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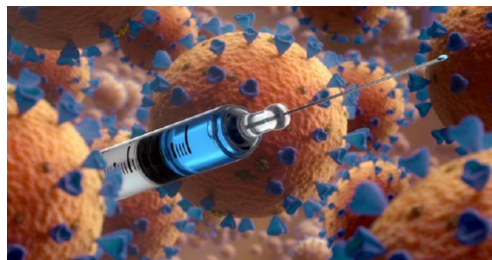
Light for the Last Days – January 2021 Edition – Light for the Last Days

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69-87 minutes

Covid, Global Reset and the Book of Revelation

We live in strange times, with changes that took place to our way of life in 2020 which we would not have thought possible at the beginning of the year. Now we are wondering what 2021 will bring. We are being told that the arrival of the new COVID-19 vaccine signals the light at the end of a dark tunnel. In November Boris Johnson said ‘Together we can get through this winter, suppress the virus until vaccines come to our aid and then reclaim our lives and all the things that we love.’ He implied that this would happen by Spring 2021.



Generally we find there are two main opinions about what happened so far:

1. The majority opinion: The lockdowns are a necessary way of

the government defending the health and safety of the people from a dangerous virus which threatens us all. The vaccines are the only way out.

2. The sceptical opinion: The lockdowns and the vaccines are an intrusion on personal freedom, a burden on society put in place to protect us from a disease which 99.7% people recover from.

Whichever view you hold, almost everyone agrees that 2020 turned out to be a most horrible year. Apart from the fear of catching the virus and being ill or dying, people suffered from the lockdowns. Businesses shut down, meetings of friends and family restricted, people stuck at home, isolated, bored and lonely. In many countries people faced extreme poverty and starvation. In developed countries most of life, work, school, shopping, meeting people and so on, was done from home by computer and the Internet. We become dependent on machines and lose human contact, causing many to be depressed, suicidal or alcoholic.

Getting back to normal by early in 2021 does not look so hopeful now. As I write this Boris Johnson has just cancelled Christmas for millions and a new mutant strain of the virus has arisen. Many people are sceptical or resistant to the vaccine and we are told that it won't be available to everyone before the end of 2021. We face what seems like a never ending cycle of closing down, opening up for a while, then closing down again as the virus continues to spread. Newspaper headlines read 'Will this nightmare ever end?'

The lockdowns have not eradicated the virus. They reduce infections and associated deaths while they are in force, but only to shift them down the road for a later period. We are told we

must follow the science, and science has become the great god we must all bow down to. But not all scientists and doctors agree with the strategy. 44,000 scientists and doctors signed the Great Barrington Declaration,

claiming that the measures taken were harmful to 'short and long term public health.' Dr Mike Yeadon, a former head

of research at Pfizer, says the advisers to the government in the Sage committee justify the repeated lockdowns by using inflated figures of potential and actual deaths from the disease. He suggests only a small percentage of PCR tests, on which the daily figures of Covid infections are based, are reliable. The book 'Corona, False Alarm' by doctors Karina Reiss and Sucharit Bhakdi (available on Amazon) gives more facts and figures on the crisis. It claims that the number of deaths is not much more than normal flu deaths and concludes that this is a false alarm inflicted on the world with disastrous results. These doctors also question the mass vaccination of the population, saying that subjecting healthy people to a hastily prepared vaccine which may have some unknown results in the future is a big mistake. Any alternatives to the government line are suppressed on mainstream media, especially BBC news, and increasingly on social media too.

We are told to follow the science, but we are not told to seek for God. God has been left out of the subject by our leaders, including most church leaders. Church of England Archbishops and Bishops say nothing about seeking God or asking for a national day of prayer to ask for God's help in the crisis. When they do have anything to say it is usually to make some fashionable left wing comment on racism, LGBT rights or

condemnation of Brexit. With the possibility of death around the corner, people should be told to prepare to meet their God by repenting of their sins and believing the Gospel, but the bishops of the Church of England will not say anything like that, perhaps because they do not believe it themselves. But that is what God is saying to us today. Jesus' first message recorded in the Gospel is

'The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the Gospel.'

Mark 1.14.

The Bible has a number of passages relating to plagues and pestilences. Almost always they come as a judgement from God on a people or ruler who is defying God. Think of Pharaoh and the plagues that came upon Egypt because of his refusal to let the people of Israel go (Exodus 7-12). Or the plague that came upon the Israelites who worshipped the golden calf: ***'So the Lord plagued the people because of what they did with the calf that Aaron made.'*** Exodus 32.35 People may say it sounds harsh to say that the coronavirus is a judgement of God, but the world today is under judgement for its sin and rebellion against God. Jesus said it would be 'as in the days of Noah' in the last days of this age before His return. In the days of Noah we read that God was sorry that He had made the world, because of human wickedness. For the ***'earth was filled with violence'***, and ***'every imagination of the heart of man was only evil continually.'*** Genesis 6.5 and 11.

Today we see the nation of China where the virus began, promoting atheism, defying God and putting up its images to its Communist Party

leaders. Millions of Christians who want to worship the true God face persecution. We see the western nations promoting all kinds of God defying laws that go against the Bible's moral teaching and confuse children about sex and sexuality. We see a mockery of God and the Bible in so much of our culture, and a suppression of God's word in the media, in our education system and even in much of the official church. We see persecution of Christians in much of the Muslim world and a hatred of Israel and the Jewish people in countries like Iran and Turkey. All of these nations have seen their countries ravaged by the virus. If they want God's help they need to repent and turn back to God.

The Bible contains many passages dealing with the conditions on the earth in a period known as the last days. They speak of a time of unique

trouble on the earth. Jesus told of the signs of His return. ***'Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences.'*** Luke 21.10- 11. In the parallel passage in Matthew 24, He said these things happening would be 'the beginning of sorrows', the first stage in the last days' scenario which will lead to the time of great tribulation just before His return to the earth. In the time of the great tribulation these things will reach their climax as the four horsemen of the apocalypse ride out (Revelation 6.1-8). In the NIV translation we read of the fourth horseman: ***'I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth.'*** Revelation 6.8. So it appears

that plague is one of the signs of the last days' judgement which comes on the earth in the great tribulation and causes mass death.

The Coronavirus is not that final plague, but it may be seen as a forerunner of it, especially in the way it is being used now to bring about radical changes in life on earth and increase the power of the government to control the people.

