



**“WATCHMAN,
WHAT OF THE NIGHT?”**



“Watchman, what is left of the night?”
(Isaiah 21:11)

My dear Reader,

What do you think? How much time is left? How many more signs do we need? How many more tragedies do we need to witness before we are convinced that we are indeed in the end times, and that the coming of the Master is drawing very near?

You **are** watching, aren't you? I don't mean watching television. I mean, watching developments in the light of the Word of God, and giving a warning to all around us that the Day of the LORD is near.

I know ... many people will not listen. It was like that when God spoke through Jeremiah:

“I appointed watchmen over you, and said, ‘Listen to the sound of the trumpet!’ But you said, ‘**We will not listen**’.” (Jeremiah 6:17)

Well, we can understand when the world says, “We will not listen to your ramblings!” But it seems that many Christians are neither watching nor listening, even though trumpets are sounding every day, pro-claiming the climax of the age.

Our Master could ask the church today;

“What! Could you not **watch** with Me for one hour?” (Matthew 26:40)

And Y’shua the Messiah says to His disciples today:

“And what I say you, I say to all, **Watch!**” (Mark 13:37)

My friends, the last two months has seen horrific conditions - excessive storms, floods, typhoons, hurricanes, heat waves, forest fires, and earthquakes.

We are witnessing alarming developments in the Middle East, with Israel being pressurised to forfeit its claim to the Temple Mount; Hizb’allah and Hamas building up for a confrontation with Israel; Russia supplying anti-aircraft missiles to Syria; the US pouring billions into the Middle East to build up the military forces of “moderate” anti-Iranian nations, as well as Israel. We see Russia’s new posturing as a superpower, its buildup in the Mediterranean with new bases at Syrian ports; and its tensions with US, UK and the EU; and also its declared intention to make Russia the world’s greatest military aircraft producer.

We have also seen a threatening stock market crash, with the nations getting the jitters. And lots more has happened. But again, Y’shua says:

“Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me ... I will come again and receive you to Myself.” (John 14:1, 3)

So, “As for me, I will watch expectantly for YHWH; **I will wait** for the God of my salvation.” (Micah 7:7). And I will “**redeem the time.**” (Ephesians 5:16)

“**Blessed are those servants whom the Master will find watching when He comes.**” (Luke 12:37)



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And now, before sharing more bad news, let me bring some points of **GOOD NEWS** – and encouragement from what our Heavenly Master is doing in these days.



CUBA'S GREAT SPIRITUAL INCREASE

The Republic of Cuba is a secular state. The Cuban people live in abject poverty, and the larger faith communities have faced intense opposition amidst claims of theoretical religious rights. But at the same time, *WorldServe's* Cuba Director Darryl Wright says, their team is reaping a harvest of revival amongst the evangelical churches.

"It began to accelerate into a house church movement. There were about 1,100 churches and house churches in 1990, and today they're drawing close to 17,000 churches and house churches. That's revival!"

This year, *WorldServe* and the American Bible Society teamed up to deliver a landmark gift to the growing church. "It's not just the largest shipment of children's Bibles. It's the largest shipment of Bibles in the history of Cuba – more than twice the previous largest shipment. Other groups have sent in large sums of Bibles, but 200,000 Bibles in one year is the largest shipment in the history of the island."



BRAZIL: TRIBAL PEOPLE READ GOD'S WORD FOR THE FIRST TIME

Two Bible translation projects are already having an impact on tribal people in Brazil. President of *WordWinds International*, Jarrette Allen, says their Tembe translation project just completed the New Testament. And that's not all.

They're celebrating another work: "We finished the Gospel of Luke in the Kuikuro language. And because of translating the Gospel of Luke this past year, the Kuikuro heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the first time in human history."

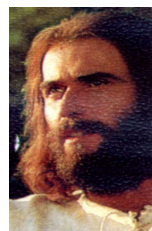


CHINA: PLANS FOR THE OLYMPICS IN BEIJING

Many Christian groups are gearing up for the Olympics in Beijing beginning August 8, 2008.

They see it as the greatest opportunity of these early years of the 21st Century to reach millions of people. The challenge is to get people trained and equipped for this ministry. The Chinese church also sees it as a tremendous opportunity to cooperate with overseas groups in a great evangelistic outreach to people from around the world.

The Communist government is also challenged to control the increasing activities of overseas groups as well as house churches as the [Christian population explodes](#). It is now recognized by the government and Chinese groups that the number of Christians has reached [130 million people](#)- a phenomenal number after the decades of persecution and restrictions.



'JESUS FILM' IN 1,000 LANGUAGES

JULY 25, 07. The "JESUS" film reached a major milestone in July with the completion of the 1,000th language of the film - Lanka Kol, spoken by more than one million people in India.

The 2-hour docudrama about the life of Christ based on the Gospel of Luke, is the most translated film in movie history. The JESUS film, produced by Campus Crusade for Christ, opened in theaters in the United States in 1979 and has since achieved more than [6 billion viewings worldwide](#).

