is saying can help us see the shape of the emerging new order.

### **Can we recognize what is happening?**

The book of Revelation describes a moment when nations combine their power into a world system that achieves the age-old dream of “a tower that reaches to the heavens” (Genesis 11:4, New International Version). Technology promises not only a convenient, connected world but also the hope of extended life and possibly even immortality through medical technology. The ability to reach into space and extend human civilization seems nearer to reality.

World economic development has progressed, and the goods and services of the global community move unchecked across oceans and land bringing wealth to multinational companies and a rising standard of living for much of the world. Revelation 18 describes such a scene when

## **The book of Revelation describes the end stages of the coming great reset—the rise of a coalition of nations into a system the Bible labels as “Babylon.”**

observed patterns. Retrospective history easily sees the rise of Egypt, Rome, France, Russia, Great Britain and America as dominant powers. Many factors such as geography, technology, wisdom and technological advancement can explain the rise of great powers of the past. But this alone cannot account for why some rose to great heights and why others did not.

Why, for instance, in the fifth century, did not the nomadic Huns overrun all the old Roman Empire and the world see a long line of emperors descend from Atilla? Why, in the 15th century, did not China move from its Asian fortress to dominate European powers and spread its culture over far-flung lands? And who would have predicted at the beginning of the seventh century that a dominating world religion would come from the sands of Arabia to spread its influence over the former lands of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome?

### **History through another lens**

Is there another lens by which to view history? There is. You are reading a source that looks to the Word of God, the Bible, to understand why the world operates as it does and why some nations are among the haves and others among the have nots.

knowledge of right values. It also shows the source of a coming global reset unlike any planned or sought by the world's elites.

The book of Revelation is Jesus Christ's prophetic message to the modern world. As a commentary on spiritual, political and human affairs, it is accurate. It shows us a coming world superpower that for a brief period will dominate the world to create a time of peace and stability that will astonish everyone. This power is called in Scripture by the name *Babylon the Great*.

It will weave a deceptive web of seductive spirituality, economic prosperity and peace on the nations. The imagery of Revelation 17 shows a scarlet-clad woman astride a fantastic beast with multiple heads and horns. It is a picture of a combined church-state power that controls world events at the end of the age. World leaders have cooperated with this “woman,” a symbol of a world spiritual authority, to the point where they cannot see, speak, think or act with wisdom, prudence and truth. This is what is meant by committing “fornication” and being “drunk with the wine of her fornication” (verses 1-6).

Critical to our discussion on the great reset is what happens in verses 12-13: “The ten horns which you



it shows the goods shipped throughout the world under the guidance of the governing structure of this end-time Babylon. We see this even now. But what is described is something larger: “All who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance . . .” (verse 17).

The move to a more fully integrated global economy is pressing relentlessly forward. Most multinational companies no longer think of themselves as large national companies. They have offices around the globe employing people of all nationalities. Call centers service customers from India while virtual meetings involving employees on multiple continents are routine. To move to a global standard of currency exchange and governance would only be the next logical step.

Loyalty is increasingly to a global order espousing universal values claimed to apply to all people regardless of sexual or gender identity, race, ethnicity or national identity. Any distinction that does not match the evolving global norm is considered regressive, hateful and discriminatory.

Now we are seeing attitudes and values shaped to accept as normal the LGBTQ agenda. We also see this in the conditioning behind critical race theory. We see this in the reframing of national history. In America if enough young people of the next generation can be persuaded that the story of America is not worth saving, a significant goal is accomplished. It will then be easy to jettison the nation as exceptional and a blessing and instead embrace a different narrative as part of a global order promising liberty, justice and freedom for all to live and act as they determine—within, of course, newly approved bounds.

### Don't think it can't happen

Does this sound impossible? It will never happen, you say? Then consider how quickly the world began accepting a pandemic lockdown in March 2020.

Within a matter of days schools closed, all but essential businesses shuttered, professional sports stopped and people were working in their homes on Zoom. No vote was taken, discussion ended as quickly as it began, and the new normal was the new normal.

The original “two weeks to flatten the curve” and no mask turned into a year and half (in some places more) of national dysfunction. By mid-summer 2020 many had had enough, and some states slowly reopened only to shut down again if a surge of cases erupted. It took until mid-2021 for much of the world to reopen to domestic travel, while much of the world remained closed to foreign travel. And there are now some calls to do it all over again.

Many have marveled at the nature of the global lockdown we've experienced and its impact on culture. Relationships were altered. All age groups showed a marked increase in anxiety. Drug abuse and overdose deaths skyrocketed. The impact of what happened will be years in understanding. Yet it all happened quickly, with a majority cooperating in the name of science, health safety and goodwill. Imagine a future calamity and the reaction.

As we saw, governments decreed and society complied—many to their own hurt. And we have certainly not seen the last of that. Events described in Revelation will happen through government decree. The entire world will be reset, and people will soon realize they are caught in a trap, a box canyon of tribulation when Satan realizes he has but a brief


We are seeing the leading edge of a final revival of this age-long system that stands in defiance of the purpose and plans of the living God.

time to reign over the kingdoms of this world.

Revelation describes the end stages of the coming great reset—the rise of a coalition of nations into a system the Bible labels as “Babylon.” For a time all will seem well. While the world will praise this system and benefit by economic cooperation, it will reject the servants of God who witness against and resist coming under the mark of its authority.

We are living at a moment in history and prophecy like that of the age of the prophet Jeremiah. Jeremiah's messages went to the nations who were being rooted out and pulled down. The old order was being reset in a time of building and planting. Babylon rose to direct and set the pattern for a world order that has endured to the modern time.

We are seeing the leading edge of a final revival of this age-long system that stands in defiance of the purpose and plans of the living God. May we all have eyes to see what is happening today!

Thankfully, as Revelation also shows, the world will not be left in the dark times ahead, for God has His own great reset coming beyond this one—the greatest reset ever with the return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom of God over all nations (see “God's Great Reset” beginning on page 17). Pray that this ultimate reset of the world will come swiftly! 



### LEARN MORE

We live in a world that's rapidly changing before our eyes. What does it mean? And what are we changing into? You need to know! Download or request our eye-opening study guide *The Book of Revelation Unveiled*. A free copy is waiting for you!

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# The Cuban and Haitian Crises: What's the Wider Impact?

Riots in Cuba and an assassination in Haiti may not seem that important in the scope of world news. But these Caribbean nations hold positions vital to American and world interests.

by Darris McNeely



Since the 1823 formulation of what's called the Monroe Doctrine (named after President James Monroe), America has generally considered any other major power's influence in the Western Hemisphere to be unwelcome—nearby neighbors having an impact on U.S. interests.

Recent demonstrations in Cuba and a political assassination in Haiti bring to our attention these two Caribbean nations and their strategic importance to the balance of world power. Should an outside major power gain influence or, worse, some level of control over these two countries, a grave threat would sit next door to the United States. A little-understood dynamic in biblical geopolitics would also be changing. Let's look at what

is happening and understand why it's important in global terms.

## Unrest in Cuba

In July mass demonstrations broke out in 20 cities across the island nation of Cuba. Since 1959 Cuba has been ruled by the socialist dictatorship set up by Fidel Castro, now in the hands of his successors. What was a prosperous island nation in the 1950s is today a broken and impoverished country run by a corrupt elite.

"All available data . . . show that before Castro took power, Cuba was far from being in a disastrous situation. In 1958, the Cuban income per capita was double that of Spain and Japan. Cuba had more doctors and dentists per capita than Britain. Cuba was second per capita in Latin

America in ownership of automobiles and telephones, and first in the number of television sets per inhabitant. Cubans could enter and leave the country freely" (Guy Milliere, "The Cuban People Deserve Freedom: Where Is the US Help?" Gatestone Institute, July 25, 2021).

Government reaction to the recent protests was swift. Internet access was restricted along with a news blackout. A lid was put on a simmering cauldron, and information has been slow to come out. Perceptions of Cuba are uneven and skewed by misinformation and lack of freedoms, with contact between Cuba and America kept to a minimum.

While the nation lies only 100 miles off the Florida coast, traveling there has been restricted. Cuban refugees have built a strong presence in Florida and the larger United States. Baby boomers remember proximity as a past concern, particularly in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, when the Russian-led Soviet Union placed nuclear-tipped missiles on the island. The resulting standoff brought the two nuclear superpowers to the brink in the classic example of Cold War hostilities.

Today it's popular for critics of American policy to blame Cuba's poverty on the American embargo of goods and services through the decades. But this leaves a lot out of the story. Cuba has been free to trade with any other nation. When the



Soviet Union collapsed, Russia did not retain Cuba as a client state. Venezuela stepped in and for many years used its revenue from its rich oil deposits to finance Cuba.

Cuba's failed communist, socialist government is to blame for the nation's present poverty. Citizens are in the streets because they suffer from failed government and corrupt leaders. Life in Cuba is a painful experience. The nation is caught in a time warp.

### All-important location

Look at a map of Cuba. It guards the way into and out of the Gulf

Without this understanding we can make little sense of the modern world, failing to grasp what Bible prophecy says about where events are headed.

of Mexico. Two of America's most important ports, Houston and New Orleans, depend on open navigation through these waters. Freedom to navigate this area has always been vital to the economic and security interests of the United States.

Cuba forms a vital passage, a "chokepoint," by two straits its location creates. A hostile power holding this island could put a strategic hold on American power. Since the early part of the 19th century American leaders have been rightly concerned that European powers (Great Britain, Spain, France and Russia) could gain a power advantage by controlling Cuba and these straits. Hence the articulation of the Monroe Doctrine.

### Haiti's similar position

At the same time as the Cuban unrest, the nation of Haiti, the poorest and most tragic of Caribbean countries, was rocked by the assassination of its president, Jovenel Moïse. Armed men entered the presidential home, shooting him 12 times and wounding his wife, throwing the unstable, impoverished nation deeper into turmoil. Moïse was not a popular leader, like most Haitian presidents, and his

loss was not mourned, though it left a power vacuum.

Haiti was once the "Jewel of the Antilles," its resources making it one of the world's richest islands. It produced sugar cane, coffee, cotton, rice and rum. It was also a port to the rich resources of Central and South America.

