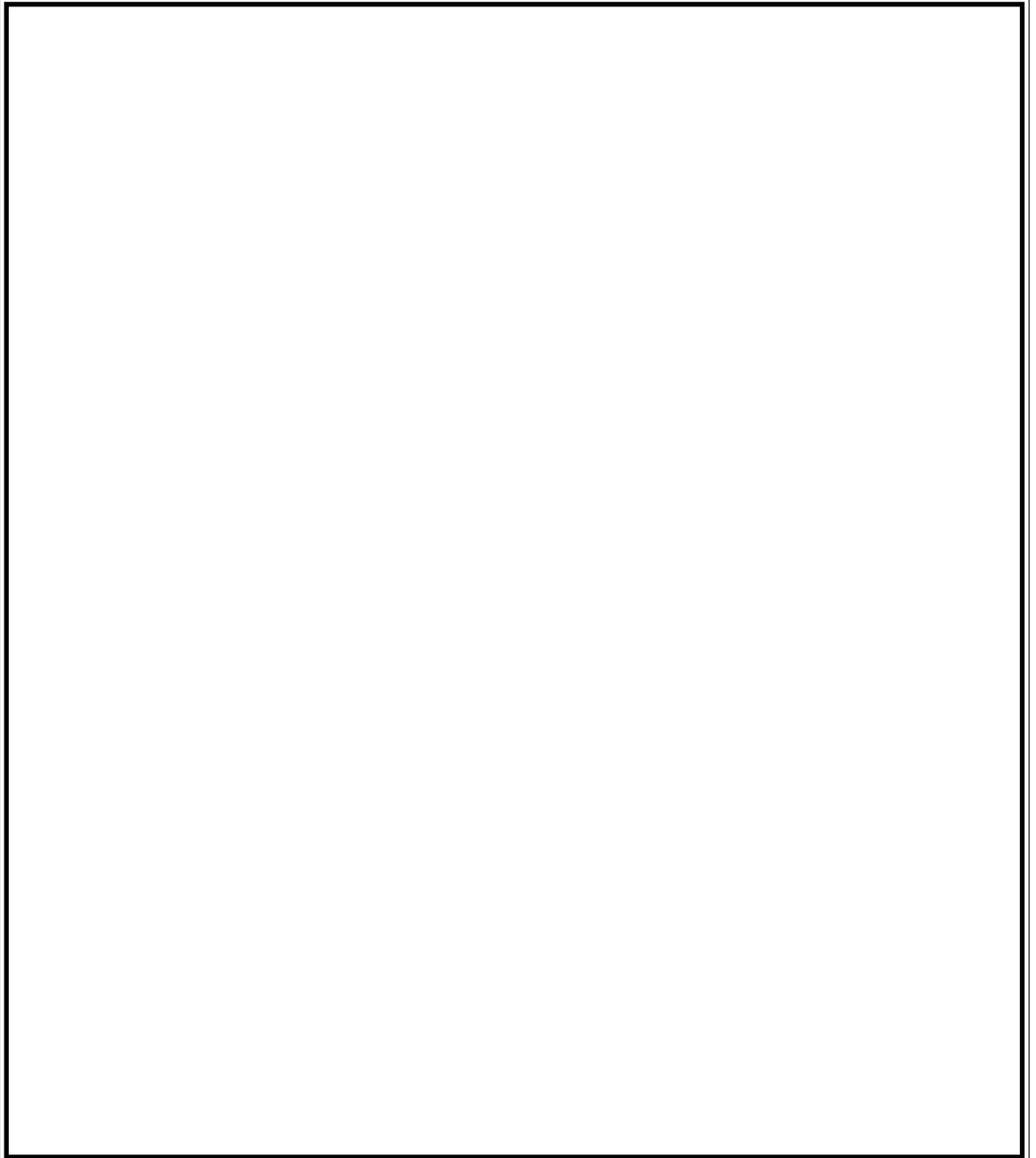


Future

NEWS

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By E. G. White

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Future for America seeks to supply meat in due season for God's flock. It is present truth that the flock needs now:

"God cannot display the knowledge of His will and the wonders of His grace among the unbelieving world unless He has witnesses scattered all over the earth. It is His plan that those who are partakers of this great salvation through Jesus Christ should be His missionaries, bodies of light throughout the world, to be as signs to the people, living epistles, known and read of all men, their faith and works testifying to the near approach of the coming Saviour and showing that they have not received the grace of God in vain. The people must be warned to prepare for the coming judgment. To those who have been listening only to fables, God will give an opportunity to hear the sure word of prophecy, whereunto they do well that they take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. He will present the sure word of truth to the understanding of all who will take heed; all may contrast truth with the fables presented to them by men who claim to understand the word of God and to be qualified to instruct those in darkness." *Testimonies*, volume 2, 631-632.

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Future News

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Mission Statement

The ministry of **Future for America** is to proclaim the final warning message of Revelation 14 as identified within the prophecies of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. The end-time fulfillment of Bible prophecy is no longer future-for it is taking place before our eyes. The historic, prophetic understanding of Seventh-day Adventism is now present truth. We are the final generation. Our emphasis on the prophetic word includes all the counsel of God's Word. To know what lies ahead is useless if we do not possess the experience to stand during these solemn times. Through obedience to God's law, and faith in the promises of God's Word, we are to receive that experience.

Coupled with the prophetic message, **Future for America** emphasizes all aspects of the medical missionary work. The "entering wedge"-medical missionary work-must be practiced by those who are to finish God's work in these final hours.

