

Foundational Teachings

Two Different World Leaders

THE PROPHET MOHAMMAD AND OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

The prophet Mohammad was born of humble origins around A.D. 570 in Mecca into the Koreish (Quraysh) tribe, custodians of the religious sanctuary in Mecca, the Kaaba.

Mohammad was married at age 25 to a wealthy widow, Khadija. From her he had one surviving daughter, Fatima, the mother of all those descended from him. Mohammad was often seen in solitude; he was a thoughtful contemplative. In one of his contemplative times (at age 40 in 610), in a cave outside of Mecca, called Hera, Mohammad heard a voice he believed to be the voice of Gabriel commanding: "Read in the name of the Lord, who created." Thus was the prophet called. Mohammad's early utterances, which took the form of rhymed prose, were the beginnings of the Qur'an. His first teachings revolved around the unity of God, his attributes, and the future life.

Mohammad's first followers were his wife, Khadija, his cousin, Ali (who became the husband of Mohammad's daughter Fatima), and his future successor, Abu-Bakr.

When rejection and persecution arose in pagan Mecca over the revelation of the one God, some 615 followers of Mohammad fled to Christian Abyssinia for sanctuary. Meanwhile, Mohammad and some of his other followers were put under siege in Mecca.

Between July and September of 622, Mohammad and his followers (in what was called the Hegira, *hijrah*) migrated to Medina at the invitation of the people of that city. The reception of Mohammad as a prophet by the people of Medina (a city also called Yathrib) was the turning point in the career of Mohammad and the history of Islam.

In 624, on the battlefield Badr, approximately 20 miles southwest of Medina, some 300 followers of Mohammad engaged and defeated an army of 1,000 Meccans. The

prophet's victory was viewed as a divine sanction of his call.

In 625, Mohammad was wounded and defeated in a second battle with the Meccans at Uhud. But two years later Mohammad successfully defended Medina against the Meccans and their confederates. His converts increased in direct proportion to his victories. The conquests of Mohammad would eventually spread all across Arabia, unfortunately at the cost of many lives.

Early in 630, Mohammad attacked Mecca at the head of 40,000 Muslims. He entered the city as a conqueror, and with his own hands he smashed the 360 idols in the Kaaba, declaring "truth hath come and falsehood hath vanished."

On June 8, 632, Mohammad fell ill of a violent fever and died in Medina in the arms of his favored wife. Historian Philip Schaff records that the dying Mohammad "suffered great pain, cried and wailed, turning on his couch in despair..." Among his final words was a cry that God would "destroy the Jews and Christians..." Mohammad was 62 years old.

The 114 Suras (chapters) of the Qur'an (the Book) are a record of Mohammad's spiritual pilgrimage. The Qur'an contains Mohammad's convictions and the foundations of the Muslim faith. Today, just over one-sixth of the world's population follows in the steps of Mohammad, Islam's prophet.

The following are some of Mohammad's most serious statements as recorded in the Qur'an.

- Mohammad taught: "Fight in the cause of God those who fight you ... and slay them wherever you catch them..." Sura 2, 190-191
- Mohammad also declared: "Fighting is prescribed for you, but you dislike it. But it is possible that ye dislike a thing which is good for you..." Sura 2, 216
- Mohammad continued: "Then fight in the cause of God..." Sura 2, 243-244
- Mohammad continued: "Let

those fight in the cause of God who sell the life of this world for the Hereafter. To him who fighteth in the cause of God—whether he is slain or gets victory—soon shall we give him a reward of great value... why should ye not fight in the cause of God... Those who believe, fight in the cause of God, and



There is absolutely nothing that Jesus ever taught or did that would uphold hatred or violence or war.



Mohammad declared: "Slay the pagans wherever ye find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them..." (Sura 9, 5).

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Editorial Staff: Charles and Dotty Schmitt, and Linda Walker.

those who reject Faith fight in the cause of Evil: so fight ye against the friends [supporters] of Satan..." Sura 4, 74-76

- Mohammad then made this statement: "The punishment of those who wage war against God and His Apostle ... is execution, or crucifixion, or the cutting off of hands and feet from opposite sides ["the right hand and the left foot," *Qur'anic commentary*], or exile from the land: that is their disgrace in this world, and a heavy punishment is theirs in the Hereafter." Sura 5, 36

The *Washington Post* on December 16, 2001, pictured a 28-year-old man, Dol Agha, one of hundreds to have "his right hand and left foot amputated by the Taliban in Kabul Stadium," where "he was forced to lie on his back. A soldier sat on him to hold him down. Someone pulled off his left shoe. The hooded doctor pushed up his sleeve ... he remembers hearing soldiers laughing before everything went black. Agha is one of hundreds of Afghans, unjustly accused, whose limbs were amputated under the Taliban's fundamentalist interpretation of the Koran. The mutilations were a regular show, a Friday afternoon bloodletting, to keep the population in line..."

