

# HOPE IN TIMES OF DISTRESS

BY DON STANTON

THE WORLD can be a very discouraging place. In the streets and homes there's violence and fear; in the nations there's rebellion and threats of wars, and world war.

Iran threatens Israel; Turkey threatens Iran; the Arab League threatens Syria; and Syria threatens Israel and the whole region. Britain threatens Iran, Russia threatens the US, and the US threatens China; Egypt threatens Israel; Iran threatens Britain, France, Canada and the US; Israel threatens Lebanon, and Hizb'ollah threatens Tel Aviv. And there's all the other cross-fire between nations in Asia, Latin America and Africa.

Add to all this, the global financial crisis and economic woes the nations are struggling with, and also the degradation of society! It's a very sorry reality.

Worldwide there is fear and desperation, poverty and starvation, violence and corruption, hatred, intolerance and persecution. There's chaos, disasters and terrorism, all creating an aura of futility, despair and anger.

From apostasy within Christianity, to the endtime rise of Mystery Babylon – the world “ecumenical” movement, the spiritual climate of the nations is one of delusion and deception. And our political, financial and global institutions are saturated with corruption and Godlessness.

**PERILOUS TIMES HAVE COME!** (2 Timothy 3:1-5). Men are lovers of themselves, lovers of money, arrogant, revilers, blasphemers, malicious adversaries, brutal, treacherous, reckless and lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.

Freedoms that we have long held dear, are now at stake, as evil men and women, and imposters, “proceed from bad to worse.” (2 Timothy 3:13)

Because of the conditions of an evil world, many have lost hope and have thrown away their confidence and faith. With the prevailing atheistic world views, many have renounced standards of righteousness, and lend their ears, eyes, and hands to the decadent schemes of hell. Even believers in the Way, the Truth and the Life, are being waylaid by the strategies of the evil one.

Now our Heavenly Master says:

“**Be on guard** that your hearts may not be weighed down with dissipation, excessiveness, drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day come on you suddenly like a trap; for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of the earth. But **keep on the alert** at all times, **praying** that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

(Luke 21:34-36)

And the apostle Paul said:

“My brethren, **be strong in the Master**, and in the strength of His power. **Put on the whole armour of God**, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes *and strategies* of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against authorities, against the world-rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual *forces* of evil in the heavenly *places*. Therefore take up **the full armour of God**, that you may be able to **resist** in the evil day, and having done everything, to **stand firm**.” (Ephesians 6:10-13)

## **HOPE - CONFIDENT EXPECTATION**

In Hebrew 10:35 believers are exhorted:

“**Do not throw away your confidence** which has a great reward; for you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise.”

The **confidence** here, is Biblical **HOPE**; and that is **confident expectation; a confident assurance**. Hope in the Bible is not “**I hope so.**” It is “**I know so.**” And that’s what we need in today’s dark world - a strong confident expectation based on the promises of God.

So this month I want to share with you, some precious Scriptures about HOPE, with the expectation that these divine words will encourage us, and galvanise our hope – our confident expectation based on the Word of God.

Let’s start with the prayer of the apostle Paul – his prayer for all God’s people.

“I do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention *of you* in my prayers; that the God of our Master, Y’shua the Messiah, the Father of Glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in *reaching towards* a full knowledge of Him; *that* the eyes of your understanding may be enlightened, so that you will know ...

- \* what is **the hope** – *the expectation and assurance* - of His calling, and
- \* what are the riches of **His glorious inheritance** in the saints; and
- \* what is the **exceeding greatness of His power** toward us who are believing.

“*These are* in accordance with the working of His mighty strength which He exerted in the Messiah, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come.”

(Ephesians 1:16-21)

According to Paul’s prayer, there are three things that we need to know:

- 1 the hope** of the Master’s calling – why we should have confident expectation in the Messiah.
- 2 the riches of the Master’s inheritance** in us – that is the riches He has planned, and receives, through His vast redeemed and perfected Family. (We also receive an inheritance – see below). But this verse is speaking of **God’s inheritance in us**.
- 3 the great power of God** that is available to us.

These three must-knows, **hope, inheritance** and **power**, are all realities that are based on the Resurrection of Y’shua from the dead, and His Exaltation to the Throne of God – above all powers.

The apostle is actually praying that we will not be ignorant of the purposes of God in our lives. There is an “**eternal purpose** which He carried out in Y’shua the Messiah our Master, in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him.” (Ephesians 3:11-12)

We should have confident Hope because of the eternal purpose of God. He created us, He planned, He called, He provided redemption, He has given us His Spirit, and He is committed to perfecting that which concerns us. (Psalm 138:8. 1 Peter 5:10)

Again, those three things we must know ...

- 1.** God is working everything together for good in the believer’s life (Rom 8:28). He has promised never to leave us or forsake us. (Hebrews 13:5). And Y’shua our Master has promised to come again and receive us to Himself, to be with Him forever. (John 14:1-3). And He will complete His work in us (Rom 8:29-30). So we should indeed have confident expectation.
- 2.** We were created for God’s glory (Isaiah 4:7). We were purchased and redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, and have been made kings and priests in His kingdom (Rev 5:9-10). He has sealed us with His Spirit, given us a pledge of our inheritance, and made us **His own possession** for His glory. (Ephesians 1:13-14). Oh! We should be filled with confident expectation!
- 3.** We have not been left alone to struggle and “do our best.” God has given us a Spirit of power (2 Tim 1:7), and He wants us to be filled with His Spirit, and to be filled up to all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 5:18, 3:19). The Spirit of Almighty God dwells within each believer to make this real. Oh! How confident, and assured, and filled with Hope we should be!

