

# SABBATH SCOOP

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## WHAT MADE AMERICA GREAT?

*As the United States celebrates its 233rd birthday July 4, it stands alone as the world's only superpower and is a nation blessed beyond measure. Why?*

By Gregory Dullum

The United States is a nation blessed beyond measure. Protected by vast oceans on east and west, and sharing borders with friendly neighbors on north and south, we have enjoyed relative security for 233 years.

Our nation has been blessed with bountiful natural resources, including an abundance of fresh water, fertile fields, rich oil deposits, and an amazing array of raw minerals from copper and iron to silver and gold.

Our people have enjoyed freedom beyond compare: freedom of religion, of assembly, of speech; freedom to choose one's lifestyle and occupation. Any American can be a success if he or she puts forth effort. No one is held back because of race, sex, class or disability.

What has made America so great? Is it our founding principles? Is it our Constitution? Is it our form of government? Is it capitalism? Is it our religion? Indeed, all of these things have contributed to our greatness but there is an underlying cause.

### Lincoln Knew Source

Abraham Lincoln understood American greatness. On Jan. 17, 1838, he spoke to the Young Men's Lyceum in Springfield, Ill., saying:

"We find ourselves in the peaceful possession of the fairest portion of the earth in regards to extent of territory, fertility of soil, and salubrity of climate. We find ourselves under the government of a system of political institutions conducting more essentially to the ends of civil and religious liberty than any of which the history of former times tells us" (*The Life and Writings of Abraham Lincoln*, Philip Stern, ed., 1940, pp. 231-232).

Lincoln realized that America's greatness was not the result of her cur-



photo by Gregory Dullum

Abraham Lincoln knew the source of America's greatness. He wrote, "No human counsel hath devised, nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the most high God."

rent inhabitants. He continued his speech, "We, when mounting the stage of existence, found ourselves the legal inheritors of these fundamental blessings. We toiled not in the acquirement or establishment of them" (*ibid.*, p. 232).

Lincoln knew from where our blessings came. In his Proclamation for Thanksgiving on Oct. 3, 1863, he wrote, "The year that is drawing toward its close has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften the heart which is habitually insensitive to the ever-watchful providence of Almighty God" (*ibid.*, p. 783).

After listing blessings in agriculture, iron, coal, precious metals, and an in-

crease in population, Lincoln made the statement, "No human counsel hath devised, nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the most high God" (*ibid.*, p. 784).

### Why Did God Bless America?

Why did God bless America? It was the fulfillment of his PROMISE to another Abraham—the patriarch Abraham of the Bible! God will NEVER break a promise (Num. 23:19)!

God told the patriarch Abraham, "I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen. 12:2-3).

Abraham's descendants would become a great, blessed nation. That describes the U.S. and British Commonwealth nations today!

Some say the promise of all families on earth being blessed is a reference to Jesus, who was a descendant of Abraham. And, indeed, Jesus' coming was a blessing for all—His sacrifice made salvation possible for everyone.

But, could there be a *latter-day* fulfillment of this phrase as well? Have not a great many families of the earth been blessed because of the generosity, kindness and sacrifice of the U.S. and British people? Have we not given food, medicine and financial aid to the poorer nations of the earth? Was it not the U.S. and British people who all but eliminated slavery from the earth? Was it not primarily the U.S. and British people who fought back tyranny and oppression against evil dictators in Nazi Germany,

**AMERICAN GREATNESS**

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## American Greatness

Continued from Page 1

fascist Italy and imperialistic Japan during World War II? Didn't the U.S. and British people put a halt to expanding, oppressive Soviet Communism? Did they not lead Coalition forces to depose wicked regimes and bring democracy and freedom to Iraq and Afghanistan? Yes, indeed, it would be hard to find any family on earth who has not been blessed in some way because of the U.S. and British people.

### Blessings Passed On

After Abraham nearly sacrificed his son, Isaac, God repeated his promise to him and added, "in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies" (Gen. 22:16-18).

Many people who misunderstand the Bible think Abraham's descendants were only the Jews. But the Jewish people have never been a nation great in power, influence and population. And they have NOT controlled the gates of their enemies.