At the beginning of the crisis Bill Gates said that 'normalcy will only return when everyone on the planet has been vaccinated.' The UK government has said that the vaccination will not be compulsory. However there is the possibility that it will be used for some kind of Freedom Pass, needed for travel, access to shops, work, entertainment venues and all public spaces. Government Minister James Cleverley has said, 'Millions of people will have their lives 'unlocked' by getting the Covid jab and a card showing they have had it. The vaccination programme will also allow Britain's economy to be 'unlocked'. A newspaper headline read 'No Jab? You're barred' after a government minister said that some venues might insist on proof of vaccination for granting entry. Mike Cernovich in the USA wrote: 'Government won't force you to take vaccine. Amazon will. Airlines will. Banks will. You won't be able to buy, sell, or trade without the vaccine.' A health committee in Israel has been told that the government won't force people to take the vaccine, but taking it will give you 'Green Status' to go freely in all the green zones: 'They'll open for you cultural events, they'll open to you the shopping malls, hotels, and restaurants.' Whoever is vaccinated may enter those green areas, that 'safe zone', whoever is not will not enter.'

Chinese President Xi Jinping told world leaders at the G20

conference that they need a 'global mechanism' using QR codes (bar codes on mobile phones) to open up international travel. The International Air Transport Association has already said that it is developing a mobile 'digital passport' that would tell airlines if a traveller has been vaccinated against Covid. This could be rolled out to cover everyday life in society, creating something like the 'health certificates' being used in China now. These are apps on mobile phones giving a traffic-light style health code. A green code allows someone to travel freely, enter shops and work places and an orange or red code keeps them out. If you get a red code you must isolate at home until you get a green one. The codes are based on data and information submitted to the operators of the system. In a police state like China, this gives the people in charge the ability to control your movement, work, finances, buying and selling, what you say on social media and who you mix with. If something like that comes in on a global scale, it would be another step towards a dictatorial world government.

The Great Global Reset.



Apart from its impact on the world's health, Covid 19 has had a huge impact on the world's economy. Governments around the world are talking about re structuring society after Covid. Klaus Schwab is the chairman of the World Economic Forum, that hosts the annual Davos summit of world economic, political and

business leaders. He has written a book 'Covid 19 – the Great Reset', saying: *'This pandemic represents a rare but narrow window of opportunity to reflect, reimagine, and reset our world. ... Many things will change forever ... A new world will emerge ... The societal upheaval unleashed by COVID-19 will last for years, and possibly generations ... Many of us are pondering when things will return to normal. The short response is: never.'*

'Every country, from the United States to China, must participate, and every industry, from oil and gas to tech, must be transformed. In short, we need a Great Reset of capitalism. ... for global leaders to shape the future state of global relations, the direction of national economies, the priorities of societies, the nature of business models and the management of a global common interests'.

The new order envisaged by Schwab will embrace the entire world and so he says it will *'only come about through some form of **effective global governance.**'* He says this will create *'a new social contract that honours the dignity of every human being.'* In other words, 'the Great Reset' is an updated blueprint for the New World Order and world government.

He also made the connection between the Covid crisis and the 'Green New Deal': *'At first glance, the pandemic and the environment might seem to be only distantly related cousins; but they are much closer and more intertwined than we think.'* One of the connections is that both issues make people afraid of something that is going to destroy their lives (Covid or global warming), unless 'global governance' steps in and saves us.

He admits that Covid did not require such a heavy-handed

response as we have had, but has proved a useful stepping stone to the next phase of the plan to control human activity and push for 'global governance'. He says we need such a government to save the world from global warming by working for the elimination of carbon emissions (coal, gas, oil). In this he has the agreement of many world leaders, including Kristalina Georgiava, Managing director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres. Heads of national governments, including Boris Johnson, EU chief Ursula von der Leyen, incoming US President Biden, leaders of Canada, New Zealand and Australia, are all making statements showing they are thinking along these lines.

UN Secretary General Guterres said, 'Our planet is broken' and blamed humanity for waging 'a suicidal war on the natural world.' He announced that the UN's central objective in 2021 will be to build a global coalition around the need to reduce emissions to net zero. Net zero refers to cutting greenhouse gas emissions (burning oil, gas and coal) as far as possible. If we don't do this, he says, the earth is doomed.

Interestingly just as there are sceptics who question the science behind the lockdown, so also there are climate change sceptics who question the science behind global warming. They point out that climate is a hugely complex entity and that burning fossil fuels makes only a very small difference to the whole picture. Computer models that predict a four degree rise in temperature over the next century are as flawed as the computer models that predicted 500,000 deaths from Covid in the UK. The main drivers of the weather are the sun, ocean currents and wind direction. We can tell from history that were times in the past when the

weather was warmer than it is now (the Medieval Warm Period in around 1300) and times when it was colder (the Little Ice Age which began in 1650 and lasted in some form until 1850).

None of this was caused by humans burning fossil fuels. Based on recent studies of the sun's behaviour it is quite likely that the world will experience global cooling not warming in the coming days. For more information on this I recommend the Electoverse website and this article 'Anthropogenic Global Warming (AGW) —a biblical and scientific approach to climate change' by Don Batten <https://creation.com/climate-change> .

Klaus Schwab wants his Global Reset to deal with problems caused by Covid 19 and Global Warming with something called the 'Fourth Industrial Revolution'. He says this will bring massive benefits to humanity by using AI (Artificial Intelligence) to change human behaviour: *'The scale and breadth of the unfolding technological revolution will usher in economic, social and cultural changes of such phenomenal proportions that they are almost impossible to envisage. ... The mind-boggling innovations triggered by the fourth industrial revolution, from biotechnology to AI, are redefining what it means to be human. ... The future will challenge our understanding of what it means to be human, from both a biological and a social standpoint'*

He describes a merger of people and machines in which new technologies become physically part of us: *'Some of us already feel that our smartphones have become an extension of ourselves. Today's external devices— from wearable computers to virtual reality headsets—**will almost certainly become implantable in our bodies and brains.** Advances in neurotechnology will enhance our cognitive abilities (i.e some*

*kind of implants will increase our brain power and our ability to function as well as cutting out disease). We will become better able to manipulate our own genes, and those of our children.’ He dreams of “**active implantable microchips that break the skin barrier of our bodies**, smart tattoos, biological computing and custom-designed organisms”.*

Implanted microchips? Does this remind you of the 666 prophecy of Revelation 13?

A new financial world order.

Some economists think ‘the Great Reset’ is a bit of a fantasy, because what is really coming down the line is an economic storm that will hit the world. In order to pay for the Covid crisis governments are creating money out of thin air, ending up with massive debts and currencies which are not backed by real wealth. The UK now has debts of £2.8 trillion. The USA and EU have equally high debts relative to their size. This is likely to cause a problem in the global banking system, much greater than the credit crunch of 2008.

