

THE SABBATH SCOOP

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WHY SCHOOL SHOOTINGS?

The shootings in Newtown bring back memories of Columbine and other school tragedies. Why did they happen?

By Gregory Dullum

The second worst school massacre in U.S. history occurred Dec. 14 in the small community of Newtown, Conn.

A 20-year-old man dressed in combat gear blasted his way through locked doors into Sandy Hook Elementary School and killed 26 people, including 20 first-graders in two classrooms. All of the children had been shot multiple times with a semi-automatic rifle. The shooter also carried in his cargo pants two pistols, one of which he used to end his own life.

This tragic shooting brought back memories of the Columbine High School massacre in Littleton, Colo., in April 1999, when two students armed with guns and bombs killed 13 people and wounded 23 others before killing themselves.

The Columbine tragedy came less than a year after a 15-year-old boy took guns into his high school cafeteria in Springfield, Ore., and mowed down schoolmates in May 1998. Two died and 15 or 20 were wounded.

Other school shootings happened prior to Springfield in Jonesboro, Ark. (March 24, 1998), Paducah Ky. (Dec. 1, 1997), and Lynnville, Tenn. (Nov. 15, 1995).

Why are school shootings happening?

Some Blame Guns

Some, like U.S. Pres. Barack Obama, blame these tragedies on GUNS. A movement is currently underway to ban the sale of assault weapons. Such a ban might keep assault weapons out of the hands of law-abiding citizens (abridging their Second-Amendment right to bear arms), but will do little to keep guns away from criminals. Since when do criminals obey laws?

Americans have had guns in their homes since the first white settlers built their first log cabins on the At-

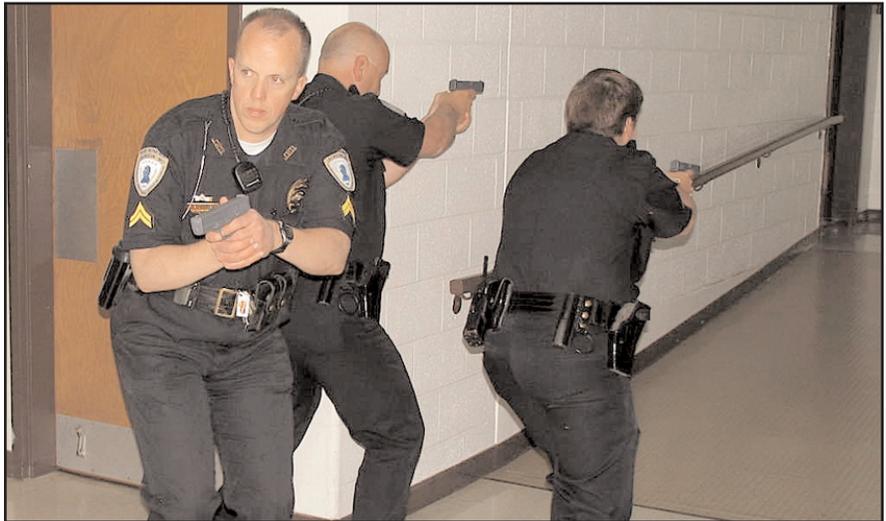


photo by Gregory Dullum

Police officers training to respond to an armed intruder in a junior high. Why is such training necessary—why are school shootings happening?

lantic shore. But they have not always had kids killing kids.

So why is this *really* happening?

1. We Are In the End Time

We are seeing an increase in violence because we are living in the end time—the last days before Christ returns to this earth.

The apostle Paul told us the end time would be like this: “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God” (2 Tim. 3:1-4).

God said of this end time, “As for My people, children are their oppressors...” (Isa. 3:12). He added, “The people will be oppressed, every one by another and every one by his neighbor; the child will

be insolent toward the elder, and base toward the honorable” (v. 5).

WHY will the *end time* be like this? Christ gives us the answer: “and because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold” (Mat. 24:12).

God’s laws show us how to love God and our neighbors. The MORE this country IGNORES God’s laws, the LESS LOVE will be shown, and the *more* VIOLENT we’ll become.

A good description of this end time is in Hos. 4:1-2: “There is no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land. By swearing and lying, killing and stealing and committing adultery, they break all restraint, with bloodshed after bloodshed.”

Matt. 24:38 tells us this time will be as it was in the days of Noah. What were those days like?