On the other hand, the U.S. and British people have become great in power and influence; they are great in number, and they have controlled the seagates of the world. They have controlled Gibraltar, Malta, Singapore, Hong Kong, Guam, Hawaii, Midway, the Philippines, the Suez and Panama canals, and other seagates.

Because Abraham had faith and obeyed God, we in America and in the British Commonwealth have been blessed (Gen. 22:18)!

The blessing of possessing enemy gates was passed on to Isaac, who married Rebekah (Gen. 24:60).

Isaac passed the blessing of national greatness on to his son, Jacob. These included agricultural blessings and a promise to *rule over other nations* (Gen. 27:28-29). In the early 1960s, Britain's Commonwealth circled the globe. Today, the U.S. is the world's only superpower.

God told Jacob in a dream that his descendants would *spread over all the earth*. He also repeated the promise, "in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen. 28:14).

Jacob had 12 sons. One was Judah, and from him came the Jews. The other sons' descendants became other nations.

### Ephraim and Manasseh

To which of the 12 sons were passed the blessings and promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? They were passed

on to Joseph and his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. 48:3-5). Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel, placed his name "Israel" upon Ephraim and Manasseh (v. 16). When we read prophecies concerning "Israel" in the last days, they are referring to the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh.

Notice what was promised to become of these two brothers. One was to become a great nation and the other a "multitude of nations" (v. 19). This is a perfect description of the U.S. and British Commonwealth today.

Jacob told his sons what would become of their descendants "in the last days" (Gen. 49:1). Joseph's descendants—the U.S. and British people—would become "a fruitful bough by a well" (v. 23). This is a promise of agricultural blessings.

There is a promise of hatred, jealousy and war brought on by enemies, but God would give Joseph's descendants victory: "The archers have bitterly grieved him, shot at him and hated him, but his bow remained in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob" (v. 24).

God also promised good weather and rich deposits of coal, iron, oil, gold, etc.: "With blessings of heaven above and blessings of the deep that lies beneath" (v. 25).

### History of Israel and Judah

The 12 sons of Jacob married and had children. They grew into 12 tribes. Numbering only about 70, they settled in Egypt during a famine and eventually became slaves (Ex. 1:1-5). Hundreds of years later, they had grown to a people several million strong. When God rescued them out of Egypt, there were 600,000 men, not counting women and children (Ex. 12:37).

The 12 tribes settled in the new land as the nation of Israel. They prospered and grew, and eventually demanded a king (1 Sam. 8:5-7). Saul was chosen (1 Sam. 10:1, 17-24).

They were one nation under Saul, David and Solomon. However, under Solomon's son, Rheoboam, the nation split. The 10 northern tribes, led by Jeroboam, seceded and became the House of Israel. Only the southern tribes of Judah, Levi (which had no land but served as priests), and a portion of Benjamin remained loyal to Rheoboam. The southern tribes became known as the House of Judah (1 Kings 12:16-21).

Each of the two nations co-existed with their own set of kings. Their history is told in the books of 1 and 2 Kings. Israel's kings were mostly evil and the nation quit obeying God. In 721 B.C., God used the Assyrians to take the 10 northern tribes into captivity (1 Kings 17:5-8, 18-19).

The Jews, who were a little more righteous than Israel, remained in Judah until the Babylonians captured them in 586 B.C. (2 Kings 25:21).

### Judah and Israel Today

The Jews kept the Sabbath—the sign between God and them (Ex. 31:13-17)—and never lost sight of who they were. After Babylon's fall, they migrated throughout the world. Today, it doesn't matter whether they live in New York, Chicago, London or the modern nation of Israel, Jews keep the Sabbath and know who they are and from where they came.

The sinful Israelites, on the other hand, lost their national identity while in Assyrian captivity. Later, the Assyrians migrated to Germany and the Israelites settled throughout Europe. The Ephraimites settled on the island of Great Britain while those descended from Manasseh sifted through many lands and eventually settled in America (*The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy* by Herbert W. Armstrong, 1967, p. 169).

In all this time, the promises God made to Abraham had not come to pass. But God's word is sure! And sure enough, after the British defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, she began her rise to superpower status, eventually becoming a Commonwealth of nations encircling the globe.