### **REJOICING IN TRIALS**

Here’s more scriptures to quicken our expectation – **in times of trial**.

“Who shall separate us from the love of the Messiah? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ... **No!** In all these things we conquer, *and* are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor *demonic* principalities, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, either height nor depth, **nor anything else** in **all** creation, **will be able to separate us from the love of God**, which is in the Messiah, Y'shua our Master.” (Romans 8:35-39)

“And not only this, but we also exult *and* **rejoice in our tribulations**, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance *develops a maturity of* character; and *mature* character *produces* **hope – confident expectation**; and hope does not disappoint *us*, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” (Rom 5:3-5). “... **rejoicing in hope**, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.” (Romans 12:10-13)

The believer is called to **REJOICE**; to rejoice in **the Lord** always (Phil 4:4); to rejoice in **His Word** (Psalm 119:162); to rejoice in **salvation** (1 Samuel 2:1); to rejoice in **tribulations** (Rom 5:3); and to rejoice in **confident expectation**. (Rom 12:12)

### PLOUGHING IN HOPE

“Is He speaking expressly for us? Yes, *this* was written for us, for the ploughman should **plough in hope**, and the thresher should **thresh in hope**, in expectation of sharing *the crops*.” (1 Corinthians 9:10)

In our work in our Master's field, we should be filled with confident expectation. After all, it is not **our** work, but **His** work that we are to be engaged in. So we put our hands out confidently, to harvest His crops for His glory.

“Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food, will also supply and multiply your resources for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in everything so that you can *continue to* be generous, and *so that* through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.” (2 Cor. 9:10-11)

### THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL

“He has reconciled *you* in His physical body through death, in order to present you holy and blameless and beyond reproach before Him - if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from **the hope of the gospel** that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all *the* creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.” (Colossians 1:22-23)

The Gospel – the Good News - is the fundamental of our faith, and it brings great confidence.

“Now brethren, I *again* declare to you the Good News which I have *already* preached to you - *the Good News* which you have received, and on which you *take your* stand; by which also you are being saved ... For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance, that the **Messiah died for our sins**, according to the Scriptures, and that He was **buried**, and that He was *raised* on the third day according to the Scriptures.” (1 Corinthians 15:1-4)

Y'shua the Messiah is the Saviour – the LIVING Saviour!

*And because He lives, I can face tomorrow;  
Because He lives, all fear is gone,  
For I know, I know who holds the future,  
And life is worth the living, just because He lives.*

If Y'shua was still in the tomb, we would be totally without hope!

“If Messiah has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, *and* your faith also is vain ... and if Messiah has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins ... But the fact is that the **Messiah has been raised from the dead**, *and He became* the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep - (*believers who have died*).” (1 Corinthians 15:14, 17, 20)

If we kind of forget that Y'shua is alive, or if we live and act as though He was not really alive, then we are most pitiful indeed – temporarily hopeless at least.

The Gospel of the living Saviour must vibrate in our lives. This song should be in our hearts and on our lips daily. It expresses our hope – our confident assurance.

*I serve a risen Saviour, He's in the world today.  
I know that He is living, whatever man may say.  
I see His hand of mercy, I hear His voice of cheer;  
And just the time I need Him, He's always near.*

*He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today!  
He walks with me, and talks with me,  
along life's narrow way.  
He lives, He lives, salvation to impart.  
You ask me how I know He lives?  
He lives within my heart.*

The Hope of the Gospel also brings us ...

### THE ASSURANCE OF ETERNAL LIFE

“He saved us, not because of righteous works that we have done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of regeneration (*the new birth*), and *through* the renewing *power* by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us abundantly through Y'shua the Messiah our Saviour, so that, having been justified by His grace, we should become heirs having **the hope of eternal life**.” (Titus 3:5-7)

This also means **the HOPE OF GLORY** (which is also on our magazine front cover.)

“... the mystery which has been hidden from the *past* ages and generations; but has now been revealed to His saints, to whom God has chosen to make known among the nations, the glorious riches of this mystery, which is **Messiah in you, the hope – the expectation - of glory**.” (Colossians 1:26-27)

The hope of glory is the confident expectation that we will be like the Messiah who is the Shekinah – the manifestation of the glory of God. This means our ultimate glorification when our new spiritual bodies will be filled with the Shekinah.

“For whom He foreknew, He also ordained beforehand *to be* conformed to the **likeness of His Son**, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; and whom He foreordained, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also **glorified**.” (Romans 8:29-39)

Such is the assurance that the apostle Paul speaks of it as already accomplished.

### LET'S ALWAYS WEAR THE HELMET OF HOPE

“Since we are of the day, let us be sober *and self-controlled*, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, **the hope – the expectation - of salvation**.”

(1 Thessalonians 5:8)

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Master, Y’shua Messiah, who, by His great mercy, has caused us, through the resurrection of Y’shua the Messiah from the dead, to be born again into **a living hope – a living expectation** - into an inheritance which can never perish, or be corrupted, or fade away, *that is kept safe* in heaven for you, *and for all* who, through faith, are being protected by the power of *El Shaddai, Almighty God until the coming of the* deliverance that is ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter 1:3-5).