During this time period, country living becomes more essential with each passing moment. **Future for America** upholds and promotes this end-time truth. God's people must prepare for the coming storm, and that preparation includes the experience of learning how to survive in a simple fashion, away from the great centers of population.

Future for America intends to print and distribute truth-filled literature, while helping to establish lay-printing operations in parts of the Lord's vineyard where faithful brethren do not have the means to raise up a printing operation with their own resources.

Ministry Update

This last week Tico Restrepo visited the United States to pick up some needed supplies and equipment for the print shop and ministry in Colombia. He left his home on Sunday, and after flying 36 hours he was picked up Tuesday morning, in Memphis by Steve Dickie. Steve took him for some instruction on making printing plates, and gathered together some needed computer equipment. Steve dropped him off at a Motel 6 in Memphis, Wednesday morning. Kathy and I met him there that afternoon. We spent Wednesday and Thursday shopping for a variety of needed essentials for their ministry. On Thursday afternoon we left him at a motel next to the airport in Memphis. Friday morning he flew to Los Angeles and spoke to a group of Spanish brethren on Sabbath. He then flew back home on Sunday.

The ministry in Colombia is very busy. The current project, which is still in process of development, is their health sanitarium. The building is up, but it lacks some items. They need the glass panes for the windows. The frames are in, but they need the glass. They also need to put in a septic system, and two large water holding tanks. They also need a jacuzzi bath tub and high pressure shower. If you have a desire to help in any of these ongoing projects mark your funds—Colombian Sanitarium.

I recently received a letter from a brother correcting my position on Daniel 11:37. I insert here to acknowledge the accuracy of the position:

Dear Mr. Pippenger,

I am enjoying your tapes, and appreciate you for sending them. You have made many things I had trouble with clearer in my understanding. . . .

I noticed in reading your syllabus on Daniel 11:37; “Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor **the desire of women**, nor regard and god: for he shall magnify himself above all,” that you used the interpretation that I have heard many give for this phrase. However, I believe this phrase refers to Jesus. Jesus was the desire of women, in that every woman hoped and prayed that she would be the mother of the messiah, whom they believed would free Israel from Rome. What an honor that would have been. This verse is speaking of how this king relates to the true God, the one sent, and gods in general. I feel it is inconsistent to the text, to inject the thought of actual women in this text. He did not “regard” or reverence “the God of his fathers,” nor did he recognize or reverence Jesus, or any other god, for that matter—he was worshipping/exalting himself. (The Catholic priesthood was not always celibate.)

Self-denial is an act of worship in the context of doing God’s [will] as opposed to my own—it puts God back on the throne. Temperance and self-denial are a requirement of the God-ward way because we cannot serve two masters—God and self. EGW said in *The Desire of Ages*, page 21, that sin originated with self-seeking. This power regards no other power than self. Sincerely, AJ.

I stand corrected.

In the last month we have sent eight cases of books and tracts ahead to the Philippines for the upcoming evangelistic series. The series will take place from April 23 until May 6. Please keep the Bible workers who are currently giving Bible studies in your prayers—as well as those studying with them. The value of the tracts and books was almost a thousand dollars, and shipping alone was over six hundred dollars. This year will be a first for us, for we will have handout materials for each health presentation and for each gospel presentation. The handout materials are greatly appreci-

ated when you realize that the economic status in the previous two efforts we conducted, was so impoverished, that in the churches we attended; only about twenty-five percent of the members have Bibles. They are just too expensive. Simple tracts are a great blessing to these meetings. We have estimated the cost of the series to be ninety-five hundred dollars, and as of today we have received just over fifty-seven hundred dollars. Praise the Lord and thank you. If you want to be part of this campaign, beyond simply your prayers, you can mark your offering Philippines 2000.

The next two Sabbaths I am speaking in Northern and Southern California, respectively. We sent out invitations and directions to our mailing list in California. We found that ten percent of those letters were returned to us, because people have changed their address. We then realized that the postal system returns regular letters when the person no longer is at the address, but the envelopes we send our monthly newsletter and audio tape is simply thrown into the trash by the postal system. We therefore intend to mail a simple letter to the rest of our mailing list. If we find that ten percent of the total mailing list is simply addresses where the brethren no longer live, we can remove those names from the computer and save a great deal of money on our monthly mailing. When you receive this forthcoming letter, simply throw it away. Its only purpose is to see which addresses no longer are valid.

Your Letters . . .

 Dear Brother Jeff, Just a note to tell you how much we appreciate your tapes. We are listening to the *Overflowing Scourge Series*, and what a blessing they are. Thank you for all the work you are doing in preparing us for what is coming upon the SDA people. We are so thankful for these messages. I have read "Miller's Dream," but never understood it until now. Sincerely, L.F.—IN

 Thanks for the good "meat" in your tapes. I grieve over the condition of God's professed people and I need Him always to continue the good work He has begun in me. God's blessings as y'all continue bringing solid truth to us in these last days. M.M.—TX

 Dear Brother Pippenger, I wanted to thank you for the tapes that you sent me on the *Overflowing Scourge*. They have been a great help in making me realize that we must prepare ourselves and others for our Fathers soon return. Please continue to send them, and Praise be to God that he has put brothers like yourself here on earth to help us in these last days.

I am trying to become vegetarian, but have found it quite difficult, not so much the red meat as chicken. If you could recommend some vegetarian cookbooks it would be greatly appreciated. I am enclosing small donation this month as my appreciation.

May God continue to bless you and your wonderfully supportive staff in our battle against the angel of darkness! My prayers are always with you. May God Bless and protect you all. Your Sister in Christ, M.C.