- "Mohammad continued: "I will instill terror into the hearts of the Unbelievers: smite ye above their necks and smite all their finger tips off them. This because they contended against God and His Apostle..." Sura 8, 12-13
- Consequently Mohammad enjoined: "When the forbidden months are past, then fight and slay the Pagans wherever ye find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem of war; but if they repent, and establish regular prayers and practice regular charity, then open the way for them; for God is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful." Sura 9, 5
- Mohammad then promised: "Those who believe, and suffer exile and strive with might and main in God's cause, with their goods and their persons, have the highest rank in the sight of God: They are the

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The Day Life Changed

—by Dotty Schmitt

The morning of September 11, 2001, dawned bright and warm in the Washington, DC, area. I was up early preparing for the beginning of our community Bible study (Titus II) that consists of women from over 50 different churches. This particular Bible study group is one of the joys of my heart, and I was anticipating meeting once again with this spiritually hungry and lively group of women.

As we gathered together at 9:30 a.m. on that eventful Tuesday morning almost immediately one of our pastors came running in to tell us of planes flying into the Twin Towers, then into the Pentagon (which is about 15 miles from us), and then finally into a field in Pennsylvania. We soon were told of the complete collapse of both towers, and of the evacuation of the White House. The feelings of shock and fear permeated the room. Women had friends and loved ones both in DC and in New York City. People began calling on their cell phones, and all of us tried to pray. It soon became obvious that the level of anxiety and fear had risen to a point where effective prayer was almost impossible.

As I stood before this wonderful group of women my heart was desperate for a word from the Lord. I felt so helpless in light of all of

these alarming catastrophic events. As I called on the Lord, an incredible peace entered my heart along with the words from Psalm 46. I also heard the Lord say that Ellen Curro, who had been near the back of the room, had a word for us! When I opened my eyes, Ellen was standing right next to me with a brief and riveting word. In one brief sentence Ellen said, “The joy of the Lord is your strength.”

I immediately thought back to about 10 years ago when the Lord had quickened that very word to me.

As sorrows in this world increase even more He will fill His people with a healing joy. The joy of the Lord produces strength and endurance in the people of God. This is a critical season of time, which is requiring from us an increased emotional, as well as spiritual, strength. Sustained joy is essential in the life of every believer. According to Matthew 24, the recent events of sorrow and turmoil are but a beginning of events to come. Only His deep, penetrating love and joy will sustain us in times like these.

As we digested the words of Psalm 46, His love began to flow into our hearts absorbing the paralyzing fears. “God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way....” As we pondered these state-

ments, the word was balm and nourishment to our souls. This is a season of time that requires a depth of love and intimacy with the Lord as our refuge, strength, and helper. Because we are abiding in His love and strength we will not fear!

The psalmist also commands us to “be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth” (Psalm 46:10). In a time in which nations have gone into a period of great

conflict and upheaval, this psalm encourages us to be still and know that Jehovah is God and Lord of all.

As these truths began to soak into our spirits, believing prayer began to arise from our midst. We were able to “look unto Jesus, the author and finisher” of our faith.

Indeed life for us here in America will never again be the same since the events of September 11, 2001, but we are also discovering that for the Church of Jesus Christ this is our finest hour to declare the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Love will triumph over evil as the blood of the Lamb of God continues to cleanse, redeem, deliver, and heal *all* who come to Him! †

—The above photo of the memorial wall where people pay tribute to the heroes and victims of September 11th was taken by Jenny Schmitt on a recent trip to New York City.



Los Olmos: Prison Revival in Argentina

Argentina’s largest prison is located in the town of Olmos, less than 100 kilometers south of Buenos Aires, the capital of the country. It is a maximum-security facility that houses nearly 3,000 inmates. One of the greatest and most dramatic miracles in modern history has taken place inside the walls of that prison.

Until a few years ago, the prison was in total chaos. Crime was rampant. Riots, murders, sexual abuse, extortion, and male prostitution were commonplace. The prison was so out of control that by default the authorities turned over the daily running of the place to the Mafia and drug dealers serving time there. These de facto leaders chose to reside on the fourth of five floors, which came to be known as the “elephant’s floor” since all the heavyweights lived there. Can you imagine what this place became when the worst inmates were given the run of it? Even a Church of Satan was established on the premises and animal sacrifices were offered regularly. Olmos—as the prison is commonly called—was so impregnable

that pastors from the nearby towns had great difficulty getting inside its perimeter.