An 1802 slave revolt in Haiti against French rule led to the creation of an independent nation run by former slaves. Facing yellow fever and astute leadership by the revolting slaves, the French retreated. Losing control of Haiti was a prime factor in Napoleon's decision to leave the hemisphere and

sell France's vast New World territory to the United States in what became the greatest real estate bargain in history—the Louisiana Purchase.

Since then the nation has experienced a long downhill slide into kleptocracy. Haiti today is a failed state. It has been failed by its own leaders as well as outside powers. Currently there is no leader who has emerged with the vision, wisdom or any ability to take effective control of the nation and lead its people to a better life. This is the ongoing tragedy of Haiti.

### Danger of outside power

Should either Cuba or Haiti fall under the control of a power hostile to U.S. interests, it could tip the balance of world power. It's known that China has been working in Cuba, building a telecommunications infrastructure there. China has such involvements around the world as a part of its effort to project influence and power.

China has made no secret of its intent to replace the United States as the world's leading power, and it's well on its way. However, it does not want to engage in a direct war with the United States. The outcome would be uncertain and something it

cannot afford. Beyond continuing to build a powerful military and navy, China projects power in other ways. Through loans and the building of technology and hard infrastructure in poorer nations like Cuba, it gains a presence, albeit one not always large enough to take effective control.

Should the Chinese take control of a strategically crucial island like Cuba or Haiti—and at present we have no evidence that they are trying to do this—it could create a position for negotiating a change in the power structure. If Cuban leaders decided they needed a new "patron" who

could provide needed money and technology, China could be able to step in. A controlling Chinese presence in Cuba or any other

location in the Western Hemisphere would challenge the balance of power and particularly America's historic role as a regional and world power. That's why unrest in Cuba and Haiti is something America and the world need to be watching.

### "The Abrahamic Doctrine"

America's historic world position is part of a larger purpose connected to the promises God made to the biblical patriarch Abraham. Because Abraham obeyed God, a covenant was established wherein Abraham's name would be great and his descendants would become a great nation and a blessing. God promised that through Abraham all the nations of the earth would be blessed (Genesis 12:1-3).

This multifaceted spiritual and physical blessing has been carried into the modern world and continues to be active and alive. Jesus Christ, the ultimate Seed or descendant of Abraham, is the means for spiritual salvation to all peoples both now and in the future. The physical dimension of this covenant blessing is in modern times found primarily in the English-speaking nations, of which America

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is now the leader. (For more on this be sure to read our free study guide offered below.)

An important dimension of this promise is found in Genesis 22:17, where God said that Abraham's descendants would "possess the gate of their enemies" (see also Genesis 24:60). Historically understood to be geographic locations vital to transportation and regional economic and political dominance, these places, sometimes called *chokepoints*, as noted above—such as the Strait of Malacca, the Panama Canal, major seaports and other strategic features like the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn—have provided the means for nations like Great Britain and America to assert power and influence.

The Monroe Doctrine not only articulated a forward-looking geopolitical intent, but it was an integral part of a historic progression fulfilling ancient promises to Abraham—a major key to understanding the prophetic story of history. A study of this story should lead to recognition of what we might call "the Abrahamic Doctrine." God has fulfilled His promises to Abraham. Modern history reflects that divine purpose and plan. Without this understanding we can make little sense of the modern world, failing to grasp what Bible prophecy says about where events are headed.

What may seem minor events in small countries take on greater meaning when understood in the context of God's plans for the nations! **BT**



## LEARN MORE

The geopolitical dominance of the English-speaking nations is not by random chance but was the fulfillment of divine promises. To understand this and what is yet to come, download

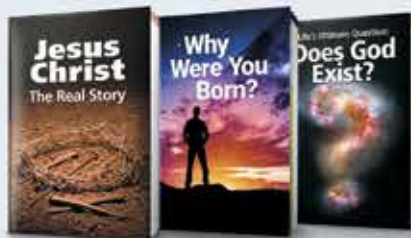
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# Anglosphere nations face megadrought, plagues

While seasonal monsoon rains made a slight dent in the severe drought in the western United States, they mainly just brought flooding, with extremely dry conditions persisting. Several sources note that the drought in the U.S. Southwest is the worst in 1,200 years. Many are labeling it a megadrought.



The northwest has also been suffering. At the end of July, more than 71 percent of Oregon was under extreme drought. Western Canada has also been affected by severe drought. Winnipeg recorded the driest July in almost 150 years.

In addition was this news headline of locust infestation: "A scourge of the Earth' grasshopper swarms overwhelm US west" (Lee van der Voo,

*The Guardian*, July 7, 2021). The deep drought has created ideal conditions for grasshopper eggs to hatch and survive.

Australia and New Zealand have also experienced recent droughts and floods. Australia has long contended with locusts. But this year it's been faced with what's been called unprecedented—a plague of mice taking over the fields of New South Wales (Maggie Gile, "Australia Could Lose Over \$775M in Crops as Millions of Mice Invade Fields," May 28, 2021). They've been invading homes and biting people in their sleep. As reported in July, dead poisoned mice were everywhere, with a terrible stench. One has the impression of the plague of frogs on Egypt in the biblical Exodus story!

What's going on? Many blame nebulous "climate change." But God foretold curses that would befall the ancient Israelites for disobeying His laws, declaring: "If you do not obey Me, then I will punish you . . . I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze [referring to a sky without rain clouds and the ground being dry and hard]. 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 . . . I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, destroy your livestock, and make you few in number" (Leviticus 26:18-22).

Moreover, He said: "The LORD will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed . . . You shall carry much seed out to the field but gather little in, for the locust shall consume it . . . Locusts shall consume all your trees and the produce of your land" (Deuteronomy 28:24, 38-42).

Later, when the Jewish people who returned from Babylonian captivity were focused on themselves and neglecting to support God's work in that day of restoring the national worship system, God used drought and other curses to get their attention. God's message to the Anglosphere nations today is essentially the same:

"Consider your ways! 'You have sown much, and bring in little; you eat, but do not have enough . . . and he who earns wages, earns wages to put into a bag with holes'" (Haggai 1:5-11).

Look at what's been happening. Does God have your attention? To better understand, be sure to download or request our free study guide *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*.

## Plans call for EU military to support European superpower

Earlier this year, Britain's *Daily Express* carried the following headline: "EU army plan to transform bloc into foreign superpower leaked in Brussels document" (Joe Barnes, June 19, 2021). The document, it noted, revealed that the European Union centered in Brussels was finalizing plans for "large-scale" operations in Libya. This would "pit the EU against Chad, Egypt, Jordan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates, which have all become involved in Libya's brutal civil war. The internal report . . . highlighted the need for an EU military mission in the region to curb human and arms trafficking.

"In this context, an EU military Common Security and Defence Policy [CSDP] engagement should be considered in order not to leave the entire field of activity in the military domain to third states," the document says. Long term, it recommends "a military CSDP engagement." It especially hopes "to compete with Turkish influence in the region, especially among Libya's naval authorities. Brussels hopes the offer of training and new equipment could help the bloc become a more dominant force" (ibid).

More recently "the European Union formally established a military mission for Mozambique . . . to help train its armed forces battling IS-linked jihadists . . . The EU has several other training missions in Africa, including in Mali, Central African Republic, and Somalia" (Tancrede

Chambrud with AFP, "EU to train Mozambique army against IS-linked jihadists," *Africanews*, July 13, 2021).

U.S. President Joe Biden is being urged by political allies to support European aspirations. As *Politico* reported: "It's time for the EU to become a global military power—and for the U.S. to stop thwarting Europe's ambitions on defense. That's according to a new report by the Center for American Progress, a Washington think tank with close ties to the Biden administration" (David Herszenhorn, "Biden Urged to Push EU to Be a Military Power," June 2, 2021).

Where all of this will ultimately lead is to the rise of what the Bible calls the Beast—a European-centered superpower wielding tyrannical power in the final years leading up to the return of Jesus Christ (see Daniel 2, 7; Revelation 13; 17-18). Led by a villainous leader who is also called the Beast, it will astound the world as it comes to dominate global affairs. It will wield such great military power that the world's people ask: "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" (Revelation 13:4).

This power will actually be in conflict with a union of forces to the south and will end up occupying significant parts of North Africa and the Middle East. To learn more about all this, download or request our free study guides *The Final Superpower* and *The Middle East in Bible Prophecy*.

# China's hand on U.S., UK power grids, agriculture

A disturbing article early this year noted that “for years now, Chinese businesses have been quietly positioned at the heart of British infrastructure. Were a conflict to erupt, their employees could, willingly or otherwise, be mobilized by Beijing . . . What could this mean in practice? To put it simply . . . , President Xi Jinping could, at the flick of a button, turn off the lights at 10 Downing Street—not to mention freeze Britain’s financial system and paralyse its hospitals” (Clive Hamilton, “How China Could Turn Off Britain’s Lights,” *UnHerd*, Jan. 25, 2021).

To some degree, America is similarly threatened, as the title of a piece by RedState commen-



tator Nick Arama highlighted regarding a White House press secretary statement: “Jen Psaki’s Answer on Why Biden Suspended Rule Protecting US Power Grid From China Is Incredibly Concerning,” *Jan. 26, 2021*).

If the lights were indeed to go out for a significant amount of time in multiple regions, with electronics knocked out, these nations would be in great calamity and peril.

As if that’s not cause enough for alarm, there is also the matter of foreign takeover of territory, food production and technology.

A Politico headline reads: “China is buying up American farms. Washington wants to crack down” (Ryan McCrimmon, July 19, 2021). As it states: “Chinese firms have expanded their presence in American agriculture over the last decade by snapping up farmland and purchasing major agribusinesses . . . By the start of 2020, Chinese

owners controlled about 192,000 agricultural acres in the U.S., worth \$1.9 billion, including land used for farming, ranching and forestry . . . Still, that’s less than farmland owned by people from other nations like Canada and European countries, which account for millions of acres each . . . But it’s the trend of increasing purchase and the buyer’s potential connections to the Chinese government that have lawmakers spooked.”