After contributing to the victory in World War II in 1945, America rose in status and prosperity. By century's end, the U.S. was the world's lone superpower.

The blessings had to come because God promised them to Abraham. However, as explained in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28, if the American and British people fail to obey God, He will remove those blessings!

We will discuss our future next month.

## The SABBATH SCOOP

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Who Is this God We Serve?

# Our Compassionate Healer

God promises to fix our broken bodies with supernatural healing out of compassion for us!

By Gregory Dullum

One of the worst things a loving parent endures is a sick child. What parent is not touched by a young child crying because he can't breathe through his stuffy nose or she can't swallow down her sore throat?

Don't you think a loving God has the *same compassion*—or MORE—for HIS sick children? And, unlike helpless parents, God HAS the *power* to heal! He boldly says in Ex. 15:26, "I am the LORD who heals you."

## What is Divine Healing?

What is divine healing? It's not as mundane as going to a doctor to get medicine that will help our bodies heal themselves.

When we go to God for healing, we are asking for divine INTERVENTION—an *interruption* of physical laws and the naturally occurring chain of events. We want *supernatural HELP!*

We humbly approach the heavenly throne of ALMIGHTY GOD—who created the entire universe *including our intricate human bodies*—and we ask Him to please come *visit us*; to place his loving hands inside our sick bodies and repair them; to heal diseased tissue, to mend broken bones, to kill a virus, or germs, or cancer cells; to SUPERNATURALLY fix whatever is wrong inside us.

We may feel out of place interrupting the King of kings and Lord of lords—the ruler of all creation—so He can make a house call, but He *wants* us to ASK and He's *willing* to HEAL! The Bible is FILLED with his *promises* to heal and *examples* of healing.

## David Was Healed

King David knew sickness. In agony, he wrote, "There is no soundness in my flesh... nor is there any health in my bones because of my sin. For my iniquities have gone over my head; like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me, my wounds are foul and festering because of my foolishness" (Ps. 38:3-5).

What did David do? He cried out to God—and was healed! "O LORD my God, I cried out to You, and You have healed me. O LORD, you have brought my soul up from the grave; you have kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit" (Ps. 30:2-3).

Healing is one of many BENEFITS we have

if we know God. David wrote, "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases" (Ps. 103:3).

## Christ Healed Multitudes

Jesus Christ healed multitudes when He walked the earth. Why? There were many reasons but sometimes it was just because He felt sorry for those who were suffering.

Compassion was the driving force when Jesus healed a multitude in Mat. 14:14: "And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick."

Jesus not only HAD compassion; He was FILLED with it (Mark 1:40-42).

The Gospels are stuffed with examples of Jesus healing. Specific illnesses were:

- Blindness (Mat. 9:27-30, 12:22);
- Blood flow (Mat. 9:20-22);
- Deafness (Mat. 11:5);
- Death (Mat. 9:18, 23-25, 11:5);
- Demon possession (Mat. 5:24);
- Epilepsy (Mat. 5:24);
- Fever (Mat. 8:14-15);
- Leprosy (Mat. 8:2);
- Muteness (Mat. 9:32-33, 12:22);
- Paralysis (Mat. 5:24);
- Severed ear (Luke 22:50-51); and
- Speech impediment (Mark 7:32).

This is an impressive list! But that's not all! Many ailments which Jesus healed are unnamed. We are told, "Then He healed many who were sick with various diseases" (Mark 1:34). On another occasion, Jesus healed "those who had need of healing" (Luke 9:11).

There is no sickness too small or too great to take to God. If you HAVE NEED of *healing of any kind*, take it to God! He will take care of it!

Jesus not only healed during his human life, He allowed his body to be ripped to shreds for our healing at his crucifixion. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53:5).

## Apostles Given Healing Power

Before He died, Jesus passed the ability to heal onto the apostles and elders in his church. They healed all kinds of sickness and disease (Mat. 10:1, Mark 16:14-18, Luke 10:1, 9, Acts 5:14-16). Specifically,

we know they healed death (Mat. 10:8, Acts 9:37, 40); demon possession (Mat. 10:8); dysentery (Acts 28:8); fever (Acts 28:8); lameness (Acts 3:1-8); leprosy (Mat. 10:8); and paralysis (Acts 8:7).