Satan was in control indeed. However, it appears that the evil one made a gross miscalculation that eventually did him in. This had to do with grace. As you know, grace requires the pre-existence of sin and the greater the sin, the greater the grace available to the repentant sinner. By those standards, Olmos was more than qualified. This is how it came about.

In the nearby town of La Plata, a well-known pastor was caught committing a crime and was sentenced to serve time—at Olmos! At first it appeared that Satan had won: his citadel remained impregnable and a church leader had been publicly disgraced. But the pastor repented and cried out to God for a second chance. And God is indeed the God of second chances. God forgave him and filled him with the Holy Spirit. Now this pastor was determined to see God bring good out of terrible evil. Filled with a passion for the lost and overwhelmed with gratitude to God for His grace, he became “a

spiritual kamikaze.” In his attempt to preach the gospel to everyone around, he thrust himself with gusto into the very pit of hell. He witnessed to the Mafia dons, gang leaders, drug dealers, and even to the Church of Satan priests! Like a kamikaze pilot, he laid down his life in order to cause the most damage possible to the enemy.

Very soon a small group of believers emerged. What Satan must have thought as an impregnable place now hosted an emerging Christian church! I believe that the anxiety he must have felt about this led to his second miscalculation. A persecution against the Christians was unleashed. If persecution can be brutal in the outside world where existing laws, the possibility of help and refuge, and the availability of the media can somehow mitigate it, imagine the persecution inside a maximum security prison run by the ruthless and fearless. However, God was in control and the biblical principle that whatever Satan plans for evil God turns around for good still held.

The persecution gave the Christian inmates legal grounds to request protection in the form of



Listen to Your Dreams

—by Pat Burck

How grateful we are to know and love the living God, and how good it is to be directed and protected by Him! One of the least understood and heeded ways our Lord ministers to us is through dreams. Much unnecessary suffering could be avoided if we but heeded the messages received while we sleep, as did the Magi in Matthew 2. Also, Joseph was diligent to hear and act when warned in a dream of Herod's satanically-inspired plans to thwart God's fulfillment of prophecy in bringing forth our Savior.

Much necessary encouragement and personal revelation can also be missed if we are without skill in this area. Young Solomon set the course of his life's ministry in his interaction with the Lord in a dream, as told in 1 Kings 3. May our faith match his in believing God in this area!

Dreams also reveal hidden parts of our heart so we may make changes before judgment is necessary to open our eyes. After his dream, I well imagine King Nebuchadnezzar wished he had listened to Daniel's warning—"Therefore, O king, be pleased to accept my advice: Renounce your sins by doing what is right and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that then your prosperity will continue" (Daniel 4:27).

their own cellblock—each cellblock houses 42 inmates. The authorities reluctantly agreed and granted the new Christians a cellblock of their own on the worst floor. Aware that their lives were at risk, the inmates organized themselves as a church. The first order of business was a 40-day fast. They also divided themselves into seven teams of six people each. Each team was to stand guard every night from 11:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. Working in pairs they prayed, read the Bible, and moved from bed to bed interceding for each one of their sleeping Christian inmates. After two hours they rotated tasks. This approach became highly effective, not only in protecting their own perimeter but also in infiltrating Satan's perimeter inside the prison.

In answer to those prayers, Miguel Zucarelli, a pastor in town, felt led to apply for a job at the prison. Several officials interviewed Zucarelli, and all of them said, "We do not want you here, we hate you. If you get the job, we may even hurt you. Get lost!" But Zucarelli persevered and against all odds—except God's—he got the job. As he connected with the emerging prison church, things began to happen. They prayed

So, how do we tune into this blessed realm and profit from it? Avoiding a worldly "analysis," and most certainly staying away from all occult counterfeits. We must realize that dreams come from one of three sources: God, Satan, or self. The God-inspired ones always work for our good and for the good of His Kingdom. Conversely, dreams from below are meant to confuse, hinder, and terrify. The ones from self are a means of "inner communication," from the body to the soul, or from the subconscious mind to the conscious mind. Why is this important to know? Because things we are unaware of need to be dealt with, whether physical or emotional. The subconscious mind is a reservoir—a holding tank—of memories, experiences, fears, traumas, and false beliefs. Often these things will "surface" in a dream and need to be explored and healed.

The first step towards understanding dreams is, of course, to ask the Lord. Next, we need to ask ourselves some questions.