Another article at AgWeb, titled “While America Slept, China Stole the Farm,” points out that “China has breached the inner walls of the U.S. agriculture industry in what has arguably been the most expansive heist in farming history, and is currently attempting to steal or hack every conceivable facet of U.S. agriculture technology . . . Over the past decade, China has appropriated trillions of dollars in sophisticated U.S. technology, with a keen interest in the latest advances in the agriculture industry” (Chris Bennett, June 8, 2021).

Long ago, God told the Israelites that disobedience to Him would result in severe consequences to help bring them to repentance. He warned: “I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies. Those who hate you shall reign over you” (Leviticus 26:17).

He said before this as a prelude, “You shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it” (verse 16). And this situation would ultimately become much worse: “A nation whom you have not known shall eat the fruit of your land and the produce of your labor, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually” (Deuteronomy 28:33). This would come most fully through invasion and conquest, as the Israelites suffered, yet before this the nation ended up paying massive tribute to foreign powers.

We will see the same terrible developments in the years ahead. A rival foreign power today taking over American farmland and technology should serve as a wake-up call. As should its positioning of itself in having some measure of control over American and British electric power.

For more on what Scripture reveals is coming, download or request our free study guide *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*.

## Al-Qaeda urges new U.S. attacks

At this 20th anniversary of 9/11, the terror group Al-Qaeda remains active. And its proponents are encouraging Islamic extremists in the West to take advantage of American civil unrest to conduct lone-wolf attacks.

As reported by the Jewish Anti-Defamation League (ADL), “on April 14, 2021, both Al Qaeda and the pro-Al Qaeda propaganda outlet Jaysh Al-Malahim Al-Electroni (Electronic Battle Army) released magazines that include articles about the cultural strife in America and the West more broadly. The articles touched on . . . the deepening of American political divisions . . . [and] portray the West as declining and divided . . . [One] gleefully predicts the imminent collapse of America into civil war” (“Al Qaeda, Supporters Advocate for Lone Actor Attacks in the West,” May 10, 2021).

The other “says a lone wolf should choose a ‘massive chaotic protest,’ preferably at night,” and recommends infiltrating the crowds, car ramming and stirring up fights with police (Art Moore, “Bloodbath: Al-Qaida Urges ‘Lone Wolf’ Terrorists to Exploit U.S. Civil Unrest,” *WND*, April 18, 2021).

It further “offers a \$60,000 Bitcoin bounty to any extremist who kills a Jewish, Christian or atheist police officer in a Western country” (ADL). As people within our society are turning on one another, enemies are watching for the opportunity to use that to their advantage and bring destruction on us all.

### How can you make sense of the news?

So much is happening in the world, and so quickly. Where are today’s dramatic and dangerous trends taking us? What does Bible prophecy reveal about our future? You’re probably very concerned with the direction the world is heading. So are we. That’s one reason we produce the *Beyond Today* daily TV commentaries—to help you understand the news in the light of Bible prophecy. These eye-opening presentations offer you a perspective so badly needed in our confused world—the perspective of God’s Word. Visit us at [ucg.org/beyond-today/daily](http://ucg.org/beyond-today/daily)!





# 20 Years After 9/11: What Have We Learned?

The devastating attacks on the United States on 9/11 should have led its people to learn critical lessons. But did they?

by Scott Ashley

It's one of those days burned indelibly into our memories. For years afterward people would ask one another: *Where were you on 9/11?*

One American songwriter encapsulated the horror and hopelessness of the day in the title of a song that asked, "Where Were You When the World Stopped Turning?" A generation later, that's the way many remember that day—an unforgettable moment when it seemed the world stopped turning and forever changed.

Although it's been 20 years, for many the memory remains raw, especially to the families of the nearly 3,000 Americans killed that day when Muslim terrorists flew airliners into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and another jet crashed into a field in Pennsylvania while apparently en route to obliterate the White House or U.S. Capitol Building.

Only later, through interrogations of the operation's captured mastermind, did U.S. intelligence learn that their goal was to bring down the entire nation in a single day by demolishing America's centers of government, military leadership and economic prosperity through targeted suicide attacks by 20 or more fuel- and hostage-laden aircraft simultaneously crashing into key targets in major cities across the country.

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who crafted the plan with Osama bin Laden, revealed that the terrorists had to settle for a scaled-back plot because growing pressure from international security agencies forced them to move up their timetable, preventing them from bringing in

enough accomplices to commandeer and pilot the 20 or more passenger jets they originally planned for.

Had this not happened, *the United States of America might not exist today as we know it*. Let that sink in. Enemies hatched a plan to bring the world's most powerful nation to its knees—armed only with box cutters.

## Lessons from the "War on Terror"

The "War on Terror" that quickly brought U.S.-led invasions of the terror-supporting states of Afghanistan and then Iraq brought swift results and was originally almost universally supported. The Taliban regime fell, as did Saddam Hussein's brutal dictatorship in Iraq. Neither stood much of a chance against allied Western nations' military might and advanced technology.

But the enthusiasm and excitement didn't last long. While America could win the war, it couldn't win the peace.

Efforts to instill Western-style democracy and cooperative government found no foothold or fertile ground among peoples who had never experienced anything of the kind and whose leaders were often local warlords in a tribal culture, Islamic extremists, and thieving opportunists. Rampant corruption swallowed up countless millions of dollars of Western funds that could have helped modernize the nations and improve people's living standards.

Bloody insurgencies by fighters who easily blended into the local populations proved almost impossible to

defeat. Western troops could never be quite sure who the enemy was. And all too often, Afghan soldiers and police who were being trained by American and other Western coalition forces turned their guns on those same Western trainers in “insider attacks”—a term that became all too depressingly familiar as the casualties mounted.

The Iraqi and Afghan fighters, and other jihadists who flooded in from all over the Muslim world, learned a

valuable lesson from Vietnam—that they didn’t need to defeat America on the battlefield; they only needed to drag out the war until American popular opinion turned against it. They knew it would then be only a matter of time before U.S. leadership would lose the will to fight and pack up and leave.

One by one, America’s coalition partners learned the lesson too—and quietly withdrew from what they

## “There Are Some Things America Needs to Learn!”

Twenty years ago, in September 2001, the world recoiled in horror as militant al-Qaeda Islamists executed a carefully coordinated attack on New York City’s Twin Towers and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. As millions looked on in live TV coverage, the 1,360-foot-high towers collapsed, with almost 3,000 innocent lives lost. One could only ask, “*What kind of wicked people could do such a thing?!*”

Thousands of organizations and people immediately offered to help. Through an international humanitarian organization I had founded a few years earlier, I was able to quickly build a network and assemble firefighting equipment, food and bottled water to supply relief workers in New York City. Our network included a local major university in Indianapolis. One of the staff there who worked with foreign exchange students—several of them of the Muslim religion—offered to drive our humanitarian donation to the Javits Center in downtown Manhattan, the staging area for donated relief supplies.

I found back then that the sentiment of the university students was almost wholly sympathetic to the victims of this evil deed and condemning of the perpetrators. However, one of the whispers among the foreign students included this disturbing statement: “We decry what happened, but there are some things America needs to learn!”

“What?” one may object. What are Americans supposed to learn? This statement seemed like an insult added to grievous injury at a most difficult time. I knew firsthand from my experience in providing humanitarian aid that the people of the United States are often the first to step up with money, equipment and personnel. Americans—whether through private or public efforts (including government resources)—have financed and built countless hospitals, schools, canals, railroads, transportation systems and much more.

No doubt the student was missing some vital perspective. But here are some hard facts: While Americans do many wonderful things, they are also resented, even despised, in many places on the earth. There are several reasons why—outright jealousy of the wealth and freedoms Americans enjoy, but also Americans are seen as insensitive or wrongly motivated, though often through a distorted lens. Despite skewed assessments, particularly from Islamic extremists, it’s sadly true that America exports corrupt values in culture, morality, entertainment and such to the world.

Americans have been regarded as generous and noble, but there is a troubling side that the world also sees. The United States is second only to China in the number of annual abortions, while Russia is third (most Latin American, Middle Eastern and African countries either restrict or prohibit abortion). Americans regularly flout traditional biblical definitions for marriage and sex. The values of faithfulness in marriage and wholesome-

ness in conduct—former bedrocks of society—are all but abandoned and constantly trending downward.

During the same year as the Twin Towers catastrophe, the Netherlands became the first nation to legalize same-sex marriages. Massachusetts followed suit three years later in 2004, leading the change throughout the United States in the next decade.

Gender itself is being redefined, as there are now dozens of definitions for what is male and female in the United States. Society-destroying pornography—a big driver of early Internet technology (including streaming video and digital photography transmission)—remains big business in America and tragically makes up much of the world’s Internet traffic.

When traveling around the world one quickly sees negative elements of American culture exported through movies, television and music.

American educational institutions have kicked God out of the classrooms. Under the guise of church and state legal principles, God’s presence and influence is increasingly stricken from our consciousness. A society-building belief in God has been replaced with godless undefined “science” and secular humanism where morality is considered relative.

The students helping to deliver aid to New York City 20 years ago perhaps didn’t think of these specific things, and they likely had some misperceptions, but they did recognize that the impact of what Americans say and do often stirs up resentment, then hatred. So much hatred exists that some radicals feel it’s justified to kill Americans.

Here’s the irony: As many scholars attest, the American legal system reflects the ancient laws God delivered to Israel. Moses declared: “Obey them completely, and you will display your wisdom and intelligence among the surrounding nations. When they hear all these decrees, they will exclaim, ‘How wise and prudent are the people of this great nation!’ For what great nation has a god as near to them as the LORD our God is near to us whenever we call on him? And what great nation has decrees and regulations as righteous and fair as this body of instructions that I am giving you today?” (Deuteronomy 4:6-8, New Living Translation).

Ancient Israel failed in this responsibility. Today Americans, who have a great opportunity to be influencers, are failing as well. And just as there were consequences for Israel long ago, so there are consequences for Americans now and in the future.

The prophets of old warned the people of Israel of impending doom for persisting in disobedience. Israel could not hide behind hypocritical piety and practice of perversion. Could the same happen again in these modern times? Clearly, there are indeed things Americans need to learn. The crucial question is, *Will we learn them in time?*

—Victor Kubik



increasingly saw as an unwinnable situation.