However the ‘Great Reset’ and the economic crisis could come together. Some are comparing the present situation to the end of World War 2, which left countries in ruins and huge debts caused by the war. At that time the Bretton Woods Agreement was signed in 1944 in the USA. This aimed at rebuilding the world economy after the war by creating a ‘New World Order’, in which the USA would be the leading power with world currencies pegged to the value of the US dollar. Note the words ‘New World Order’, ‘Novus Ordo Seclorum’ in Latin, on the back of the dollar bill.

The Coronavirus pandemic has created an economic crisis, similar to the one caused by World War 2. This requires a new monetary world order to reshape the world. Kristalina Georgiava, managing director of the IMF, said *'Today we face a new 'Bretton Woods moment'. A pandemic that has already cost more than a million lives. An economic calamity that will make the world economy 4.4 % smaller this year and strip an estimated \$11 trillion of output by next year. And untold human desperation in the face of huge disruption and rising poverty for the first time in decades. Once again, we face two massive tasks: to fight the crisis today—and build a better tomorrow. We must seize this new Bretton Woods moment.'*

One idea which is being floated is a new monetary system, replacing cash and cheques with CBDCs – Central Bank Digital Currencies. This is a form of cryptocurrency used in international trade and finance. It can also be adapted to give individuals the ability to use it with mobile phone apps and debit cards cutting out cash altogether. China is already creating such a system. Bank of England Governor, Andrew Bailey, has said, *'I think in a few years' time, we will be heading toward some sort of digital currency.'*

The Bank of International Settlements, based in Basel, Switzerland, is a very powerful organisation, a kind of central bank of central banks. Its General Manager, Agustin Carstens, strongly advocates the creation of CBDCs, saying they have a great advantage over cash, because they give the central bank absolute control over who uses them. He says that a cash economy means that no one knows who is spending money and what they are spending it on. With CBDCs the banks (and

government) can keep track on every penny spent. They are now developing the technology to do this.

This means that they can develop the power to enable people to buy and sell. They can also prevent people who don't comply with their rules from being able to use the system. This could be used for good to clamp down on criminal activity and the drug trade. It could also be used to bring the poor and disadvantaged into the banking system and to help the flow of money into poorer countries of the world. In order for this to work everyone will need to be identified and linked to a worldwide database. Bill Gates is proposing just such a worldwide biometric ID system to be set up, coupled with a worldwide vaccination programme to beat Covid 19.

The downside of this is that it makes everything dependent on technology which can be hacked or go wrong and throw the whole system into confusion. From the point of view of Bible prophecy this system could be used by the people in power to identify dissenters, especially Bible believing Christians, and cut them out of the financial system (i.e. stop them from being able to buy and sell).

One possible outcome of the present crisis is that the banking system hits a new crisis and collapses, in which case personal assets and savings are wiped

out. Out of this a kind of socialist world government emerges.

Everyone is paid a basic equal allowance through Digital Currencies (CBDCs) linked to personal accounts by some kind of biometric ID. This will create a kind of techno tyranny controlled by a handful of super rich elitists who will no doubt find a way to

preserve their own wealth and privilege while destroying everyone else's.

So money fails, nations go onto some kind of digital currency enforced by technology. The money supply is controlled by a central world authority linked to a central bank which pays people a basic living allowance. People who don't comply get cut out of the system and can't buy or sell.

Revelation 13 and the Mark of the Beast.

This really does sound like the antichrist world government described in the Book of Revelation. The Bible says that in the very last days before the return of Jesus Christ the world will be in the hands of a satanic dictatorship.

'Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon (Satan) gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marvelled and followed the beast. So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"'

Revelation 13.1-4

Interpretation. A world antichrist government will emerge in the last days, empowered by Satan with his man, the beast or antichrist, in control. The seven heads and ten horns on the beast

are explained further in Revelation 17.7-14. The ten horns refer to the ten kings, either ten dominating nations or a committee of ten world leaders. These are in power at the time of the Antichrist and give him their power in the final period before Jesus' return to the earth. Power is concentrated in his hands and he sets up a dictatorship in the manner of Stalin or Hitler, with super technology to enforce it.

'And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If anyone has an ear, let him hear. He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.'

Revelation 13.5-9.

Interpretation. For a brief period (3 ½ years) he achieves world power and makes war on God and his people. He blasphemes God and 'those who dwell in heaven' (a possible reference to those taken in the rapture of the church). He then makes war on those on earth who have come to believe in Jesus Christ during the seven-year tribulation event (see Revelation 7). Unbelievers will worship him as a god (see 2 Thessalonians 2), while many of those faithful to the true God will experience death and imprisonment. The Beast and the False Prophet will be destroyed

by the soon returning Lord Jesus to judge the world in righteousness, so believers should be encouraged to continue in the faith in these circumstances.

In verses 11-18 a second beast emerges, generally known as the False Prophet, who bears witness to the beast and makes people worship him as a god. He creates an image to the beast that they should worship. This one completes the satanic trinity of the dragon (Satan), the beast (his man on earth) and the false prophet (who bears witness to the beast). This is a counterfeit of the trinity of the Father, Son (Jesus revealed on earth as Son of God) and the Holy Spirit (Who bears witness to Jesus). This sets up the Mark of the Beast system:

'He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.'

Those who do worship this image receive a mark on the right hand or on their forehead. The mark of the beast is connected to a number and some kind of mark or 'engraving' on the skin of people. Those who have this will be allowed to 'buy and sell', a basic part of entering into normal society. Those without it won't. Revelation 14 shows that taking the mark is forbidden by God and will result in eternal damnation of those who take it.

This is where we see the connection to what I have written in the first part of this article. Think about health passes given to people vaccinated for Covid which relate to people's ability to buy and sell, the development of the kind of technology that Klaus Schwab proposes in his Global Reset, the financial crisis and the development of crypto-currencies. All this is leading to the last days economic system which could bring all financial transactions under the control of a central authority. We do not yet see this in place. Taking the vaccine is not taking the mark of the beast. But the attempt to bring something like this on the whole of society is a sign that the world is moving in this direction.

The fact that this is beginning to happen is also a sign to believers in Jesus Christ that the day of His appearing is drawing near: ‘

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.’

1 Thessalonians 4.16-18.

According to the pre-tribulation view, this event known as the rapture of the church happens before the seven year Great Tribulation period, the time when the Antichrist takes power. This means that born again Christians could be taken to meet the Lord at any time now, so we must be ready for this event. It also means that those who are taken in the rapture will not be present on earth in the tribulation time. The mid and post tribulation views

put the rapture at the end of the seven year tribulation period (or in the middle of it). If this is correct, born again Christians will be here for the coming time of trouble and will face the Antichrist rule and must be ready to resist him, even if it costs our lives. Either way the only answer to the crisis which is surely coming on the world is to repent and believe the Gospel. The Lord Jesus will determine the timing of the rapture and my belief is that there is good evidence for the pre-tribulation teaching. We have two CDs of teaching on the subject 'The Rapture, the Tribulation and the Millennial Reign of the Messiah' available on request.