## Steps for Healing

How do we access the healing power of God? There are four steps to take.

**1. Obey God.** God's promise to heal the Israelites was based upon their obedience: "If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his sight, give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you" (Ex. 15:26).

If Israel failed to obey God, He would send plagues, consumption, fever, inflammation, boils, tumors, scab and itching, madness, blindness and heart attacks (Deut. 28:21-22, 27-28).

Sin has consequences and *sometimes* sickness is caused by sin. For example, drunkenness can cause liver disease, smoking can cause lung cancer, fornication and adultery can cause sexually transmitted diseases.

Not ALL sickness is *caused* by sin (John 9:1-3). However, sin *cuts us off from God* so He can't hear our request for healing (Isa. 59:2). If we want God to heal us, we must repent of our sins (1 John 3:22).

**2. Get anointed by a minister.** James tells us, "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven" (James 5:14-15).

**3. Beg God continually for healing.** Follow the example of the persistent widow (Luke 18:1-7).

**4. Wait patiently.** God heals on his timetable; sometimes healing immediately after anointing, sometimes not. We shouldn't get discouraged if healing isn't immediate. We may be sick in order to learn a lesson, and until we learn it, God won't heal us. At other times we may suffer so others who know us will learn a lesson.

God promises to heal us. Trust in his promises, have faith in our COMPASSIONATE HEALER, and *He will make us whole* (Mat. 9:22, 15:28)!

# College Letters:

## Lessons of Life Learned at Ambassador College *The gospel message becomes relevant to the world when people see no hope in their government, in the economy, and in society around them. Meanwhile, we, in the church, must stay loyal to God.*

**[Editor's Note:** At 1:15 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 19, 1975, I sat in a lounge chair on a patio in the shade outside of third floor Grove Terrace—my dorm—and began writing a long letter to Mom and Brad. We continue that letter this month.]

**1:15 p.m. Sunday, 1-19-75**

### Part 2

Not so much has been happening lately. Yesterday, I met Mary Hamilton at brunch, and proceeded to make a "Sabbath date" out of it. We had breakfast together, then sang together in Sabbath singing. I walked her back to her room, and I came back and indexed my [church] notes. I picked her up at 2 p.m. and we went to church (Mr. Waterhouse). He went overtime by one hour. But it was cool.

From my notes:

God has planned this work—and is carrying it out according to plan. Mr. Waterhouse knew HWA had to go before world leaders. But he didn't know how. So when HWA began going before leaders, he said, "That's how!" He didn't say, "What's he doing over there?"

Rev. 3:1 Sardis Era. Dead, yet has a spark of life—HWA [Herbert Armstrong came from the Sardis era and started the Philadelphia era]. Without Sabbath and holy days, we cannot understand God's plan. v. 7. Why are we called the Philadelphia era? (Brotherly love). Because we will live into the World Tomorrow and most teach people God's way of love. So we have to live up to that name.

The Work began in Eugene, Oregon (Eugene means "good birth"). 12 years later, it moved to Pasadena, meaning "crowned city."

V. 7—Christ has to remind us that He is the living Head and is holy & true. He has the KEY of David to OPEN up real religion and education, and CLOSE false religion and education. Through us He began true religion and education.

V. 8—Our message becomes relevant when society sees no hope in the government, economy, and society, and we are put into captivity. If it weren't for God's MESSAGE, they would have NO HOPE, NO REASON TO LIVE.

NO ONE CAN SHUT THE DOORS TO THIS

WORK. V. 8—Why do we have "a little strength"? Because the doors will not keep open by our strength—but by God's strength they will stay open.

God had to try and test HWA when he was first called. Then He knew HWA would be loyal when the Work got big. HWA put God first before his son, Dick; before his wife; even before having his own son [Garner Ted] put out of the church. BUT HIS ATTITUDE NEVER GOT BAD.