More than 200 million decisions for Christ have been made as a result of the film, including about 14,000 people who made public decisions for Christ when a missionary team showed the JESUS film to Nigeria's Idoma people group this summer.

Project coordinators have plans to continue translating the JESUS film into 500 new languages. That includes every language with more than 100,000 speakers.

Read full report> <http://www.worthynews.com/news/bpnews-net-BPnews-asp-ID-26128/>

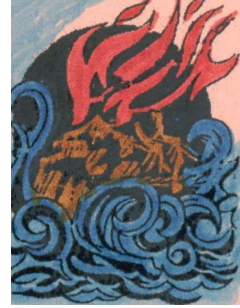


PROGRESS IN BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Languages spoken in the world:	6,912
Languages with some or all of the Bible:	2,426
Translation programs in progress in languages without adequate Scripture: for hundreds of millions of people:	1,941
Languages needing Bible translation work to begin: for people groups totaling 196 million.	2,286

“The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is upon me, for the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.” (Isaiah 61:1. NLT)

“The gospel must first be preached to all the nations.” - Y’shua (Mark 13:10)



WEATHER IS BREAKING RECORDS AROUND THE WORLD

The climate this year is being called a “100-year weather rarity.” The world has experienced a string of record-breaking weather events from early 2007, from tropical storms, hurricanes, typhoons, tornados, to floods, heat waves, forest fires, snowfalls in South Africa, and to the Arabian Peninsula’s first tropical cyclone.

South Asia’s worst monsoon flooding in recent memory has affected 30 million people in India, Bangladesh and Nepal, destroying croplands, livestock and property and raising fears of a health crisis in the densely-populated region.

Heavy rains also doused southern China in June, with nearly 14 million people affected by floods and landslides that killed 120 people.

There had also been abnormally heavy rains in northern Europe, UK, N Korea, Sudan, Mozambique, the Sahel of north Africa, Uruguay, the USA and Australia.

England and Wales had their wettest May and June since records began in 1766, resulting in extensive flooding, more than \$6 billion in damage, and nine deaths.

Germany swung from its driest April since country-wide observations started in 1901 to its wettest May on record.

In S America, Uruguay had its worst flooding since 1959, in May.

Huge waves swamped 68 islands in the Maldives in May, and the Arabian Sea had its first documented cyclone in June, touching Oman and Iran.

There have been extreme heat waves in southeastern Europe and Russia. In many European countries, April was the warmest ever recorded. The World Meteorological Organisation said global land surface temperatures in January and April were likely the warmest since records began in 1880, at more than 1C higher than the average for those months.

And in South Africa and South America this year there was unusual snowfall.

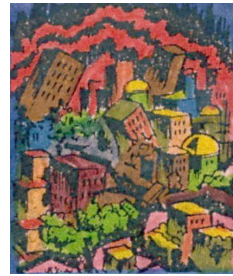
Although the recent wacky weather has no clear-cut cause, the extreme weather is getting more scientists to sound the alarm.

Y’shua the Messiah prophesied about endtime weather conditions?

“There will be mighty and violent **earthquakes** in various places, and **plagues**, (*pestilences, malignant, contagious or infectious diseases, and deadly, devastating epidemics*), and **famines**; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven ... And there will be signs in the sun and moon and stars, and upon earth despair among nations, with perplexity at **the roaring and tossing of the sea**. Men’s hearts will faint from terror, being apprehensive of what is coming upon the world; for the *very* powers of the heavens will be shaken.” (Luke 21:11, 25-26)

In addition to the devastating floods in many places, there was also a **super earthquake**, a **super hurricane**, and a **super fire** in August. Such disasters are not new, but they do emphasise that ...

“... the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth ... For the intense longing of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.” (Romans 8:22, 19)



PERU: POWERFUL 8.0 EARTHQUAKE

AUG 15, 07. A powerful 8.0 magnitude earthquake hit the coast of Peru, on 15 August, killing more than 500 people, injuring at least 1,500 people, and leaving thousands homeless.

In the oasis city of Ica of 120,000 near the epicentre, a fourth of the buildings collapsed. At least 200 people were buried in the rubble of a church where they had been attending a service.

“The dead are also scattered by the dozens on the streets. We don’t have lights, water, communications. Most houses have fallen. Churches, stores, hotels - everything is destroyed,” the mayor said, sobbing. At least 15 major aftershocks followed, some as strong as magnitude-6.3.

President Alan Garcia thanked God that the earthquake had not caused “a catastrophe with an immense number of victims.” In 1970, a 7.9 earthquake high in the Peruvian Andes triggered a landslide that buried the town of Yungay and killed 66,000 people. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/6953486.stm>

There were also powerful earthquakes in ...