 Dear Brother Jeff, Thank you for the tape you sent to me entitled the *Overflowing Scourge*, also the newsletter. I realize this is a very expensive and time-consuming work for our Lord. The scripture Isaiah 42:4 was brought to my mind speaking of Jesus: "He shall not fail nor be discouraged till he have set judgement in the earth and the isle shall wait for his law." Isn't that beautiful and encouraging to us? May the Lord Bless thee and keep thee may the Lord let his grace be upon thee. Your Sister in Christ, C.P.—CA

P.S. Could you please send me the tapes on Daniel Eleven?

 Dear Jeff, Thank you so much for your family messages you send us. They are a real blessing. May our Great God continue to bless you and your ministry. Please keep us on your mailing list. Sincerely, A.S.

 I thank you for sending me your most interesting publications each month, also the tapes, and your prayers for the salvation of my sons. Love in Christ, H.R.

 Dear Jeff and Kathy, I have been so greatly blessed by the newsletter and the audiotapes that I have received from you. I am so happy to have found someone who sheds so much light on the

prophecies. May God forever bless you and may we meet in Heaven. What a thrilling thought! Please continue sending both the newsletter and the tapes. Thank you again. Your sister in Christ Jesus, K.S.—OR

 Dear Brother Jeff, I just received your newsletter yesterday and have been as usual reading it from cover to cover. It is a very welcome piece of mail amid all the junk mail, which seems to fill our mailboxes daily. I recently took the position in our church as the Primary Sabbath school leader; it is my desire to teach these little ones about prophecy. I was very glad to see the ad for the book, *The Illustrated Guide to Bible Prophecy*. Could you please send one to me? Do you feel this is a good book for this age group? I think a lot of times we think that our children cannot understand such things, but my 9 year old daughter is very interested in the books of Daniel and Revelation so I think the saying goes “strike while the iron is hot”. Thanks for your help with this. Please keep my wife and I in your prayers as we minister to these precious ones. Your Brother in Christ Jesus, R.G.—ME

 Thank you too much for sending me 4 cassette tapes by Jeff Pippenger. I have only listened to the first one, but it was excellent. I hope you have been able to distribute these tapes far and wide. They are excellent. Sincerely, V.B.—CA

 Hi Jeff and Kathy, We praise the Lord that you’re working in His service. We enjoy your newsletter and your tapes. What a blessing to be kept updated on current events. Thanks. Your Brother and Sister in the Lord, D. & J.

 Dear Pippenger Family, Enclosed is a check for audio sets received. Thanks so much for all the deep study that had to go into producing these for us. I hope that you will continue to challenge prophecy students with your insights and courage to step out on this very difficult and controversial subject matter.

There are so few willing to address these statements in the Spirit of Prophecy and make them relevant to this time. May God Bless your ministry in the New Year and may we all realize our need to study and prepare spiritually and physically. I was reminded of Noah, he had preparation going on for 120 years prior to the flood. May God wake us up soon. Once again, your ministry is a real blessing to us, God Bless you, your family and your ministry! D.W.

 Dear Friends, Your location has changed a time, or two, so I hope and pray this reaches you. Thank you for your endeavors to save lost souls. The Lord is blessing you, and soon Jesus will come, and rescue His faithful souls from this wicked planet! I am very anxious for this, as I’m sure you are! Thanks for your taped messages, which I appreciate very much. Please keep them coming. My husband and I have been quite ill, and I’ve fallen behind in many things, so please pray for our healing.

Pray for healing for S.T., who is terminal with cancer, unless God sees fit to heal her. Pray for K.S., who faces surgery on his sinus’s in the near future. Pray she will be healed in every way. Pray for T., who is bulimic and alcoholic and is a lost little lamb. She doesn’t know how to get out of the pit she’s in . . . though we’ve tried to tell her about God’s love and the power to heal us, whatever our problem. Thank you. You remain in my prayers. In Jesus love, A.

 Dear Future for America, I have been enjoying and appreciation you tape and newsletters that have been sent to me. I wish to support your ministry as I can and as the Lord leads. On your tape you mentioned the *Prophetic Pattern* set of tapes. I’m sure you have sent a list of available tapes but I can’t put my hands on the list right now. I wish to order these sometime. If convenient please send a tape order form to me. Thank you and God bless your ministry. I see a lot of truth in your tapes. Appreciate the present tapes on William Miller’s dream, very insightful. M.S.—TN

 Dear Precious Ones, I am thankful to God for using you in doing great and wonderful work for Him in these troubled times. I wish to commend you for the indefatigable efforts put forth to bring the truth home to the hearts of thousands longing for light. May God help us to be faithful

until Jesus comes and we shall meet in the everlasting kingdom. What a joy that will be! Yours in the Blessed Hope, K.N.—West Africa

 Dear Future for America, Sure enjoy the monthly. So timely. Thanks so very much. Time is running out. The Lord bless your ministries. Sincerely yours, A.S.—OR

 Jeff and Kathy, Thank you for sharing God's message with us. The Holy Spirit is doing a lot of work here in U. and elsewhere too! May God's leading be always present in your life. With much Appreciation, S.C.

 Thank you Jeff, and who ever are working for your ministry. Praise God I know the end is not far off and we need more soldiers like you out there. Thanks for the letters, tapes and encouragement. God Bless. Here is a donation for whatever is needed. R.P.

 Hi Kathy and Jeff, Good to talk with you. Thanks for the call. It is so thrilling to think of the possibilities in America. May God bless this ministry that others too may catch this vision and spread the news Jesus is coming very soon! We look forward to meeting you both. B. loves his Bible. Love, C.B.