So, “**Do not throw away your confidence which has a great reward.**” (Hebrews 10:35)

“**Oh YHWH, my hope and expectation is in You.**” (Psalm 39:7)

“**For You are my Hope, my expectation;**

**O Adonai YHWH, You are my confidence  
from my youth.**” (Psalm 71:5)

“Now may **the God of hope** fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may overflow with **hope** – (confident expectation and assurance) - by the power of the Holy Spirit.” (Romans 15:13).

AMEN



## MYSTERY BABYLON IN THE SADDLE TODAY

Mystery Babylon is counterfeit religion. It’s a system that is opposed to the truth of the Word of God. It is a worldwide, multi-religious amalgam that exerts great influence over the lives of billions of people.

In the endtimes, this “united religion” rides over the political powers of the nations. The Book of Revelation describes Mystery Babylon as a woman riding on a beast. And she is an abomination:

“He carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness. There I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast *that was* full of blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns.

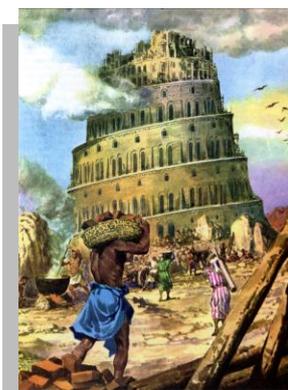
“And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and glittered with gold, precious stones and pearls; *and* in her hand *she* had a golden cup full of abominable, *repulsive things* and the filth of her immorality; and on her forehead there *was* inscribed a name *with a* mysterious meaning — **BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.**” (Revelation 17:3-5)

Mystery Babylon in Revelation 17, is a symbolic description of an age-long religious system which began at the original Babylon (the Tower of Babel). It was during the time of Nimrod, the rebellious great-grandson of Noah.

Nimrod wanted to establish Babel as his “world capital.”

Nimrod and his wife, Semiramis, developed a religion that was opposed to the truth revealed to Enoch, Methuselah, and Noah by Yahweh, the Almighty Creator. The religion of Nimrod was based on astrology and occultism. Semiramis became a high priestess, and later, "the Queen of Heaven." Nimrod became the Sun-god, and their child, Tammuz was proclaimed as "the promised Seed, the Messiah."

"And they said, 'Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in heaven, and *let us* make for ourselves a name, lest we be scattered over the face of the whole earth!'" (Genesis 11:4)



The result was that God destroyed the tower, confused the people's language, and scattered them all over the world. And wherever they went, the tribes took the Babylonian mystery religion with them - the cult of the Queen of Heaven and the Sun-god. The Queen of Heaven became identified with Venus, and was otherwise called Aphrodite, Eastre, Ashtoreth, Ishtar, and other names in various languages. The male-child Tammuz was called by names such as Baal, Horus, and Eros.

As the Revelation 17 passage says, **MYSTERY BABYLON** sat in pomp upon a Beast - the 7-headed, 10-horned beast. (The seven heads of the Beast are Biblical empires, beginning with Assyria at Babel, and ending with the Antichrist's 10-nation confederation.)

This mother of harlots controlled the peoples through her occultic powers and their religious superstitions. At the end of the age, this Babylonian religion will be very powerful, and will promote the Antichrist.

Mystery Babylon is enlarging today into a “new world religion.” Actually, is not new at all. It is the old Mystery Babylon. It is new only in that it is an amalgam of all religions that are opposed to, or not loyal to, "the Way, the Truth and the Life" - that is, the Truth of *Yahweh El Shaddai*, the Great I AM, who ...

"... in these last days ... has spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, and through whom also He made the ages *and the universe*." (Hebrews 1:2)

For years preachers have warned us about the dangers of the ecumenical movement, and of the large organisations that were striving to create a new world order, including a one-world economic system, and a one-world religion.

Very few people took much notice of them, as they did not see any immediate danger. They thought such groups would never gain enough momentum to take over the world. However, the picture has changed. Today the New World Order is like a beast, galloping across the world.

The woman in the saddle of the Beast is Mystery Babylon, the new world religion. And she is drunk with the blood of believers! (Revelation 17:6). Today, across the nations of the world, more Christians are being persecuted for their faith than ever before. Some estimates say that every year, some 160,000 Christians are killed because they are Christians. They are being slaughtered by Mystery Babylon and her political comrades.

To many well-meaning people, a one-world religion seems to be the answer to the atrocities perpetrated by religions in the name of "God." The way to unite the world, they say, is to forge a "spiritual consensus." Extract the "truth" from each religion, arrive at the "sum total of spiritual truth," and make this the new spirituality for the New Age.

In view of this "totality of truth," all people and nations are expected to sink their differences, and respect the "new planetary consciousness." Now to get some idea of how all this is progressing, and of the dangers we face, let's look back at a few modern developments.

### THE WORLD PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

At the 1993 WPR synod held in Chicago, a religious proposal was presented called the "Declaration of Global Ethic," formulated by a Swiss liberal, one-worlder theologian, Hans Kung. This "Ethic" embraces the theory which says that "the 21st century will bring about the end of the Christian interlude."

The WPR also proposed to establish a One World Religion by the year 2,000. The next big WPR summit will evidently be in 2014.



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In 1995, former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev came to San Francisco, bought a big building near the Golden Gate Bridge, and announced a meeting, called the ...