“The Lord saw that the wickedness of

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man was great in the earth, and that every imagination and intention of all human thinking was only evil continually. And the Lord regretted that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved at heart....

“The earth was depraved and putrid in God’s sight, and the land was filled with violence (desecration, infringement, outrage, assault, and lust for power), and God looked upon the world and saw how degenerate, debased and vicious it was; for all humanity had corrupted their way upon the earth and lost their true direction” (Gen. 6:5-6, 11-12, *Amplified Version*).

2. Lack of Proper Teaching

One reason for the increased violence in these last days is that the Bible is no longer taught. Children don’t learn the 10 Commandments. They aren’t taught the greater commandment of “Love your neighbor as yourself (Mark 12:31).”

Instead, they are raised to be selfish and demanding. They have been taught to strike out and hit and kill whatever gets in the way of their immediate pleasure. If they didn’t learn this from their parents, then they absorbed it from their music, movies, television and literature.

3. Time of Affluence, Boredom

Our children began going down the wrong path in the 1950s and ’60s. And now they have grown up and have had children and grandchildren of their own, with each generation getting worse! Why?

It is NOT more *poverty* which is causing violence—It is more *affluence!* “Affluence reappeared in the late 1940s and in the decade of the 1950s and has remained with us.... Affluence brings with it boredom. Of itself, it (affluence) offers little but the ability to consume, and a life centered upon consumption will appear, and be, devoid of meaning. Persons so afflicted will seek sensation as a palliative, and that today’s culture offers in abundance....

“With the time and energy of so many individuals freed from the harder demands of work, the culture turned to consumerism and entertainment. Technology and its entrepreneurs supplied the demand with motion pictures, radio, television, and video-cassettes, all increasingly featuring sex and violence. Sensations must be steadily intensified if boredom is to be kept at bay” (*Slouching Towards Gomorrah* by Robert H. Bork, 1996, pp. 8-9).

Violent games and movies must become more violent and more graphic to satisfy their audience. And a *few* in the audience

can find satisfaction ONLY by *acting out* the violence—by actually *attacking* others.

How can these young people become so hardened that they could kill innocent little first-graders—or their classmates, teachers and principals?

4. Children Are Out of Touch

The military desensitizes its soldiers. It trains them to think of the enemy, not as real people with families and ideas and goals and problems, but as inanimate targets—just something to shoot at; something to be destroyed.

Violent video games and movies are desensitizing young people’s minds. They spend hour after hour destroying aliens, zombies and enemy soldiers on their TVs and computer screens. Many of today’s games are lifelike 3-D video games where players have guns in front of them, and they walk through realistic scenery killing zombies, aliens, or other enemies.

The graphics of these games are so real, it’s getting harder for young minds to distinguish between fantasy and reality. After so much killing and destroying of these unreal targets, it becomes easier to point a gun at a real person and pull the trigger.

And yet there may be millions of children playing these violent games who never go on killing sprees. So why does it happen on these rare occasions? Something else must be at work behind the scenes.

5. Satanic Influence

All of us are influenced to some degree by the world around us—and this is Satan’s world (2 Cor. 4:4). The apostle John tells us, “the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one” (1 John 5:19). What kind of sway; what kind of attitude does Satan project? Satan (the former Lucifer) is *filled* with VIOLENCE (Ezek. 28:16). Some *allow themselves* to be influenced MORE than others by Satan.

God created millions of angels (Rev. 5:11). When Lucifer rebelled against God, he took a third of them with him (Rev. 12:4). So there are probably millions of fallen angels, called demons, here on earth.

When Christ walked the earth, He was continually casting out demons that had taken over the minds of people. It was a big problem in first-century Palestine. We don’t hear about demon-possession today—but those demons have not gone away. They are still out there.

It would not surprise me to learn that violent, mass-murderers had DEMONIC *influence*, if not *complete* POSSESSION! Most, if not all, were taking psychiatric drugs for mental problems. Some of those problems

may have been SPIRITUAL and NOT *mental!*

End Result of a Violent Land

What is God going to do about the violence which fills this land? He tells us:

“Thus says the LORD God to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the land of Israel: ‘They shall eat their bread with anxiety, and drink their water with dread, so that her land may be emptied of all who are in it, because of the violence of all those who dwell in it. Then the cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, and the land shall become desolate; and you shall know that I am the LORD’ ” (Ezek. 12:19-20). National captivity is coming upon the United States of America—the modern-day descendants of Israel. When will this happen?