 Future for America Ministry, Please us the enclosed as necessary to further some of the needs in your mission program. May God continue to bless you in your work. L.T.

 Future for America, Many Thanks for sending me the monthly audio-tapes even when I didn't have money to send you. Have enjoyed listening to the tapes for they bring knowledge and comfort to one that has weak eyesight. May I one day have the means to faithfully support your ministry. And, may it be very soon as we are living in the last days. I truly thought my retirement would be a better one than it turned out. Yet our dear Lord has been wonderful as I still have a roof over my head and food to nourish the body. Praise our Savior! Enclosed is a little to help end 1999. Just received money for Christmas. Wasn't that nice! Wishing all a peaceful Holiday Season! Aloha from Hawaii, E.N.—HI

 We pray to be ready to meet our Creator when He comes. God bless you in your move and the work you are doing. Wish we could have seen you when you were in Tennessee. About 200 miles from us. Hope you will continue to spread the truth. At almost 78 with all the spring, summer and fall outside work and winter baking a years supply of bread we have all we can do to pass out literature some Sabbath afternoons. We thank God for what we can do. R. & E.—TN

 Dear Brother Jeff, I look forward to your mailing each month. Please keep sending them. At this time I would like to order the *Prophetic Pattern* magazine and the *Time of the End* magazine. Please find enclosed money to cover the costs. I wish I had more to send. May the Lord be with you and bless you and your ministry. In His Love Your Brother in Christ, R.G.—ME

 Dear Future for America Ministry, We would like to thank you for your ministry in forewarning and preparing a people for Jesus Glorious Return! Enclosed is a donation we pray will help in continuing God's work for His glory. Maranatha, C.R.

 Dear Brethren, Thank you for your ministry. May the Lord richly bless your labors. Your ministry has been a tremendous blessing. I've shared some of the materials with loved one. My prayer partner and I are praying for you. Please pray for my family and me as we are struggling through some difficult times. God Bless you. Thank you, N.F.

 Thanks for all your hard work. God Bless you. My prayer for you Hebrews 13:20–21. Let us keep on keeping on. Hosea 6:3. With Christian Love, W.K.

 Hi Jeff and Kathy, What a surprise when I opened your box. We had no idea you had so many series and now (from your future news list) even more wonderful things are available. Pray

T I M E L I N E S

In The Stream Of Time Near The End Of The Line.

⌚ POPE MAY RESIGN IN 2001

London Telegraph: The Pope will step down on grounds of health and old age next year, after Jubilee Year celebrations for the Millennium are completed, it was reported yesterday. Rome's informed *La Repubblica* newspaper said there were insistent rumors within the Vatican of such a plan, and Milan's *Giornale* quoted an Italian author who knows the Pope to the same effect.

The suggestions come days after the head of Germany's Roman Catholics, Bishop Karl Lehmann, became the first senior churchman to raise the subject of the Popes possible resignation, leaving it to haunt the Vatican, as one report put it, like Banquo's ghost. The bishop also speculated that Parkinson's disease might be affecting the Pope's ability to run the Church. A unnamed but close adviser of the 79-year-old Pontiff told *La Repubblica* that the Pope's discovery that his body was "no longer a docile instrument, but a cage" had come as a "terrible blow" to him. A few years ago as a result, the pontiff had asked Vatican experts for a feasibility study concerning his possible resignation. Their response was that the Church would be "unable to cope with two Popes"—one reigning, the other in retirement. However, *La Repubblica* said, "insistent rumors in the Vatican are hinting at the eventuality that John Paul II will re-examine the question in 2001, after the Jubilee."

Editors note: In the audio series titled, *The Crowning Act*, we briefly touch upon the message coming to Catholicism, from the so-called Virgin Mary [obviously a demon]; which portrays a struggle within the Catholic Church. Mary places this struggle in the context of the "man of sin" sitting in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. Mary's identification is correct, in the sense that she identifies the man of sin, as the pope, but, she identifies two popes who are struggling for the control the Catholic Church. Pope John Paul II is one of these two popes, and according to Mary—he is the good pope, sometimes called Mary's "pope-son." She also makes a distinction between the 'man of sin' (the bad pope), and the antichrist; who she identifies with the one-world government people.

In her scenario the good pope will be forced into exile by the forces within the Catholic Church who are working to place the "evil pope" into control of the papacy. According to this prophecy when the good pope abdicates his papacy the chastisement of the third, or secret, Fatima message will begin. In the book, *Keys of This Blood*, Malachi Martin is clear and specific that the current pope, not only believes these predictions concerning himself and a evil pope, but he has directed all that he has done in his reign as pope according to the information contained in this prophecy.

Malachi Martin, who died last year, stated before his death, in the early part of 1999, that Pope John Paul II already has his resignation written, and was simply waiting for the sign from Mary that it was time to leave the Vatican. Of the many books, which Malachi Martin has authored, his last work was the only book that was a novel. It was released in 1998, and titled, *The Windswept House*. The novel begins with the opening ceremonies of Vatican II and describes a simultaneous Satanic ceremony, which you are led to believe actually took place. The Satanic ceremony took place in the United States and was the beginning of Satan's effort to take over the Catholic Church. The book parallels Mary's prophecy about a good pope—bad pope struggle. After opening with the ceremony, the novel continues on to tell how the struggle has moved forward in Catholicism until we reach our current time period. The final chapter of the book closes as Pope John Paul is going into exile.

The teaching of Mary in Catholicism concerning Pope John Paul II is well documented and the focus of many of the current Catholic books which deal with the messages that come from the many mystics who are receiving messages at the different apparition sites around the globe. All of this is satanic prophecy at best. But when you see the discussion of the current popes retirement reach the level of the secular press, you can see that something in that realm of Bible prophecy is developing.

