

About the Last Days

By Ronald L. Dart

What did the First Christians believe about the last days?

I suspect more than a few of us have been disquieted by events in the Middle East. Even if we don't fully understand all the implications of biblical prophecy, we know that the Middle East looms large at the end time, along with serious loss of life. With the Iranian regime certain to develop nuclear weapons, and with the stated intent to destroy Israel, you have to take this seriously.

That said, we aren't seeing much more than the First Christians did, and they can be excused for thinking the return of Christ would be in their lifetime. There were prophets among the First Christians, but strangely, they expressed little interest in the far horizon, perhaps because they thought it wasn't all that far away. There is a minor example of one of those Christian prophets at Antioch, which seems to have had a very intense and active church. Barnabas had come there and, when he experienced that church, departed immediately to Tarsus and brought Paul back.

The prophets activities were immediate

One day a prophet showed up from Jerusalem, Agabus by name, who told them that a major drought and famine was coming to the land of Israel (not the whole world, as the King James Bible puts it). When they heard that, the church in Antioch determined to send relief to Judea. Later, it appears local prophets were involved in the call and commission of Paul and Barnabas. The prophets of this era seem more concerned with exhortation than merely foretelling the future.

A similar incident occurs much later. When Paul was on his way

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back to Jerusalem, they landed in Caesarea where they stayed in the home of Philip, who was one of the first seven "deacons" ordained years before. It turned out that Philip had four daughters who were prophets. Then old Agabus

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Would You Fiddle While Rome Burns? . . .

Well, maybe we should say the good ol' USA—the nation that took the idea of a man walking on the moon and turned it into reality within eight years. How proud we were when Neil Armstrong walked on the moon 40 years ago! You believe in the future of America. But will it always be so great? Will you always enjoy the freedoms to which you've become accustomed? Can we afford to allow our collective inaction defy sanity? The *Born to Win* broadcasts are telling it like it is. Your support can help get the message on more stations and keep it on the air. You can even sponsor the broadcast on a station in your area. To learn how, call Larry Watkins at 1-888-BIBLE-44.

Growing Faith in Kids and Teens at the 2009 Feast of Tabernacles

By Diane and Keith Kleeschulte

You can't find a better place to park your kids and teens while you attend adult seminars than in these state-of-the-art YEA classes and seminars. For six days during this year's Feast of Tabernacles, YEA will be planting and watering seeds to give our youth a faith that grows. But when we said park your kids, that in no way means these classes will be inactive, latent, or motionless. As each student approaches the door of his classroom, he will instantly sense excitement, action, and a place where he will be loved and taught God's Word.

Every child, preteen, and teenager will delight in each action-packed class or seminar from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. starting Sunday, October 4th through Friday, October 9th. *FREE*, full-color,

improved YEA books will be available at YEA registration an hour before Friday night and Sabbath morning worship services so each student can read the lesson to be prepared for class/seminar on Sunday. The following are themes for each age group:

- Beginners (3-5) *Tales from the Kingdom*
- Primaries (6-8) *Going Places*
- Juniors (9-11) *Exploring God's Word*
- Intermediates (12-15) *Get Real*
- Senior Teens (16-20) *Smart Talk*

Each class/seminar will be staffed with a team of capable and enthusiastic teachers and assistants using active forms of learning. Active learning is an adventure, it's fun and captivating, and it involves everyone. Each lesson is focused

by an activity or an object lesson to drive the point of lesson home and make it memorable. These lessons are not left hanging in midair, each contains a personal application of God's Word to kids' lives.

Parents, we need you to encourage your child or teen to read each lesson, along with the Daily Devotionals, before the class or seminar. YEA goals are to help your children and teens become biblically literate and to bring them to repentance and baptism as early as maturity will allow.

If you are coming to Fort Walton Beach in Florida for the Feast and would like to volunteer to help in a YEA class, contact Diane or Keith Kleeschulte at jetklee33@yahoo.com, or Allie Dart at allie@borntowin.net.

God is a Good Listener

By Lenny Cacchio

“Your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him”
(Matthew 6:8 NKJV).

I am thankful that God knows what I need even before I ask, but that leads me to wonder: “If God knows what I need before I ask, then why ask at all?” God is good. He'll give me what I need. Besides, Paul says, “we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered” (Romans 8:26 NKJV).

It's tempting to think that we might bore God with things he already knows, but we run no risk of doing that. Even though God knows everything we need, he likes to hear us talk. In John 17, Jesus prayed the obvious: The hour has come. God gave Jesus authority over all flesh. Eternal life is to know God and Jesus. Jesus had glory with the Father before the world was. Jesus had shown God's name to men. Etc., etc., etc.

The point being that Jesus said nothing the Father didn't already know. And the Father didn't seem

to mind. Jesus needed the therapy of talk and the Father wanted to listen. One can get the impression the Father likes to hear us talk, and that is part of the therapy of prayer.

Knowing that God already knows but listens anyway teaches a lesson that reaches into my living room. Sometimes I am tempted with boredom when my daughter wants to talk about kid things. I really don't want to put down the book or turn off O'Reilly, who is talking about the really big issues rocking the world (which I can do nothing about) in order to hear

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showed up again. He took Paul's belt, bound himself with it, and said: "Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles" (see Acts 21:8 ff.). They all begged Paul not to go up to Jerusalem, but he was determined to go.