“For I am the LORD. I speak, and the word which I speak will come to pass; it will no more be postponed; for in your days, O rebellious house, I will say the words and perform it,’ says the LORD God” (v. 25). As we see our nation grow MORE VIOLENT, we know we are reaching the point where national captivity will *no longer be postponed*. We may be rapidly approaching that point!

Peace Is Coming

There is a happy ending to all this! Jesus Christ will return, bind Satan, and establish his government of PEACE in all the land.

The Americans will return from captivity and be peaceful instead of violent. Isaiah 60:18 tells us, “Violence shall no longer be heard in your land, neither wasting nor destruction in your borders.”

There will be no more violence in our schools, on our streets, in our homes or in our hearts. At last, we will experience peace, because we will be ruled by the Prince of Peace and the law of love.

The SABBATH SCOOP

228 O’Connell Drive
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701-3332

Editor

Gregory Dullum

Circulation Managers:

Craig Evans • Raleigh Collins

Ed Crook • Gregory Dullum

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JOHN THE DISCIPLE WHOM JESUS LOVED

John gains experience preaching, healing and serving.

By Gregory Dullum
Part 4

Christ Casts Out Demons

After calming the Sea of Galilee, Jesus and his disciples crossed over to the country of the Gerasenes, where they were met by two men possessed by demons (Mat. 8:28). One of the two was more prominent and is the only one mentioned in the Gospels of Mark (5:1-3) and Luke (8:26-27). Jesus asked the demon his name and he replied, "My name is Legion; for we are many" (Mark 5:9).

The demons begged Jesus not to send them out of the country, but instead, to allow them to enter into a nearby herd of swine. Jesus gave his permission. They entered the swine and about 2,000 of them ran violently down a steep incline into the Sea of Galilee and drowned (vv. 12-13).

The men who fed the swine fled into a nearby city and told what had happened. The residents of that area came out to see for themselves. They were afraid, and begged Jesus and his disciples to leave (vv. 14-17).

John and the other disciples followed Jesus into the boat and they sailed back home to Capernaum (vv. 18, 21).

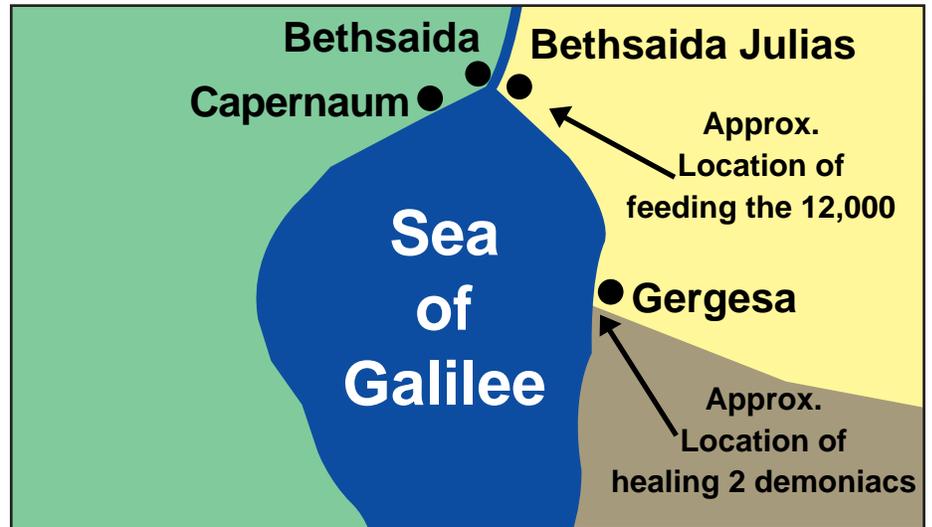
Jesus Heals a Woman

A crowd met them upon their return. In the crowd was Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue in Capernaum. He fell at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come and heal his 12-year-old daughter, who was at the point of death. Jesus agreed to go.

The crowd tagged along. On the way, a woman who had an issue of blood for 12 years touched Jesus' garment with the hope of being healed. Her hope was realized. The blood stopped flowing. All pain and discomfort ceased. She felt completely whole for the first time in more than a decade!