- What influenced me this day? Things such as a loss, a conflict, a TV show, or a book may show up in a dream. If so, the dream probably just needs to be given to the Lord in prayer or worked through emotionally.
- Does a dream reflect something I have been worrying about or am afraid of? Ecclesiastes 5:3 says "a dream comes when there are many cares." Perhaps we need to talk it through with a trusted person.
- Have I had this dream or a similar one before? If so, it may be significant, as Joseph declares to Pharaoh (Genesis 41:32).
- Is it prophetic or discerning, warning of some coming situation or person? If so, it may be a strong call to intercession. When

for and were given one and a half hours a week on the prison radio station, which all inmates hear since the speaker cannot be turned down nor can the station be changed. Very soon the weekly Gospel message began to make an impact on the prison population. This, coupled with intense prayer activity in the Christian cellblock, produced mass conversions. Today 44 percent of the inmates are born again!

As soon as 42 new converts are admitted to the church, a cellblock is made available for them. A resident pastor is appointed from among the inmates, and the same routine of prayer, fasting, and night vigils is instituted.

Since no money is allowed to circulate inside the prison, the inmates tithe from the care packages they receive from relatives. Last year a town in Central Argentina was devastated by floods, and the church in the prison was able to send relief by using the product of their tithes. They fast twice weekly and hold church services every day.

There are 19 cellblocks that occupy the entire fourth floor and 80 percent of the third floor. Nearly 1,300 inmates have received

God reveals the plans of the enemy, we have the authority in prayer and spiritual warfare to "spring the trap" before harm comes. In these days of terrorism and war, our very lives may depend on hearing His warnings to avoid certain places at certain times. In 2 Kings 6:8-12, the Holy Spirit revealed to Elisha the prophet the evil plans of ambush laid for Israel by Aram. Thanks be to God, Israel heeded and much suffering and loss were avoided.

- How did I "feel" during the dream? Our emotions give strong indications that our conscious mind may miss. Was it reassuring, comforting, or perhaps frightening?
- How much is symbolic and how can I discern it? A most important factor is to look for a "story line" or underlying theme. This is more reliable than individual details.
- What should I do with this dream? If no answer comes right away, put it on the shelf and wait. If it was from the Lord, it will unfold in time and you will have an "aha!" experience. Your understanding will grow and develop over time.

As we hold all these issues before Him, keeping an open heart and mind, our Lord will respond. Sometimes truth doesn't come until we walk it out. *The Teacher*, the Holy Spirit, faithfully works with us and in us. Joseph expressed it well to Pharaoh—the interpretation of dreams is *a gift from God*. I want all His wonderful gifts to benefit my life, don't you? Sleep well! †

—Pat Burck is the wife of Dr. Jim Burck, and assists him in leading *Immanuel's counseling ministry*. She also leads *Immanuel's intercession ministry*—SWAT (*Spiritual Warfare Action Team*).

Christ. Recent unconfirmed reports state that the number of guards has been reduced from 300 to 30 as a result of the behavior standards of the Christians. Normally 50 percent of the inmates find themselves back in prison following their release. Of the 604 released Christians, only three have returned—less than half of 1 percent!

We organized a trip to the prison to meet with the inmates. The prison chapel is too small to accommodate the growing number of believers, so they have removed all the furniture. More than 800 inmates stand shoulder to shoulder except when they kneel to pray. Their vibrant singing is incredibly moving. One of the inmate pastors said to our group, "If you came to see prisoners, you have come to the wrong place. We are free men, free indeed!" Even though their bodies are in prison, they roam the heavenly places in prayer and intercession! †

—by Chad Taylor, Global Revival News.
(I also experienced seeing this above miracle on a recent trip to Argentina!—Charles Schmitt)



Biblical Prosperity

A PROMISE FOR BELIEVERS

—by Charles P. Schmitt

The issue of “biblical prosperity” is raised from time to time. The following are some basic biblical guidelines that the Lord has quickened to me.

The dictionary meaning of “prosper” is simply “to flourish, succeed, thrive, grow” (*Webster’s New World Dictionary*). The Old and New Testaments use the words prosper, prosperity, prosperous, and prosperously nearly 100 times. The NIV translates some of these words as “success.” Daniel “prospered” in his work (Daniel 6:28). Solomon “prospered” in his reign (1 Chronicles 29:23). Hezekiah “prospered” or “succeeded” in everything he undertook (2 Chronicles 32:30). Of the one who closely follows the Lord, it is declared, “Whatever he does shall prosper” (Psalm 1:3). Joshua was told that in his obedience to God, he would “be prosperous and successful” (Joshua 1:8). New Testament Christians are told to set aside offerings “as God has prospered them” (1 Corinthians 16:2, KJV). John blessed his friend Gaius with the words: “That thou mayest prosper . . . even as thy soul prospers” (3 John 2, KJV). It is God’s clearly revealed will that His people prosper—that they “flourish, succeed, thrive, and grow.”