VANUATU. S. Pacific. 7.2. Aug 1, 07

JAKARTA, Indonesia: 7.5. Aug 8, 07



HURRICANE DEAN'S SWEEP FROM CARRIBEAN TO MEXICO

AUG 19-23, 07. Hurricane Dean, the first hurricane of the Atlantic season, began near Haiti and Jamaica, where it claimed 12 lives. It then side-swept the Cayman Islands; and as it moved westward, Dean strengthened into a monstrous Category 5 hurricane (the highest category), and then began to slam the coasts of Mexico and Belize with winds up to 165 mph (265 kph), and gusts that reached 200 mph (322 kph).

In Mexico, tens of thousands of people were evacuated ahead of the storm, as workers hammered plywood over the windows of hotels along the tourist strip, where Hurricane Wilma caused \$3 billion in losses in 2005.

Dean toppled trees and houses and created havoc as it crossed Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula.

Mexico's state oil company, Petroleos de Mexico, evacuated all of its 14,000+ offshore workers in the southern Gulf of Mexico, including the giant Cantarell oil field, which Dean was soon pounding after weakening as it crossed the Yucatan peninsula. (Shutting the 407 oil wells resulted in a production loss of 2.7 million barrels of oil and 2.6 billion cubic feet of natural gas per day.) The hurricane then moved across the Gulf into southern Mexico.

Hurricane Dean was the third-most intense Atlantic hurricane to make landfall since record-keeping began in the 1850s.

Category Five storms are rare - only three have hit the US since record-keeping began. The worst storm to hit Latin America in modern times was 1998's Hurricane Mitch, which killed nearly 11,000 people and left more than 8,000 missing, most in Honduras and Nicaragua.



DEATH TOLL MOUNTS IN DEADLY WILDFIRES



AUG 24. Forest fires are again ravaging swathes of southern Europe.

A multitude of blazes killed at least 63 people in **Greece**, where fire fighters have battled multiple forest fires since June, after several heat waves and months of drought, and temperatures recently touching 40C (104F). Tens of thousands of hectares (acres) of forests and dozens of houses have been burned.

Many people have been trapped by fires fanned by winds of up to 87 kph. The fires moved so fast that people were cut off before they could escape. At least nine people are reported to have burnt to death in their cars as they attempted to flee the flames. Fire crews said they had found at least 30 bodies in villages near the town, as they searched burned out cars and houses.

Italy, Sicily, and Portugal were also hit by fires at the same time.

For an expanded account of recent disasters, please see **DISASTERS July and August 2007**.

APOSTASY

DUTCH CATHOLIC BISHOP: “CHRISTIANS SHOULD PRAY TO ALLAH”

AUG 14, 07. The Roman Catholic bishop of Breda in the Netherlands wants Christians to pray to Allah. He says Holland should look to Indonesia where the Christian churches already pray to Allah. It is common in the Arab world for Christian and Muslim Arabs use the words God and Allah interchangeably.

Bishop Martinus Petrus Maria Muskens told Dutch TV: “Allah is a very beautiful word for God. Shouldn’t we all say that from now on we will call God ‘Allah’?”

Muskens says it could take another 100 years, but eventually the name Allah will be used by Dutch churches. And that will promote rapprochement between the two religions.

Muskens worked in Indonesia more than 30 years ago. “Someone like me has prayed to ‘Allah yang maha kuasa’ (Almighty God) for eight years in Indonesia, and other

priests have for 20-30 years. In the heart of the Eucharist, God is called Allah over there, so why can't we start doing that together?" he said.

In the last part of his statement, he said: **"God doesn't care what we call Him."**

An Islamic American Relations spokesman Ibrahim Hooper thinks it is a great idea. "It reinforces the fact that Muslims, Christians and Jews all worship the same God," Hooper told *FoxNews*. "I don't think the name is as important as the belief in God and following God's moral principles. I think that's true for all faiths."

That's false! It's the ecumenical attitude today! God has more than 200 names or titles in the Scriptures including Elohim, El Shaddai, Adonai, Shepherd, Judge, Father, Counselor, Comforter, Advocate, and the Most High.

But the personal Name of God is YHWH – Yahweh – which means "The eternally-existing One." This is His "memorial Name to all generations." (Exodus 3:15)

According to Yahweh Himself, His Name is **very** important to Him.

"You shall not take the Name of YHWH your God in vain; for YHWH will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain." (Exodus 20:7)

For a study on the Names of God, see our new edition of,

"THE NAME ABOVE ALL NAMES,"



It is on our website, and we trust to reprint it soon. ## LINK

SCOTLAND: DOCTORS BANNED FROM EATING LUNCH AT DESK

AUG 14, 07. Doctors and health workers in Scotland have been banned from eating lunch at their desks during the Ramadan fast - in case it offends their Muslim colleagues.

Willful blindness has now become standard practice in cases like this; the officials who instituted the ban openly admit they did it out of fear, even while parroting the usual "politically-correct tolerance-speak."

Health chiefs believe the sight of food will upset Muslim workers when they are celebrating the religious festival Ramadan. The lunch trolley is also to be wheeled out of bounds as the 30-day fast begins next month. Also all vending machines should be removed from areas where Muslims work. <http://littlegreenfootballs.com>



“GIVE ME SCOTLAND OR I DIE!”