What JOY she felt at that moment! For 12 YEARS she had gone to doctors. They had performed many procedures on her, consuming her life's savings, but only making matters worse (Mark 5:25-27). Now, by simply touching the garment of the ONLY One who truly has the POWER to heal, she was *instantly* made well!

Her joy lasted only a moment. She had touched Him anonymously and without permission. Fear came upon her as she



Map by Gregory Dullum

Jesus and the disciples sailed from Capernaum to the country of the Gerasenes near Gergesa. Later, 12,000 people were fed south of Bethsaida Julias.

saw Jesus' reaction and she worried about being discovered.

Jesus perceived that power had gone out from Him. He stopped, turned around and asked, "Who touched My clothes?"

The disciples were unaware that a healing had taken place. Led by Peter (Luke 8:45), they responded, "You see the multitude thronging You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'" (Mark 5:31).

Jesus insisted, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me" (Luke 8:46). The disciples then realized Jesus was not talking about a casual jostling. Someone had touched Him with purpose—the purpose of being healed.

"Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. And He said to her, 'Daughter, be of good cheer, your faith has made you well. Go in peace'" (vv. 47-48).

John Sees Girl Raised from Death

While Jesus was talking to the woman, someone came from the home of Jairus and said, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher" (Luke 8:49).

Jesus heard the comment and answered, "Do not be afraid; only believe and she will be made well" (v. 50). Christ here described FEAR and FAITH as being opposites. He tells Jairus not to be afraid; in-

stead of having fear, he should have faith.

When they all arrived at Jairus' house, Jesus allowed only five people to enter with Him: the girl's mother and father, and his three closest disciples: Peter, James and John. The other nine disciples were told to wait outside (v. 51).

When Jesus and the other five people entered the crowded home, they saw many friends and relatives of the girl weeping and wailing loudly. Mournful funeral music filled the air.

Jesus quieted the crowd and asked them, "Why make this commotion and weep? The child is not dead, but sleeping" (Mark 5:39).

The mourners burst into laughter. They knew death when they saw it, and this girl was *stone dead!* They "laughed Him to scorn" (v. 40). So Jesus put the crowd of unbelievers out of the home. The only ones to remain with Jesus were the girl's parents and the three disciples, Peter, James and John. They followed Jesus as He went into the room where the body lay (v. 40).

Jesus took the girl's cool, pale hand in his, and said to the dead body, "Talitha cumi," which is translated, "Little girl, I say to you, arise."

Color and warmth immediately returned to her flesh. She took a breath. Her eyes fluttered and opened. She sat up, jumped down upon her feet and walked.

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John

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Her parents and the three disciples were “overcome with great amazement.” Their mouths fell open. Their knees may have weakened and they may have needed to sit down. They may have uttered phrases of shock and unbelief under their breath.

They had heard the Old Testament accounts of Elisha raising people from the dead (2 Kings 4:32-36, 13:20-21), but now they had witnessed *with their own eyes* a dead girl brought back to life! They began to grasp that Jesus had POWER OVER DEATH. Jesus told them to be quiet about this miracle (Mark 5:43). But there was *no way* the crowd outside the home could keep quiet about a dead girl brought back to life, and “the report of this went out into all the land” (Mat. 9:26).

More Healings

As Jesus traveled from the home of Jairus, He healed two blind men and a mute man who was possessed by a demon (Mat. 9:27-34).

Last Visit to Nazareth

Jesus went from there and made a final visit to his home city of Nazareth (Mark 6:1-6; Mat. 13:54-58). Unlike his first visit, in which He traveled alone and was nearly murdered, this time Jesus was accompanied by his disciples (Mark 6:1).

The result, however, was nearly the same. The local inhabitants rejected Jesus as the Messiah. They remembered Him as just the son of a carpenter. Because of their unbelief, Jesus could perform no mighty work except for a few healings (Mark 6:6).

Third Tour of Galilee

From Nazareth, Jesus conducted his third and final tour of Galilee, preaching the kingdom of God and healing all manners of sickness (Mark 6:6, Mat. 9:35).

During this tour, Jesus was moved with compassion for the multitudes (Mat. 9:36). There were so many who needed help, and He was only one person! He decided to send out his disciples to preach and heal in his place.