### STATE OF THE WORLD FORUM

Gorbachev sent invitations to 500 elite politicians, economists, and leaders in the leftist culture. Those who attended paid Gorbachev \$5,000 each to hear what he had to say. Here is a partial listing of the best known and most influential attendees:

George Bush Sr., Al Gore, Ted Turner, Jane Fonda, Colin Powell, Shimon Peres, Mario Cuomo, Ted Koppel, George Mitchell (former Democrat Senate Majority Leader), Zbigniew Brzezinski (Trilateral Commission Director), Shirley MacLaine, Tich Nhat Hanh (Buddhist monk), George Schulz (former Secretary of State), David Packard (billionaire), Maurice Strong (New Age leader), Desmond Tutu (Archbishop, Africa), Deepak Chopra (New Age doctor), John Naisbett (futurist).

The full list includes 141 heads of state, and 59 former heads of state.

What was the purpose of this 5-day forum? In Gorbachev's words, it was "to launch the Transition to a **New Civilization.**"

The term "New Civilization" is slowly replacing the old term "New World Order." The *McAlvany Intelligence Advisor* summed it up like this: "The main goal of this inaugural event was to work toward a synthesis and merger of the Socialist New Left (and their philosophy) with leaders of Eastern and New Age religions (and their philosophy). Evil politics mixed with a God-free religion."

A report from the meeting told of the uniting of these ultra-liberal, powerful, well-financed men and women, and the plan for their **new civilization** which is designed to produce a new people and a global government run by them. One of the real dangers to Christianity (as called for in this new civilization) will be the **outlawing of all religions that do not accept the equal validity of all other religions.** Any person in any religion who refuses to accept this new civilization and its philosophies will be "eliminated." They have not yet said how they plan to do this.

As well as the destruction of non-conformists, the "new civilization" program calls for the removal of about nine-tenths of the world's population, on environmental grounds.

Ted Turner was quoted some time back as saying: "Right now there are way too many people on the planet; we need to cut the world's population from the current 6 billion to no more than 250 to 350 million."

Radical environmentalist Sam Keen was at the Global Forum, and in a speech said: "The ecological crisis, in short, is the **population crisis.** Cut the population by 90%, and there aren't enough people left to do a great deal of harm to the environment." He drew loud applause, indicating that the big reduction in the population is the goal of the intelligentsia of the New Civilization. At the forum it was suggested that Christianity must be replaced with a more "inclusive" religion. Coupled with this would be the ending of all national sovereignty. America would become just another unit of the global government.

Speakers described Christian beliefs as "crumbled," "decayed," and "exhausted." Something must be found to replace them. Christianity's "one-God" concept would have to be given to leaders of Eastern religions.

Al Gore can go along with this. In his book, *Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit*, Gore says: "Our religious heritage is based on a **single earth goddess** who is assumed to be the fountain of all life." That "earth goddess" was, of course, **Gaia**, the ancient Babylonian earth goddess; and her satanic number, I am told, was 666. Gore totally rejects the Genesis account of creation. He writes: "Creation is god, nature in its fullness is god."

In his book he also says that those who believe in the Second Coming of Jesus are "heretical."

Now in all this we have the skeleton framework of the coming Antichrist and the False Prophet, the mandatory world religion and obedience to a global, Christ-less dictatorship.

Zbigniew Brzezynski suggested that scientists formulate some kind of a substitute religion. He said, "Science needs to develop an **ethical code** so that we do not get entangled in paradoxical fundamentalism (i.e., narrow cults, ethnicity, national or religious passions)."



## THE UNITED RELIGIONS

On June 1997, the liberal Stanford University, California, hosted a week-long interfaith meeting. There were at least two hundred "Christians" and non-Christians assembled, including Catholics, neo-Evangelicals, Buddhists, Muslims, Jews, Sikhs, Hindus, and Baha'is. And many more.

**The purpose of the meeting** was to lay the foundation for the establishment of "**The United Religions.**"

"The 'spiritual United Nations,' as some have referred to it, would be a world assembly for humanity's many spiritual traditions.

The meeting was called and presided over by a leftist Episcopalian priest, William Swing of San Francisco. Swing started his groundwork for the United Religions (UR) in 1993 when he undertook a world tour to confer with leaders of all faiths, non-Christian and otherwise - the same thing as the Pope has been doing for many years.

Swing told the *Chronicle* that his conversations with all those groups "... provided me with new spiritual insights. I feel I have been enormously enriched inwardly by spending a lot of time praying with Brahmins, meditating with Hindus, or being silent or chanting with Buddhists. I've gone back and read our own scriptures, and it's amazing how they begin to read differently when you're exposed to more truth from more people in other parts of the world."

"'You are deputized!' the Rev. William E. Swing, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of California, told delegates as they prepared to go home. 'Tell the people that there is a **United Religions**, and that somewhere in the world, it is beginning to happen: that the religions are going to have an oasis where they can talk about peace.'"

A spokesman for the UR told the prestigious magazine, *The New American*, that Bishop Swing and his assistants have held "regional conferences" across the world in conjunction with UN's "Temple of Understanding."

"But the (Holy) Spirit explicitly says that in latter times some will turn away from the faith, paying attention to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared as with a hot branding iron." (1 Timothy 4:1, 2)

## **THE TEMPLE OF UNDERSTANDING**

The United Nations has an organization called "The Temple of Understanding," a group sailing under the guise of "religion," and conducting what they call "Spiritual Summit Conferences" in conjunction with the UN's political summits.