Jesus came the first time to die for our sins so that we might find forgiveness and be reconciled to God. He rose from the dead to give eternal life to all who believe in Him. He is coming the second time to judge the world in righteousness, according to how we respond to the message of the Gospel. The things recorded in this article are another sign of the soon coming of Jesus Christ. So we must pay attention to His word, ‘

Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.’

Matthew 24.44.

Now is the day to accept Jesus as your Saviour. To do this, repent of your sins, turn to God in faith, and believe that the Lord Jesus died for your sins and rose again from the dead. In His name you receive forgiveness of sin and eternal life. Here is a prayer you can pray to accept Jesus as your Saviour:

Dear Heavenly Father, I admit that I am a sinner and need your forgiveness. I believe that Jesus Christ died in my place, shedding His blood to pay for my sins, and that He rose again

from the dead to give me eternal life. I am willing right now to turn from my sin and accept Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour and Lord. I commit my life to you and ask you to come into my life by the Holy Spirit and help me become the kind of person you want me to be. Thank you Father for loving me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Israel Matters



The Danish Lutheran Church sponsored a new translation of the Bible which deleted the word Israel in almost all of the New Testament and much of the Old Testament. They did this because they were worried that people reading their Bible might think that the modern State of Israel has something to do with God and the Bible. They had quite a lot of deleting to do because the word Israel appears 2319 times in the Bible and 73 times in the New Testament (and in the New Testament references Israel always means either the land or the people of Israel). Here are two of their deletions:

Psalm 121:4 says, *'He that keeps Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.'* This Psalm along with many other verses in the Hebrew

Bible expresses God's continuous love and concern for Israel. In case you might think that is out of order the new version says: 'He who takes care of us will not fall asleep, no He is not sleeping.' In Matthew 2.19-21, after fleeing to Egypt from Herod's murderous attempt to kill Jesus at birth, Joseph is told *'Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel ... Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came **into the land of Israel.***' In the Danish Lutheran Bible to avoid any connection of the land to Israel, Joseph is told to 'return home' with the Child Jesus and Mary, His mother.

The motive of these translators appears to be to remove any connection between God and the people and the present land of Israel. Behind this we see a view that is strong in much of the professing Christian church today which says that the church has replaced Israel and therefore Israel today does not matter.

But Israel matters to God.

There are many today who wish to delete Israel not just from the pages of the Bible but from the map of the Middle East.

On November 4th the United Nations General Assembly passed seven resolutions condemning Israel without mentioning any transgressions by any other nation. Britain along with the countries of the EU voted against Israel, or abstained, in these resolutions.

Every year the UN passes numerous resolutions condemning Israel for human rights abuses and hindering the peace. These resolutions are generally approved by the British government and EU countries, as well as countries like Syria, China and Iran. No

such resolutions are passed against Syria where the Assad regime has killed hundreds of thousands of its own citizens or China where Christians and Muslims face appalling denial of their basic human rights. Israel has made efforts to create peace with its neighbours and gives full human rights to Israeli Arabs, so the hypocrisy of the UN's continual attacks on Israel is quite mind blowing. The basic reason is that the majority of nations in the UN say Israel does not matter and would like to see the end of the State of Israel.

But Israel matters to God.

Outgoing US President Trump may have had his faults, but he was beyond doubt the most pro-Israel US president since Harry Truman, who supported Israel's restoration in 1948. Trump endorsed Israel's claim to Jerusalem as its undivided capital, moving the US Embassy there. He supported Israel's claim to the Golan Heights, a vital defence for the country from Syrian aggression. He opposed Palestinian terrorism and cut off aid to the Palestinian Authority unless they renounced terror against Israel. He withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal, which had empowered Iran to increase its aggression against Israel. He backed a peace deal with Israel and the Palestinians which would have left Israel in control of an undivided Jerusalem, most of the settlements in Judea and Samaria and the Jordan Valley. Under his influence a number of Arab countries have now signed peace agreements with Israel.

Now the incoming administration of President Biden looks like it will change all of this. US policy towards Israel will go back to Obama's which wanted to re-divide the land with a Palestinian

state on the territory Israel gained in the Six Day War. This means Jerusalem divided between Israel and the Palestinians, the Old City and holy places under Palestinian control, the settlements in Judea and Samaria uprooted and Israel pushed back to 'the suicide borders' of 1967. He wants to revive the Iran nuclear deal made under the Obama Administration which freed up billions of dollars to the Islamist regime to equip terrorists in the Middle East to destabilise moderate Arab countries and confront Israel. Iran's stated policy is the elimination of Israel with missiles provided to its proxies in the region and with a nuclear weapon which it is not far away from creating. Israeli politicians fear war is coming to Israel as a result of all this.

If the incoming US administration goes along with this programme, they will show that Israel no longer matters to the United States. This will help Israel's enemies to work for their goal of deleting Israel from the map. Iran, Turkey, Hezbollah, Hamas and most of the Palestinian Authority have gone beyond saying Israel does not matter to saying Israel should not exist. Anti Zionists in the West agree, joining anti Israel demonstrations where they chant 'From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free.' The river is the Jordan and the sea is the Mediterranean, so they mean that Israel should cease to exist.

But Israel matters to God and will not cease to exist.

The restoration of Israel.

We say this not on the basis of any political view, but on the Word of God, the Bible. The Danish Lutheran Church must have some belief in the importance of the Bible, but it has missed the point that God has chosen Israel as a people by a covenant which goes

back 3000 years to the time of Abraham. In Genesis 15 we read how the Lord made a covenant with Abraham to give him a multitude of descendants, as many as the stars in heaven and sand on the sea shore and that He would give to them the title deeds of ownership of the land of Israel. ***“I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it.”*** Genesis 15.6. This promise was repeated to his son Isaac (Genesis 26.2-5) and his grandson Jacob (Genesis 28.3-4). God promises that He will bless those who bless His people and curse those who curse them. Genesis 12.1-3.

The Bible is full of prophecies of the restoration of Israel, an event scheduled for the last days of this age (Hebrew – acharit ha yamim). For example:

“In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the surviving remnant of his people He will raise a banner for the nation and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth.”

Isaiah 11.1-12.

“Hear the word of the Lord, you nations; proclaim it in distant coastlands: ‘He who scattered Israel will gather them and will watch over his flock like a shepherd.’”

Jeremiah 31.10.