### The disturbing bottom line

Although few are willing to admit it, the uncomfortable truth is that in withdrawing from Afghanistan, *the United States has lost another war.*

One could even say America has lost *two more wars*, since in July U.S. President Joe Biden announced that U.S. troops, except for a small advisory force, would withdraw from Iraq by the end of the year.

So ends a long, painful chapter in U.S. military history. The two conflicts killed or maimed more than 60,000 American servicemen and women. The financial toll is close to an estimated \$6.4 trillion—more than *total U.S. government spending* in any fiscal year until very recently.

Afghanistan lived up to its reputation as “the graveyard of empires”—having thwarted the forces of Alexander the Great, the British Empire and the Soviet Union. Now history will add the United States to that list.

So who are the winners? In Iraq, the big winner will be Iran, which has worked largely behind the scenes to provide weapons such as drones and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that took many American lives. Iran has steadily gained power in Iraq and will play a major role in Iraq’s future. And in light of the recent Iran-China agreement by which China will buy vast amounts of Iranian oil, which will in turn fuel Iran’s economy, look for China to also make major inroads in the vacuum left by America’s withdrawal.

In Afghanistan, the Taliban are already capturing large swaths of territory as Afghan soldiers flee or join what is now viewed as the winning side. Afghanistan will likely soon revert to what it was just before 9/11—a fundamentalist Islamic state indistinguishable from Islam in its early years, only now armed with much more modern weapons and capable of exporting terror far beyond its borders.

### The all-important biblical perspective

The sad reality is that *the United States has not truly won a significant war since World War II, more than 75 years ago.* Korea ended with an uneasy truce and a regime that now threatens its neighbors with nuclear-armed missiles. Vietnam was a humiliating defeat. The first Gulf War was an initial victory, but it left the Saddam Hussein dictatorship in power, leading to a second war a decade later and, after 20 years, Iraqi demands that America, being unwelcome, must leave.

And then there was Afghanistan, where the world’s most powerful military force couldn’t decisively defeat fighters living in caves whose most powerful weapons were AK-47s and roadside bombs (read more in “America’s Uncertain Future” on page 3).

Now, 20 years after 9/11, the pain remains a raw wound

for America. Reflecting, we try to make sense of what makes no sense at all. How could these things happen?


Most of today’s experts offer no real answers, *but your Bible does.*


To begin to understand, we must first recognize who America is in Bible prophecy. Americans don’t know who they are. The stunning fact is that history and Bible prophecy reveal that the United States and the other major English-speaking nations of the world are descended from ancient biblical Israel. The Bible is filled with many end-time prophecies of Israel that *were never and cannot be fulfilled* by the small Jewish state of that name in the Middle East (the Jews there are descended primarily from one of the 12 tribes of Israel—*Judah*).

With this perspective, we can see that Bible prophecy tells us that America is a very sick nation. Foreseeing our time, the prophet Isaiah wrote: “The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faints. From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores” (Isaiah 1:5-6).

In Leviticus 26:19 God spells out the consequences of the nation rejecting Him and disobeying His laws, which were designed to bring blessings on a nation. “I will break the pride of your power,” He warns. Consider that for the last 76 years since the end of World War II, the United States has been the world’s greatest military power. *But that power has not brought a single lasting military victory!* Let that sink in!

There is a reason for that and the many other problems that plague the United States today! Reading from that same chapter, God tells us: “If you do not obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments . . . I also will do this to you: I will even appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever . . . I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies. Those who hate you shall reign over you . . .” (verses 14, 16-17). The chapter goes on to list many other curses, as does its companion chapter, Deuteronomy 28. It’s sobering reading—as it’s meant to be.

To get the whole picture, be sure to read the eye-opening study guide offered below. Our mission with *Beyond Today* is to help you understand where this world is heading and why—and what you can and should do about it. We pray that you will have eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to act on what your Creator says! 



**LEARN MORE**

You cannot make sense of the world and Bible prophecy without understanding who the players are, especially the major English-speaking nations. Download or request your free copy of *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy* to begin to make sense of your world!

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# God's Great Reset:

## How It Will Change the World!

We've been hearing news of a coming "Great Reset" being planned by world leaders. And make no mistake, that is in the works. But a far greater reset is coming *from God*—and it will transform everything!

by Michael Kelley

**A** new phrase has entered the English lexicon over the past year: *the Great Reset*. With ominous implications for America and the entire Western world, its many provisions would, if enacted, change our lives in ways most of us have never dreamed of. A new philosophy for reordering the world's economic structure, the Great Reset would change how we work, how we educate our children, how we save and invest. It would change concepts of government, calling the relevance of nation-states into question.

Though many global elites subscribe to its ideas and concepts, the current push for this Great Reset has emerged from the World Economic Forum (WEF). This international conclave, which typically meets in Davos, Switzerland, envisions a reordered, "better" world rising from the aftermath of the death and economic hardship of the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2020 WEF founder Klaus

Schwab pointed to the pandemic as a global inflection point that offers world leaders and economic theorists the opportunity to remake the world's economic structure. The WEF website states: "The pandemic represents a rare but narrow window of opportunity . . . to reflect, reimagine and reset our world" (emphasis added throughout).

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau echoed that statement: "This pandemic has provided an opportunity for a reset . . . our chance to accelerate our pre-pandemic efforts to reimagine economic systems."

### A reimaging to what?

But notice something here. If these two leaders who've lived under Western capitalist systems want to "reimagine" them, what are they seeking? Obviously something quite different. And the preferred economic flavor of the day among Western intelligentsia and government elites

is increasing socialism, if not outright Marxism.

In looking at their intentions it becomes plain that this is what they are seeking. A WEF-sponsored social media ad for the Great Reset, offering happy predictions for 2030, declared: "You'll own nothing. And you'll be happy." It further exulted: "The US won't be the world's leading superpower. A handful of countries will dominate."

Indeed, this socialist/Marxist plan would change the economic balance between the United States and the rest of the world. Enacting its goals and aims would relegate the United States, the beacon of democracy and freedom since World War II, to secondary power status. America would no longer be seen as the leader of the free world, but as a cow to be milked of much of its wealth and power that would be redistributed to supposedly equalize income and wealth among all citizens of the world.

But the “reset” would not apply to only the United States. Free-market capitalism would cease to exist. Nations would largely surrender to a central authority the power to formulate their own economic policies and goals. Central banks in individual nations, if they continued to exist at all, would be stripped of the power to regulate their currencies and influence interest rates. All such power would be ceded to an international body of economic policymakers with *transnational* aims.

This would all come at the price of national and much individual freedom. Nations are being groomed to willingly turn over power to the dictates of transnational government.

The reset’s planners realize it might take a catastrophic event, such as the breakdown of America’s financial system, to bring about the desired reordering of the world monetary system. Since the start of the pandemic a year and a half ago, the Federal Reserve has created nearly \$3 trillion out of thin air, exploding the money supply. The White House and Congressional leaders are working on plans to spend at least that much more.

Could resulting runaway inflation that would destroy the value of the dollar be the catalyst reset planners are waiting for? The destruction of the dollar, the world’s foremost currency since the 1930s, might allow the replacement of our present financial system with one the elites would perhaps claim to be fairer and more inclusive.

There can be little doubt that the intent of the global elites is *control*—control of nations, economic systems and virtually every aspect of people’s lives. The coordination of governments and “big tech” social media giants to censor and “cancel” dissenting views shows that efforts to control what people think is alive and well.

### Another great reset is coming

Students of Bible prophecy should not be surprised by these events. It



reveals that the world’s governmental, economic and social structures will be reset for a time in a satanic, power-mad system that will crush the United States, Great Britain and other English-speaking nations, while subjugating billions. Revelation 17 reveals the coming of such a system that will control the world’s monetary system and commerce just before the return of Jesus Christ. (To learn more, see “The ‘Great Reset’: Where Will It Lead?” beginning on page 4.)

But the good news is that another great reset will shortly follow. That reset, to be carried out at Jesus Christ’s return to earth, is as certain as the rising and setting of the sun. It will be brought about by One who has the absolute, unfettered power to bring it to pass! God’s great reset will bear almost no resemblance to what the world’s elites have in mind!

### An end to war

Your Bible reveals that Christ’s second coming will occur at a time of worldwide chaos and warfare. Nothing has been a greater scourge on civilization than war and the threat of war. Recorded history chronicles more than 15,000 significant human conflicts that have taken the lives of hundreds of millions of human beings. The 20th century alone witnessed wars that caused the death of more than 100 million people.

The early stages of God’s reset include putting down all resistance to His rule and then abolishing war. One

of the Bible’s most-quoted prophecies is Isaiah 2:4: “*He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many peoples. 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.*”

Armies, militias, “international peacekeeping forces,” all will be only memories. The nations of the world will cease spending large percentages of their national wealth to sustain standing armies.

For the first time in history, the earth and its people will experience peace. As they look around the smoldering remains of their cities and nations, the world’s remaining population will work together under Christ’s direction to rebuild a world of beauty and splendor never seen before.

If this was all that God’s great reset accomplished, it would be the greatest blessing in human history. The good news, however, is that the establishment of lasting worldwide peace is just the beginning of the story.

### Restoration of sound government and blessing

Along with disarming the nations, Christ’s great reset will involve extending His government over all nations. Having absolute power, He will enforce His policies, not being burdened with having to reach consensus among the world’s political leaders. Utopians for centuries have realized true peace can come only

with one world government, but not one run by fallible human beings motivated by selfishness and lust for power. History has shown our utter incapability of ruling ourselves.

Enlightened leaders have sought peace and prosperity since the dawn of history, but these outcomes have always eluded their grasp. God's great reset will bring about world conditions that enlightened thinkers and world leaders can only imagine.

Why has it been this way? Mankind has always rejected the way of life that

His great reset, on the world's people to rescue them and help them at last choose rightly.

The Bible gives us tremendous hope in telling us of this declaration yet to come: *"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever"* (Revelation 11:15, English Standard Version). Try to imagine what this rule will lead to. There will be no more war. There will be perfect justice and racial harmony. People universally will enjoy

reset, knowledge of Him and His way will permeate society *"as the waters cover the sea"* (Isaiah 11:9; Habakkuk 2:14; compare Jeremiah 31:34).