The UN will eventually develop into (or be replaced by) the one-world government under the power of the Antichrist, and the one world religion will be destroyed and replaced by a one-world Satanic worship.

## **Antichrist will Co-operate with all Religions**

The Antichrist will be what the title implies – anti-Christ and anti-God. However, in the beginning he will not be anti-religion, because the majority of the world belongs to

a major religion, or has connections to one. If at his appearance he were to ban all religions, there would be such an uprising that he would not be able to carry out his satanic agenda. Therefore, he will go hand-in-hand with the United Religions to get their religious and financial backing and adherence. Once he has that, and his program is totally solidified, he will turn on the united world religion, and destroy it. (Revelation 17:16)



Former UN Assistant Secretary-General, **Robert Muller**, (who later became chancellor of the University of Peace in Costa Rica), is quoted as saying: "If Christ came back to earth, his first visit would be to the United Nations to see if his dream of human oneness and brotherhood had come true."

Muller advised the United Religions, "Peace will be impossible without the **taming of fundamentalism** through a United Religions that professes faithfulness only to the **global spirituality** and to the health of the planet."

Hans Kung's "**Global Ethic**," and Gorbachev's proposed "**Earth Charter**," and also Swing's "**United Religions**" all provide an illustration of "monism," the world view that says the cosmos itself is divine and so are we. If they had a golden text it would be, "All is one and one is all, and we are all a part of a pantheistic collective."

Monism is exactly the opposite of the Christian "theist" view which declares that God is the Creator of all things and that He alone is divine, as is not the case of that which He created.

These men - Gorbachev, Swing, and other betrayers of the Reformation - are, by their ecumenical endeavors, promoting a world religion that will soon be destroyed by the Antichrist and his ten cohorts.

See Revelation 17:16-17 ...

"The ten horns which you saw, along with the beast, will hate the harlot. They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire, for God has put it into their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by surrendering their sovereignty to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled."

Mystery Babylon is a great religious deception, and we see many manifestations of this deception today. One of the latest expressions of Mystery Babylon has been initiated by Saudi Arabia, Austria and Spain.



**SAUDIA ARABIA INITIATES  
NEW MULTI-RELIGIOUS ORGANISATION**

*beliefnet.com* have circulated the following report ...

OCT 14/11. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is financing a new organisation designed to bring all the world's religions together.

"The organization hopes to prevent conflict through interfaith dialogue," writes Spencer Kimball for the German news site *Deutsche Welle*. "The foreign ministers of **Austria, Saudi Arabia and Spain** have signed the founding treaty of a new international organization designed to foster dialogue between the world's major religions."

"The thesis is valid that world peace cannot exist without peace between the world's major religions," Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal said during the signing ceremony in Vienna.

*The King Abdullah Center for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue*, initiated and financed largely by Saudi money, is set to have its seat in Vienna. Plans envision an organisation with a governing body composed of 12 representatives from the world's five largest religions.

The governing body is set to be staffed by two Muslims (Sunni and Shi'ite), three Christians (Catholic, Anglican and Orthodox), a Buddhist, a Hindu and a Jew. The organisation will also have a consulting body with 100 representatives from the five world religions plus other faiths as well as academics and members of civil society.

Austria's Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger said that the organization's structures are designed to ensure that none of the represented religions dominates the organisation. The three founding states are also open to the membership of other countries.

Saudi King Abdullah initiated the idea for the centre after visiting Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican in 2007, the first Saudi monarch to do so. Shortly thereafter, King Abdullah stated that Christians and Muslims should offer a **common message of peace** to humanity.

Abdullah then initiated an interfaith dialogue in Mecca in 2008 followed by a second meeting in Madrid with Jewish representation, and a third meeting in Vienna's Hofburg in 2009.

The initiative is not new. In 2003, the Christian Broadcasting Network reported on a UN-sponsored summit of the world's religions. "**A one world government and a one world religion** — it may just sound like fiction from the popular *Left Behind* novel series," reported Wendy Griffith for CBN News. "But some Christians say this scenario may be closer than most people think.

Earlier this fall in Geneva, hundreds of spiritual and religious leaders met for a **peace summit**. And although all the major faiths were there, including some who claim to represent Christianity, it was clear that Jesus was not invited."

To say that many Christians do not welcome the notion of a one-world religion would be an incredible understatement. Just in recent weeks, long-time TV prophecy preacher Jack Van Impe ended decades of broadcasting on the Trinity Broadcasting Network — charging that popular author and pastor Rick Warren has been too cozy with Muslims.

Van Impe charged that the intent is a merger of Islam and Christianity — *Chrislam*. Warren scoffs at the notion, saying that he supports a Christian-Muslim dialogue — and that Christians are required to love all Muslims and win them to Jesus.

Read more: <http://blog.beliefnet.com/news/2011/10/saudis-underwrite-organization-to-bring-worlds-religions-under-one-roof.php#ixzz1b5I5mM00>



# PERSECUTION

## IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AND WORLDWIDE

Regardless of how moderate a form of Islam a country can embrace, and regardless of a government's willingness to co-operate with the West, non-Islamic peoples still suffer persecution under these Islamic governments. In Iraq, Christians and other minority religions have faced many attacks since the fall of Saddam Hussein.

More than 800,000 Christians lived in Iraq 10 years ago, and now fewer than half of those remain, having left for more peaceful lands. Churches are being bombed and even children are attacked. A nine-year-old Iraqi boy was beaten in front of his class last year and called an "infidel" because of his Christian faith.