Health Workers Needed!

Dr. Joseph Uniat lives in the United States, but serves the Western Ukraine. He does sanitarium work there, and is seeking brethren to help serve there for two to three month periods. You would use and teach hydrotherapy, message, diet, and all aspects of the health message. If you have these abilities, and would like to serve in this capacity you may contact Dr. Unait at 916-624-2987. His address is 4150 Secret Court, in the city of Rocklin, California. The zip code is 95677-3214.

Brothers and Sisters, how often do popes retire?

“The only safety for the soul at this time is to inquire at every step, What saith the Lord to his servant? The word of the Lord endureth forever. The Bible is to be our guidebook, and instead of consulting the wisdom of men, and accepting as divine truth the assertions of finite mortals, we should search the sure word of prophecy. God has spoken, and his word is reliable, and we must rest our faith upon a ‘Thus saith the Lord.’ **God would have us study the events that are taking place around us, and compare them with the predictions of his word, in order that we may understand that we are living in the last days.** We want our Bibles, and we want to know what is written therein. The diligent student of prophecy will be rewarded with clear revelations of truth, for Jesus said, ‘Thy word is truth.’

“Those who profess to be followers of Christ will be found guilty before God unless they are laborers together with God, and earnestly seek to lift up their fellow-men. Prophecy is rapidly fulfilling; and all men are ranging under their chosen standards. One class are preparing to be used of the Holy Spirit, and another class are ranging under the black banner of the prince of evil. This class have no love for either God or their fellow-men, and Satan uses them as vessels to honor himself. The very atmosphere of our world is tainted with physical and spiritual miasma. The principles of truth are corrupted. God has been dishonored, his law has been transgressed, and the earth has become defiled under the inhabitants thereof, and the vials of the wrath of God will be poured out upon the world.” *Signs of the Times*, October 1, 1894.



POPE CONSIDERS MAKING MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. MARTYR

The London Times: Vatican officials yesterday confirmed that the Pope was considering naming Martin Luther King, the US civil rights leader who was assassinated in 1968, as a martyr in the eyes of the Roman Catholic Church, even though the murdered civil rights leader was a Baptist.

In Catholic doctrine a martyr must have died for the faith. The move, if approved, could put King on the path to beatification and sainthood. Normally the Vatican requires proof that the person to be beatified and given the title Blessed is responsible for a miracle, either in his or her lifetime or after death, through prayers of intercession. For canonization two such miracles are required. But in the case of a martyr, the need for accredited miracles can be waived.

A martyr, the words means witness in Greek, must fulfill three conditions: the victim must die, the murder or murderers must have killed out of hatred for Christian truth, and the martyr must

have given his or her life in a higher cause. According to Vatican officials, the US National Conference of Catholic Bishops has included the name of Martin Luther King in a list of 20 US candidates for consideration by the Pope, who is to announce a new list of 20th-century martyrs on May 7, at the Colosseum (site of Christian martyrdom in Roman times) as part of the Holy Year celebrations. The US list also includes four nuns who were raped and murdered in El Salvador in 1980, and Oscar Romero, the Archbishop of San Salvador, who was murdered by right-wing terrorists in 1980.

⌚ POPE TO VISIT EGYPT

STARTING SERIES OF MIDEAST TRIPS

USA Today: Pope John Paul II will make a three-day trip to Egypt next month, the first of his planned pilgrimages to religious sites in the Middle East, the Vatican said Thursday. He will stop in Cairo and then visit Mount Sinai during the February 24–26 trip, the Vatican said. The trip will come before a major pilgrimage to the Holy Land in March that will include stops in Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian territories. The stop at Mount Sinai is one of a series of pilgrimages the pope has planned to make in the new millennium, trips he says are purely for religious reasons.

⌚ POLITICAL USE OF POPE—HISTORIC MARCH TRIP TO HOLY LAND

Associated Press: Pope John Paul II may insist his Holy Land visit has nothing to do with Mideast politics, but Israel and the Palestinians were quick to read political wins—and losses—into the planned itinerary. Israel pointedly expressed its disappointment Wednesday that the pope would not spend more time visiting sites of national importance in the first trip to the Jewish state by a pontiff since 1964.

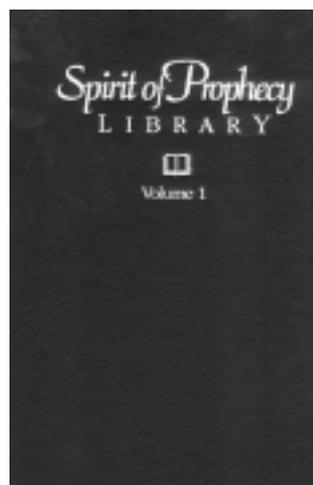
The Palestinians fended off claims that the pope's visit to east Jerusalem amounted to condoning Israeli control of the disputed sector. Both sides welcomed the pope, who is expected to bring thousands of pilgrims to Israel and the Palestinian areas and boost the region's image. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak praised the pope's efforts to improve ties with Israel, including a 1994 Israel-Vatican treaty establishing diplomatic relations. The visit in late March will "forge closer relations between the Jewish people and the world's Christian population," and help the peace process, Barak said in a statement.

⌚ 62 MILLION US CATHOLICS

National Catholic Register, June, 1999: The 2,300-page 1999 *Official Catholic Directory* states that the US Catholic population grew by 455,000 in 1998 to just over 62 million, totaling 23% of the general population of the United States.

