

THE EDIFIER

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No Private Interpretation

In these times of uncertainty, writers of eschatology (the study of end times) present a myriad of predictions, believing that they have the correct interpretation of prophecy from the Bible regarding current events, as many before them also believed.

In the 1970's Hal Lindsey wrote his bestseller, *"The Late Great Planet Earth"*, stating that *"This is a book about prophecy – Bible prophecy."* It was estimated 35 million copies were sold up to 1999.

Professor Erin A. Smith from the American Studies at the University of Texas. The author of *"What Would Jesus Read"* stated, *"Every 3 years Hal Lindsay writes a new book*

denoting how the world will end in 5 years. Each subsequent book explains how he WASN'T wrong in the previous book and the world will really end in 5 years. . . . He has followed this pattern for 3 decades and is now acknowledged as "the foremost authority on Biblical prophecy in the world today."

Prophecy was never meant to be used to predict an outcome before it happens, such as times, dates, places or even naming the man of sin. When I was young in the faith I was told Henry Kissinger was that man. He is now 98 years old.

"knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never

came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." 2 Peter 1:20-21 NKJV (emphasis mine)

The Apostle Peter gave sound advice to the brethren not to put their own personal meaning on prophecy which flows from Scripture, because it was carried beyond themselves by the influence of the Holy Spirit of God. The fulfillment was to be the proof that the predication or event was of God and not some private invention of man.

Bernard Ramm remarks, *"It is an infallible rule of prophecy interpretation that the prophecy became fully clear only after it has been fulfilled"*

A great example of prophecy being fulfilled is the coming of the Messiah, His birth, ministry, death and resurrection. Messianic prophecies in the Old

Testament predicted that the Messiah would come through Abraham's posterity and through Jacob's son, Judah. The people were waiting and I

am sure they were speculating who he would be. *"Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not"* Luke 3:15-16 NKJV

The four Gospel writers clearly showed that Jesus Christ, was the Messiah and He fulfilled all the prophecies that were made about His first coming.

When Jesus appeared to His disciples after His resurrection, He said to them in Luke 24:44 NKJV,

"These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me."

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taking Jesus seriously

- John 14:15

EDUCATION OF THE BROTHERS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Have you ever neglected something or someone very special in your life? It sounds like a crazy thing to do. I mean, if something or someone is very special to you, neglect doesn't make any sense does it?

However, as humans, we can relate to this. After a while, we all too often take wonderful things or people in our lives for granted and neglect them. We let our relationships drift along. Are we neglecting someone or something very special right now? We ought to reflect on this and stop doing this very thing, if we are. However, there's something more special we shouldn't neglect. It's more special than anything or anyone in our lives. Hebrews 2:3 asks: *how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him?*

How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? Note, it says *neglect*, not resist, oppose or despise - just neglect. Many will perish through negligence. Before I show why the writer of Hebrews said this salvation is so great, let's be reminded of the lead-up to Hebrews 2:3.

In Hebrews chapter one, Jesus is exalted and extolled as Son of God, God's final word, the one chosen by God in these last days to speak through, the heir

of all things, the brightness of God's Glory, the Creator of all things, the exact image of God's person, the one who keeps the whole universe together by the word of His power, the only one who could purify us from sins, and the one seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. The first word in Hebrews chapter two is, *therefore*. Can you see why this, *therefore*, is a very weighty and powerful *therefore*? The writer of Hebrews now gives a very strong exhortation and warning to his readers to take Jesus very seriously. We should also take heed of it.

There are various things in Hebrews 2:1-10 making this warning so serious. Firstly verse one says: *therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.*

In other words, because Christ is so great and glorious, we, like the Hebrews, must carefully and seriously follow what we've heard from Christ and his Apostles. If we don't, the serious consequence of drifting away is given in verse one.

I remember the testimony of a friend of mine who was a diver. He spoke about how easy it was to drift far from the boat when he was diving. He had to be very conscious the current didn't cause him to drift away. It was very easy for him to go with the flow of the current, so he had

to be alert to his position in relation to the boat.

He exhorted how we too have to pay special attention to our relationship with Christ as it's very easy just to go with the flow and drift. We are strongly warned in Hebrews 2:1 to take the things we have heard seriously to avoid drifting away. I believe it's talking about drifting away from the faith - something we don't want to ever happen, but which I believe can happen over time if we don't pay special attention to our relationship with Christ. If you are a *Calvinist* reading this, please bear with me on this, because you will see the book of Hebrews has this and much more to say to the people of God about the dangers of unfaithfulness. For example, just consider verses 2-3 which add more to the seriousness of the warning of verse one:

or if the words spoken through Angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard him.