In Egypt, since the ousting of Hosni Mubarak, attacks on Christians have increased. In early October in Cairo, the Coptic Christians were persecuted while protesting the burning of two churches. Some of those attacked were run down by Egyptian military vehicles or beaten and dragged through the streets.

Let's pray for believers throughout the Arab and Islamic world. Every day the persecution goes on. Every day Christians are killed because of their faith. Many are in prison, and are being tortured. Pray for the mighty enabling grace of God to uphold all who are suffering for His Name.

The persecuted believers need all the HOPE promises in our opening article. And here is an exhortation for all who follow Y'shua the Way.

"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body." (Hebrews 13:3)

### International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted

There is an annual day of prayer held which helps to focus widespread attention on the tragic situation of hundreds of thousands of persecuted believers. This year it was Sunday, Nov 13<sup>th</sup>. But **every** day we should remember our suffering brothers and sisters, and their little ones. One day we also might be included in their number.

**IRAN:** Youcef Nadarkhani continues to await execution in an Iranian prison for having repeatedly refused to renounce his Christianity. The case of this courageous man has been well reported, and the world is watching as Iran shamelessly bullies an innocent pastor.

The true plight of the house churches in Iran has not received an appropriate amount of attention, though. Thankfully, Nadarkhani's story has been told, but at least **285 Christians** were arrested in Iran in just the second half of 2010, and they – like many others around the globe - suffer in obscurity.

**NIGERIA:** As many as 152 people are dead in various Nigerian states, in gunfire and bomb attacks on police stations and at least six churches. This started on November 4. The Islamist group *Boko Haram* (which means "Western education is a sin") wants to rule the area according to strict Shariah law.

At least 425 people have been killed in attacks by Boko Haram this year. *Boko Haram* has targeted churches, but has fought the established security forces as well.

Christian youths, angry at the destruction, have used burning tires to block roads, and a mosque under construction was attacked. There have been calls for President Goodluck Jonathan's Government to crack down on *Boko Haram* and stop the violence.

To learn more about persecution in Nigeria, please visit [www.persecution.net/nigeria.htm](http://www.persecution.net/nigeria.htm).

**SOMALIA AND KENYA:** The Islamist group *al-Shabab* is suspected in a recent brutal murder in Somalia, as well as others across the border in Kenya. *Al-Shabab* are experts in suicide bombings, and are a constant threat to Christian civilians. And they are an al-Qaida-linked Islamic group that wants to enforce a strict form of Shariah in Somalia.

17-year-old Guled Jama Muktar was beheaded as he got ready for school on September 25. (*Al-Shabab* believed the boy's family had been holding secret Bible studies at their home after having moved to Somalia from Kenya). After his parents left for work, the militants entered Muktar's house and hacked off his head. After burying their son's body, Muktar's family fled the area, fearing they too would be murdered.

Two people were killed in a grenade attack at the East African Pentecostal Church in Garissa, Kenya. A woman and her two children also sustained injuries. Witnesses said that after the explosion, the attackers spoke in Swahili, saying, "This is just the beginning."

A Somali Christian refugee in Kenya was attacked and beaten unconscious with iron and wooden clubs on Nov. 6. Because he is a Somali, *al-Shabab* viewed the 25-year-old Hassan as an apostate from Islam. His attackers left him crumpled in a church entrance. He and his family had sought refuge in Kenya from the turmoil in Somalia, and Hassan's mother now feels obliged to move again.

The Kenyan military invaded Somalia on October 16 to battle *al-Shabab* after the terrorist group committed a series of kidnappings and attacks in Kenya. The French military reportedly assisted Kenya in bombing near an *al-Shabab* stronghold.

Please pray regularly for our brothers and sisters around the world, facing major opposition, violence and even death for the crime of following Jesus Christ. May the God and Father of Jesus Christ bless them and strengthen them, giving them comfort and peace in the midst of great peril. May God give the governments of these countries wisdom and discretion through His Spirit, and may these suffering people seek protection and justice from God rather than allowing vengeance and retaliation to burn in their hearts. They need help. And we need to pray for them. - [www.khouse.org](http://www.khouse.org)



## CHRISTIANS DIE IN ERITREAN MILITARY CAMPS

Denied their most basic needs for survival, three Christians have died in military camps.

Two Christian women died in the Adersete Military Camp in western Eritrea, according to a local source, as they were confined in a dungeon-like cell intended for religious prisoners. Terhase, 28, and Ferewine, 21, both employees of a wholesale store, were arrested during a prayer meeting in 2009 at a private home. After two years of physical military torture and the denial of medical care, the women succumbed to starvation and poor health.

Within weeks of these deaths, Angesom, a 26-year-old Christian, also died in an Eritrean military camp after serving two years. He contracted severe malaria but was denied medical treatment because of his written refusal to recant his Christian faith. He died one week later.

**Eritrea** (which shares borders with Ethiopia) has a history of severely mistreating Christians and is known as **one of the worst nations for Christian persecution**.

Do pray that the unwavering faith of Terhase, Ferewine and Angesom will be an example of Christ to unbelievers.

Pray that those mourning, and that other Christians imprisoned in Eritrea will soon be released.

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## THE "T-B-N" MISSION FIELDS



**TBN** stands for **T**ibet, **B**hutan and **N**epal.

These three adjoining countries are linked, not only by borders, but also by religion. Tibet and Bhutan are Buddhist; Nepal is Hindi-Buddhist. Each of them, officially, have freedom of religion, but the reality is a different story.