John and Others Sent Out

“And He called the twelve to Him, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them power over unclean spirits. He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bag, no bread, no copper in their money belts—but to wear sandals, and not put on two tunics.

“Also He said to them, ‘In whatever place you enter a house, stay there till you depart from that place. And whoever will not receive you or not hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!’

“So they went out and preached that people should repent. And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them” (Mark 6:7-13).

John was one of the 12 sent out. The Bible doesn’t say who his partner was. It may have been his brother, James, (together they were called the sons of thunder) or perhaps John was accompanied by his close friend, Andrew (Peter’s younger brother), for John and Andrew had served together as disciples of John the Baptist before they became Christ’s disciples. These seem to be logical choices, but Jesus may have paired him with one of the other disciples.

During this time, John gained first-hand experience at preaching and healing. Then he and the other 11 returned to Jesus in Capernaum and reported what they had done (Mark 6:30, Luke 9:10).

Feeding About 12,000 People

Back in Capernaum, so many people were coming to be healed that Jesus and his disciples didn’t have time to eat. So Jesus said to John and the others, “Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while” (Mark 6:31).

They traveled by boat—once again, it may have been a boat belonging to the old fishing business—and they sailed from Capernaum (or possibly western Bethsaida) to eastern Bethsaida.

Bethsaida was a city on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee. It was divided by the Jordan River as it emptied into the sea. On the west side, near Capernaum, Bethsaida was a small, undeveloped town. The eastern side, which was under the rule of the tetrarch Philip, was developed into a large, modern city and given the name Bethsaida Julias. “The territory belonging to Bethsaida Julias would naturally extend some distance down the lake [along its eastern shore]” (*A Harmony of the Gospels* by A.T. Robertson, 1950, p. 86).

Luke’s Gospel tells us that Jesus and the twelve disembarked at Bethsaida (Luke 9:10), which John’s Gospel tells us was on “the other side of the Sea of Galilee”—or on the eastern shore, east of the Jordan River (John 6:1).

The boat had never ventured far from shore on this short journey, and the crowd never lost sight of it as they fol-

lowed on foot along the shore line (Mark 6:33, Mat. 14:13, Luke 9:11, John 6:2).

Once off the boat, Jesus and the 12 disciples walked up a mountain to a deserted place south of Bethsaida Julias (Mark 6:32, Mat. 14:13). They sat and rested until the crowd caught up to them (John 6:3).

When Jesus saw the crowd approaching, He had compassion on them and began to teach them many things about the kingdom of God. And He healed the sick among them (Mark 6:34, Mat. 14:14, Luke 9:11).

As the sun sank in the western sky, John and the other disciples grew hungry. They realized this crowd of 5,000 men, besides women and children—about 12,000 in all—was getting hungry too. They went to Christ and asked Him to send the crowd away into the country and to the nearby villages to eat (Mark 6:35-36, Mat. 14:15, Luke 9:12).

Jesus knew He was going to miraculously feed the 12,000. But He wanted to *test* Philip. He asked him, “Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?”

Philip replied, “Two hundred denarii [equivalent to about eight month’s salary] worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little” (John 6:5-7). In other words, Jesus said, “I want to feed these people,” and Philip told him, “We can’t afford to! We don’t have enough funds.” Jesus was about to show his disciples that He could accomplish what He wanted to do even when the funds weren’t there!

Andrew, Peter’s brother, said to Christ, “There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish. But what are they among so many?” (v. 9). Jesus was about to show his disciples that He can make a small amount go a long way!

He commanded the crowd to sit down in an orderly fashion. They sat on the grass by hundreds and fifties (Mark 6:39-40).

Jesus blessed the five loaves and two fish. He divided up the meager meal and gave it to the 12 disciples to distribute. As John and the other disciples went from person to person distributing the bread and fish, their baskets NEVER EMPTIED. There was *always* another piece to hand out. Each disciple fed about 1,000 people. After all had eaten their fill, the 12 disciples picked up the fragments, put them in their baskets, and the baskets were full (Mark 6:42-43)!

This miracle impressed *the crowd*—they wanted to make Jesus their king. But the *disciples* were unimpressed. Mark’s Gospel says “For they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened” (Mark 6:52). WHY were their hearts *hardened*?