Financial Prosperity

The issue of financial prosperity has, at times, been poorly expressed by saints across the land. Sounds of greed, materialism, fleshly consumerism, and a worldly lifestyle have marred the beauty of the concept of God’s intent to bless and prosper His people. It is, therefore, important for us to carefully note God’s Holy Word on these matters.

- Paul, in writing to the Philippians, commended them for the financial “gifts [they] sent” to bless him. These gifts were a “fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.” Paul then gave the saints this divine promise: “And my God *will meet all your needs* according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:14-19). “*Will meet*” is emphatic. It is certain. “All” is all-inclusive. They would lack nothing. “Your needs” speaks of every *necessity* (but not of every *luxury* or of every *want*). Because all of the promises of God are “yes and amen” in Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 1:20) we can claim this promise for ourselves as well.
- In his great teaching dealing with financial blessing in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, Paul

establishes the following four guidelines for our faith concerning financial blessing.

1. Even those in “extreme poverty” can be full of “rich generosity” (2 Corinthians 8:2). And those in personal financial need will be themselves blessed as they give “as much as they [are] able, and *even beyond their ability*” (vs. 3). The poor widow, who gave all that she had, and whom Jesus then blessed (Luke 21:1-4) is an example of such “rich generosity” on the part of one in “extreme poverty.” You do not, therefore, have to be wealthy to be generous! And many times it is the person who is poor in this world’s goods, but who is “rich in faith towards God,” who is among the Kingdom’s most lavish givers!
2. There is a principle in the Kingdom called “sowing and reaping.” Jesus first clearly taught this Kingdom principle in Luke 6:38: “Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.” Giving here refers to giving everything in your life—giving love and forgiveness and care and friendship, as well as giving finances and material goods. Often folks do not experience God’s multiplied blessings in their lives because they give with a “thimble” rather than with a “bucket,” and so God gives back to them a thimbleful rather than a bucketful. With the measure we use, it will be measured back again to us! Paul, in 2 Corinthians 9:6, declares this same Kingdom principle—“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly [using a thimble] will also reap sparingly [mere thimblefuls], and whoever sows generously [using a bucket] will also reap generously [with bucketfuls]. We *do* reap as we sow!”
3. Valid, God-glorifying giving must always be done cheerfully and never reluctantly or as a cumbersome duty. “Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful [literally, a hilarious] giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7).
4. God’s material blessings on our lives have *selfless* ends in view. God blesses us materially, not that we might live a more luxuriant, opulent, materialistic lifestyle, but rather that we can be even more generous than we ever were before! Notice carefully Paul’s words: “And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that *in all things at all times, having all that you need* [not necessarily all that you *want*, but all that you *need*], you will *abound in every good work*.” As it is written: “He has *scattered abroad his gifts to the poor*; his righteousness endures forever” (2 Corinthians 9:8-9). Paul’s conclusion is, therefore, “You will be made rich in every way so that you can be

generous on every occasion . . .” (2 Corinthians 9:11). God blesses us so that we can be a blessing to others. His will is that all of our basic needs be met. With the surplus He gives us, however, whether we are wealthy or not, we must seek to meet the needs of others! And the grand result of this generosity will be “thanksgiving to God” (2 Corinthians 9:11)!

This is something of what biblical prosperity is all about. And this understanding is what we will seek to walk out as a people! Amen! †

—To order the single cassette, *God’s Key to Financial Prosperity*, by Charles P. Schmitt, please see page 7.

An Amazing Bank

Imagine that there is a bank that credits your account each morning with \$86,400. It carries over no balance from day to day. Every evening it deletes whatever part of the balance you failed to use during the day. What would you do? Draw out every cent, of course!

Each of us has such a bank. Its name is “Time.” Every morning, it credits you with 86,400 seconds. Every night it writes off, as lost, whatever of this you have failed to invest to good purpose. It carries over no balance. It allows no overdraft. Each day it opens a new account for you. Each night it deletes the remains of the day. If you fail to use the day’s deposits, the loss is yours.

There is no going back, and there is no drawing against the “tomorrow.” You must live in the present, on today’s deposits. Invest it so as to get from it the utmost in health, happiness, and holiness! The clock is running. Make the most of today.

To realize the value of *one year*, ask a student who failed a grade. To realize the value of *one month*, ask a mother who gave birth to a premature baby. To realize the value of *one hour*, ask the lovers who are waiting to meet. To realize the value of *one minute*, ask the person who missed the train. To realize the value of *one second*, ask a person who just avoided an accident. To realize the value of *one millisecond*, ask the person who just won a silver medal in the Olympics.

Treasure every moment that you have! And treasure it more because you share it with someone special—especially the Lord Jesus. And remember that time waits for no one. Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. That’s why it’s called the *present*. †

—Adapted from *Wes Roberts*.