V. 10. God protects us from tribulation because we have already repented. The tribulation is to effect repentance.

God is not impressed with knowledge. But He is impressed with loyalty (v. 11). God tested the loyalty of the church. The church has HWA; GTA, 2nd in charge; a gospel commission; and a support system called tithing. The disloyal said, Don't follow HWA, GTA. The gospel commission is not for us, and the support system is done away. They put knowledge ahead of loyalty. They became confused, and used their knowledge corruptively.

God is always right. There is no way to go contrary to God and be right. Rebellion cannot work.

During the past 6,000 years, Christ trained men the right way when mankind made one big mistake after another—to show that He will not allow that same mistakes in his kingdom. And when they are all resurrected and put together, his kingdom will not make the mistakes mankind has made in the past.

We have to develop the right relationship—love [with everyone]. Because if not, how long will we be able to NOT STAND our ETERNAL brothers?

First shall be last; last first: why God has not revealed his plan to all: if they knew they were gonna be last, they would have said, NO THANKS! In a human society, being last is not a valuable position.

Religion—teaches love to God.

Education—teaches love to neighbor.

Matt. 22:36-40. We must love God and neighbor to guarantee that what happened with the angels [rebellion against God] WILL NOT HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE. GOD'S FAMILY HAS A FUTURE.

Matthew 11—Christ said John (the Baptist) is Elijah (not literally, but by of-

fice). HWA is Zerubbabel (Zech. 4:6) and GTA is Joshua. the physical temple of Zechariah is the spiritual church.

Zech. 3 is a picture of GTA from the time he was out of the church until the World Tomorrow. Ted was crushed by God thru his father—which united them, and taught Ted that HWA really was (physically) head of this work. And now Ted is merciful because he has been shown mercy.

Zech. 3:1 Satan had Ted. Satan thought he had him for keeps. V. 2—A brand in the fire. To have a brand, you must first carve and shape the brand. GTA has the voice, mind, and looks. But a brand is no good unless heated. When heated, what do you do with it? BRAND OTHERS.

V. 4—Change of raiment. GTA is a different man since then.

V. 8. BRANCH=return of Christ

V. 10—Millennial setting

Zerubbabel despised small things. HWA did not want to remain small—"Let's invite Rubinstein to the tent. And rent a piano." Zerubbabel went before mountains (governments), etc.

2 olive trees=strong arms (nuff said).

40=time of trial and test. At the end of 40 years, something effected. At the end of 40 years of this work, loyalty was effected. Last January, an emergency conference was called. It lasted three days. Three is the number for revealing (three days and nights in the grave revealed Christ as Messiah, three woes revealed God, etc.). During the conference, Ted was locked under his father as 2nd in charge. After the three-day conference was the Sabbath—to rest and think about it. The next day was the LAST OF THE 40 YEARS. Then Christ tested his ministers—and some left! Then God tested his people with Pentecost. By revealing the real day to us [Pentecost observance was moved from Monday to Sunday], He showed us He wanted to give us more of his Holy Spirit. And He wanted to see who was loyal to keep Pentecost. WE NEED A LOYAL TEAM!

Then Christ/God revealed D&R [a change in church policy regarding people who had been divorced and remarried. Under the previous policy, if divorced people had remarried, their current mar-

Stairway to Heaven

There's a lady<sup>1</sup> who's sure  
 All that glitters is gold  
 And she's buying a stairway to heaven<sup>2</sup>  
 When she gets there she knows  
 If the stores are all closed  
 With a word she can get what she came for<sup>3</sup>

- 1. Church
- 2. Tithing
- 3. Rev. 3:7

There's a sign on the wall  
 But she wants to be sure  
 'Cause you know sometimes words have  
 two meanings<sup>12</sup>  
 In a tree by the brook  
 There's a songbird<sup>4</sup> who sings  
 Sometimes all of our thoughts are misgiven

- 12. Duality of prophecy
- 4. Garner Ted Armstrong

There's a feeling I get  
 When I look to the west<sup>5</sup>  
 And my spirit is crying for leaving  
 In my thoughts I have seen  
 Rings of smoke through the trees  
 And the voices of those who standing looking.