### **True justice and the ultimate solution to crime**

The 20th century, especially in the period after World War II, saw major shifts in the balance of criminal and victim rights in most nations of the Western world. Criminal justice has largely shifted from the punishment of criminals and restitution being made to victims to the coddling of criminals. Courts increasingly turn even violent criminals back out on the streets with little more than a slap on the wrist. In the name of "social justice," society turns a blind eye to rioting in our cities, allowing those who loot, burn and vandalize to go unpunished.

Believe it or not, this was all foreseen thousands of years ago. The prophet Ezekiel was inspired to pronounce, *"The land is full of bloodshed, and the city full of injustice"* (Ezekiel 9:9). The prophet Isaiah similarly lamented, *"Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands afar off, for truth is fallen in the street"* (Isaiah 59:14). How prophetic for our time now!

God's reset will change all of this. His government, administered on earth by Jesus Christ, will usher in true justice and fairness in society. Gone forever will be victims not only of crime, but of flawed criminal justice systems that too often fail to give them justice.

It will start with the fact that most crimes will not be allowed to take place. Harmful acts will be prevented from happening. *"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain"* (Isaiah 11:9). Would-be perpetrators will be prompted not even to try to carry out their evil actions: *"Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it'"* (Isaiah 30:21).

### **The family again at center place**

For nearly all of recorded history,

**God's reset will bring the abolition of war! However, this lasting worldwide peace is only the beginning of the wonderful story.**



would bring sound government. That way can be summarized as *living in obedience to the law of God*.

God created human beings with freedom of choice. For more than 6,000 years of recorded human history, our own stubbornness and resistance to God's authority has always led mankind to choose to follow Satan the devil in going the wrong way. The time is coming, however, when mankind will no longer choose its own governmental structure under the influence of Satan. Jesus Christ, at His return, will impose His perfect one-world government,

good health. Addictions will cease. Strong, happy families will become the basic units of society. Earth will be restored to its original beauty, free of environmental degradation.

The chaos and evil of today's world should make us yearn deeply for God's great reset. It will be a world of peace, where even the natures of wild beasts will be changed and children will play safely in the streets, not fearful of being shot, as so tragically happens in our major cities today (Isaiah 11:6-9; Zechariah 8:5). It will be a world of abundance (Isaiah 25:6; 35:1-2; Amos 9:13). During God's great

the family has been considered the cornerstone of society. The ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, Greeks and Romans all recognized the importance of stable families in forming solid, well-ordered citizens. For centuries, and in virtually all nations, this held true.

The Great Reset envisioned by today's globalist elites, however, deemphasizes the importance of the family. Parents, they think, cannot be trusted to instill the values and attitudes the state wants in a compliant citizenry. Already we see the opening salvos of this in the growing pressure by elites to push Critical Race Theory and other warped social dogma.

Across America, we see education giving way to indoctrination. The history of a nation God has blessed and used to bless the entire world is distorted to denounce it as fundamentally and irredeemably racist. U.S. efforts to help other nations are recast as acts of racism, colonialism and imperialism.

In God's society, truth will prevail. All will gain proper perspective of the importance of families and right values.

### An end to disease

Disease epidemics have ravaged humanity throughout history. The recent Covid pandemic has taken a great many lives. We see additional tens of thousands dying from the loneliness, isolation and mental health problems resulting from the unprecedented worldwide lockdowns enacted by governments across the world.

Scarcely a century earlier in 1918 and 1919 the Spanish flu epidemic took the lives of more than 50 million worldwide, with nearly 500,000 in the United States alone. In our modern times we might think we have gained mastery over these horrible epidemics, but that's clearly not the case.

Despite medical breakthroughs that occur on an almost daily basis, millions still die from such ravages. Communicable diseases take an estimated 25-27 million lives each year.

And heart attacks, strokes and other forms of heart disease, formerly considered diseases of only the wealthier nations, are increasing rapidly in the developing world, having become the three main killers worldwide. Until a couple decades ago these were almost unknown in India, China, Indonesia and other nations whose living standards are rising.

Sickness is an unnatural situation, and it is our Creator's intent that people be healthy. While He may have it take some time, disease will be eradicated under God's reset.

As people are instructed in right eating, personal hygiene and cleanliness, being freed from the ravages of stress, they will live longer and happier lives—besides God's direct

intervention with miracles to heal (Isaiah 35:5-6).

### You have a choice!

God's great reset will change everything—starting with an outward takeover of the nations but then proceeding to transform people within, to literally change hearts and minds. Only God is capable of doing this.

*When Jesus Christ returns to earth, He will have all power and authority.* No force on earth, not even the combined forces of the world's nuclear-armed militaries, will be able to resist His conquest and reign. Accompanied by His resurrected saints from this age, Christ will have power the likes of which the world has never seen. He will put down all opposition in spite of mankind's final, last-ditch effort to resist His rule (see Revelation 17:14; 19:14-21).

He will change the world through exercising leadership through the multitude of His resurrected followers who will hold key positions in His great reset government. These resurrected followers will work with Christ to reestablish the government of God on the earth, a government that will have as its constitution the Word of God—the Bible. He will grant repentance and pour out His Spirit, leading all to understand and live by His laws, helping them to choose right and remain faithful.

Contrast God's great reset with the satanic plans of corrupt human beings. The "Great Reset" planned by human political and economic leaders will result in tyranny over peoples' lives. The ruling cabal will be led by an evil dictator under Satan's influence whom the Bible calls "the Beast" (Revelation 19:20).

Conversely, God's great reset will bring the righteous rule of His government, with the wisdom and power to establish lasting peace, true justice, right education, universal good health, love and good will in human hearts and minds and real harmony among all people.

No doubt we will hear more about man's version of the Great Reset in the months to come. Powerful forces in many nations believe strongly that it represents a gigantic leap forward in human progress. Your Bible indicates it will come to pass. But we are also warned: *"Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues"* (Revelation 18:4).

The choice is yours. Be part of the greater reset by accepting the rule of God in your life today! **BT**



**LEARN MORE**

The Bible contains many prophecies of the transformed and renewed world that will come to pass when Jesus Christ returns to reign on earth. To learn more, download or request our study guide *The Gospel of the Kingdom*. A free copy is waiting for you!

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# Do You Know About the Holy Days Jesus Kept?

Did you realize that the Bible contains exciting knowledge that is rarely noticed? It has everything to do with God’s marvelous plan for humanity revealed through the biblical festivals that Jesus Christ Himself observed.

by John LaBissoniere

**W**hen I grew up attending a mainstream Christian church I simply assumed that what I had been taught was correct. However, in my early 20s I was challenged to compare my beliefs with the Bible’s teachings. When studying holidays like Christmas and Easter and many other subjects, I was shocked to discover major, glaring conflicts with my church’s age-old doctrines and traditions. They simply didn’t agree with the Bible’s instruction.

In examining what the Bible actually revealed, I was introduced to something marvelous—that God had instituted an exciting, step-by-step plan for the future of mankind. This amazing blueprint is revealed in the seamless panorama of the seventh-day Sabbath and the Bible’s seven annual festivals (see Deuteronomy 5:12-14; Leviticus 23:1-44). While each one of these has unique features, they all interact and align perfectly to illuminate God’s plan of salvation through Jesus Christ. Furthermore, I learned that Jesus Himself faithfully observed the Sabbath and these festivals throughout His entire earthly life—leaving an example for everyone to follow (1 John 2:6).

So are you up for a challenge—one that may conflict with some of your beliefs and yet can show you the pathway to tremendous spiritual insight and incredible hope? If so, join me on a brief journey through Holy Scripture to discover what it says about God’s great plan of salvation as illustrated through the biblical festivals Jesus observed. These include Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles and the Eighth Day. While some people label these observances as merely “Jewish,” God in fact declares, “These are *My feasts*” (Leviticus 23:2, emphasis added throughout).

## The weekly Sabbath day

God established the seven-day weekly cycle at the time of creation when He “rested on the seventh day” and set

it apart as holy time (Genesis 2:1-3; Mark 2:28). In doing so He commanded all people to observe the weekly Sabbath by resting from their labors (Exodus 31:13-17; Hebrews 4:1-11). In addition to pointing to the true God of creation, the Sabbath looks forward to the future return of Jesus Christ to establish the Kingdom of God on earth, bringing humanity relief and rest from evil, contention and suffering.

It is important to note that Jesus diligently observed the Sabbath (Luke 4:16, 31; 13:10; Mark 6:2), as did the apostles and other members of His early Church (Acts 13:14-44; 15:20-21; 17:1-3, 18:4). Their example is one everyone should follow today.

## The Passover

Passover memorializes the miraculous event by which God broke the bonds of ancient Israel’s enslavement in Egypt. On the first Passover evening a lamb was slain, roasted and eaten in each Israelite household. The lamb’s blood was placed on the lintel and doorposts of their homes as a sign of God’s protection from the plague of death upon Egypt’s firstborn (Exodus 12:12-13).

Scripture reveals that the lambs symbolized Jesus Christ as the future sacrificial “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). He did this by willingly dying, His blood shed so that every person could be spared from eternal spiritual death (Matthew 26:28; Romans 5:20-21). At the Passover observance with His disciples the night before His death, Jesus shared the symbols of unleavened bread and wine as representing His sinless body and His blood poured out to cleanse all those who repent of their sins (Ephesians 1:7; 1 John 1:7).

Jesus had been observing the Passover throughout His human life. “His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast” (Luke 2:41-42). At age 30, when Jesus began His earthly ministry, He was still observing it as He always had: “Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand,

and Jesus went up to Jerusalem” (John 2:13). (It’s termed “the Passover of the Jews” here since the Jews observed it while gentiles did not.)

Then later, as noted above, He observed the Passover at the time of His sacrificial death (Matthew 26:17-19). Plus, it’s important to note that more than two decades later, the apostles and other members of His Church were still observing the Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7-8).

### The Feast of Unleavened Bread

Returning to the story of ancient Israel, the Bible explains that the morning after the Passover, the Israelites began to gather in preparation for hastily leaving Egypt that evening. At that time “they baked unleavened cakes of the dough . . . because they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared provisions for themselves” (Exodus 12:39).