Saint Patrick and Dublin, Ireland

HOW TO WIN YOUR CITY FOR CHRIST!

As Patrick came near to Dublin, at that time a small village, he prophesied: “This village which is now very small shall hereafter become very eminent. It shall be enlarged in riches and dignity. Neither shall it cease to grow until it has become the principal seat of all the kingdom.” When the people of Dublin heard of the great signs and miracles that were done through Patrick, and when they saw that he was coming to their village, they went out to meet him.

At this time, Alpinus was the king over Dublin. He and all the citizens, however, were in great sorrow because of the death of the king’s two children. The king’s only son, Eochadh, had died a natural death, in his bedroom. The king’s daughter had just drowned. Her name was Dublinia, and from her Dublin is thought to have derived its name. The young lady’s body was laid by her brother’s corpse in order that their funeral rites might be solemnized together.

The king and the people were so cast down and saddened with grief, that all of their rebellion and barbarous rudeness, and the pride of their idolatry were utterly subdued.

The king, hearing of Patrick’s arrival, rejoiced and had him come in where his two children lay dead. He then promised, with all those present, if God restored his children to life, that he and all the citizens would become Christians. Seeing such a gain of souls, Patrick raised to life those princely children! The king and all his subjects, being astonished at this great miracle, turned away from the worship of idols, believed, and were baptized.

From that day the king and all the people worshipped God and gave liberally to Patrick, so that he was able to give to the poor both in that place and in other places. †

—From *Celtic Flames* by Kathie Walters.

Focus on Missions in Afghanistan

I will never forget how he smiled through years of scars. It was in 1987, the last time I saw him. He had paid dearly for his faith in Christ. He told me that militant Muslims were daily threatening to kill him. I was afraid for this precious man of God and offered him a plane ticket to Europe. “You will be safe there,” I urged him. His smile was so beautiful as he answered. . . .

Mohammed Zia was born blind in Afghanistan. In his youth he memorized the whole Koran and was the first non-Arabic speaker to win a contest quoting it from memory in Saudi Arabia. He had a brilliant mind, spoke seven languages, studied law and had once held a high government position in Afghanistan.

One day he picked up a Bible in Braille and began to study it so that he could make Christians turn to Islam. He studied the Bible for two years and became a Christian. As a result his wife and children were taken from him. He was thrown into prison where he was beaten, electrocuted, burned—he had so many scars. He stated: “Jesus died for me. How can I deny Him?” When he was not in prison he was telling his fellow Afghans about Jesus. He led many Afghans to Jesus.

He turned down my offer of escape with a joyful smile. I looked at his smile and at all his scars. I will never forget that moment. “How can I serve my people in *Europe*?” he asked me.

Some time later he was kidnapped by radical Muslims. They brought him before a large group of Muslims and asked if he was a Christian. When he declared his faith, his tongue was cut out. Thrown into a dirty little room, he died two days later. I was in America when I got the news. I began to weep but then thought of my friend standing before the throne of God, no longer sightless, worshipping. He was home! †

—Written and provided by, a missionary couple that Immanuel’s Church helps to support, who are serving Jesus in Central Asia. If you wish to help support such missions in the 10/40 window, send your gift to Immanuel’s Church at the address on this flier, earmarking it “10/40 Missions.”

A National Revival in Fiji!

There is a full-blown national revival breaking out in Fiji! It has been in the headlines for months now. And the *Transformations II* video started it!

It turns out that several Fijian pastors—all Methodists—were overtaken by the presence of God as they watched *Transformations II* this past summer. By the end of the video, the group was so convicted of their prayerlessness and lack of unity; they immediately contacted pastors from every denomination in the country to discuss their situation.

To make an amazing story short, this action has led to an unprecedented unity between the churches, and fostered a nationwide prayer campaign aimed at welcoming the Lord into the islands. For the past five months, souls have been flooding into the Kingdom—a glorious torrent that has even swept up the nation’s acting prime minister, the Honorable Laisenia Qarase!

Just a few moths ago, the Fijian president, His Excellency Ratu Josefa Tloiloa Uluivuda, convened his full cabinet to view the *Transformations II* video, and then sanctioned a public apology, delivered by Prime Minister Qarase, for the nation’s shameful treatment of its large ethnic Indian population. This bold and widely praised action is even now paving the way for national reconciliation.

Can we believe this will happen here in the United States? Amen! †

Q&A CAN A PERSON LOSE HIS SALVATION?

—by Charles P. Schmitt

People lose vast fortunes. They lose their way. They lose their healings. It should not be surprising if one suggested that they could also lose their salvation. People tend to be losers.