⌚ SOUND ECUMENISM

National Catholic Register, June, 1999: By emphasizing the struggles shared by all Christians, the Ecumenical Pastoral Institute of South Africa has caught the eye of Vatican officials. Instead of looking at differences in dogma and doctrine, the institute approaches relations among the churches on a pastoral level, which offer a common ground. "Christianity is joined more in her suffering than in her dialogue," said the organization's director after a round of meetings with Vatican officials in Rome.



Until the end of March we are offering the three-volume, hardback, Spirit of Prophecy volumes for

\$100.00 plus shipping and handling.

“Papists, Protestants, and worldlings will alike accept the form of godliness without the power, and they will see in this union a grand movement for the conversion of the world and the ushering in of the long-expected millennium.” *The Great Controversy*, 588–589.

⌚ GLOBAL WARMING CONFIRMED

The Washington Post: Worldwide rise in temperatures at the Earth’s surface is “undoubtedly real” and appears to have accelerated in recent decades, an independent scientific panel concluded in a major new report yesterday. The panel estimated the increase in temperatures over the past century at between 0.7 and 1.4 degrees Fahrenheit, a 30 percent increase from earlier projections that reflects record-shattering high temperatures in the late 1990s. Partly deflating a key argument used by skeptics of global warming, the report also dismissed as insignificant a glaring contradiction between two sets of measurements that have tracked temperature change over recent decades.

Although land-based weather stations have shown a rise in temperatures, satellites that record temperatures in the upper atmosphere have shown little change in 20 years. The difference between the surface and upper-air trends in no way invalidates the conclusion that the Earth’s temperature is rising, said John M. Wallace, a professor of atmospheric sciences at the University of Washington and chairman of the panel.

⌚ RUSSIAN SECRET SERVICE RISES TO POWER AGAIN

The LA Times: Top officials of Russia’s secret police, known these days as the FSB, gathered last month to celebrate the founding of their agency in 1917 by Communist leader V. I. Lenin. Vladimir V. Putin, an ex-KGB colonel who had become prime minister only months earlier, spoke to his compatriots and reported with a smile: A group of FSB colleagues dispatched to work undercover in the government has successfully completed its first mission.

Putin, referring to his own rapid rise within Russia’s power structure, meant to be funny. But less than two weeks later, when he unexpectedly became the nation’s acting president, there were many who didn’t take it as a joke. The KGB has risen from the ashes and come to power in Russia, said Sergei I. Grigoryants, a human rights activist arrested twice in the 1970’s and 80’s by the KGB and imprisoned for nine years for publishing anti-Soviet literature. It is the logical outcome of the process that has been unfolding for the past decade.

⌚ GENETICALLY ALTERED COW TO PRODUCE HUMAN BREAST MILK

The London Express: Genetic scientists hope to create cows that produce human breast milk. The product could be on the market within 30 months, researchers claimed last night. Already cows exist whose milk contains a protein component of human milk. Researchers believe adding this to commercial infant formula will make it more nutritious and closer to the real thing. The team is already thought to be negotiating partnership deals with three major formula milk manufacturers in Europe and the United States. Work began eight years ago and the scientists’ ultimate goal is to eliminate the animal protein in the cows’ milk and replace it with human protein.

⌚ THE NEW ARMY

WORLD, May 29, 1999: According to Army Chief of Staff General Dennis Reimer, “the U.S. Army exists to win the nation’s wars.” *Army Vision 2010*, a strategic document, also names many other missions. These include “defending or liberating territory, punitive intrusion, conflict containment, leverage, reassurance, core security, and humanitarian” missions. Each of these missions has sub-missions; Core security, for instance, includes counter-drug operations, illegal immigration control, and control of crime in the streets—all traditional civilian police functions.

⌚ IMAGINE THERE’S NO HEAVEN: A FUTURE WITHOUT RELIGION

FREE INQUIRY’s Twentieth Anniversary International Conference brochure: “Imagine There’s No Heaven: A Future Without Religion,” is the title of Free Inquiry magazine’s twentieth anniversary celebration, to be held at the Council for Secular Humanism’s year 2000 annual

conference, at the Wyndham Hotel LAX in Los Angeles, California, on May 4–7.

The advertising brochure says, “Imagine There’s No Heaven” will bring together scientists, intellectuals, politicians, activists, and entertainers to explore the threats and opportunities of the dawning century. Topics will include: Secular Humanism and Politics; Scientific Revolutions of the Twenty-First Century; Reason and Superstition in the Entertainment Industry; Humanist Manifesto 2000; Developing a New Global Ethics; The Future of Sex; Will Secularism Survive?; and The Student Freethought Revolution.”

The flyer further says, “In this crucial election year, politicians and community activists will examine the need for nonreligious people to increase their political visibility and to fight for their own survival in an increasingly devout America. Humanist leaders from over thirty countries will also bring their unique perspectives on the future of secularism. In addition to keynote speeches...the conference will include roundtable discussions and workshops on how freethinkers can become active in challenging the religious right.”

EARTH’S EBBING EXISTENCE

“And shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth.” Rev. 11:18.

Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund, information brochure, February, 2000: The Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund is an environmental law firm. To give a flavor of their activities they list the number and kind of environment-related lawsuits they have in progress: 8 concerning forest use, 18 concerning wildlife, 18 concerning water purity, 7 concerning air quality, 14 concerning public lands, 2 concerning farm/food worker’s health, 4 concerning community safety, 3 concerning international environmental issues.

SUPREME COURT TO HEAR SCHOOL PRAYER CASE—Doe vs. Santa Fe Independent School District.