God told the Israelites to observe the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread each year as a reminder that He freed them from terrible bondage (Leviticus 23:5-8). This is emblematic of our redemption from the spiritual slavery of sin through Jesus Christ’s sacrifice. Unleavened bread is symbolic of Jesus’ life, unblemished by sin, which all people must strive to imitate. Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life (John 6:33, 35, 48, 51), is at the center of this festival—as He is in all of God’s Holy Days. He personally observed this feast, as did the apostles and the Church—then and now (Acts 20:6; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8).

### The Feast of Pentecost

The Bible shows that God spoke the Ten Commandments to the Israelites at Mount Sinai about the time of Pentecost (Jewish tradition holding that this was the exact day). God at that time made a covenant with them, stating that after they agreed to its terms they would “be a special treasure” to Him (Exodus 19:1-8).

This relationship was a forerunner to a far more meaningful one involving Christ’s disciples on a later Day of Pentecost. “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:1-4).

This defining moment not only marked the birth of the New Testament Church but began fulfilling God’s promise to make a new covenant with faithful disciples by writing His laws on their hearts and minds (Ezekiel 36:26-27; Jeremiah 31:31-33). The members of God’s Church today follow the example of Jesus and His early disciples in observing this Holy Day (Acts 20:16). By doing so they are reminded of the hope, joy and divine

## The Truth About Christmas and Easter

**M**any people assume that Christmas and Easter originate in the Bible. But the fact is, Christian observance of these days is found *nowhere* in Scripture. (There is one place where *Passover* is incorrectly translated “Easter” in Acts 12:4 in the King James Version.)

Actually, Christmas and Easter emerged from ancient festivals honoring pagan gods. James Hastings, editor of *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, wrote, “Most of the Christmas customs . . . are not genuine Christian customs, but heathen customs which have been absorbed or tolerated by the Church” (1910, Vol. 3, p. 608, emphasis added throughout).

Regarding Easter, *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* states: “The term ‘Easter’ is not of Christian origin. It is another form of Astarte, one of the titles of the Chaldean goddess, the queen of heaven. ‘Easter’ was . . . introduced into the apostate Western religion, as part of the attempt to adapt pagan festivals to Christianity” (1985).

When challenged by such statements, many professing Christians might justify continuing in these observances by saying, “Shouldn’t we be able to worship God any way we choose?” The answer is *no*, for God said not to worship Him with pagan religious customs (Deuteronomy 12:29-32; Jeremiah 10:2).

The truth is, God has *already decided* how He wants to be worshipped, which is by means of His own holy festivals. Otherwise, as Jesus said, “*In vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men*” (Matthew 15:9). Furthermore, He explained that “true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth” (John 4:23).

So how about you? Are you worshipping God as He directs? If not, isn’t *now* the time to start?

transformation that God provides through the power of His Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5; 2 Corinthians 6:6; 13:14).

### The Feast of Trumpets

In Scripture, trumpets—whether metal instruments or rams’ horns—were employed for important purposes including calling people to assemble (Numbers 10:1-10), an alarm of impending war (Jeremiah 4:19) and the proclamation of a king’s coronation (1 Kings 1:39-40). Trumpets were also blown to announce the beginning of the Feast of Trumpets—the first of four Holy Days of the fall harvest season (Leviticus 23:24).

The weighty characteristic of the Feast of Trumpets is its vital connection to biblical prophecy of a great, future trumpet blast announcing the turning point in all of human history—the second coming of Jesus Christ! (Revelation 19:16).

It also reminds us of another key event that will occur when that trumpet sounds—the resurrection of Christ’s

faithful followers: “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and 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” (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; see also Job 14:14-15; Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 15:50-55).

When Jesus walked the earth as a man He observed the Feast of Trumpets, and on His return at the sound of the great trumpet He will fulfill its meaning by taking over the rule of this world and ushering God’s spirit-born sons and daughters into His glorious Kingdom and family (Isaiah 52:7; 1 Corinthians 15:51). This is why God’s people today keep this Holy Day and all of His festivals to fully comprehend and deeply appreciate His marvelous plan of salvation!

### The Day of Atonement

The Bible explains that Satan is a real spirit being who possesses immense power to deceive people and influence them to disobey God’s commandments—resulting in terrible suffering and anguish (Revelation 12:9; Ephesians 2:2; 1 Peter 5:8).

The Day of Atonement, observed with fasting, pictures a marvelous time when, shortly after Jesus Christ’s second coming, Satan the devil and his demons will be bound for 1,000 years (Leviticus 16:20-22, 29-30). The apostle John describes this in Revelation 20:1-2: “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.”

With Satan’s poisonous influence severed, Jesus will begin removing humanity’s spiritual blindness (2 Corinthians 4:3-4) so that in due time, “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea” (Habakkuk 2:14). Additionally, the Day of Atonement reveals that Jesus Christ’s atoning sacrifice will ultimately be made available to all people for the cleansing of their sins, giving everyone the opportunity to obtain salvation (John 3:17).

### The Feast of Tabernacles

The first time the Feast of Tabernacles is mentioned in Scripture it is referred to as the Feast of Ingathering (Exodus 23:16). In ancient Israel, this was a great fall harvest festival where the people rejoiced together while thanking God for His blessings of prosperity and protection (Deuteronomy 12:10-12). During the seven-day festival the people dwelt in temporary shelters made from branches of trees. This was to remind them that God dwelt with and sustained them throughout their 40-year wandering in the wilderness (Exodus 25:8-9;

1 Corinthians 10:4; Leviticus 23:42-43).

Just as Jesus personally kept the Feast of Tabernacles, His present-day disciples do the same (John 7:2-14). Furthermore, this seven-day festival, which begins with an annual Holy Day (Leviticus 23:34-35), pictures the coming time when Christ will dwell with man on earth (Romans 11:26). And Jesus will reign on earth for a thousand years as King of Kings (Revelation 19:16; 20:4, 6).


During that magnificent future age, all people will not only learn God’s ways but will experience extraordinary peace and prosperity, while being brought into a close relationship with their Creator (Isaiah 11:9-10).


### The Eighth Day

The Eighth Day immediately follows the seven-day Feast of Tabernacles and adds an intensely exciting element to God’s perfect plan. It reveals that Jesus Christ will complete His great harvest of human beings by raising from the dead all people who had never heard about Him or learned and lived God’s way of life! All of these resurrected people, raised to temporary physical life again, will be given the opportunity for salvation and eternal life (see Ezekiel 37:1-14; Romans 11:25-27; Revelation 20:11-13).

Again, as with the Sabbath and the other Holy Days, Jesus Christ observed this Eighth Day, as the people of His true Church also do today.

In summary, God’s amazing plan for humanity is revealed in the marvelous panorama of the weekly seventh-day Sabbath and His seven annual festivals—all of which interrelate to light the pathway to salvation through Jesus Christ. As was noted, Jesus obediently observed each festival during His earthly ministry. In doing so He left an example for His disciples to imitate so they could understand God’s loving plan of salvation. In fact, thousands of people from around the world gather in many locations to keep God’s festivals each year.

What does this mean for you? Will you carefully consider what you’ve read here and study it on your own with the aim of growing in spiritual understanding? If so, and if you follow Jesus’ example of keeping the Sabbath and festivals of the Bible, it can lead you to experience tremendous joy and peace in knowing God and His awesome plan for you and all people. We hope and pray you are up for the challenge! 



#### LEARN MORE

Would you like to worship God in the same way Jesus and the early Church did? Why not start by worshipping on the same biblical Holy Days they celebrated? Download or request our free study guide *God’s Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind* to learn more.

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# Gain From God's Perspective

We need a higher vantage point to understand the full context of our own lives and the whole human story. We'll then see that even amid life's difficulties a great plan and purpose is being worked out—toward a wondrous future with God.

by Victor Kubik

**A** large and respected investment firm advertises, “Gain From Our Perspective,” assuring clients of help in achieving financial goals. The firm’s experts know and see things customers may not. Their perspective reflects years of investing experience, seeing a bigger picture of what techniques and practices are necessary for success and prosperity. They offer customers guidance toward this end, helping to keep them from financial ruin.

The slogan “Gain From Our Perspective” intrigued me because this principle can be applied to a far more valuable and lasting venture than merely making money. Consider: What if we could have a clearer view of life that solidly reveals *who* we are, *where* we came from, *what* is ahead for us and *how* we will get there?

Wouldn't you like to hear from One who has been alive through all time, who designed and created all that is, whose extraordinary perspective encompasses all, seeing so many things that we don't? Wouldn't it be wonderful to truly find out how it all works—learning this from a loving, all-powerful God who wants us to gain from it all?

Many would jump at this chance. The question then becomes: Can we tap into and experience this? Many have searched, conjectured and devised various philosophies and founded many religions that claim to offer enlightenment. Many others are clueless regarding these questions and are left in darkness and ignorance.

At first, we may feel too overwhelmed to give this more thought. We may find it challenging to choose any particular line of thinking about life's meaning. After all, many have already explored this. Who, one may think, can stand against the accumulated knowledge of a legion of thinkers and clerics? The answer, as we will see, is both surprising and satisfying.

Questions about life's meaning are timeless. Some 3,000 years ago King David recorded the apparent insignificance of human beings when contrasted with the majestic vastness of the night sky. As a shepherd before becoming royalty, David had spent many nights gazing at the stars above. Notice how he framed his thoughts in

Psalm 8:3-4: “When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit [or attend to] him?”

When I was a teenager I pondered similar thoughts. I wondered about what happened after death. Would I cease to exist? I thought long and hard about these questions many a night in bed when it was quiet. It was very troubling. But through the pages of the Bible, God gave me an awesome perspective. I embraced that marvelous and sure perspective, and it has brought great things to my life. I want to share with you some thoughts about having this perspective.

## God wants us to see, but there are hindrances

A fact sometimes overlooked is that our Creator God, our divine Parent, intended that we come to understand the meaning of our existence. He *wants* us to see what He is doing with and for all mankind, including *you* personally. But this insight does not come through intellect alone, or secular philosophers would have found the truth and agreed on it by now. The world's most erudite thinkers cannot see the meaning of life. It's presently hidden from them even though it's right in front of them. Yet it's not entirely their fault for not seeing it.

The problem with perception is mostly one of obstructions and mental barriers. This means that once the obstacles are removed, an entire world of design, a relationship with God and the profound meaning of life can come into clear focus.