Ezekiel describes a barren land made fertile by the returning Jewish people at the end of days. ***“But you, O mountains of Israel, you shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to My people Israel, for they are about to come. For indeed I am for you, and I will turn to you, and you shall be***

tilled and sown. I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt. ... The desolate land shall be tilled instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by. So they will say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.'

In the 19th century Palestine was a neglected backwater of the Ottoman Empire, with a sparse population and a largely desolate land. The Jewish chalutzim (pioneers who returned to the agricultural settlements) bought unwanted land from absentee Arab landlords, and began the process of turning the desolate land into the amazingly productive land that it is today, draining the swamps, planting millions of trees, making the desert to bloom. Even before the State of Israel was proclaimed, Rav Kook, the chief rabbi of Israel in the British Mandate time saw in the secular Jewish kibbutzniks who were reclaiming land, the footsteps of the Messiah.

Today we see Israel's accomplishments in this area as the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled: ***"In days to come Jacob will take root, Israel will bud and blossom and fill all the world with fruit."*** Isaiah 27.6. As well as exporting its agricultural produce around the world, Israel has shared its agricultural techniques, especially in desert agriculture, for the help of many countries in Africa and Asia, where food production is difficult.

David Ben Gurion, the leader of the Yishuv, the Jewish community in the land before the State of Israel, was summoned before the Peel Commission of the British Mandate in Palestine in 1936 and asked what was his mandate for wanting to gather the Jews to

this land. He replied, 'The Bible is our mandate.' Sadly the British authorities at this point showed their lack of faith in the Bible and went back on their promise in the Balfour Declaration of 1917 to 'view with favour the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.' They published the White Paper limiting and eventually stopping altogether Jewish immigration into Palestine, at the very time that the infernal Nazi regime was preparing for the Holocaust of the Jewish people in Europe. The British did allow 10,000 children into Britain in the Kindertransport, but without their parents. The opportunity to save Jewish people from the death camps in Europe by allowing immigration into Palestine was lost and the British have a big responsibility for this.

British opposition to the establishment of Israel continued after the war and was a key factor in Britain's subsequent decline as a nation. God judged the country because it did not care for the persecuted Jewish people, as He did to Edom according to the prophecy of Obadiah:

"Indeed, you should not have gazed on their affliction in the day of their calamity, ... You should not have stood at the crossroads to cut off those among them who escaped; nor should you have delivered up those among them who remained in the day of distress. "For the day of the Lord upon all the nations is near; as you have done, it shall be done to you; your reprisal shall return upon your own head."

Obadiah 10-16.

As a patriotic Englishman who loves our nation, it grieves me to say that this prophecy applies to Britain as well as Edom. Britain continues to be under God's judgement as we continue to vote

against Israel in the UN and show indifference or hostility to the State of Israel.

Despite opposition, the UN did vote in 1947 for the partition of Palestine which led to the establishment of the Jewish State (Britain abstained). The State of Israel was 'born in a day' as prophesied in Isaiah 66.9-10, when David Ben Gurion proclaimed the State of Israel on May 14 1948.



Ben Gurion proclaims the State of Israel in Tel Aviv

The very next day five Arab armies attacked with the intention of destroying Israel at birth, but Israel not only survived the onslaught but emerged from its first war with more territory than the UN had granted it in the first place. Israel has faced repeated attempts to attack it, and try to destroy it, but it has always survived. As we read in Psalm 83

["For behold, Your enemies make a tumult; and those who hate

You have lifted up their head. They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, and consulted together against Your sheltered ones. They have said, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be remembered no more."

Psalm 83

These words were almost spoken literally by President Nasser of Egypt just before the Six Day War in 1967 as he contemplated a war in which he planned the end of Israel. Far from being cut off, Israel defeated the armies of Egypt, Jordan and Syria in six days, gaining control of Jerusalem, the West Bank / Judea and Samaria, the Golan

Heights, Gaza and the Sinai. A miracle if ever there was one.

As a result of this Jerusalem became the defining issue concerning all nations, the UN, USA, EU, Russia. Should it be the undivided capital of Israel, divided between Israel and Palestine or some kind of international entity governed by the UN? This fulfils biblical prophecy that Jerusalem will be the 'burdensome stone burdening all nations' (Zechariah 12.2-3).

Jerusalem will be the scene of the last world war bringing about the return of the Messiah (Zechariah 12-14, Revelation 16-19).

Israel's spiritual rebirth.

In the prophecy of Ezekiel 36-37 we read how the restoration of Israel will happen in stages, firstly physical and then spiritual. We also read in Ezekiel 36.24-28:

"For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all

countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.”

Ezekiel 36.24-28:

This implies that Israel will first be born of the flesh, and then born of the spirit and given a new heart and a new spirit, which will cause them to dwell in ‘the land that I gave to your fathers.’ The present restoration of Israel is a significant event because it shows that God is faithful to His word and His covenant and that He is in control of historical events. It is also significant because these events herald the soon coming of the Messiah. Will this be the first coming of Messiah, as is taught by rabbinic Judaism or His second coming as taught by believers in Jesus / Yeshua? We believe Jesus is the Jewish Messiah who came once to fulfil the prophecies of the suffering Servant Messiah (Isaiah 53) and is coming again to fulfil the prophecies of the Reigning King Messiah (Isaiah 2). The return of the Jewish people to Israel is a vital sign of His soon return. These things are at the heart of God’s purposes for Israel and the whole world, so what happens in Israel matters a great deal to God.

After the Exodus from Egypt God gave the Torah (the Law) to Israel through Moses, to be their guide and law (Exodus 20). He promised to bless them if they were obedient and kept the Torah,

but warned of judgement coming if they were disobedient (Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28). The most severe judgement would be removal from the land, living in dispersion amongst the Gentile nations. This would be the result of not obeying the Lord and His word:

'Then the Lord will scatter you among all nations, from one end of the earth to the other. ... Among those nations you will find no repose, no resting place for the sole of your foot. There the Lord will give you an anxious mind, eyes weary with longing, and a despairing heart.'

Deuteronomy 28.64- 66.

However God always promised that there would be a return to the land:

"If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you. Then the Lord your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it."

Deuteronomy 30.4-5.

After years of warnings from the Hebrew Prophets to repent and return to God, Israel eventually experienced dispersion from the land, the northern kingdom of Israel being taken captive by the Assyrians in around 730 BC and the southern kingdom taken by the Babylonians in 586 BC. The prophet Jeremiah told the people taken to Babylon that they would return to the land after 70 years of captivity: *"For thus saith the Lord, that after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place."* Jeremiah 29.11. This happened in the events recorded in the book of Ezra

and Nehemiah.