What is Hebrews 2:2-3 adding to the seriousness of the warning and the call to take Christ seriously today? It's saying, even under that old inferior covenant spoken through angels, sinners were punished as they deserved. Therefore, how much more will our sins be rightly punished if we neglect this new covenant word spoken, not through angels, but rather through the great and glorious Jesus Christ. The people of God back then (the Israelites) didn't escape the consequences of their sin. Many were denied entry to the Promised Land. How much more will the people of God today fail to escape? The seriousness of this warning is made even stronger because, according to verse three,

the words spoken by God's Son were not only confirmed to us by eye witnesses of His majesty, but as verse four says, *God* also confirmed it with signs, wonders, many miracles of many kinds and with gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Another thing making this warning in Hebrews 2:1-3 so serious is the greatness of the salvation being neglected. If you or I neglect taking a bath or shower for a week or two, as bad as that might be, it's not half as bad as neglecting the eternal salvation God paid the highest price for us to have. Verses 5-10 begin to tell us why this eternal salvation we shouldn't neglect is exceedingly great and why neglecting it would indeed be foolish.

Notice the greatness of this salvation in verses 5-10:

⁵ For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. ⁶ But one testified in a certain place, saying: "What is man that You are mindful of him, Or the son of man that You take care of him?" ⁷ You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands. ⁸ You have put all things in subjection under his feet." For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.

Did you see the great destiny this great salvation brings you and me? Consider who Hebrews 2:5-8 is talking about when it refers to rulership in the world to come. Is it talking about humanity or Christ? It's a quote from Psalms 8. Notice who Psalms 8:3-8 is talking about:

When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, ⁴ What is man that You are mindful of him, And

the son of man that You visit him? ⁵ For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. ⁶ You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, ⁷ All sheep and oxen— Even the beasts of the field, ⁸ The birds of the air, And the fish of the sea That pass through the paths of the seas.

Psalms 8:3-8 is clearly talking about humanity. Can you now see then Hebrews 2:5-8 is talking about the destiny of humanity in the world to come? We are to be crowned with glory and honour. We are to be given dominion over all things, just as God ordained from the beginning in Genesis. 1st Corinthians 6:3 even says we are destined to judge angels.

Back in Hebrews 2:8 though, we see something went wrong, because in the latter part of the verse we see not all things are yet put under man.

Praise God, in verse nine though, we see the great price paid to restore man's destiny originally



intended for Adam. We see Jesus regaining the dominion originally intended for Adam. He was also made a little lower than the angels. Verse nine says:

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.

This is saying Jesus became fully human like us. He suffered

death, even the death of the cross, and as verse nine says, He tasted it for everyone.

We've already seen we need to take seriously the warning not to neglect this great salvation because it's offered to us by the great and glorious Son of God, because of the serious consequence of drifting from Christ if we're neglectful, and because there's sure banishment for neglecting the words of Christ which were confirmed by eye-witnesses, signs, wonders, miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Now we also see we need to be because of the terribly high price paid so we can have it, namely – God's only begotten Son's death and horrible suffering in our place.

We also see in verse nine the great grace behind the salvation we neglect at our peril. The grace of God, the underserved kindness of God towards you and me is truly marvelous. Jesus paying the penalty we deserved for our sins, so that we can have this incredible destiny of glory and honour with Jesus Christ, is absolutely wonderful.

I once did a sermon entitled – *Let's be serious - God is!* The fact He and His Son should suffer so terribly for our salvation shows to the highest degree just how serious God is about us. It especially shows how committed God is to saving us from sin and preparing a future world for us where there will be no more sin. No more sin means no more pain and suffering and death - the wages and consequences of sin.

Oh yes, there is a great link between our suffering and our sin. Our lying hurts others. Our adultery hurts others. Our greed hurts others. Our stealing and murders hurt and destroy others. Our pride hurts others. The list goes on and on.

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So let's be serious in our Christian walk. Let's be serious about the Great Commission and continuing the mission of Jesus. Let's be serious. God is!

In the first 24 verses of Hebrews, did you notice there's only one verse which tells us how to be serious? We're only told to do one thing. What is the one thing and can we do it? It's in chapter 2:1 which said, *therefore, we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard* – that is to the word of God spoken to us in these last days through His Son. Hear Jesus. Hear him! He's our only hope, the only Saviour we can trust. Let's trust him and heed his words.

**Written By Pastor David Kidd,
New Zealand**

No Private Interpretation

Continued from page one

Some religious leaders are using the pandemic as a vehicle to push their brand of religion.