– John Knox

JOHN KNOX (1514 – 1572) was a Scottish religious reformer who took the lead in reforming the Church in Scotland.

He is widely regarded as the father of the Protestant Reformation in Scotland and of the Church of Scotland. Well might this great reformer, John Knox, cry out again, today, **“Give me Scotland or I die!”**



HARRY POTTER COMING TO SUNDAY SCHOOL

The new “Mixing it up with Harry Potter” study guides from the Church of England is a 12-part series that will use scenes from the J K Rowling’s Harry

Potter books and movies to help children discuss big issues such as death, sacrifice, loneliness, fear, mercy and grief. “Jesus used story-telling to engage and challenge his listeners,” said Bishop John Pritchard of Oxford, speaking on behalf of the curriculum.

“There’s nothing better than a good story to make people think, and there’s plenty in the Harry Potter books to make young people think about the choices they make in their everyday lives.” <http://tmatt.gospelcom.net/column/2007/08/08/>

“The time will come when *people* will not tolerate sound doctrine ... *They* will turn away from hearing the truth, and will turn aside *and listen to fables.*” (2 Timothy 4:3-4)



“DANGEROUS” MIDDLE EAST SUMMIT AHEAD

President George Bush has called for a high-level summit as a major step towards a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

With only 16 months left in office, George Bush and Condoleezza Rice have been urging PA chairman Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli PM Ehud Olmert to meet regularly in the hope of creating a dynamic that will lead to a breakthrough at November's conference.

While the summit, under the chairmanship of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, will not immediately create a Palestinian state, the plan is evidently to forge [principles](#) for the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Abbas has been meeting with Olmert, and also with Jordan's King Abdullah, reportedly discussing plans for the summit.

Israeli opposition leaders warn that the summit will mark the climax of a heavy series of pressures upon Israel to agree formally to the formation of a Palestinian state in Judea, Samaria and Gaza - just kilometers from Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Ben Gurion International Airport.

IDF (Israel Defence Force) Col. (res.), Moti Yogev, says the Bush Administration, working under the pressure of the 2008 elections, is planning to hit the Iranian nuclear infrastructures. This is why the President is in such a rush to give the Palestinians and the moderate Moslem states weapons deals, and a Palestinian state - in order to silence them in anticipation of the planned attack on Iran. Yogev says, Bush and his partners, Abbas and Olmert, all have an unpleasant political situation, and this is prodding them to take steps they hope will improve their standing.

Yogev says we must be very far from being complacent, however: “[Israeli Cabinet ministers] are again working, trying to give between 70 and 90% of Judea and Samaria to the PA for a state.

“True, some say the present government does not have the political strength to pull it off. But what is now on the agenda is just a signature on a [‘declaration of principles’](#) for the establishment of a Palestinian state.

“Even if the implementation is put off, it will still be an international Israeli commitment, and this is very grave. In addition, if it is marketed as a way of saving Israel from the Iranian nuclear threat, it will be very hard to convince the average Israeli of the dangers of abandoning most of Judea and Samaria - despite what has happened in Gaza.”

The only way to stop this, Yogev writes, is for the “nationalist, religious, Zionist camp to wake up, unite as one, and work together ... We have the strength to declare firmly that the Land of Israel belongs to the People of Israel, and that any thought of giving it to ‘moderate’ murderers is immoral and will not bring peace or security.”

MK Yuval Shteinitz (Likud) told Arutz-7 that the summit is something that must be strongly opposed: “This summit could well lead to a Palestinian state, with clear Hamas and Iranian influence, right on the doorstep of Tel Aviv. Even if it just serves as a small support for this idea, the summit is something that we must not allow.” (Shteinitz served as head of the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee in the previous Knesset.)

Though plans are proceeding apace for the summit to be held, several major stumbling blocks remain - including the refusal of [Saudi Arabia](#) to announce its participation, and the questionable status of Mahmoud Abbas.

Conflicting reports abound as to whether [Hamas](#) and [Fatah](#) are on the road to [peace](#) between them OR to a resumption of [hostilities](#). If the latter, then Mahmoud Abbas could find himself a target of assassination; a statement by Hamas elements accuses him of “launching a war against Hamas together with the Zionist occupation forces.” – Source Arutz-7

NEGOTIATIONS OVER TEMPLE MOUNT

Under the 1993 Oslo Peace Pact, negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians began with the easier issues, and left the sticky issues (Jerusalem, and Palestinians statehood and refugees, to the last). When these issues came up for serious negotiation at Camp David in 2000, the talks broke down, and intifada followed. This time around, the concerned parties are seeking to thrash out the principles for a final solution [before](#) the summit begins.

The hot topic in Israel right now is the negotiations going on between PM Olmert and Arab representatives.

According to a report in the Israeli newspaper *Yediot Acharonot*, Olmert is willing to discuss joint Israeli-Arab control over the Temple Mount compound.