The activities of the prophets among the First Christians seem to be very immediate—concerned with the events of the immediate future. But that doesn't mean that there was not a broader view of prophecy in general and the Last Days in particular. In fact, you are probably already thinking about the Book of Revelation. I won't go there right now, but I have a full set of verse-by-verse programs on the Book of Revelation that you can order from CEM.

Last Day prophecies

It is plain that they had a belief system about the Last Days which was, at first, somewhat off base. To some extent, this is accounted for by something Jesus himself had said. It happened on a day when Jesus and the disciples were near the Temple and he told them about its future destruction. When they got to the Mount of Olives, the disciples asked him outright when these things would happen—and what would be the sign of his coming and the end of the age. What follows, commonly called the Olivet Prophecy, is in answer to that question. In his answer, Jesus spoke plainly about the Last Days: "Immediately after the tribulation of

those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matthew 24:29-37).

There is very little question that Jesus told them about the Last Days. Not only that, but he indicated that they would not be caught totally unaware. What made it difficult for them was that many of the things he spoke (though not all) would be fulfilled with the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. But then he added a caution: "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."

That had to put a damper on speculation by the disciples as to timing. And yet, Jesus had told them there were things to watch for. It seems evident that they didn't have a clue that history would continue for 2000 years after their day. They didn't need to know that. In fact, knowing that would have taken the wind out of their sails. So what did the First Christians believe about the Last Days, and how did that affect the things they did and said?

In the days following Jesus' resurrection, before his ascension, the disciples reveal their expectations about the Kingdom: "Will

you," they asked, "at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6).

We don't know the time or season

It would be hard for any of us to resist asking the questions the disciples asked, but between what Jesus had already told them and what he told them on this occasion, we should know better: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

So, they weren't to know the time of his coming. But they were told what they had to do. This statement should have given them a clue that it would be a while. And here we are, 2000 years later, wondering what Jesus Christ is going to do next. The answer? It is not for us to know that, but we do know what we have to be doing, right now.

When Jesus finished speaking, they watched as he rose up into the sky and disappeared into a cloud. As they stood there gaping, two men standing there (no doubt angels) said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

I doubt they ever looked at the Mount of Olives in the same way again. No doubt it took a while for them to settle in and understand that the Kingdom of God was not

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the restoration of the kingdom of Israel. At this point, the next ten days gave them time to think through what Jesus had told them. And interestingly, Peter, on the Day of Pentecost, revealed at least some of their thinking. You can read his speech in Acts 2, and it is obvious he had the door open in his own mind for Jesus' imminent return. When you compare Peter's words to Joel 2 (which he cited) it is obvious that he had the Last Days in mind.

I can't develop this further here, but I have in a radio program that answers the question of what the first Christians believed, titled *About the Last Days*.

I would like to send you a *FREE* CD of the program, which may not air for several weeks. Just check the box on the enclosed card and return it to us in the envelope provided.

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about the latest schoolyard problem. And I really don't want to take a break from writing this essay when my wife decides it is time to talk about cleaning up my desk before company comes over.

But then I must ask myself: What would our Heavenly Father do when I talk to him about the obvious? He would put down the book, put the universe on cruise control, lean forward, and listen. God likes to hear us talk, and he is the best listener there is.

2009 Feast of Tabernacles October 2nd through 10th

Come join a great bunch of people in celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles at the Emerald Coast Conference Center in Ft. Walton Beach, Florida. No preregistration is required. Bring your best attitude and show up for the opening night service beginning at 7:30 p.m., Friday, October 2, 2009. An exhilarating, worshipful experience awaits everyone who joins us. Each day is jam-packed with a compelling sermon, seminars, youth classes, music, and socializing opportunities. Your spiritual cup will surely run over as you grow in service to your fellow man and to your Creator. Watch next month's *Living to Win* for a full schedule of thrilling events.

Wonderful, affordable accommodations are available for every budget. One Realtor® to check out is Newman-Dailey Resort Properties, Inc., which offers a 30% discount to guests of the Christian Educational Ministries Feast (800-225-7652, <http://www.destinvacation.com/>). Go to www.borntowin.net for other Realtors® and to check out Newman-Dailey's cancellation policy.

Christian Educational Ministries

Statement of Cash Flows
For the Three Months Ended
April 30, 2009

Receipts:	
Contributions	\$339581
CEM Bookstore	32612
Other Income	2524
	\$ 374717
Expenses:	
A/V Supplies	\$ 7871
Occupancy	7568
Office & Adm. Expenses	6891
Mailing Expenses	3255
Postage	18116
Printing	12025
Radio Expenses	179574
Telephone & Utilities	4345
Editorial Services	2088
CEM Bookstore	3994
Employee Benefits	10752
Wages & Payroll Taxes	81405
Total Operating Expenses	<u>337884</u>
Increase in Fund Balance	\$ 36833



Radio Update

Linton, IN
WQTY 93.3 FM
Sunday 7:00 a.m.

Montrose, CO
KUBC 580 AM
Sunday 7:00 a.m.

Las Vegas, NV
KKVV 1060 AM
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Christian Educational

Ministries

PO Box 560
Whitehouse, Texas 75791
phone: 1.888.BIBLE.44
fax: 903.839.9311
email: adm@borntowin.net
website: www.borntowin.net

*That the man of God may be proficient
and equipped for every good work.*