I recently had a lady come to me who has been caught up in the wave of prophetic predictions, afraid that she received the mark of the beast, because she had been vaccinated. She thought her eternal life was in jeopardy.

Others after listening to Pastor John Hagee (false prophet) regarding COVID-19, a rehearsal for the New World Order, they were very concerned the man of sin (antichrist) is waiting in the wings ready to take control through the one world order.

The bible clearly teaches in Daniel 2:41-45, that the next worldwide government will be

ruled by Christ himself and not by an antichrist! Between the verses of "*feet of iron and clay*" (incoherent divided nations such as now) and the Kingdom of Christ, there is no biblical understanding of a one world government!

I do agree there is an attempt by wicked men to bring about a world order to control mankind, as it has been tried in the past. However, I believe it will not come to fruition because of Daniel 2:41-45.

While prophecy does contain predictive elements, its primary purpose in the Old Testament is to call on God's people to turn away from their wickedness and return back to God's moral principles and His covenant with them. In the New Testament there is also a similar aspect of prophecy in mind.

"But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men" 1 Corinthians 14:3 NKJV.

While much of prophecy has already been fulfilled, with what is still in the future, we must be careful to exercise integrity when it comes to the context of a prophetic passage.

Another misconception is trying to predict Jesus Christ's return by watching world events unfold.

Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come . . . What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'" Mark 13:33,37 NIV

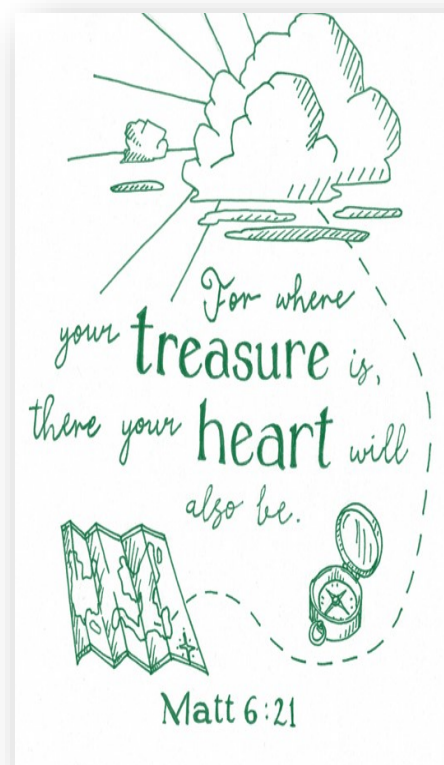
The word *watch* in this verse is not about watching world events to work out the Saviour's return, but to watch ourselves, that we

are not caught up in sin and the ways of the world. Not sleeping on the job, (Luke 21:36) when we should be a wise and faithful servant doing our Lord's will.

Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." Luke 21:36, NKJV

The prophecy regarding the glorious return of Jesus Christ and His kingdom still awaits us. Instead of predicting, let's say "Come, Lord Jesus".

Written by Pastor Phil Kordahi

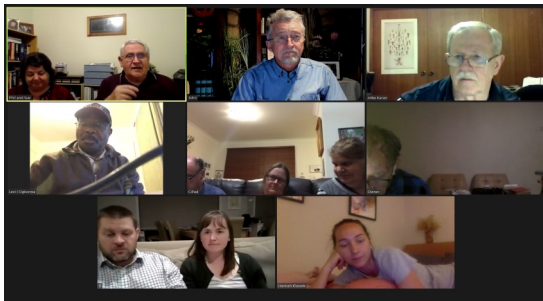


**Drawn by Leah Anderson
Perth, Western Australia**

True, False, True, False, True, True, True
Answers



A weekly series, entitled:
'A Faithful Savior',
Exodus and the People of God.



If you would like to join the bible study, and receive the study notes each week. Please send your email address to:

office@cog7aus.com

STARTING TIMES

WA 4.30 pm

SA 7.00 pm

Eastern States 7.30 pm

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9931362668?
 pwd=RGN4NU5ySFR4eGRXMUE2MVdPUHhxQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9931362668?pwd=RGN4NU5ySFR4eGRXMUE2MVdPUHhxQT09)

Meeting ID: 993 136 2668

Password: Church2020



The Second Coming of Christ

The return of the Lord Jesus Christ is portrayed in Scripture as the most dramatic and spectacular event in history - one that will be witnessed by every human being on earth.

"Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him.

(Revelation 1:7a)

**Please send for the
free booklet**



John Newton -The Amazing Grace guy!