Daniel was God's prophet to Israel while they were captive in Babylon. In Daniel 9 he recognised that the 70 years of Jeremiah's prophecy have been completed and prays for the return and restoration of Jerusalem. He received a word from the angel Gabriel who told him that Jerusalem and the Temple would be restored and that during the days of the Second Temple Messiah would come and be 'cut off' dying a violent death for others, an event which happened at exactly the time prophesied in Daniel 9.26, when Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) came and died by crucifixion (fulfilling Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22). He took the sins of the world upon Himself, died and was buried and then rose again on the third day to give forgiveness and eternal life to all who call on His name.

This prophecy goes on to say that following this event 'the people of the prince to come' (the Romans) would destroy the 'city and the sanctuary' (Jerusalem and the Temple) and there would be wars and desolations following. That happened 40 years after the crucifixion of Jesus when the Jewish Revolt against Rome was crushed and Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed and the long years of Jewish dispersion into the Gentile lands began. Jesus prophesied this and gave a reason for it:

"Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another,

because you did not know the time of your visitation.”

Luke 19.41-44.

“For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”

Luke 21.23-4.

Jesus prophesied the coming fall of Jerusalem, the dispersion of the Jewish people into the Gentile lands, and says this is connected to the fact that ‘you did not know the time of your visitation’, in other words you did not understand the meaning of My coming to you as the Messiah to save you. But He also implies there will be a restoration, a return to Zion at the end of days. That is happening now.

Israel in the last days.

All of this matters a huge amount to God and none of it can happen unless the Jewish people are preserved as a nation, beloved by God. So deleting the word ‘Israel’ from the Bible as the Danish translation has done is to change its meaning which God does not permit us to do. Concerning Israel God says:

“Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you. Again I will build you, and you shall be rebuilt, O virgin of Israel! You shall again be adorned with your tambourines, and shall go forth in the dances of those who rejoice. You shall yet plant vines on the mountains of Samaria; the planters shall plant and eat them as ordinary food. For there shall be a day when the watchmen will cry on Mount Ephraim,

'Arise, and let us go up to Zion, to the Lord our God.' ”

Jeremiah 31.3-6.

“Thus says the Lord, Who gives the sun for a light by day, the ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, who disturbs the sea, and its waves roar (The Lord of hosts is His name): “If those ordinances depart from before Me, says the Lord, then the seed of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before Me forever.” Thus says the Lord: “If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, says the Lord.”

Jeremiah 31.35-37.

Some Christians say that these words only apply to Israel up to the coming of Jesus. They say the Jews rejected Jesus and so God has rejected the Jews. Actually this is not true because the first church was entirely Jewish, the New Testament was written by Jews and the Gospel was brought to the Gentiles by Jewish disciples of Jesus. Also the passage in Jeremiah 31.35-7 comes immediately after the prophecy in Jeremiah 31.31-34 of the new covenant which applies to the coming of the Messiah and the covenant God made with us through Jesus. In Romans 11, Paul says that even in unbelief Israel remains *'beloved (of God) for the fathers' sakes. For the gift and calling of God are without repentance.'* Romans 11.28-29. There have always been Jewish people who believed in Jesus and today there are at least 130 congregations of Messianic Jews in the land of Israel (Jewish believers in Yeshua / Jesus as the Messiah).

Jesus implies that there will be a restoration of Israel in the last

days when He says ***'Jerusalem will be trodden down (ruled by) the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.'*** The end of the 'times of the Gentiles' is tied up with the Second Coming of Jesus and the event prophesied in Daniel 2.36-45 when the stone (coming of the kingdom of God) smites the image of Babylon (the world system in rebellion against God) and fills the earth with the glory of the kingdom of God. This will be preceded by the revelation of the Messiah to the Jewish people. In Matthew 23.37-9 Jesus prophesies to Jerusalem, *"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate (coming destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem in 70CE). For I say unto you, 'You shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.'"*

In other words Jerusalem will see Jesus again, at a time when the Jewish people greet Him with the words, 'Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.' This is the Hebrew phrase 'Baruch ha ba be shem adonai', the traditional greeting for the Messiah. This means that at the time of the end there will be a revelation to the Jewish people that Yeshua, Jesus is the Messiah. This corresponds to the prophecy in Zechariah 12, the event that happens before the Messiah comes in power and glory to the Mount of Olives at the last battle over Jerusalem (Zechariah 14): 'And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.' Zechariah 12.10. This revelation of the Messiah as the one who has been pierced (died by crucifixion many years previously), will convince this last generation before His return

that Yeshua, Jesus is the Messiah and will open a 'fountain of cleansing' from sin to the remaining Jewish people. (Zechariah 13).

This will happen at a time of great trouble for Israel and the world. Nevertheless, it will lead to the time of ultimate deliverance when the Messiah comes in person with all the power of God to put an end to the war, to regather the final remnant of Israel and set up His Messianic Kingdom, ruling from Jerusalem, with the Millennial Temple rebuilt and peace and justice restored to the earth (Isaiah 2, Ezekiel 40-48, Zechariah 14, Revelation 20).

God has preserved Israel as a people through the long years of the dispersion and brought them back to the land of Israel for this final period of history which will conclude with the return of the Messiah to Jerusalem. The fact that we see these things happening now is a sign that we are in the last generation before the return of the Messiah.

In Psalm 102 we read:

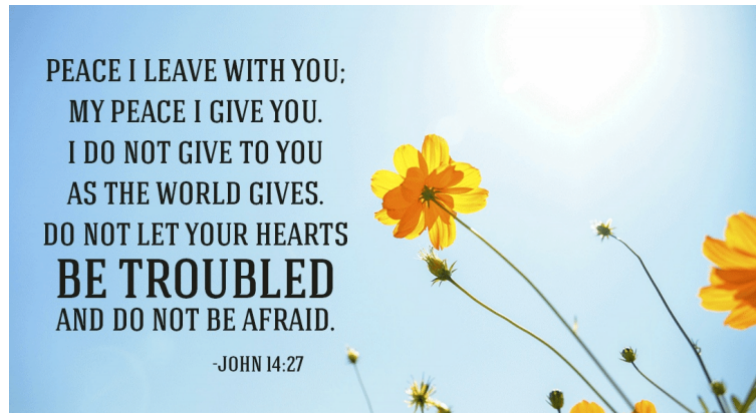
"For the Lord shall build up Zion; He shall appear in His glory. ... This will be written for the generation to come, that a people yet to be created may praise the Lord."

Psalm 102.16-18.

When you see the Lord restoring the people of Israel to the land and building up Jerusalem, you know that this is the sign that He is about to appear, in the person of the glorified Messiah Yeshua. The Psalm says this will be written for the generation to come. The Hebrew is 'le dor ha acharon'. That can also be translated for 'the last generation.'

So Israel matters. Israeli lives matter. And what we believe about the Messiah matters.