American Center for Law and Justice, bulletin, January, 2000: A Galveston, Texas U.S. District Court has ruled in a controversy about student initiated messages that may include a prayer during graduation services that “The Court will allow that prayer to be a typical nondenominational prayer, which can refer to God or the Almighty or that sort of thing. The prayer must not refer to a specific deity by name, whether it be Jesus, Buddha, Mohammed, the Great God Sheba or anyone else. And make no mistake, the Court is going to have a United States marshal in attendance at the graduation. If any student offends this Court, that student will be summarily arrested and will face up to six months incarceration in the Galveston County Jail for contempt of Court. Anyone who thinks I’m kidding about this order better think again. . . Anybody who violates these orders, no kidding, is going to wish that he or she had died as a child when this Court gets through with them. . . . There will be no handouts of any religious literature of any kind or description by parents, students, administrators, or anyone else of any kind for description in the Santa Fe schools for the remainder of this school year.”

President of the American Center for Law and Justice, Jay Alan Sekulow, will argue the case before the US Supreme Court. He has argued seven other cases before the Court.

WORLD HEALTH OFFICIALS WORRY ABOUT POWERFUL NEW FLU STRAINS

CNN: The United States and Europe battle yet another cold and flu season, scientists are having more trouble tracking and predicting where and when the next strain will pop up. As global travel becomes easier, the highly contagious virus can now hitch a quick ride to any part of the world at any time of the year, disrupting what has been a predictable pattern. *We are very worried we will have a worldwide pandemic of influenza that will affect probably 40 percent of the world’s population,* said Dr. Steven Mostow of the University of Colorado.

Mostow said the number of people killed from such a wave of influenza could rival some of the worst outbreaks in modern times. In the late 19th century, more than 29 million people worldwide died as a result of the flu. In 1917, flu outbreaks killed more people than those who died during

Gideon Called

Alas, that in the history of God's chosen people the sorrowful story of apostasy and its punishment must be so oft repeated! Forty years of peace elapsed after the destruction of Sisera and his host, and again "the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years." Heretofore the hand of the oppressor had fallen but lightly on the tribes dwelling east of the Jordan, but in the present calamities they were the chief sufferers.

The Midianites and Amalekites, who dwelt on the eastern borders of the land and in the deserts beyond, were still the bitter and unrelenting enemies of Israel. These nations had been well-nigh destroyed by the Israelites in the days of Moses, but they had since increased greatly, and had now become a numerous and powerful people. They had thirsted for revenge, and now the opportunity had come.

Because of their sins, the protecting hand of God was withdrawn from Israel, and they were left to the mercies of their enemies. The wild, fierce inhabitants of the desert, "as grasshoppers for a multitude," came swarming into the land, with their flocks and herds, and pitched their tents in plain and valley. They came as soon as the harvests began to ripen, and remained until the last fruits of the earth had been gathered. They stripped the fields of their increase, and robbed and maltreated the inhabitants, and then returned to the deserts. Thus the Israelites had been forced to abandon the open country, and to congregate in the walled towns; and many had even found shelter in caves among the mountains.

For seven years this oppression continued, and then in their distress the people remembered Him who had so often delivered them; and they cried unto the Lord for help. But while they were very desirous to be relieved from their oppressors, they did not exercise true repentance for their sins.

God could not help them in their state of impiety. But through his prophet he addressed them in words of warning and reproof, and the message was publicly proclaimed from city to city throughout the land. "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage. And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and drave them out from before you, and gave you their land. And I said unto you, I am the Lord your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell. But ye have not obeyed my voice."

We might expect the Israelites to harden their hearts against the reproofs of the prophet. We listen to hear them respond, "We do not wish to be continually reminded of our sins. Speak to us words of peace, encouragement, and hope, but do not keep ever before us the dismal relation of our backslidings." How often do the professed people of God at the present day turn away from instruction, and neglect oft-repeated warnings. They dislike to be reminded of their defects of character. They are unwilling to be reproofed for their pride and idolatry in turning from the requirements of God to seek the gains, friendship, or pleasures of the world.

Such was the manner in which some of the Israelites received the message of reproof. Had the people been enjoying prosperity, this feeling of rebellion would, no doubt, have been general; but in their distress from the oppression of their enemies, with want and even starvation staring them in the face, they felt their need of help from God. They knew that unless he whom they had so dishonored should manifest his power for their deliverance, they must perish. In deep humility they accepted the message of reproof, confessed their sins, and implored the mercy of the Most High.

Their prayers were heard, and again the Lord sent forth the man of his choice to act as deliverer for Israel. The one thus selected was Gideon, of the tribe of Manasseh. The Midianites had swept like a devouring plague over the land. It was only with the greatest difficulty that the

Hebrews could secrete sufficient food to save them from actual starvation. Gideon had, however, retained possession of a small quantity of wheat, and fearing to beat it out in the threshing floor, he had taken it to the vineyard, near the wine-press. The time of ripe grapes being far off, the attention of the Midianites would not be directed to that place.

As he thus labored in secrecy and silence, he sadly meditated upon the condition of Israel. He thought of her glorious triumphs in the past, of her present abject condition, and of the still darker prospect for the future, and his spirit was stirred within him. With deep earnestness he considered how the oppressor's yoke might be broken from off his people. To all appearance this was impossible. The Israelites were disheartened and discouraged. They had dishonored God by their idolatry, and they felt little confidence that he would work for them.

Gideon almost despaired of inspiring the people with faith or courage, but he knew that the Lord would work mightily for Israel as he had done in the past. His whole soul cried out after God. He felt that although he might stand alone, yet if he had the assurance that God was with him, he would not fear to strike a blow against the oppressors.