Here's the backstory: Jesus Christ came preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God. This gospel (the Greek word here literally means “good message” or “good news”) addresses the big questions of life—concerning God, man, the relationship between God and man, and our eternal future.

When Jesus preached in the ancient towns of Chorazin and Bethsaida in northern Galilee, He was met with closed minds and resistance. In His prayer to His Father in heaven, Jesus made a remarkable statement: “I thank



You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that *You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes*” (Matthew 11:25, emphasis added throughout).

### **We must become as little children**

Jesus gave us an important key here to grasping these precious truths about our future. Understanding the Kingdom of God comes first to those who are *like babes—like little children*. Jesus underlined this in His ministry when little children were brought to Him to be blessed: “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it” (Mark 10:14-15).

His point is that we must be ready to receive this truth in a trusting and humble attitude, being *approachable and teachable*.

We see, then, that God’s message of His Kingdom is largely hidden to the world’s great thinkers, even to some who claim to be great theologians. But it is comprehensible to those who have a child-parent relationship with their Creator. This relationship is built on love, obedience, respect and humility, which is within every human being’s ability to a degree. It’s in this mental environment that understanding and perspective are established. The good news of Jesus Christ and God’s Kingdom was intended to eventually be understood by everyone—by the poor, the rich, the well-educated and the illiterate.

The apostle Paul reminds the Christians in Corinth about the kind of people God typically leads to see and understand His sacred truths:

“For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.

“But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—that, as it is written, ‘He who glories, let him glory in the LORD’” (1 Corinthians 1:26-31).

Once the vision is clear, a fantastic panoramic mural spanning from man’s prehistoric roots to everlasting glory unfolds. It is meaningfully tied together, showing God’s meticulous plan for humanity created in His image and likeness to exist in a family relationship with Him forever.

### **The enemy’s deceptions and human shortsightedness**

Another factor in people not seeing the greater picture

and purpose of life is one called the ruler of this world and god of this age, Satan the devil, who has tampered with people’s perceptions, blinding their eyes and minds so they cannot see. Again writing to the Corinthians, Paul declared:

“But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus’ sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Corinthians 4:3-6).

Our vision may also be limited because we see or consider only what is close by and immediate. We naturally may not see what God sees because we don’t look beyond our immediate surroundings. Just as we may have known, in our early years, little more than our familiar physical neighborhood, we may not perceive much beyond what we’ve grown up learning and experiencing.

So what about our personal perspective? Our early memories probably center on our parents. We remember the home we grew up in. We remember the people around us and how we related to them. We believed much of what people around us thought, this still influencing our thinking while we ventured on to our own views. It’s important to recognize that our initial concept of God, or lack of it, was derived from those around us. We also learned about evil and had experience of it.

As we grow older our perspectives broaden. We increasingly gain more understanding about the world around us. Through curiosity and education, we become aware of our city, state, country and the world. This same curiosity simultaneously extends to thoughts of being, helping to form our human understanding of our existence and matters of life’s meaning.

### **The source for answers and needed perspective**

This leads to some critical questions: Why were we born? Is there a reason, a purpose, for human existence? Where did we come from? Is this physical life all there is? Does my life have a purpose? Can we see a purpose for our own life with its ups and downs, a mixture of joys and sorrows? Do we sense lasting value in its toil, challenges and uncertainties?

Grasping the answers to these important questions takes more than speculation and reason. It takes revelation, a shining guiding light to see all this—a “light to shine out of darkness”!

Where can we as human beings find the answers we seek? The only overwhelmingly authoritative source that has stood the test of time and scrutiny is the Bible, which has been

amazingly and accurately preserved. It was written by more than 40 authors over a span of 1,500 years. In and of itself it is a chronicle of centuries of human experience. If we look to it with respect and humility, we will see design, fulfillment, purpose and lessons that give us perspective stretching across all time—from before the creation of the universe to far into the future.

So then, what is the story God is trying to tell us? What does He see that we don't?

To understand anything more fully, we have to see it from a different and broader view. The best view is from high above, where you can see it all and comprehend its fullness. If we were to explain the geography of the earth from just knowing our neighborhood, that would be very inadequate.

Many have used Google Earth, a computer program with satellite, ground-level and computer-generated imagery that allows users to view and virtually navigate through cities and landscapes around the world. We can begin with our local neighborhood, showing our streets and even our own home.

We can then quickly zoom out and see more of what we're part of. We begin to see the shape of our state. Zoom out farther and we can see our entire country. Still farther and we can see the curvature of the earth, and as we reach the limit of this program, we'll see the earth as a sphere in space. You can thereby see the big picture of where you are in the world.

But where we are in the universe is on a far greater scale than where Google Earth can take us. Earth is one of the small inner planets of our solar system. Our sun is one of hundreds of billions of stars in the Milky Way Galaxy. Even our galaxy is only one of a "local" group of galaxies within a "local" supercluster of many more. As you expand out farther you start to gain the awe-inspiring perspective of an unimaginably large universe with hundreds of billions of galaxies that only God can perceive in full. We can easily concede that our street view of where we are in our galactic neighborhood is very limited.

Can we come to the point where we also admit that we don't see everything about our place and purpose in life as well? Can it be that we simply don't know because we don't have that expansive view that takes into account the passage of time, events, history and many other factors?

As mentioned, the Bible offers the perspective of many authors writing about crucial aspects of human history and morality going back to the early days of the earth and man. It also authoritatively foretells the future, catapulting us way beyond our present time. It's actually a rather straightforward story presenting a perspective by which we can learn and benefit.

As we now strive to gain from God's perspective, let's look at the Bible, His Word, as a book that gives us a much bigger and highly useful perspective from which we can gain immeasurably.

### Zooming out to see the whole story

Some find the Bible a challenge to comprehend. If you were to turn to random sections of it, you would discover biographical and historical accounts, some that are violent and seemingly bizarre. You will read of murder, polygamy, war, slavery, idolatry, genocide and other evils. Seeing these as isolated events can make us wonder about the purpose of recounting some of these happenings.

God has been working out a marvelous plan. A long, thoughtful and loving story has been unfolding right alongside the pain of human drama.

But here's the key: By zooming out and seeing the entire human experience from a higher perch, the overall story of man's experience as narrated in the Bible begins to paint an indelible picture filled with meaning.

The story of man begins in the Garden of Eden. The book of Genesis describes two remarkable trees in this garden—the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God created human beings in His image and likeness (Genesis 1:27), intending them to be in His family forever. He instructed Adam and Eve to eat of the tree of life, as it signified the source of eternal life.

And He warned them not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which represented learning or experiencing life by trial and error, and rejecting God's authority by substituting moral relativity. Death would be the certain outcome of this approach.

The Bible records that Adam and Eve made the wrong choice and were expelled from the Garden of Eden and thus from access to the tree of life—that is, from access to living forever. As mortal beings cut off from that access, Adam and Eve eventually died. This condition was also passed on to all humanity (Romans 5:12). The world at large remains barred from access to the tree of life.

Consider this perspective: The story of man as told by the Bible and history is a narrative of man trying to find his own way—with calamitous results. Perhaps you've not previously thought of it this way, but a little more than 1,500 years after man's creation, society became so corrupted and steeped in evil that it was beyond repair. God then brought about a global Flood and in a sense rebooted human civilization with only a few survivors. But even after the Flood, humankind descended again into a harmful way of life. No improvement in the basic nature of man came about.

Imperialist civilizations rose and fell, starting with the

city-state of Babylon. Marching across the ages, a civilization that has rejected God will produce, as revealed in the book of Revelation, a terrible *end-time* Babylon, known also as the Beast.

Along the way, man has experimented with every form of government imaginable. Each has had its flaws—some ending in catastrophe. Man has devised his own laws. Embracing moral relativism, humanity has created its own gods, religions and philosophies. Conflicts have been settled by murderous and destructive wars again and again and again. In generation after generation, societies have had to rise again and try to find their own way.

Around 65 million people (3 percent of the world's population) perished in World War II. That global conflict blazed across all human civilizations and left a charred world. In the end, the state of today's world is what man has to show for himself.

Yet, as bad it was in the 1940s, a coming global conflict will be far worse! In fact, the Bible foretells that events will grow so utterly turbulent and perilous that survival will be possible only through direct intervention and bailout by God Himself!

Jesus Christ warned: "For there will be greater anguish than at any time since the world began. And it will never be so great again. In fact, unless that time of calamity is shortened, not a single person will survive . . ." (Matthew 24:21-22, New Living Translation).

The incredible good news? ". . . But *it will be shortened* for the sake of God's chosen ones" (verse 22, NLT).

While man's flawed saga carries on, God has been working out a marvelous plan—with its culmination yet to come. A long and thoughtful and loving story has been developing right alongside the pain of human drama.

### Understanding the plan God is working out

God from the very beginning had a plan in operation to redeem humanity. He started by working through certain individuals between the creation and the Flood, and later through the family of Abraham, and then through a nation descended from him. As the Bible records, the nation of ancient Israel was to be the agency through which redemption—buying man back from sin and death—would ultimately come.

God rescued Israel from national slavery through the Exodus. He made covenants with the people through which they were to show His righteousness and goodness to surrounding nations and all the world. But they failed. One generation after another rejected God and His ways. Israel's disobedience led it directly into another period of slavery.

But God was not thwarted. This was part of His plan. He wanted to show that man needed not only His blessings and laws, but *a new spirit and heart*—which God

promised to give. God would yet directly deal with the core issues that keep producing pain and hurt. Ultimately, this fundamental permanent change in the nature of man would come as Jeremiah prophesied: "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant . . . *I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people*" (Jeremiah 31:31, 33).

A critical, all-important step in the plan came about 2,000 years ago. God came to the earth as a man, as Jesus Christ, sent by the Father. Through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, man is redeemed. Man's flaw is corrected in receiving a new nature through the Holy Spirit.

Now we begin to see *real* gain from God's perspective.

Through the gift of the Holy Spirit, men and women converted with this new nature will receive the gracious *gift* of immortality, which will include a new spirit body that will live forever. If you have God's Holy Spirit living in you, here's what you can expect: "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you" (Romans 8:11, New Revised Standard Version).