Don't Panic



Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. Jesus speaking in John 14.1.

These words were spoken by Jesus to His disciples at the Last Supper, His last meeting with them before His arrest, trial and crucifixion. He had just told them that He was going to go away from them, that one of them (Judas) would betray Him, that Peter would deny that he knew Him. In a few hours' time He would be cruelly put to death by crucifixion. So the disciples had enough reasons to be troubled, alarmed, even terrified at what was about to happen. But Jesus told them not to be troubled but to have faith in Him.

We have enough reasons to be troubled, alarmed, even terrified at events that are coming down the line for the human race in our time. We have seen the Coronavirus spread, shutting down normal life in most of the countries of the world. Along with this we see a cocktail of crises coming down the line with the potential to overturn our society – economic meltdown, civil unrest, new forms of dictatorship controlling our lives. We see dangerous

regimes like North Korea and Iran developing weapons of mass destruction and China becoming more aggressive and threatening the peace and freedom of the world.

There is a growing hatred for God and Christianity manifesting itself in many countries leading to an increase in persecution of Christians. We see also the danger to our Jewish friends as Antisemitism grows around the world and Israel's enemies threaten it with destruction.

We also see the connection between all this and the prophecies of the Bible meaning that we are living in the last days of this age, which will be a time of great trouble before the Day of the Lord, the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Read through these passages in the Bible which describe this time and you will see reasons to be troubled at what is coming on the world. Isaiah 2, 24, Jeremiah 30-31, Ezekiel 38-9, Daniel 12, Joel 2-3, Zechariah 12-14, Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, 2 Thessalonians 2, 2 Timothy 3, Revelation 6-19.

But Jesus says, **'Don't panic and give up, but have faith.'** In Luke 21 He describes the things happening in the world which cause people's hearts to be **'failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.'** But to those who believe in Him He says **'When these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.'** Luke 21.28. The reason we may look up with hope and expectation is because these things happening are a sign of Jesus' return, when He will put the world to rights and save those who trust in Him now.

When we look at the bad things happening in the world, we worry about what will happen to us. Will we suffer hardship, poverty, pain? Will we be locked up or locked down, or die in the coming events? Jesus gives us assurance to those who trust in Him that whatever we go through He will be with us, always even to the end of the world.

He says, ‘

Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.’

John 14.1-3.

Jesus says as the antidote to fear is faith. In the context of John 14, the bad thing about to happen to Him (the crucifixion) is not the end. On the third day He would rise again from the dead, conquering sin and death and hell. Nor are the bad things happening today the end. There will be a brief time of severe trouble followed by a long time of the glorious reign of the Messiah on the earth and then an eternity in the new heavens and new earth. There will be a dramatic intervention of God when He comes to take those who believe in Him to Himself in the rapture of the church.

Jesus tells us ‘Believe in God, believe also in Me’. In this way we move from fear to faith. The world considers faith foolish. ‘You really believe that God exists as Creator of the universe? That a man dying on a cross 2000 years ago can save your soul for eternity? That Jesus is going to come back again?’ Yet for those

who believe and understand the Bible, it is the wisdom of God. The Bible says, **'Believe in the Lord your God so shall you be established. Believe his prophets, so shall you prosper.'** 2 Chronicles 20.20. **'He that comes to God must believe that he is (exists) and is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him.'** Hebrews 11.6. **'Take the shield of faith wherewith you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one.'** Ephesians 6.16.

When Jesus says 'Believe in God, believe also in Me', He means a belief in God as revealed in the Bible, not a god of our imagination whom we have made up (or Satan has put into our minds). In James 2.19 we read, **'You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!'** In Isaiah 45.20 we read of the nations who **'have no knowledge, who carry the wood of their carved image, and pray to a god that cannot save.'**

The God who can save is God as revealed in the Bible, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, the Redeemer and Judge of all the earth. He exists from eternity to eternity, the righteous judge of all the earth, who gave His law through Moses and confirmed it through the Prophets. He promised the coming of the Messiah to save us from our sins and revealed that Messiah uniquely in the person of the Lord Jesus. He is active on behalf of all who call upon His name to save us from the power of the devil who is responsible for all the sin and evil on the earth.

The present world crisis is allowed by the Lord, as a judgement on the world that has rejected Him. But it is also an attack of the devil, who is mustering his forces for his final assault on the kingdom of God. The devil is stronger than we are, but there is

one stronger than the devil, the Lord Jesus.

In 1 John 4.1-5 we read ***'You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.'***

1 and 2 John are the only books in the Bible which refer by name to the Antichrist. Elsewhere the coming bad man prophesied in scripture is known as the Beast (Daniel and Revelation) or the Man of Sin (2 Thessalonians 2). John defines the spirit of antichrist and the many antichrists who will precede him in his epistle.

Firstly the spirit of antichrist will deny the relationship between the Father and the Son:

'Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ (the Messiah)? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.'

1 John 2.22-23.

Secondly it will deny the humanity of the Lord Jesus, that He became man in order to bring salvation through His death on the cross. Note the name Jesus Christ is Yeshua ha Mashiach in Hebrew, which means 'salvation (of) the Messiah:

'Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.'

1 John 4.2-3.

Interestingly in John 14 Jesus makes two statements about Himself which confirm these two central beliefs necessary for saving faith in the Lord Jesus. In verse 6 He says ***'I am the way the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father but by Me.'*** Since God is holy and we are not, we cannot come to God in our own righteousness. We must come through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross which is the only way our sin can be forgiven and we can have a relationship with God. Paul writes ***'God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.'*** 2 Corinthians 5.19. We must believe that Jesus Christ became man in order to reveal the truth of God to us and to bring us salvation through faith in His name.

The second statement Jesus says about Himself in John 14.11 is ***'Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me'***. In this He is saying that He is equal with the Father, eternal, self existing, without beginning or end, and is therefore the Word made flesh. John 1.14 says of the Lord Jesus ***'And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.'*** In the first three verses John has defined the Word as being God ***'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.'***

In verse 16 He is going to speak of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the tri-unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who will come to dwell in the disciples after Jesus' departure. ***'I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may***

abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

The word used for helper or comforter in Greek is Parakletos, meaning one who comes along side. So the Holy Spirit will come alongside all true believers in Jesus and be with us forever. This means that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Jesus once we have put our trust in Him.

If you look at all erroneous beliefs about God or Jesus you will find that

they fail these two tests given in 1 John. They will deny that Jesus is the unique Saviour, the Word of God made flesh (appearing in human form) and also the divine person who exists from eternity to eternity. Jesus' authority to give salvation and eternal life to those who believe in Him rests on Him having this nature as God. Therefore if people believe in 'another Jesus' who is less than God they will not have salvation. In fact any person who follows a religious system that denies these truths revealed in the Bible will find that they are praying to a god that cannot save. They may be very sincere, even nice people, but they are not saved. This is why we must insist that there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved, than the name of the Lord Jesus the Messiah or Christ.