- 5. Pasadena

And it's whispered that soon  
 If we all call the tune  
 Then the piper<sup>6</sup> will lead us to reason  
 And a new day will dawn<sup>7</sup>  
 For those who stand long<sup>8</sup>  
 And the forests will echo with laughter

- 6. Herbert W. Armstrong
- 7. World Tomorrow
- 8. Matt. 24:13

If there's a bustle in your hedgerow  
 Dont be alarmed now  
 Its just a spring clean for the may queen<sup>9</sup>  
 Yes, there are two paths you can go by  
 But in the long run  
 There's still time to change the road you're on  
 And it makes me wonder

- 9. Days of Unleavened Bread

Your head is humming and it won't go  
 In case you dont know  
 The piper's<sup>6</sup> calling you to join him  
 Dear lady, can you hear the wind<sup>10</sup> blow  
 And did you know  
 Your stairway lies on the whispering wind

- 10. Holy Spirit

And as we wind on down the road  
 Our shadows taller than our soul.  
 There walks a lady we all know  
 Who shines white light and wants to show<sup>11</sup>  
 How everything still turns to gold  
 And if you listen very hard  
 The tune will come to you at last.  
 When all are one and one is all  
 To be a rock and not to roll

- 11. Matt. 5:14-16

And she's buying a stairway to heaven.

A dorm mate told me "Stairway to Heaven" by Led Zeppelin was about the Church of God. Whether true or not, the parallels are interesting. I typed these lyrics with side notes and included them in my Jan. 19 letter home.

riage was not recognized as binding and the couple had to separate]. He told us by this that there are more people available to enter the church than we thought. And

there is no D&R stumbling block to the

Fun Fact



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS

There are an estimated 250,000 kinds of flowering plants in the world.

Witerature

*Wit and wisdom to complement the truths of the Holy Bible can be found in secular writings.*

*The Oregon Trail* by Francis Parkman, University of Nebraska Press, 1994 (reprint of 1893 book), pp. 123-124.

Ask God for Healing

"I had been slightly ill for several weeks, but on the third night after reaching Fort Laramie a violent pain awoke me, and I found myself attacked by the same disorder that occasioned such heavy losses to the army on the Rio Grande. In a day and a half I was reduced to extreme weakness, so that I could not walk without pain and effort. Having no medical adviser, nor any choice of diet, I resolved to throw myself upon Providence for recovery, using, without regard to the disorder, any portion of strength that might remain to me. So on the twentieth of June we set out from Fort Laramie to meet The Whirlwind's village. Though aided by the high-bowed 'mountain saddle,' I could scarcely keep my seat on the horseback."

Ex. 15:26, Ps. 30:2, James 5:14-15

Quotable Quote

"A life directed chiefly toward fulfillment of personal desires sooner or later always leads to bitter disappointment."

—Albert Einstein

Memory Scripture

"God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said and will not do it? Or has He spoken and will not make it good?" —Num. 23:19

## College Letters

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newly called ones.

Rev. 3:12 Let's be a LOYAL CHURCH. (Note Book, Vol. 10, pp. 1711-1716, Jan. 18, 1975).

Last night, I ushered with Chuck Daniels for a graduation ceremony of the L.A. College of Chiropractic. BORING!! They had their own ushers; the two of us were mostly security. We had to keep women from playing with the candelabras in the foyer. Chuck said he has never seen so many so fascinated with touching those. They're only worth about \$10,000 apiece.

After ushering, I talked with Santana. He has only been in about seven states, and would like to see the eastern states. I said I would love to go with him if we were to take a car across the country for the spring feasts—staying at his friends and relatives, or local church members for the holy days. If we do—(it's not even in the planning stage) (yet) five of us would maybe go through B.S. [Big Sandy, Texas]—and I might see Gary [my brother]. We would take a southern route out—maybe go to Washington, D.C. and we would come back through the middle. Maybe get as far north as Detroit, to see Dianne Spencer, if she goes home for spring feasts. We would not get as far south as San Antonio to see his folks, or as far north as Mpls. to see you all. But he'll see his folks at graduation, and I'll see you soon after.