At the very end of the Bible, in the last chapter of the book of Revelation, the tree of life *reappears* (22:2, 14). This time its spiritual fruit—access to wondrous eternal life together with God the Father and Jesus Christ—is available to all! Thus, as we zoom out to an end-to-end view of the Bible's story, we see—as part of God's purpose in creating us to be His family forever—that the tree of life bookends humanity's amazing journey.

As the Bible reveals, God is presently bringing many sons and daughters to glory (Hebrews 2:10). And you can be one of them!

When you see God's perspective of what we in our limited view see in such a small way, you see His logical plan and love for all. It really does make sense. In facing some of the most difficult questions of life, the marvelous answers are right there in front of us. We just need to be able to see what God is showing us.

What a wondrous story we are part of! Keep studying God's Word, live by it and gain from His perspective. **BT**

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Much more eye-opening and astonishing information about God's plan for you exists in the pages of the Bible. If you're interested—and you should be, given the marvelous scope of God's interest in you—we invite you to send for or download our free study guides *Why Were You Born?* and *God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind*.

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# Luther and Tyndale on Death: “The Dead Know Nothing”

Many believe the soul is immortal and remains conscious apart from the body after death. But early reformers Martin Luther and William Tyndale recognized what the Bible teaches about this—that those who’ve died have no awareness while awaiting a future resurrection.

by Tom Robinson

**M**any people today believe the Bible teaches that when a person dies, that person has an immortal soul that remains conscious after death and goes on to live with God in heaven or goes to some kind of eternal torment in hell. But that is assuredly not what the Bible teaches. It informs us that man is a mortal soul able to die (Ezekiel 18:4, 20) and that to die is to “sleep the sleep of death” (Psalm 13:3).

The Bible repeatedly compares death to sleep and not conscious existence—a sleep from which we must be awakened in a future resurrection (see Daniel 12:2; Job 14:12-14; 1 Corinthians 11:30; 15:51; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14). Scripture explicitly states that “*the dead know nothing*” (Ecclesiastes 9:5, emphasis added throughout). It further assures that “there is no . . . knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going” (verse 10).

Many recognize that the Bible teaches a coming resurrection. The traditional argument is that the immortal soul departs into bodiless yet conscious existence at death and that the resurrection is the raising up of a renewed body in the future for the soul to reinhabit. This concerns what is called the intermediate state of the dead—the nature of existence between the death of the body and the future resurrection.

Given the biblical comparisons to sleep, some disparagingly refer to

belief in this intermediate state of unconsciousness as “soul sleep.” Yet this is simply taking Scripture for what it says, whereas belief in a disembodied soul in the afterlife came not from the Bible but from pagan religion and philosophy.

Some have recognized the truth of this matter for centuries. It would no doubt greatly surprise many of today’s Protestants to learn that key figures they view as heroes of the faith—namely Martin Luther, father of the Protestant Reformation, and

All the Articles of M. Luther Condemned by the Latest Bull of Leo X, Art. 27, *Works of Luther*, Weimar ed., Vol. 7). Luther’s main concern in this was the Catholic conception of the conscious torment of souls in purgatory, which he rejected.

Not long afterward he wrote: “It is probable, in my opinion, that, with very few exceptions indeed, the dead sleep in utter insensibility till the day of judgment . . . On what authority can it be said that the souls of the dead may not sleep . . .

**As Luther and Tyndale taught, the Bible presents death as having no conscious awareness.**

William Tyndale, who suffered martyrdom for his monumental work of translating the Bible into English—wrote against the immortality of the soul and against the idea of conscious awareness in death. These men were teachers of soul sleep—as were the inspired writers of Scripture, such as the apostle Paul.

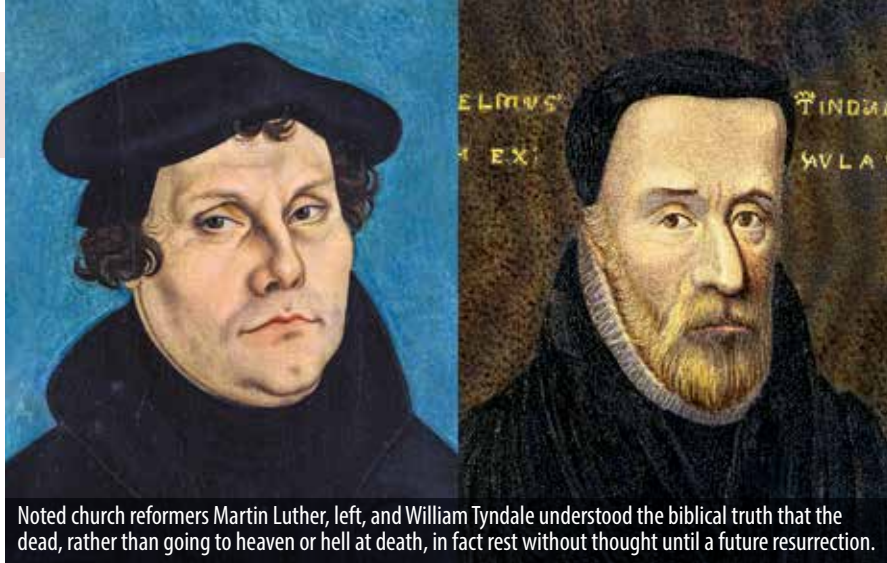
## **Martin Luther: “The dead sleep in utter insensibility”**

In 1517 Martin Luther posted his famous 95 Theses regarding the errors of the Catholic Church. In defending many of these later in 1520 he listed the idea “that the soul is immortal” as among “all these endless monstrosities in the Roman dunghill of decretals” (Assertion of

in the same way that the living pass in profound slumber the interval between their downlying at night and their uprising in the morning?” (Letter to Nicholas Amsdorf, Jan. 13, 1522, quoted by Jules Michelet, *The Life of Luther*, translated by William Hazlitt, 1862, p. 133).

Regarding the quote we earlier saw from Ecclesiastes, Luther later pointed out: “Solomon judges that the dead are asleep, and feel nothing at all. For the dead lie there accounting neither days nor years, but when are awaked, they shall seem to have slept scarce one minute” (*An Exposition of Solomon’s Book, Called Ecclesiastes or the Preacher*, 1553, folio 151v).

Luther viewed this as some sort of comatose existence, elsewhere stat-



Noted church reformers Martin Luther, left, and William Tyndale understood the biblical truth that the dead, rather than going to heaven or hell at death, in fact rest without thought until a future resurrection.

ing: “Thus after death the soul goes to its bedchamber and to its peace, and while it is sleeping it does not realize its sleep, and God preserves the awakening soul. God is able to awake Elijah, Moses, and others . . . so that they will live. But how can that be? That we do not know; we satisfy ourselves with the example of bodily sleep, and with what God says: it is a sleep, a rest, and a peace” (*Interpretation of the First Book of Moses, Writings, Vol. 1*). He was trying to explain the preservation of our existence through death until the resurrection.

While Luther was perhaps not always consistent or clear, we should recognize that he definitely did not advocate the conscious bodiless existence of an immortal soul in heaven or hell immediately after death, as today’s Lutherans and other Protestants believe.

### William Tyndale responds to Thomas More

Around the same time, William Tyndale defended the teaching of death as a sleep against denunciation by the English Catholic philosopher and statesman under King Henry VIII, Sir Thomas More, who also wrote *Utopia*.

Tyndale responded to him in 1530, contending: “And you, in putting them [departed souls] in heaven, hell, and purgatory, destroy the arguments wherewith Christ and Paul prove the resurrection . . . And again, if the souls be in heaven, tell me why they be not in as good [a] case as the

angels be? And then what cause [or reason] is there of the resurrection?” (*An Answer to Sir Thomas More’s Dialogue, Book 4, chap. 4*).

In the same response, Tyndale castigated the Catholic position on the matter as embracing pagan teaching, declaring: “The true faith puts [forth] the resurrection . . . The heathen philosophers, denying that, did put [forth] that the souls did ever live [as immortal]. And the pope joins the spiritual doctrine of Christ and the fleshly doctrine of philosophers together; things so contrary that they cannot agree, no more than the Spirit and the flesh do in a Christian man. And because the fleshly-minded pope consents unto heathen doctrine, therefore he corrupts the Scripture to establish it.”

Elsewhere in his response, Tyndale notes that the concept of the faithful dead being conscious in heaven was contrary to Christ’s teaching. He points out: “And when he [Thomas More] proves that the saints be in heaven in glory with Christ already, saying, ‘If God be their God, they be in heaven, for he is not the God of the dead’ [as More tried to argue from Jesus’ point in Matthew 22:31-32]; there he steals away Christ’s argument, wherewith he proves *the resurrection*: that Abraham and all saints should *rise again*, not that their souls were in heaven; which doctrine was not yet in the world. And with that doctrine he takes away the resurrection quite, and makes Christ’s argument of none effect.”


Moreover, Tyndale makes poignant

use of the apostle Paul’s statement that Christians are most pitiable, or miserable, if there is no resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:16-19) and of his instruction that Christians should comfort one another over lost loved ones with the hope of the resurrection at Christ’s return (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). This instruction would make no sense if those loved ones are now awake in heaven. As Tyndale sarcastically presents it:

“Nay, Paul, you are unlearned; go to Master [Thomas] More, and learn a new way. We be *not* most miserable, though we rise not again; for our souls go to heaven as soon as we be dead, and are there in as great joy as Christ that is risen again.’ And I marvel that Paul had not comforted the Thessalonians with that doctrine, if he had wist [known] it, that the souls of their dead had been in joy; as he did with the resurrection, that their dead should rise again. If the souls be in heaven, in as great glory as the angels, after your doctrine, show me what cause should be of the resurrection.”

While we would not agree with Luther and Tyndale in various facets of religious teaching, we do agree that the Bible presents death as having no conscious awareness.

While many other reformers recognized this, the Reformation as a whole persisted, and persists still, in false teachings about the immortal soul in heaven or hell. But the truth of Scripture yet stands. Why not accept what God’s Word reveals about this vital issue? **BT**



### LEARN MORE

To understand the nature of existence following death, we must look to what God has to say about the matter in His Word. Be sure to download or request our free study guide *What Happens After Death?* to learn what the Bible really says!

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