Several reports say that Palestinian negotiators who are drafting an agreement behind the scenes with Prime Minister Ehud Olmert’s office, have made clear they will not accept any final peace deal with Israel unless the Jewish state forfeits the Temple Mount, Judaism’s holiest site.

A chief Arab negotiator told *WorldNetDaily* that “there can be no agreement with Israel unless we get complete sovereignty of the Mount. Once Palestinian control over the [Temple Mount] is fixed, then we will make assurances for Jewish visits to the site.”

The same negotiator said aides from Mahmoud Abbas’ Fatah organization have been working out the details of a “final status” agreement, which they intend to present in November at a U.S.-sponsored international summit on the Middle East.

Other issues on the table reportedly include the division of united Jerusalem and permanent borders between Israel and the PA.

Asked whether Olmert is willing to forfeit the Temple Mount in an agreement with the Palestinians, David Baker, a spokesman for the prime minister, had no comment.

This “Palestinian” position today remains as solid and unyielding as it was when Arafat scuttled the talks at Camp David in July 2000.

And while the terrorism over the last seven years awakened many Israelis to the true goal and nature of the “Palestinian” leadership and people who consistently supported and celebrated “suicide” and massacres, it has driven others to advocate [appeasement](#).

There are now influential Israeli leftists urging the government to relinquish Israel’s claim to Mt Moriah that God calls “My Holy Mountain.” (Psalm 2:6)

“GIVE THEM THE MOUNT”

Writing in *Ha’aretz* in mid-August, commentator Akiva Eldar said; “Give them the Temple Mount!”

Eldar argues that religious Jews won’t agree to surrender the Mount, and neither will extremist “Palestinians.” So the answer is for Olmert “to take away the main contentious elements preoccupying the religious extremists ... and to hand them over to the [moderate](#) secularists.” The Temple Mount should be offered to the PLO at the November conference, and taken away from the Jews altogether, he says.

Eldar, is a diplomatic affairs analyst who also views the Christian Zionist-Israel relationship as an “unholy alliance.”



PERES’ ‘SECRET’ PLAN WOULD GIVE JUDEA AND SAMARIA TO ARABS

Recent reports say that President Shimon Peres has quietly drafted a plan for the Jewish State to evacuate and transfer to the PA nearly the

entire area of Judea and Samaria, along with several Arab-Israeli cities located within pre-1967 Israel.

Peres presented his initiative to [PM Olmert](#) and to [top Abbas aides](#) soon after he took office as President last month. Olmert is said to be considering the plan and he “agrees with much of its contents.”

Peres' plan calls for Israel to hand 97% of the West Bank over to Abbas, with Israel retaining a small number of the territory's Jewish communities.

In exchange for Israel keeping some land, the Jewish state will give the PA control of Arab Israeli cities north of Tel Aviv which, together with the evacuated West Bank territory, would amount to the equivalent of 100% of the West Bank.

The West Bank is within rocket range of Tel Aviv and Israel's international airport; and it is home to some of Judaism's holiest sites.

HISTORY OF THE TEMPLE MOUNT



MOUNT MORIAH, in the time of Abraham, was a part of the Jebusite city of Salem.

In 1017 BC, King David bought the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, and the whole temple mount of Mount Moriah, for a place of sacrifice – for 600 shekels of gold. (2 Samuel 24:24. 1 Chronicles 21:18-26, 2 Chronicles 3:1).

The First Jewish Temple was built by King Solomon in the 10th century B.C. It was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.

The Second Temple was rebuilt in 520-515 BC after Jerusalem was freed from Babylonian captivity. It was expanded and embellished by King Herod. That temple was destroyed by the Roman Empire in A.D. 70. Both temples stood for about 400 years.

The Jewish Temple was the centre of religious Jewish worship, and housed the Holy of Holies, including the Ark of the Covenant where the Sh'khinah - God's Presence dwelt. It served as the primary location for the offering of sacrifices and was the main gathering place in Israel during Jewish holidays.

The Mosque of Omar – the Dome of the Rock – built in AD 691, now sits on the temple mount, marking the place where Muslims believe Muhammad, the founder of Islam, ascended to heaven.

Nearby is the Al Aqsa Mosque which was constructed around A.D. 709.

Jerusalem is not mentioned in the Quran. Islamic tradition states Mohammed took a journey in a single night from “a sacred mosque” – believed to be in Mecca in southern Saudi Arabia – to “the farthest mosque” and from a rock there ascended to heaven. The farthest mosque later became associated with the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

Although currently under Israeli control, Jews and Christians are barred from [praying](#) on the Mount.

The Temple Mount was opened to the general public until September 2000 when the Palestinians started their intifada by throwing stones at Jewish worshipers, after then-candidate for prime minister Ariel Sharon visited the area.

Following the onset of violence, the new Sharon government closed the Mount to non-Muslims, using checkpoints to control all pedestrian traffic for fear of further clashes with the Palestinians.

The Temple Mount was reopened to non-Muslims in August 2003. It still is open but only for a few hours on Sundays through Thursdays, 7:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., and not on any Christian, Jewish or Muslim holidays or other days considered “sensitive” by the Muslim Waqf.