If we have the saving faith in Jesus we can claim for ourselves the promise of the following verses: ‘

In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to

Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.'

John 14.1-3.

So Jesus promises three things which are enough to take away our fears

1. A dwelling place in My Father's house.
2. I will come again.
3. Where I am there you may be also.

In the Authorised Version the text reads 'In My Father's house are many mansions.' In the New International Version it says 'In My Father's house are many rooms.' Some have said 'many rooms' sounds a bit down market and that what is on offer is a mansion not a bed-sit. The Greek word used here is 'mone' which simply means a dwelling place, a place to stay. What Jesus is offering here is an eternal dwelling place in His presence. Where He is, we will be. The disciples listening to these words from Jesus were to understand that His departure was not the end of His relationship with them. He is preparing a place for them to dwell in for eternity. In Jewish culture of the day, after the betrothal of the bride to the bridegroom, the bridegroom departs to prepare a place for bride to dwell. Then he returns to fetch her so she can be with him. Jesus, our eternal heavenly bridegroom, has departed to heaven from where He will come again to fetch His bride and take us to be with Him in our eternal home.

To be homeless is a terrible thing. It is to be vulnerable and in danger, especially when asleep. There are dangers of robbers, of cold, rain, wild animals, disease. In the Bible there are examples of the dangers of being outside at night without a place to dwell

in. In Genesis 19 we read of the two men (angels) who enter Sodom, intending to spend the night in the open square. Lot warns them not to because of the evil of that place. As he takes them into his house a depraved mob surrounds the house wanting to rape them. A similar situation arises in Judges 19 with the Levite and his concubine.

To be eternally homeless is much worse. In fact it is literally hell.

This is why we need to make sure that we know we have an eternal home to go to when we 'sleep' – leave this world.

Everyone has to sleep in the natural. Everyone will sleep in the spiritual sense of dying (apart from those taken in the rapture).

We do our best to make preparations now so we are able to sleep in a safe place. But most people do nothing to prepare for where they are going to spend eternity. We can know by faith that we have an eternal home where we will dwell in safety with the Lord.

'For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' 2 Corinthians 5.1

Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us and it will not be a scruffy bedsit or even a magnificent mansion on an earthly style.

Paul writes: ***'But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.'*** 1

Corinthians 2.9. In order to live in this place, God will change our mortal body, subject to sickness and aging, decay and death, into an immortal body which will never get sick or die:

'In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on

incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

1 Corinthians 15.52-54.

See also Philippians 3.20. So any momentary trouble that we go through in the coming days, pales into insignificance in the light of the glory that is coming in Jesus at His return.

Jesus also says '***I will come again.***' The promise 'I will come again' is a promise of His return to take the disciples to be with Him where He is. This is the only reference we have in John's Gospel to the 2nd coming. In the Synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke, we have lengthy passages giving details of signs of Jesus' coming, the great tribulation before His personal return to the earth, the rapture event when one is taken, and one is left, something He tells us to be ready for at all times. In John's Gospel this is all that we have. But John was to go on to write the Book of Revelation, which has much more detail on the events surrounding the 2nd coming than is found in the synoptic Gospels and is really an expansion on what Jesus says will happen in passages like Matthew 24.

Details about the events surrounding the second coming are not given here in John's Gospel. The sole point Jesus makes here is to tell us 'I will come again.' His coming departure which was troubling the disciples is not the end. The distressing things happening on earth right now are not the end. There will be a second coming of Jesus, when He, not Satan, will have the last word in human affairs. This promise is a great comfort in the face

of the troubling events we see coming on the world. In the grand scheme of things, the final time of trouble is but for a short time of seven years. What is coming in Jesus lasts for eternity – His 1000-year reign on earth followed by eternity in new heavens and new earth.

In John 14.3 Jesus speaks of taking his people to 'Myself that where I am there you may be also'. This corresponds to 1 Thessalonians 4.16-18.

'For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.'

1 Thessalonians 4.16-18

In John 14 Jesus tells us: 'Where I am you shall be'. Paul tells us in Thessalonians, 'Thus we shall always be with the Lord.' You may not understand all the details of Bible prophecy or have worked out the timing of the rapture, the tribulation, and the millennium. You may have questions about this issue. I have studied it for the past 50 years and still don't have it all worked out. What we can know for sure is this. Jesus is coming again. When He comes again if you are a saved believer you are going to be with Him from that point on for all eternity. In a safe place. In a beautiful place. In a body which will never again get sick, suffer pain or die.

If we look at the whole plan of God concerning the 2nd Coming, we see that at the moment when Jesus comes to take us in this

event described here in John, we will be taken into His presence, given new bodies no longer subject to sin and mortality (1 Corinthians 15.50-57). Then we will pass before the judgement seat (Bema): ***'For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.'*** 2 Corinthians 5.9-10. This is for rewards for our works on earth, not for heaven and hell. 1 Corinthians 3.11-15. Then we will go to the glorious marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19.6-10) before returning with the Lord Jesus Christ at His second coming to the earth (Revelation 19.11-16, Jude 14, Zechariah 14.5). Because the Bible says, 'Where I am there you also will be' it is logical to believe that we will be with Him in glorified bodies for His millennial reign on earth after His second coming. Then when He dissolves this world and universe, after Satan's final rebellion at the end of the 1000 years, we will be with Him forever in the new heavens and new earth which He will create. 2 Peter 3, Revelation 21-22.

So when you see bad things happening in the world, don't panic and give up. Look up and lift up your heads. Your redemption is drawing near. *Weeping may endure for the night but joy comes in the morning.* Psalm 30.5. ***For our light affliction which is but for a moment is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*** 2 Corinthians 4.17.

Jesus also said, *'I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work.'* John 9.4. Let us use the time that remains to serve the Lord and get His word out before the dark night of tribulation comes on the earth.

And read the last pages of the Book and know that Jesus is the

winner and we are on the winning side if we join with Him.

Tony Pearce has given four talks on this subject at The Bridge Christian Fellowship. These are available in the sermons' section at our website www.bridgelane.org.uk or on CDs available for us (£2 each).

Titles: John 14.13 'I will come again' – Don't let your hearts be troubled.

John 14.6. 'I am the way, the truth and the life.' – One Way – OK?

John 14.9-11 'I am in the Father, and the Father in Me.' – the Divinity of the Lord Jesus.

John 14.12-31 'The Indwelling Holy Spirit' – Walk in His way and do His will.