If believers fall away from the Lord and return to a sinful lifestyle, will they go to heaven? Paul is rather pointed in his answer. He writes to the Roman believers: “If you are living according to the flesh, *you must die* . . .” (Romans 8:13).

Since these things are true, wherein, then, lies our security? Surely not in ourselves or in a doctrine. But I do believe we can rest securely in *Him*. Paul could be “confident of this very thing, that *He* who began a good work in you *will perfect it* until the day of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:6). Peter could rejoice that we “are *kept* by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Peter 1:5). Jesus declared: “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me, and I give eternal life to them, and *they shall never perish*, and no one shall snatch them out of My hand” (John 10:27-28).

Some clear thinkers, however, quickly respond to these promises: “But what about those who no longer follow Him? Are they secure?” In themselves, no. In that condition, no. What, then, is our hope for backsliders who we are praying for? Our only hope lies in a God who is “married to the backslider.” The theme of the prophet Hosea is of a “love that will not let us go,” of a God who will pursue His failing people to the ends of the earth and to the ends of time to restore them. He declares, “I will heal their apostasy, I will love them freely. . . .” (Hosea 14:4).

In my 50 years as a Christian, I have seen even strong believers fall away from God—some for 10 or 20 years and even longer. And all the while the great “Hound of Heaven” was pursuing them, seeking “the one which is lost, until He finds him” (Luke 15:4). And after years of backsliding, I have seen them recovered by Jesus. Our Lord wishes to dwell within us in all His restoring, loving heart; Jesus wants to be revealed in our lives in all His redeeming, recovering nature. And I believe that as this happens we will see many lost, broken, bruised, shattered, fallen people come and find Him as the God who saves and heals and forgives and redeems and restores and recovers!

A visitor came to me one Sunday. She had heard the remark about our church, “Oh, they’ll take anyone over there.” She was concerned and asked if this was true. I told her this *was indeed true*, for this was the Gospel! This was the call to repentance! This was the Kingdom of God! This was the heart of Jesus—to “gather up the fragments, that nothing may be lost!” She seemed stunned at my reply, but I trust she caught a glimpse of Him in the process and a glimpse of what the Church is really all about. †

- people who will achieve salvation. . . . Their Lord doth give . . . gardens for them, wherein are delights that endure: They will dwell therein forever. . . ." Sura 9, 20-22
- Mohammad further commanded: "Fight those who believe not in God nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by God and His Apostle, nor acknowledge the Religion of Truth even if they are of the People of the Book [Mohammad's name for Jews and Christians], until they pay with willing submission and feel themselves subdued." Sura 9, 29
 - Mohammad then promised: "Those who leave their homes in the cause of God, and are then slain or die—on them will God bestow verily a goodly Provision: truly God is He who bestows the best Provision. Verily He will admit them to a place with which they shall be well pleased: for God is All-Knowing, Most Forbearing." Sura 22, 58-59
 - Mohammad decreed: "Hypocrites . . . shall have a curse on them: wherever they are found, they shall be seized and slain without mercy." Sura 33, 60-61
 - For Christians, perhaps Mohammad's most serious statement is Sura 9, 30: "The Christians call Christ the Son of God. That is a saying from their mouth. . . . God's curse be on them: how they are deluded away from the truth!" Islamic radicals to this day, such as those in the Poso region of Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, espouse Mohammad's hatred for Christians. One sign near Tentena reads: "Jesus would have been better to be beheaded. Kill all the Christians!!!" (*I.C.C. Update*, December 19, 2001). God's Holy Word soberly declares: "This is God's command: to believe in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as He commanded us. . . . Every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming. . ." (1 John 3:23; 4:3).
- These things are what Mohammad believed and decreed and practiced. However some Muslims today may wish to explain or offset these statements of Mohammad, one thing is clear—these are the very verses that have inspired terrorists to murder innocent victims, primarily Christians and Jews, with a total sense of impunity. The architects of jihad use these very words of Mohammad to justify their cause. For example, Saudi scholar Dr. Muhammad-al-Amin in his book, *The Method of Islamic Law*, plainly states: "No infidel should be left on his land as it is denoted from Muhammad's statement: 'I was commanded to fight the people' until they bear testimony to the fact that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is his messenger."
- Muslims declare Mohammad to be a greater prophet than Jesus and the Qur'an to be a greater revelation from God than the New Testament. We will now examine the life and

the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ to see if these claims are true.

More than five and a half centuries *before* the birth of Mohammad, another world leader was born—One who today has the allegiance of one-third of the world's population—over 2 billion people. Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ commands more people than any other religion. One billion of Jesus' present-day followers are deeply committed to His cause, and most would gladly lay down their lives for His message—as over 50 million have done since He ascended into heaven nearly 2,000 years ago. Twenty-five million have been martyred in His Name in this past century alone, many at Muslim hands.