During “open” days, Jews and Christian are allowed to ascend the Mount, usually through organized tours and only if they conform first to a strict set of guidelines, which includes demands that they not [pray](#) or bring any “[holy objects](#)” to the site. Visitors are banned from entering any of the mosques without direct Waqf permission.

“Great is YHWH; and greatly to be praised,
in the city of our God, *in* His holy Mountain.
Beautiful *in its* elevation, the joy of the whole earth,
is Mount Zion on the sides of the north,
the City of the Great King.” (Psalm 48:1-2)

Zion is a term that refers to Jerusalem, and particularly to the Temple Mount where YHWH dwelt. - (Isaiah 8:18)

SOME INTERESTING BRIEFS

HAMAS now has a well-trained army, 13,000 strong, and is preparing for a confrontation with Israel. The “disengagement” (from Gaza in 2005) has “boosted the terror groups’ morale and capabilities.”

IRAN'S hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said in mid-August that Israel was the standard bearer of Satan and the Jewish state would soon fall apart.

IRAN DEVELOPS 900-KG 'SMART BOMB'

Iran has developed a 2,000-pound (900 kg) "smart bomb" according to a Defence Ministry statement. The guided bomb, named Qased (Messenger), was developed by specialists within the ministry and is now operational. It could be dropped from F-4 and F-5 jets.

RUSSIA SENDS MISSILES TO SYRIA

Russia began delivering 50 anti-aircraft missiles to Syria on 20 Aug. The Pantsyr-S1E anti-aircraft missiles are part of a \$900 million contract signed earlier this year between Syria and a Russian state arms firm. - *Daily Telegraph* August 21, 2007

ISRAEL TO BUY ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILES

The Israeli Air Force will buy advanced US-made Patriot PAC-3 missiles from Lockheed Martin, capable of intercepting aircraft and long-range ballistic missiles, including the type used by Syria.

RENEW ANIMAL SACRIFICES ON MOUNT

A radical member of Israel's Sanhedrin says sacrifices should be renewed on the Temple Mount. "When the people of Israel were in the Diaspora, sacrifices were not possible, but now they are," he said.



HEAVY LOSSES SWEEP WORLD STOCK MARKETS

"TO HELL AND BACK"

This is how one newspaper described the scary stock market plunge in mid-August.

It began in the U.S. where domestic financial markets fell 11.1%, and more than \$100 billion was wiped out. But the crisis there quickly affected global markets, and stock plunged around the world.

In the UK shares fell 3.1%, and £110bn was wiped off the value of leading shares. In Japan, the Nikkei index closed down 2%; in Hong Kong 3.7%; Singapore lost almost 3.7%; India's Sensex index lost 4.3% of its value. France's Cac-40 index was

2.6% lower; Germany's Dax-30 was down 1.7%. Australia stock was down by 5.5% - \$35 billion wiped out.

Australian home loan firm RAMS saw its shares sink 36% after it had failed to refinance \$A6.17 billion (\$US5 bn; £2.5 bn) in debt after the credit crunch spurred by the crisis in the US housing market.

The financial market volatility was triggered by the US sub-prime mortgage sector, which offers higher-risk loans to people with a poor credit history.

As US interest rates rose and the housing bubble burst, a growing number of sub-prime borrowers defaulted on their loans. This led to extensive financial difficulties for a number of investment funds with heavy exposure to the sector - and triggered fears of a wider financial crisis.

No-one knew how deep the stock market would crash – and how far the crisis would go.

One executive of a mortgage business in the US said: “I think I’ll take the rest of the year off until this thing sorts out. It’s full-on panic mode here, with mortgage companies closing every day.

In response to the plunge, and trying to ease fears over available credit, the US Federal Reserve along with other world central banks injected over \$400 billion into the financial system to prop it up. But all steps only seemed to make markets more nervous.

It was only after the Federal Reserve Chairman, Ben S Bernanke, reduced the Reserve’s discount rate from 6.25% to 5.75% that a rebound began on Wall St (the US stock market). And markets around the world began to recover. But fears persist.

Credit Suisse strategist Adnan Kacukalic said the rebound could be short-lived with further fallout from the sub-prime mortgage scandal in the US. The basic problems have not gone away!

The basic problem is debt. The world is awash in debt, from individuals to governments. The US itself has debts amounting to many trillions of dollars. It only stands to reason that there must be an accounting time.

The Book of James warns of the “Last Days” ...

“... the rich *will* “weep and wail because of the miseries that are coming upon you. **Your wealth has become rotten**, and your garments are moth-eaten. **Your gold and silver have corroded**, and their corrosion will testify against you and will consume your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the Last Days!” (James 5:1-3)

And the destruction of our great commercial system (Babylon) is also described in Revelation:

“And the kings of the earth, who committed *acts of* immorality and lived in luxurious revelling with her, will weep and wail over her, when they see the smoke of her burning, standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment, saying, ‘Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! **For in one hour your judgment has come.**’ And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their merchandise any more.” (Revelation 18:9-11)

The message in all of this is that the world’s economic and financial system is extremely fragile. The debt is so enormous, that the whole system must crash sooner or later.