But if we could do that, I would love it! What an opportunity to see the country. What do you think? We won't be making any plans until Feb. sometime. So far, it's just an idea, and maybe [it will] never come to fruition. It will cost me about \$100, we figured. But I think it would be cool.

Well, hope you enjoyed Mr. Waterhouse's sermon, and the sun has gone down, it's 5:05. I've been writing all afternoon on the roof with Grant and my stereo. What a beautiful day.

Have a beautiful day. Love you all.

Greg

**[Editor's note:** At the bottom of the page was glued a picture of a smashed up car with the words, "P.S. Here's a 'hot car' from California for your 'cold cash' from Minnesota. Also included: words to 'Stairway to Heaven' and some interpretations."

On the back of the envelope was written, "P.S.—SEND MY TAX FORMS" with drawings of tacks and a note, "Just got my [first semester] grades: English B, Civ., C, Mass Comm, A; Softball, C; Speech, B; Life and Teachings, B; Principles of Living, C; GPA: 2.87.]



### Iran Test-Fires Missile With 1,200-Mile Range

"Iran test-fired a sophisticated missile on Wednesday [May 20] that was capable of striking Israel and parts of Western Europe, adding to concerns that Iran's weapons-development program is fast outpacing the American-led diplomacy that President Obama has said he will let play out through the end of the year" ("Iran Test-Fires Missile With 1,200-Mile Range" by David E. Sanger and Nazila Fathi, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, May 21, 2009, p. 1).

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has, on numerous occasions, stated that Israel should be wiped off the map. His country is developing nuclear weapons and now has a missile capable of striking Israel.

Israel will not allow itself to be nuked. It successfully carried out a mission to destroy Saddam Hussein's nuclear facilities in Iraq and will likely have to carry out a similar strike against Iran.

The Israeli government assured the United States it would not take military action against Iran without first consulting Washington. It also signaled that it may give the U.S. a year or so to try diplomatic means of disarming Iran ("Netanyahu to Meet Obama as U.S. Priorities Shift" by Mark Landler, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, May 15, 2009, p. 1). An Israeli military strike in Iran could light the fuse to an end-time explosion of events.

Israel will continue to exist when Christ returns (Isa. 4:3-6; Zech. 12:1-9)—but some Jews will be taken captive (Jer. 33:7). We are also told that a king of the South will arise and push at the king of the North (a European union). Iran may lead a coalition of Muslim nations to make up the king of the South.

The stage is being set for one last battle to control the world—and then Christ will return and establish God's government of peace (Rev. 17:14).

### Swine Flu Spreads

"Health experts are looking at the spread of swine flu among people in Spain, Britain and Japan, a WHO

[World Health Organization] official said Sunday [May 17] as Japan reported a one-day total of more than 70 new cases, mostly among teenagers....

"As of Sunday, the swine flu virus—which WHO calls the A (H1N1) virus—has sickened at least 8,480 people in 40 countries, killing 75 of them, mostly in Mexico....

"WHO spokesman Gregory Hartl said in-country transmission rates were a key factor in whether the global body decides to increase its pandemic alert level. Right now, the world is at Phase 5—out of a possible 6—meaning that a global outbreak is 'imminent' " ("WHO eyes swine flu transmission rates, vaccine," by Eliane Engeler and Mari Yamaguchi (The Associated Press), *The Southeast Missourian*, May 18, 2009, p. 9A).

One of the "horsemen of the apocalypse" that will ride at the end time represents disease (Rev. 6:7-8). When asked what would be the sign of his second coming, Jesus said, "And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places" (Mat. 24:7).

The swine flu could be one of the diseases that will plague mankind at the end time.

### European Economy Shrinks

"European economies contracted sharply in the first quarter of 2009 as activity stalled across the region after convulsions in the global financial system last year, according to reports released Friday [May 15].

"Europe went through an even steeper fall than the United States, probably representing the worst point in the economic cycle for the region, economists said....

"The economy in every major European country has fallen this year" ("In Europe, Major Economies Shrank in First Quarter" by Carter Dougherty, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, May 16, 2009, p. 1).

A weak German economy allowed Hitler to come to power 75 years ago. Will a weakened European economy allow a new world dictator—known as the Beast—rise to power before Christ returns?