## PER - TIBET (China)



*TIME* and other news media have reported recently about recent tragic events involving Buddhist monks in Tibet, where frustration and anger at the repressive Chinese rule has boiled over again.

On Aug. 15, a 29-year-old Tibetan monk, Tsewang Norbu, living in the remote Chinese outpost of Tawu, in Kham, Eastern Tibet, emerged from his monastery and walked down the hill to the centre of town. For a few minutes, he passed out pamphlets advocating Tibetan independence. Then he gulped down kerosene, bathed his body in the combustible liquid, and struck a match.

As he burned in the centre of town, Norbu shouted for freedom in Tibet and screamed his love for the Dalai Lama, the exiled spiritual leader. Since then at least eight others have burned themselves to death as a protest.

It is all very tragic. But the spiritual needs of the Tibetan people are ever greater.

There may be just a few hundred Christian believers throughout the whole country, and they have to be very inconspicuous. Please pray with us, as we look to the Lord to gather in a great spiritual Tibetan harvest for His name.

This is our vision, and we pray for it; and it will come!

“For the vision is yet for an appointed time; it hastens toward the end and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; for it will certainly come, it will not delay.”  
(Habakkuk 2:3)

## BHUTAN – the Land of the Dragon

(South of Tibet, and East of Nepal, and north of East India)



An exciting event for Bhutan was the marriage of the young king, Jigme Kheser Namgyel Wangchuk and Jetsun Pema in mid-October.

The king married and crowned Jetsun Pema, the commoner daughter of an airline pilot, in a colourful Buddhist ceremony in the ancient capital of Punakha.

When the couple returned to Thimphu, tens of thousands lined the streets — six or seven deep. Many had been waiting for hours to see the newly-married couple.

The "Dragon King" who came to power in 2008 at the start of democracy in Bhutan, is very popular. He loves to mix with the crowds, greeting the people and picking up babies. This exasperates his security personnel, but it is a very real part of his appeal to his **700,000** adoring subjects.

Bhutan banned foreign television until 1999, and it is the only nation in the world whose government pursues "**Gross National Happiness**" for its people instead of economic growth.

Bhutan, which has never been colonized, remained in self-imposed isolation for centuries and is still wary of outside influence and the impact of globalisation. The country had no roads or currency until the 1960s, and continues to resist mass tourism.

Ethnic Nepalese Bhutanese who fled the country in the early 1990s, claiming ethnic and political persecution, have congratulated the king, while urging him to find a solution that would allow them to return home. "I'm very happy and wish him a happy married life," said one of the tens of thousands of refugees living in camps in eastern Nepal. "But I will only be able to truly celebrate when I am allowed to return to Bhutan," he said.

For believers in Bhutan, to share the Gospel is still very difficult. But there is a hope that the 31-year old, Oxford- educated king will bring in more democracy and religious freedom.



## **NEPAL — THREATENING TIMES**

This Himalayan nation has seen much turmoil over the last couple of decades. It was officially a Hindu nation until it was declared a secular country, six years after the Maoists joined in the political process.

It has been a rocky road ever since, as the government has sought to bring in a new constitution. The present government is seeking to extend the deadline to complete the draft constitution.

Included in the constitution is an Anti-Conversion Bill, which is currently on the Prime Minister's table, in the approval stage. There is uncertainty about what the new Prime Minister will do regarding the Bill.

A group called NDA (Nepal Defence Army), an extremist pro-Hindu underground organization, is likely to press the present government to urgently take up the Anti-Conversion Bill.

The NDA wants to make Nepal into a Hindu country again. In many places on the street walls are slogans saying, "**Nepal is the only Hindu country. Declaration of secular country should be cancelled.**"

On 22nd Nov., the NDA tried to bomb a Mission office. Reports said a homemade bomb went off in front of the office of the United Mission to Nepal. The NDA has owned up to the explosion. Leaflets scattered at the site issued in the name of NDA, demand that all the Churches close down within 15 days, and Christians leave Nepal.

The leaflets asserted, as the majority population in Nepal is Hindu, it should be a Hindu state. The leaflets also accused the UMN of converting Hindus to Christianity. On the same day, in NE Nepal, two brothers were assaulted, leaving one unconscious, because they lead worship services at their home.

On 30th Nov., security forces defused a powerful bomb packed inside a sack and placed at the entrance of a Protestant Church in Kathmandu. The bomb-planters are the same ones who exploded a pressure-cooker bomb in the Catholic Assumption Church, Dhobighat, in 2009, which claimed three lives, and injured at least 14 others.

A new criminal code was introduced in Parliament on June 23. A news report says the debate for its approval will continue in the next few days. Article 160 of the new criminal code punishes all acts that may lead a Hindu citizen to convert to a different religion.

*Nepalnews* reports that religious minorities have initiated a petition to amend the new code, which, in their opinion, violates religious freedom and only supports Hinduism.

Christians have been asked to be watchful when in their gatherings, and activities.

Over the past twenty years there has been amazing growth – now an estimated one million believers throughout Nepal. So, of course, the enemy of souls is seeking to contest the work of God. And Nepal's Christians are now facing very uncertain and threatening times.

