

outreach

The New Horizons Newsletter

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providing
leadership,
information and
Biblical teaching

Matthew 28:19-20

representing
Churches of God Outreach
Ministries

CGOM
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Britain—end of an era?

June 23—decision day for the citizens of the ‘United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland’. In the referendum will we vote to ‘Remain’ as part of the European Union? Or to ‘Leave’ it, taking back our national sovereignty? A momentous decision.

Britain had for centuries been an independent ‘island fortress’ that did indeed ‘rule the waves’—and much of the world’s land mass—for centuries, an empire over which ‘the sun never set’. It’s an independence that has been eroded over the past half century, as it succumbed to the dictates handed down by the European Union.

The Decline...

Until World War II ‘empire red’ tinged the maps over most of the globe. Foreign invasions were sent packing. Beginning in the early 1800s British enterprise civilised nation after nation—curbing tribal slaughter, providing infrastructure, establishing governance, introducing Christian values.

The ravages of two world wars sapped our economic strength, and a slow decline set in. Colonies were reluctantly relinquished and weak leadership sought protection from the rising European ‘common market’. The glory of empire faded.

Broken Covenant

There is, however, more to our decline than mere econom-

ics. Rooted as Britain is in Christian values we should have noted the warning signs. We knew what God had said: ‘...
remember Jehovah your God, for it is He who gives to you power to get wealth; that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers’ (Deuteronomy 8:18). A principle that applies universally to any nation.

And, like our ancient forebears we ‘...love to have it so’. Our people are slowly submerging in a

A covenant has terms binding on all

participants, and our forebears had readily signed up to God’s terms (as descendants of Biblical Israel or as Christians): ‘...All which Jehovah has spoken we will do’ (Exodus 19:8, I Corinthians 11:25). Our part: ‘...if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation’ (vv. 5-6).

Observing the covenant—summarized in the Decalogue—guaranteed the hedge of divine protection. Erosion of the covenant’s terms, in contrast, guaranteed a rising tide of self-inflicted trouble. So now we don’t even pretend to be ‘a Christian nation’ and we experience the ‘trouble’.

In reality there’s no such thing as a ‘Christian nation’ - only a nation that’s more—or less—influenced by the teachings of Jesus Christ. *Less* is the current trend. Britain (though not Britain alone) is plagued by practices that overturn the terms of our Covenant with the Creator. And to such an extent that we are castigated by foreign faiths for our shameful low-life morals and naked disrespect for human dignity.

The Fall

Our leaders bulldoze through perverse man-made laws that undermine true Christian values. They actively seek to trade away our national sovereignty for a tawdry place in the

(European) sun. The elderly are neglected. Promiscuity and depravity is tolerated and actively promoted in the false name of ‘liberty’. Disrespect for life is shamelessly enshrined in abortion law. Corruption abounds in government, in business, in the church, in the media, in family life.

And, like our ancient forebears we ‘...love to have it so’. Our people are slowly submerging in a

cont’d p.4

A Review

The *Churches of God Outreach Ministries*, founded in 1996, is an association of inter-dependent local assemblies and individuals who voluntarily co-operate in our mission. We are not a 'denomination' but share common foundation truths. Unusually among the Churches of God we are not hierarchical, and there is no 'corporate headquarters' or salaried ministry.

Our outreach with the Gospel message is focussed locally, though each assembly voluntarily contributes to the financing of our website (www.cgom.org) and the bi-monthly magazine **New Horizons** for a wider outreach. Over a hundred Bible-based booklets and articles are mailed on request—all handled by volunteers who, with your prayers and support and with God's blessing, have been able to make this effort possible over the past 20 years. In 2010 we had 888 requests via our website and 1080 requests via regular postal mail. In 2014 we had 2,551 requests via our website and 1,148 requests via postal mail! A substantial increase! In 2015 we had 2,550 requests via our website and 1,429 via postal mail.

On average each year we mail out 15,000 issues of *New Horizons* magazine and close to 16,000 pieces of literature to 122 countries around the world. Others will have read or downloaded articles and back issues from the website. From 2010 to 2015 we added a total of 3,297 and 1,127 new names to our mailing list. In the previous *ten* years (2000 - 2009) we had added 3,954 and 1,084 new names.

Here are just a couple of the most recent examples of the letters and notes that we have received:

Thank You! No words can express the blessing these small, but powerful, booklets have been to me. It's not only been a blessing to me but also to those I've shared with. God continue blessing your ministry and that through these resources you can change many lives. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. Sincerely with God's blessing, Darlene C. ~ Florida"

*Dear CGOM, Many, many thanks for sending me these wonderful articles: **Three Days and Three Nights in the Grave, Why?, 6,000 Years of Christianity, A Framework for Prophecy and A message of Hope for The World of Tomorrow!** I am beginning to realize some new truth that I had never known, i.e. the glimpse that there is a world of tomorrow. I thought that we are going to heaven when Jesus comes the second time. Another shocking truth is that*

of [the] three days and three nights. I have been a pastor in Seventh Day Adventist Church but have not known some of these truths the Lord God is opening for me to know through your articles. Now I am beginning to see how we have been deceived that Jesus died on a Friday - before the sabbath and resurrected on a Sunday. May the Almighty God bless you more abundantly and my prayer is that I should be meek enough to learn the truth and serve God Almighty in truth. Please, I am longing to know more from this wonderful and blessed Ministry! May God bless you abundantly. Sincere regards, Peter O. ~ Kenya

Your contributions, whether great or small, along with God's blessing, enables us to spread the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ around the world. We are not a huge organization, but God has blessed us to be able to do what we are doing! Financially, it is best said that God provides us with the funds as we need them.