The economic rulers of the world are planning a New International Economic Order. And that will become the reality at the time the Antichrist takes control of the world. And then, “woe, woe” to all who take the mark of the Beast.

“And another messenger followed, saying, ‘Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the fury of her immorality.’

“Then a third messenger followed them, saying with a loud voice, ‘If anyone **worships the beast** and his image, and **receives *his* mark on his forehead or upon his hand**, he also will drink of the wine of the fury of God, *which has been* poured full strength into the cup of His wrath; and he will be tormented with burning sulphur before the holy angels and in the Presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day and night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name’.” (Revelation 14:8-11)

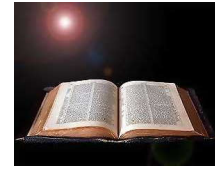
My dear readers, that time may be very near. And now is the time to make sure you and your loved ones belong to the Saviour. It is time to “put your house in order”!

See also this challenging message:

IS YOUR HOUSE IN ORDER?

(Maranatha Hope of Glory #5 - April 2000).





SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE OLD & THE NEW COVENANTS

#9 in series on the New Covenant, by Don Stanton

“For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the **bondwoman** and one by the **free woman**. But the *son* by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman *was born* as a result of the promise. This is allegorically (symbolically, figuratively) speaking, for these *women represent* two covenants: the one *proceeding* from Mount Sinai brings forth slavery; this is Hagar. Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But *the other woman corresponds to* the Jerusalem above; she is free, and is our mother.” (Galatians 4:22-26)

While there are similarities between the Old and New - both have commands, and some commands in the New Covenant are the same as those of the Law of Moses - these two are very separate systems.

The above passage in Galatians defines the Law of Moses as bringing slavery, but the Law of the Messiah – the New Covenant - brings freedom – the freedom to live the Spirit-filled life. That’s why Y’shua said;

“If you remain in My word, *then* you are truly My disciples, and you will know the Truth, and the Truth will set you free ... If then the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.” (John 8:31, 32, 36)

We are indeed under grace. (Romans 6:14). But grace and freedom does not mean lawlessness. There is a **Law of the Messiah** –

“... the law of the Spirit of Life in the Messiah, Y’shua.” (Romans 8:2)

Y’shua said: “If you love Me, you will obey what I command.” (John 14:15)

Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum, a Jewish Messianic believer, made this observation:

“Nine of the Ten Commandments are to be found in the Law of the Messiah, but this does not mean that the Law of Moses is still in force. The Law of Moses has been rendered inoperative and believers are now under the Law of the Messiah.

“If we do not kill or steal today, it is not because of the Law of Moses but because of the Law of the Messiah. On the other hand, if someone steals, he is not guilty of breaking the Law of Moses, but of breaking the Law of the Messiah.”

“Some commandments in the Law of Moses are intensified by the Law of the Messiah. For example, the Law of Moses said in Leviticus 19:18: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’; this made [man](#) the standard. The Law of the Messiah said in John 15:12: ‘Love one another, even as I have loved you’; this makes [the Messiah](#) the standard in that He loved man enough to die for him.”

Some Old Covenant dietary laws are still valuable today, but dietary codes are not mandatory in the New Covenant. Paul’s exhortation on food is in Romans 14:

“Now accept the one who is weak in faith, *but not for the purpose of* passing judgment on disputable matters. One person believes he may eat all things, but he whose *faith* is weak eats *only* vegetables. The one who eats *everything* is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat *everything* is not to judge the one who does, for God has accepted him.” (Romans 14:1-3.) See [also verses 20-23](#).

THE SABBATH QUESTION – 7 ?

On the seventh day of Creation, God rested. (Genesis 2:2). God there, right from the beginning, set an example and established a principle. Six days work, one day rest.

Later, the 7th day Sabbath Law became mandatory for Israel, as it was a sign between Yahweh and Israel:

“Also I gave them My Sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am YHWH who sanctifies them.” (Ezekiel 20:12)

Shabbat was given as a gift to Israel from God. It was a gift that helped restore and maintain the faith of the Jewish family. It was intended to be a blessing that would bring refreshment and spiritual growth to each family, and to the whole nation.

As a part of Israel, Y’shua and the apostles observed that Sabbath. But when it came to Gentile believers, no commandment on the Sabbath was given to them. It is conspicuously absent in the epistles, and it was not an issue at the Council of Jerusalem where the apostles and elders met and discussed Gentile believers, and issued instructions for them.

“For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials: that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; if you keep yourselves free from such things, you do well.” (Acts 15:28-19)

Neither circumcision nor Sabbath was enjoined upon the Gentile believers. And neither were Gentile believers commanded to worship on Sunday. In the epistles, the only mention of the word Sabbath is in Colossians 2:16, where it says:

“Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day.”