Like Mohammad, Jesus of Nazareth was born of humble birth. But He called together and led no earthly armies; He fought no earthly battles. He declared that His kingdom was not of this world. He forbade His followers to hate, declaring that only "the pure in heart . . . will see God," and that "only the peacemakers . . . will be called sons of God" (Matthew 5:8-9). He commanded: "Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. . ." (Matthew 5:44-45). He taught that "if someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also . . . and if someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. . ." (5:39, 41).

There is *absolutely nothing* that Jesus ever taught or did that would uphold hatred or violence or war.

As initially with Mohammad, Jesus of Nazareth and His followers were despised and rejected by men, but Jesus' steady word to His followers was simply: "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have *love* . . ." (John 13:35). In a self-fulfilling prophecy Jesus declared: "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Seized by wicked and hateful hands, Jesus of Nazareth was crucified on a Roman cross, but even then, with His dying breath, He prayed: "Father, *forgive them*, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34).

Because of His spotless and holy life, God was pleased, on that cross, to make Jesus the sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Then, raised from the dead by the power of His Father, Jesus commissioned His small band of followers to go into all the world and bring to all the nations His message of

forgiveness and reconciliation and love. And for that purpose He filled them with His Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

Down through the centuries, so-called Christians who have taken up the sword in His name—all the way from the Inquisitors to the Crusaders to present-day warring churchmen in northern Ireland—have blemished His cause and shamed His Name, for they have violated His basic teachings of love and forgiveness. By *His* own words, they are therefore not true disciples of His (Matthew 7:22-23).

On September 11, 2001, 19 Muslim men shattered the lives of over 3,000 innocent families in New York City and Washington, DC, by the greatest acts of terror ever perpetrated on American soil. They believed they were fulfilling the will of Allah, following in the footsteps of Mohammad, his prophet, and obeying the commands of the Qur'an. They inflicted a wound of unspeakable pain upon the soul of all humanity in the name of Islam.

It is important for us to acknowledge at this juncture that not every Muslim is a terrorist and that not every Muslim believes Mohammad's statements are to be taken literally in our present century. The *Middle East Media* (December 2001) reports: "Many Middle Eastern people were overcome with profound grief and shock at the loss of life and property in America in September. In some countries, prayer services were held. In Morocco, a remarkable interfaith service was held in a Catholic cathedral at which a strong contingent of government ministers was present."

On the flip side, a Muslim student from Pakistan writes: "The most painful discovery for me about the Islamic faith has been its concept of militancy. I always used to think that these fanatics were just misguided people who give Islam a bad name. To be sure, Islam does not permit killing of innocent women and children, but as I have found out, its teachings are quite different from those of Jesus, who wants you to turn the other cheek. As I know now, violence does have a strong precedent in Islam. The terrible tragedy that happened in this country seems to be the logical outcome of teachings that tell you it's okay to reply in kind. I think that's what happens when you try to enforce God's will in this earthly world rather than believing that his kingdom is not of this world but of the other world" (letter published by Philip Yancey in *Christianity Today*). †

PERSONAL CONCLUSION —by Charles P. Schmitt

For myself, I personally have examined the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, the Prince of Peace, and I have concluded that *He alone* is worthy of my deepest devotion and my fullest commitment. As with more than a billion others (with another billion nominal Christians besides), I have received Him as my Lord and Savior, the true revelation of the one true God. I now commend Him to everyone everywhere as the One worthy of our love and allegiance, for only when *His* message is believed and *His* forgiveness is received by mankind, and mankind then walks in *His* footsteps of kindness and compassion—*only then* will wars cease and hatred end and hostility and inequity be swallowed up in love.

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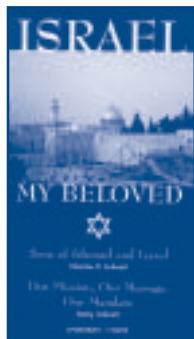


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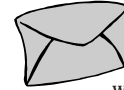


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- **July 7-13**—Charles and Dotty—Liberty Corners Retreat Center, Liberty Corner, NJ; Contact: (908) 647-1777.
- **July 25-27**—Dotty—*Awake Deborah* Women's Conference, First Assembly of God, Cedar Rapids, IA; Contact: (319) 393-6356.
- **August 11-17**—Dotty—*Releasers of Life* Equipping School, Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship, Toronto, Canada; Contact: (416) 674-8463.
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- **September 13-15**—Dotty—*Women of the Word*, Ridgecrest, NC; Contact: (828) 669-8411.
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- **October 3-5**—Dotty—Annual Women's Conference, Zion Family Ministry, Wise, VA; Contact: (540) 328-9255.
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