While Gideon's mind was absorbed in meditations like these, suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared to him and addressed him with the words, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor."

The melancholy nature of Gideon's thoughts is revealed by his answer, "O my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites."

The messenger of Heaven replied, "Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have not I sent thee?"

With a sense of his own unfitness for so important a work, Gideon exclaimed, "O my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house."

Then the angel gave him the gracious assurance, "Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man."

Gideon desired some token that the one now addressing him was the same that spoke to Moses in the burning bush. The angel had veiled the divine glory of his presence, but it was no other than Christ, the Son of God. When a prophet or an angel delivered a divine message, his words were, "The Lord saith, I will do this," but it is stated of the Person who talked with Gideon, "The Lord said unto him, I will be with thee."

Desiring to show special honor to his illustrious visitor, and having obtained the assurance that the Angel would tarry, Gideon hastened to his tent, and out of his scanty store prepared a kid and unleavened cakes, which he brought forth to set before him. Gideon was poor, yet he was ready to use hospitality without grudging.

As the gift was presented, the Angel said, "Take the flesh and unleavened cakes, and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth." Gideon did so, and then the Lord gave him the sign which he desired. With the staff in his hand, the Angel touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and a fire rose up out of the rock and consumed the whole as a sacrifice, and not as a hospitable meal; for he was God, and not man. After this token of his divine character, the Angel disappeared.

When convinced that he had looked upon the Son of God, Gideon was filled with fear, and exclaimed, "Alas, O Lord God! for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face."

Then the Lord graciously appeared to Gideon a second time and said, "Peace be unto thee, fear not, thou shalt not die." These gracious words were spoken by the same compassionate Saviour who said to the tempted disciples upon the stormy sea, "It is I; be not afraid,"—he who appeared to those sorrowing ones in the upper chamber, and spoke the selfsame words addressed to Gideon, "Peace be unto you." The very same Jesus who walked in humiliation as a man among the children of men, came to his ancient people, to council and direct, to command, to encourage, and reprove them.

The family to which Gideon belonged was grievously infected with idolatry. His father erected at Ophrah, where he dwelt, a large altar to Baal, at which the people of the towns worshiped. Gideon was commanded to destroy this altar, to cut down the groves that surrounded it, and in its stead to erect an altar to Jehovah, over the rock on which the offering had been consumed, and then to offer a sacrifice unto the Lord. Gideon faithfully carried out these directions, performing the work by night, lest he should be compelled to desist if he attempted it by day.

The deliverer of Israel must declare war upon idolatry before he went to battle with the enemies of his people. He must esteem the honor of God above the credit of his father, and regard the divine commands as more obligatory than parental authority.

The offering of sacrifice unto the Lord had been committed to the priests and Levites, and had been restricted to the altar at Shiloh; but He who had established the Jewish economy, and to whom all its services pointed, had power to change its requirements. In this instance he saw fit to depart from the ritual appointment. It was of great importance that the deliverance of Israel should be preceded by a solemn protest against the worship of Baal, and an acknowledgment of Jehovah as the only true and living God.

When the men of the city, early in the morning, came to pay their devotions to Baal, they were greatly surprised and enraged at what had taken

place. Soon it was known that Gideon had done this, and then nothing but his blood could satisfy those deluded idolaters. They at once began to put forth efforts to take his life.

Gideon had told his father, Joash, of the Angel's visit, and the promise that Israel should be delivered. He also related to him the divine command to destroy the altar of Baal. the Spirit of God moved upon the heart of Joash. He saw that the gods whom he had worshiped had no power even to save themselves from utter destruction and hence they could not protect their worshipers. When the idolatrous multitude clamored for the death of Gideon, Joash fearlessly stood in his defense, and endeavored to show the people how powerless and unworthy of trust or adoration were their gods: "Will ye plead for Baal? will ye save him? he that will plead for him, let him be put to death whilst it is yet morning; if he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar." He reminded them that the penalty of death would justly rest upon themselves instead of Gideon, for they had broken the law of God against idolatry.

The whole transaction, with the stirring appeals of Gideon, produced a powerful effect upon the people of Ophrah. All thoughts of violence were dismissed; and when, moved by the Spirit of the Lord. Gideon sounded the trumpet of war, they were among the first to gather to him. He then sent messengers throughout his own tribe of Manasseh, and also to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and all cheerfully obeyed the call.

Gideon deeply felt his own in-

sufficiency for the great work before him. He dared not place himself at the head of the army without positive evidence that God had called him to this work, and that he would be with him. He prayed, "If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said, behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor, and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou has said."

The Lord granted the prayer of his servant. In the morning the fleece was wet, while the ground was dry. But now unbelief suggested that wool naturally absorbs moisture when there is any in the air, and that the test was not decisive. Hence, he asked a renewal of the sign, humbly pleading that unbelief might not move the Lord to anger. His request was granted.

The Lord does not always choose for his work men of the greatest talents, but he selects those whom he can best use. Individuals who might do good service for God, may for a time be left in obscurity, apparently unnoticed and unemployed by their Master. But if they faithfully perform the duties of their humble position, cherishing a willingness to labor and to sacrifice for him, he will in his own time intrust them with greater responsibilities.

Before honor is humility. The Lord can use most effectually those who are most sensible of their own unworthiness and inefficiency. He will teach them to exercise the courage of faith. He will make them strong by uniting their weakness to his might, wise by connecting their ignorance with his wisdom.

God will accept the services of all who will work in obedience to his will, who will not for any consideration bring a stain upon

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