We don't have a large bank account, but rely from month to month on your contributions to be able to provide these booklets and articles to all who are requesting them. In 2015 we had a total contribution of \$40,980. Our expenses came to a total of \$42,177. This is for printing, postage, *etc.* Postage over the past few years has gone up, which has impacted us. We are blessed to have a very fine printer who provides us with the *New Horizons* at his printing costs, but it is still expensive and that has also gone up over the past years.

We fortunately do have a small buffer that enabled us to cover the additional expenses, but we value your prayers on our behalf asking God to please open the hearts of those who are receiving these materials, both to His Word and to maybe be inspired to help us so that we might continue to help others who are also seeking the truth and knowledge about the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Word of God.

Richard Gawith

request the free article:

CGOM in Perspective

you can also check out

New Horizons

at www.cgom.org

or request a free subscription

Insight from Paul

The apostle Paul's letters shed a bright light on our walk with God

The apostle gives the lie to the nebulous concept held by most Christians of life after death. Devout believers, of course, at their funeral service are laid to rest and their 'soul' is believed to pass on to Heaven where they will spend eternity. What transpires there, however, isn't clearly defined beyond a vague picture of 'bliss' in the presence of God.

But not so good for the wicked of any ilk, any faith. Many - especially 'fundamentalists'—have a clear view of *those folk's* destiny, 'hell', where they will experience excruciating suffering and fiery torment in the presence of the Devil, also for eternity.

Then there are the 'in-betweeners', those who appear to live decent lives—just a little bit naughty from time to time. Or infants who die all too soon? Or the 'heathen' who never heard of Jesus Christ as the one and only Saviour? What happens to them? Do they all deserve a fiery hell? And who decides their fate? How 'bad' do they have to be? Is there a line to cross?

Rest in Peace

Paul is quite clear—the dead, *all* the dead, truly do 'rest in peace'. The 'good' *and* the 'bad'. He, in accord with all the Christian Scriptures, teaches that the dead are asleep, unconscious: '*...I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep [ie, die], but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump[et call]*' (I Corinthians 11:30, 15:51 etc).

As said the Psalmist, '*...The dead are silent and cannot praise the LORD*' (Psalm 115:17), and, '*... in death there is no remembrance of you: in the grave who shall give you thanks?*' (Psalm 6:5).

The question then arises: *what of our 'immortal soul'?* Paul, steeped as he was in the Hebrew Scriptures (Philippians 3:5-6), understood that at death there is a cessation of consciousness: '*...that which befalls the sons of men befalls beasts; even one thing befalls them: as the one dies, so dies the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man has no preeminence above a beast*' (Ecclesiastes 3:19). Or, as wise King Solomon also wrote: '*...the living know that they shall die, but the dead know not any thing*' (ch 9:5). It is an echo of the original creation account—both man and animals are '*living souls*' (Heb *nephesh*), subject to death. And destined for oblivion—unless resurrected.

The Return

For the apostle, the Christian hope lies in a return from death, a *resurrection* to a life on a higher plane. This, he says occurs, '*...Whenever Christ our life is revealed, then also you will be revealed with Him in glory*' (Colossians 3:4). That momentous event is the return of Jesus Christ: '*...we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not precede*

them which are asleep [dead].... and the dead in Christ shall rise first' (1Thessalonians 4:15-17).

And Next...

Then Christ returns from his place at God's right hand: '*...In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality*' (I Corinthians 15:52-53). Notice that we *put on* immortality—it's not an in-born state! As said Jesus, believers don't 'perish' [be destroyed] but have 'everlasting life' [*ie, immortality*] (John 3:16). *cont'd p.4*

Letter from England

Hello

Prophecy is tricky! I hesitate to write on it, preferring to stick to the obvious and clear outline: that in the Father's own time He will return Jesus Christ to this planet (which he created) to wind up this phase of His Master Plan, and put a stop to human destructiveness.

But there's no doubt that God has provided us with a blueprint for human history stretching from the sixth century before Christ through to that momentous return of Messiah. But how do we judge its accuracy?

God warned Moses: '*...You may wonder how you can tell when a prophet's message does not come from the LORD. If a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD and what he says does not come true, then it is not the LORD's message. That prophet has spoken on his own authority, and you are not to fear him*' (Deuteronomy 18:21-22). What, then, of Daniel's prophecy—a figment of an overripe imagination, or from God?