This is a story of 2 men. The first man was a terrible sinner, a thoroughly evil person. It is sin that separates us from our Lord and Saviour Jesus. I have always struggled with the idea that 'sin is sin' with no difference between a petty thief and a serial murderer. The first man I will talk about today is John Newton. He is best known of course, as the author of AMAZING GRACE. The story of John Newtons' life is unfortunately much deeper than a lovely hymn. Sin grips our lives in many ways that we do not even realise. However, we can be reassured in COLOSSIANS 1:14 "In whom we have redemption through his blood EVEN the forgiveness of sins."

At the time that Colossians was written it was clearly understood that God was the only one who could forgive sin.

Newton was born in 1725 and lived until 1807. Newton's mother died when he was 7 and his sea-captain father took him to sea at the age of 11. Newton eventually became the captain of a slave ship. Conditions on-board were so bad that many of the slaves did not survive the journey. Newton is reported to have said: "I sinned with a high hand and I made it my study to tempt and seduce others into sin."

Daniel 9:9 tells us, "To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness though we have rebelled against him."

John Newton experienced his Christian conversion during a huge storm at sea. He chose to remain in the slave trade in an attempt to improve

the conditions for the slaves.

In the words of John Newton:

I am not the man I ought to be

I am not the man I wish to be

I am not the man I hope to be

But by the Grace of God, I am not the man I used to be!

In 1755 Newton left the life at sea and settled in Liverpool. He conducted regular Bible studies in his home. His Christian views developed and he eventually left the slave trade all together. Newton became ordained as an Anglican minister and took up a position at Olney in Buckinghamshire. Newton continued his usual Thursday night prayer service. Each week he would write a hymn to be sung to a familiar tune. In the end John Newton had written 280 hymns. Newton refused to retire, even in infirm old age, on the grounds that his prior life had been so sinful that he must continue his work.

I wrote at the top of this article that this was a story of two men. The other man is of course JESUS. Without Jesus as our connection to the Lord, there would be no forgiveness for sin and no forgiveness for the long list of offences we have committed against the Lord and indeed against each other. As the author of this article I can honestly say that I still struggle with the concept that even I can be forgiven!

Acts 13:38 tells us, "Be it known unto you therefore men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." KJV

Finally, I thank GOD for sending us JESUS and giving us a way home to the LORD.

*Written by Andrew Sams,
Northam, Western Australia*

Youth Corner

Paul Taught Lydia About Jesus Word Search

Find the words on the list that are hidden in the puzzle. The words can be left to right, up and down, or diagonally.

L	P	R	A	Y	E	R	L	L	A	F	A	C	I	D
U	N	T	L	L	I	Q	U	A	C	L	O	T	H	T
L	O	R	Y	R	I	V	E	R	E	M	D	I	T	O
N	U	L	D	A	M	C	O	N	S	W	Q	U	O	S
N	O	N	I	E	H	U	I	S	C	O	L	L	P	N
D	R	E	A	E	L	E	X	E	R	R	R	I	E	R
L	A	O	R	E	M	O	A	O	R	S	I	T	N	R
B	E	L	I	E	V	E	R	R	E	H	A	T	E	E
I	T	N	I	A	T	B	H	E	T	I	S	M	D	D
T	I	O	N	P	E	D	E	U	G	P	A	M	V	E
L	A	I	Q	A	A	T	N	O	N	S	E	C	T	E
T	U	H	O	U	S	E	H	O	L	D	L	I	Q	U
Z	R	I	T	L	U	F	E	U	G	A	I	T	V	U
L	A	O	R	E	M	O	B	A	P	T	I	Z	E	D
T	H	Y	A	R	T	I	R	A	E	T	A	T	V	E

BAPTIZED
BELIEVER
CLOTH

HEART
HOUSHOLD
OPENED

LYDIA
PAUL
PRAYER

RIVER
THYARTIRA
WORSHIP

Please read the story of Lydia meeting the Apostle Paul. Acts 16: 11-15



Lazarus was healed of his blindness by Jesus

True or False

Moses led the children of Israel over the river Jordan into the Promised land.

True or False

Mary, mother of Jesus, was at the wedding in Cana.

True or False

There are 29 books in the New Testament

True or False

Naaman was told to wash in the river Jordan seven times to be cured of leprosy.

True or False

Absalom was the son of King David

True or False



A Closer Look at Christmas

Many Christians have inquired, "Is this celebration taught in the Bible?" To their surprise, Christmas is neither taught by the Bible, nor was it ever celebrated by the New Testament Church. If this is true, then what is its origin? What about the date of December 25? What about the Christmas tree, lights, decorations and Santa Claus? Where did these traditions come from? Who authorized them and for what reason?

Please send for the free booklet

"A Closer Look at Christmas"

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