Perhaps they thought serving food and cleaning up afterward was *beneath their dignity*. After all, they had been *preaching*

and *healing* just a short time before! They thought they were *too important* to be waiters and busboys. This attitude appeared again after the church began, when they said, “It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables” (Acts 6:1-4). And it was these same 12 who argued over who would be GREATEST in the kingdom (Mark 9:34).

In addition, they may have thought, okay, we’ll serve the food. *It won’t take long* to dish out what little we have and *we’ll be done*. But the task took much LONGER than they *expected*. Rather than being *pleased* to find another piece of fish or bread in their basket, they became *disgusted* and *weary*. Would this task NEVER END? They may have grown weary from doing good (Gal. 6:9, 2 Thes. 3:13).

We can learn a lesson from them. As time goes on longer than we think it should before Christ returns, we must not let our hearts become hardened. We must not become weary with well doing. We must be patient and endure to the end, no matter how long it takes (Mat. 24:13, Luke 21:19).

When supper was finished, Jesus sent the disciples away in the boat back to western Bethsaida while He stayed with the multitude (Mark 6:45).

The crowd wanted to make Jesus their king but He put a damper on this desire and sent them away (Mat. 14:23, John 6:14-15). Then He went up into the mountain alone to pray.

Walking on Water

The wind blew hard from the west and the disciples fought against it to get home. Instead of using sails, they rowed back to western Bethsaida. It was a tremendous struggle and they made very slow progress. It’s as if the Father said, “Oh, you don’t want to work? Well, I’ll make you work!”

About the fourth watch of the night (3-6 a.m.), Jesus came walking on the sea, and would have passed them by. John and the others saw Jesus and supposed He was a ghost. They screamed in terror. The “ghost” turned to them and said in a voice they recognized, “Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid” (Mark 6:47-50).

Peter yelled back, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.” What went through John’s mind? Did he think, *Oh, I wish I had said that—what an adventure, to walk on water!* Or did he think, *That Peter is nuts to request such a thing!* Jesus bade Peter to come.

Peter climbed down from the boat until his feet stood upon the sloshing waves of the sea. It was wet, slippery, and constantly in motion as the wind whipped up waves. And yet, he felt some resistance; he wasn’t sinking. He was standing!

John and the other disciples watched in amazement as Peter stood upon the water and let go of the boat.

As Peter slowly walked toward Jesus with his arms outstretched to keep his balance, he saw how the wind was whipping up the waves and he began to be afraid. The more fear he felt, the more his feet sank under surface. The deeper his feet sank, the greater his fear. It snowballed until Peter thought he would drown. At last, he cried out to Jesus, “Lord, save me!”

By that time, Jesus was just an arm’s length away. He immediately stretched out his hand and caught Peter as he was sinking. He pulled him back up so his feet stood upon the surface and said to him, “Oh you of little faith, why did you doubt?” (Mat. 14:28-31).

After they had climbed up into the boat, the wind ceased (v. 32). John and the other disciples who were in the boat were amazed by what they had witnessed (Mark 6:51). They worshipped Christ, saying, “Truly You are the Son of God” (Mat. 14:33).

Because the wind had ceased blowing, the disciples were able to quickly finish their journey (John 6:21).

Once back on the shore, a crowd gathered around them and many sick people were healed (Mark 6:53-56, Mat. 14:34-36).

Multitude Follows

The next day, the multitude who had eaten the loaves and fish got into boats and sailed to Capernaum, where they caught up with Jesus and his disciples (John 6:22-25).

Jesus did not seem to have a lot of time for these people. He said to them, “you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled” (v. 26). In other words, He told them, “All you seek is a free meal.”

Then Jesus gave them a spiritual lesson: “Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him” (v. 27). He explained that He had come down from heaven, just as manna had come down from heaven to the Israelites in the wilderness. Then He said, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world” (v. 51).

JOHN

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Fun Fact



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS

The use of an image of baby “New Year” was brought to early America by the Germans. They had used the image since the 14th century.

Witerature

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

“A Lost Opportunity” by Leo

Tolstoy, *Eyes to See*, vol. 2,

Thomas Nelson, 2008, pp. 227-228.

Settle Out of Court

“‘See here, my brothers,’ said one feeble old judge, looking at Ivan and Gavryl as he spoke, ‘I think you had better try to arrange this matter peaceably. You, brother Gavryl, did wrong to strike a woman who was in delicate health. It was a lucky thing for you that God had mercy on you and that the woman did not die, for if she had I know not what dire misfortune might have overtaken you! It will not do either of you any good to go on living as you are at present. Go, Gavryl, and make friends with Ivan; I am sure he will forgive you, and we will set aside the verdict just given.’”