Daniel detailed a succession of kingdoms—all of which came to pass, and in their time order. Not just historically accurate but also relevant to us, today—for the prophet's blueprint concludes with the coming return of Messiah and the establishment of His rule worldwide. He notes that the final human empire before Messiah will be a revival of the Roman Empire incorporating ten 'kings' who briefly yield their authority to an antichristian despot.

Now, when I look at the world scene outside my window (or *via* the TV) - what do I see, what do *you* see? Well—there is indeed another attempt to revive an empire on the territory vacated by previous Roman Empires over the past two millennia—but with the added vision of a worldwide empire, not Islamic.

The so-called 'European Union' is crumbling, but—in the words of one of its founding fathers—is looking to a strong leader '*...be he god or devil*' to revive it.

So—do we believe prophecy? Hasn't Daniel, so far, get it right? We would be unwise to ignore him!

James

Definitions:

Evil (Heb *ra'*), (Gk *poneros*):
Doesn't always have the modern sense

664 occurrences in *KJV* (OT)
76 occurrences in *KJV* (NT)

‘...deliver us from evil’
[ie help us out of trouble]
Matthew 6:13
‘...if your eye is evil [ie diseased, defective]’
v.23

Britain...cont'd from p.1

deepening cesspool of ungodliness. Can divine judgment be far behind? The prophet Habakkuk reflected on his own times, pondering when God would intervene: ‘...Laws cannot be enforced; justice is always the loser; criminals crowd out honest people and twist the laws around’ (ch 1:4 *CEV*). An echo of our own times! God’s reply was the assurance that justice would eventually prevail.

Justice

A principle of divine justice is that God isn’t a ‘respector of persons’: ‘...if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves with fear’ (I Peter 1:17). Or, as he said to Gentile enquirers, ‘...I understand that God is not one who shows partiality, but in every nation the one who fears him and who does what is right is acceptable to him’ (Acts 10:34f). Any nation or individual that submits to God’s perfect will experiences the benefits of His care and protection. Those who ignore the divine ‘Law of Life’ experience inevitable adverse consequences.

The twenty-first century descendants of ancient Israel—the Anglo-Saxon nations—have, however, inherited God’s blessings bestowed on their ancient ancestor, faithful Abraham. But the greater the privilege the greater the responsibility, *and we can expect to be held to account*.

The Scriptures are clear that the LORD God controls all nations—and uses them to correct Israel ‘...the apple of His eye’. Anciently, for example, He used the most powerful nation around, Assyria, to deal with Israel’s sin: ‘...O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is my indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets’ (Isaiah 10:5-6).

Brexit?

It’s a pattern we can expect in our own times. Whether we *remain* or *leave* the European Union, our success depends on our response to God’s call to repentance—not immigration or the economy. **Ω**

Read: **The Two Houses of Israel**
<http://www.cgom.org/Publications/Articles/TheTwoHousesOfIsrael.pdf>

How Long?

We are all concerned about *time*—not least within Judaism, Christianity and Islam. *How long before Jesus (or the Messiah, or Mahdi) returns? Is there a 6000 year plan? Have we not passed that? If so, how far along are we?*

In much Christian thought we are within years of that six thousand—perhaps even past it. In Judaism (*see below*) we are, in 2016, still well short of that point in time. As Jesus tells us: ‘...as to that day and that hour, no one knows, neither the angels of Heaven, except My Father only’ (Matthew 24:36). And, ‘...watch, for you do not know the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man comes’ (ch 25:13). Pointless, then to speculate!

There’s a lesson in an encounter with an Orthodox Rabbi last year in Jerusalem, as recalled by a Christian pastor. Here’s his account, quoting the Rabbi:

‘The six days of creation are the six days of the week. A day is as a thousand years. The seventh day, the Millennium, is the Sabbath. We are living in the sixth day, in the year 5776.... It is possible for the start of Sabbath to be declared, not at sunset...but when only 75% of the sixth day has passed. This is because in different time zones Shabbat starts at different times. According to Rabbinic law a chief rabbi can declare Shabbat at any time after three-quarters of the day has passed.

‘[That point] was the year 1990, Messiah could come at any time!’ *Prophetic Vision*

It’s a cautionary tale, for based on the chronology of the *King James Bible* the Churches of God believe we have now more or less reached that six thousand years.

Our watchword, then, must be: *be awake, be alert, be prepared!* And *be enthusiastic* for the task assigned to each of us. **Ω**

Insight from Paul ...cont'd from p.3

When we die, the heart stops, the body decays—and over time it disappears. The life force (the ‘soul’) ceases. Every ‘living creature’ is motivated by a life force imparted through our inherited living reproductive cells—each ‘...after its kind’. Yet something remains—the human spirit. Hear Paul again: ‘...the Spirit itself bears witness with *our spirit*, that we are the children of God’ (Romans 8:16). As noted Elihu: ‘...there is a spirit in man’ (Job 32:8).

Upon death that ‘spirit’ remains, inert, in God’s care until resurrected: ‘...The spirit of man that ascends, it belongs to on high; but the spirit of the beast that descends, it belongs to below, even to the earth’ (Ecclesiastes 3:21: *Weiss*). **Ω**