If you have a **prayer interest** in the TBN mission fields, and would like to receive information by email, please request from - [mrc70707@yahoo.com](mailto:mrc70707@yahoo.com)

## CURRENT GLOBAL EVENTS



### SYRIA NOW IN CIVIL WAR

The situation in Syria continues to deteriorate. The Bashar al-Assad regime continues its crackdown on protesters, and is now battling a Free Syria rebellion. The Arab League has suspended Syria's membership, and imposed economic sanctions on Assad's regime, which will be a blow to Syria's economy. But Assad hangs on!

An estimated 4,000 have died in the continuing violence. The battle is against dictatorship and repression, but it seems to be developing more into a fight between Sunnis and Shia Muslims.

NOV. 30. Turkey will suspend all financial dealings with Syria and freeze Syrian government assets as part of sanctions against President Bashar Assad's government, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said.

Arab nations around the region, as well as Israel, have their military on high alert!

## RUSSIA DELIVERS ANTI-SHIP MISSILES TO SYRIA

DEC 1/11. The *Interfax* news agency, citing an unnamed military source, reported that just days after a UN commission of inquiry called for an arms embargo on Damascus, Russia delivered anti-ship cruise missiles to Syria.

The missiles will "allow coverage of the entire Syrian coastline, and are capable of hitting ships 300 km off the coast. – [www.jpost.com](http://www.jpost.com)



## DEVELOPMENTS IN IRAN

Several major events involving Iran have occurred in the past few weeks.

\* Last month, explosions severely damaged two of Iran's nuclear plants – in Bidganeh and Isfahan. In the Bidganeh blast, 17 people were killed, including the mastermind of Iran's missile program, Brig.-Gen. Hassan Maghaddam.

Iran tried to pass off both explosions as accidental. But evidence indicates that the cause was sabotage. The attacks could have come from the Green (anti-regime) Movement in Iran.

The Green Movement that began protests in 2009, has, over the past two years, become strongly opposed to both Ayatollah Khamenei, and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

(Since 2010 there has been a fivefold increase in the number of explosions at Iranian oil pipelines and refineries.)

\* In November, in response to the recent IAEA report indicating Iran is steadily developing nuclear weapons, and also because of Iran's recent attempt to launch terrorist attacks in Washington, D.C., President Obama issued a series of new sanctions against Iran and its nuclear program, targeting the country's petroleum industry. He avoided taking a move against Iran's central bank.

The French, British, and Canadian leaders took a tougher stance than President Obama. They imposed new economic sanctions on **Iran's Central Bank**, as well as other sanctions, and called all nations of goodwill to follow their lead.

France also urged a freeze on purchases of Iranian oil.

The goal of the sanctions is to try to force Iran's economy to its knees, with the hopes that Iran's current government — or a new one — will be forced to give up its nuclear weapons ambitions in order to get its economy growing again.

\* Nov 30. Iranian protesters stormed British Diplomatic compounds in Tehran, causing great damage. Britain quickly evacuated all its embassy staff and closed its embassy in Tehran. It also expelled Iran's diplomats from UK, and ordered the immediate closure of Iran's embassy in London. France also recalled its ambassador to Iran, and Norway shut its embassy in Iran after the attack on the British..

Iran, in defiance of international pressure, stepped up its nuclear program.



## MB WINS BIG IN EGYPTIAN ELECTIONS

DEC 5/11. The first round of elections late last month, show that the situation in Egypt is worse than even the realists imagined. Last week's elections took place in Cairo and Alexandria -- the centres of the secular movement in Egypt.

Political analysts had predicted that the **Muslim Brotherhood** would win the most seats and secular parties would be in second place. The results did not produce this outcome.

The Brotherhood won big (40%+); but the even more radical Islamic parties won 25% of the vote, while the Western style liberals came in a poor third with 10% of the vote. The radical Islamic parties are the ones who are carrying out the deadly attacks on Egypt's Coptic Christian communities.

The next stages of the elections (Dec 14 & Jan 3) will take place in the rural areas where radical Islamic forces are even stronger.



## THE EURO CRISIS

With little interest in the private sector to boost the eurozone's rescue fund, the region may ultimately be forced to turn to the IMF, eurozone finance ministers conceded.

DEC 4. French President, Nicolas Sarkozy, has called for a **new European treaty** to save the Euro, and to revive a European Union from fragmenting in its worst crisis. Aiming to shore up Europe's shattered markets, he pledged that no euro zone country would be allowed to default.

While he conceded that Europe's debt crisis and the currency collapse meant France had to surrender some of its sovereignty under punitive fiscal discipline, Mr Sarkozy's focus appeared to be on a new deal enabling the leaders of the 17 euro zone countries to strike bargains among themselves.

The German Chancellor Angela Merkel is calling on the eurozone to accept a **strict regimen of legally binding budget discipline**.

Merkel and Sarkozy have differences on the way forward. But seeking to halt the spreading contagion from the euro crisis, they were to lead a summit on Dec 9-10, in a "now or never" push for an overhaul of **eurozone governance**.

*The Wall Street Journal* says: "But fear is growing, even in Berlin, that Ms Merkel's long-term fix may not be enough to stop the panicked exodus of investors from government debt markets. The price of failure, German officials know, is a wave of national insolvencies in a swath of the eurozone, which could plunge Europe into a depression and batter the global economy."

At the same time Merkel has dismissed talk that the current summit will bring about a definitive solution to the eurozone crisis, saying **it will take years to overcome the single currency's problems**.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR !!**

**“But when these things begin to take place,  
straighten *yourselves* and lift up your heads,  
because your redemption is drawing near.”**

(Luke 21:28)