And there’s also Paul’s adjudication in Romans:

“One man regards one day as *more sacred* than others; another man regards every day *alike*. Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes one day *as special*, does so to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. He who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God.” (Romans 14:5-6)

So the apostles did not reiterate the 4th commandment, “Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it.” The Gospel was now going to the whole world, and the LORD, and the apostles, knew it would be impossible for all the church to keep the Sabbath at the same time, or even on the same day. And besides, like circumcision, it was a covenant ordinance for Israel.

The disciples undoubtedly recognised that God would not enforce Shabbat - the sign He had given to the nation Israel – upon the Gentiles in the pagan world where mostly there was no weekly holiday at all. They recognized that Shabbat was indeed a wonderful gift from God for Israel. And one day, God would give such a gift to the Gentiles also.

In the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit indwelling believers would lead them into the truths they needed to know, from the Scriptures. And the Holy Spirit would reveal the reason why God had given laws; and why He set an example by resting on the seventh day after six days of work.

To put it simply, God does not want people to have to work seven days a week! Man needs time to recuperate from the stress and strains of daily life. He needs to relax and spend time with his family, and with God.

Today, in most Western nations, it has become possible for most people to have **two** weekly off days. And in most other nations people have one day off.

But recuperation means much more than having a day off. We need rest for our minds, for our souls, and nourishment for our spiritual lives. And on the day off we should be able to have more time with God.

Just as circumcision is not wrong for Gentiles, it is not wrong to have a Sabbath rest on Saturday, or any other day of the week if you want to. And I don’t think any reader should object to the principle of giving prime time to our Heavenly Master. After all, it is in His Presence that we enter into His Rest!

The **principle of REST**, both **physical** and **spiritual**, is inherent in **God’s New Covenant plan** for believers, even as it was in the Old Testament.

“Return to your rest, O my soul, for YHWH has dealt bountifully with you.” (Psalm 116:7)

Our spiritual Rest is in the Person of the Messiah. And Y’shua has promised to give us His rest.

“Come to Me, all *you* who are weary and burdened, and **I will give you rest**. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you will find rest for your souls.” (Matthew 11:28-29)

This spiritual rest should be a continuous, moment by moment experience, even in our busy work week.

“Therefore, since the **promise** concerning entering **His rest** still stands, let us be afraid *of the possibility* that any one of you should seem to fall short of it.” “Now it is we who have believed that do enter **that rest**.” “For he who has entered **God’s rest** has also ceased from his *own* works, just as God did from His. Let us therefore be diligent to enter **that rest**, so that no-one will fall *short* by *following* the same kind of disobedience.” (Hebrews 4:1, 3, 10-11)

DO WE HAVE TO?

Do Gentile believers **have** to observe a rest day? This is like asking, Does a believer **have** to go to church? Does a believer **have** to pray and read his Bible? Does a believer **have** to tithe? Does he **have** to be baptized? Does he **have** to “break bread” regularly?

The New Covenant is not a set of “musts” and “have-to’s”! It is a life of fellowship with the Heavenly Father. Sabbath (or the Lord’s Day) for a Gentile believer is not an observance of a set, inflexible “holy day” that must be “kept”, otherwise you’re condemned - like it was in Israel under the Law. (For an Israelite, to break the Sabbath was very serious indeed. There was a death penalty attached. (See Numbers 15:32-36)

But Y’shua said: “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.” (Mark 2:27)

Sabbath is there for man’s benefit and blessing. Our Father wants us to be blessed by the rest He provides. And He invites us to enjoy as much of it as we desire.

But it is not mandatory to have the rest day on Saturday or even Sunday. In the Persian Gulf and in most Middle East countries, the “Lord’s Day” has to be on Friday, as that is the weekly holiday, and the only day possible for most believers to meet. (Hebrews 10:26)

In Israel, Saturday is the national Sabbath. (Israel was, of course, commanded to keep the Fri evening to Sat evening Sabbath as a perpetual observance. (Ex. 31:13-17). In some countries where there is a six-day working week, only Sunday is possible.

A DAY OF REST IS A BLESSING, NOT BONDAGE

God does not want us to be in bondage, but He does want to bless us with a day of rest. (Romans 14:4-6, Colossians 2:16-17). So on whatever day is possible, it will be a blessing if we sanctify the day to the Master, and thank Him for His Rest.

(For any readers who are convinced that Sabbath **must** be observed from Fri. eve to Sat. eve, I say dear friend, I respect your belief on the matter. But I believe, in the church, it is the observance of the principle that brings the blessing, rather than the exact timing.

If Fri. eve to Sat. eve Sabbath was mandatory for the church, as Seventh Day Adventists have taught, then why would God pour out His Spirit in revival on people who were not observing that timing? We know that YHWH **has** shaken various nations and poured out blessing. And none of those powerful revivals, as far I am aware of, ever led to a restoration of Fri eve to Sat eve Sabbath. Thus I say it is the **principle**, rather than the **exact time** of the Sabbath that brings a blessing to believers - and to families in particular.) Selah!