“The secretary on hearing this said: ‘It is impossible to do this on the present case. According to Article 117 this matter has gone too far to be settled peaceably now, as the verdict has been rendered and must be enforced.’”

Luke 12:57-59, Rom. 12:18, 1 Cor. 6:1-7

Quotable Quote

“The art of teaching is the art of assisting discovery.” —Mark Van Doren

Memory Scripture

“He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”

—1 John 4:8

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He added, “unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you” (v. 53). This was a hard saying for these Jews.

Many of his disciples did not understand the spiritual intent of these words and were offended by them. They didn’t realize He was speaking about taking the bread and wine at Passover (Mat. 26:18, 26-28). They took Jesus literally, and thought he was preaching cannibalism. They knew human flesh and blood were not to be consumed (Lev. 11:2-8, Gen. 9:4, Deut. 12:16).

“From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more” (John 6:66).

Jesus seems to be HURT or depressed by the desertions. He had just told them that He was the key to obtaining eternal life, and MANY—not just a FEW—disciples *deserted Him!* They didn’t want eternal life—they wanted free food. They wanted free health care by way of miraculous healing. They wanted a king to lead a rebellion against the Romans. They were focused on the physical things of *this life*. They didn’t want someone speaking “crazy” words about eating flesh and drinking blood to obtain *eternal life*.

Frustrated that these disciples did not understand what his ministry was about, Jesus then turned to John and the other 11 disciples and asked them, “Do you also want to go away?” (John 6:67).

John didn’t have to say anything. Peter was their leader and he spoke for them all when he replied, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words to eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God” (v. 69).

Peter could not have given a better reply. He told Jesus there was nowhere else to go; no other path led to eternal life. He told Him, “We aren’t here for a free meal and a free healing. We believe your words. We know who you really are and why you’re here.”

Of course, their understanding was limited, for they had not yet received God’s holy spirit. However, in their unconverted state, they were doing the best they could to follow Jesus.

And yet, Jesus still seemed a little down; a little betrayed. He shot back this retort: “Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?” (v. 70). He spoke of Judas Iscariot, who would later betray Him (v. 71).

(To be continued!)



Nature of Muslim Brotherhood Revealed

Some resistance is rising against the Muslim Brotherhood, the party which is currently ruling Egypt.

“Residents here [Al Talbeya, Egypt] and around Cairo say the damage to the Brotherhood’s popularity is unrelated to its religious ideology. It reflects a consistent trio of complaints: confusing economic policies of the Brotherhood-led government, a near-monopoly on power and civilian supporters’ use of force against opponents in a street battle two weeks ago. Even so, many say the Brotherhood remains the most potent political force....

“ ‘People don’t like the Muslim Brotherhood as much as they used to, because they saw how they tried to control everything and how they beat people up,’ said Emad Mohamed Yosri, 37, a tailor who still counts himself a supporter of the group” (“Support for Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood Erodes in an Islamist Bastion” by David D. Kirkpatrick, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, Dec. 21, 2012, pp. 1-2).

The true nature of the Muslim Brotherhood is beginning to show. It stands NOT for *democracy* and *freedom* but for the *enslavement of the world* under Muslim Sharia law. David Kupelian, in World-Net-Daily, described the Brotherhood as “the shadowy transnational Islamist organization dedicated to establishing Shariah throughout the world, including in America” (“The Muslim Brotherhood’s sneak attack on America,” Feb. 17, 2011, p. 1).

At the time of the end, before Christ returns, there will be three main power groups battling for world power with Jerusalem in the middle. In addition to the “king of the North” (Dan. 11:40)—a 10-member European union (Dan. 2:41-44, Rev. 17:12-14)—and “kings from the east” (Dan. 11:44, Rev. 16:12-16)—an Asiatic union—there will be a king of the South (Dan. 11:40-43)—very likely be a union of Muslim nations based in Egypt.

We can expect a Muslim union to grow out of last year’s ‘Arab Spring’ in which numerous north African and mideast nations saw uprisings, demonstrations, and governmental overthrows.

North Koreans Launch Long-Range Rocket

“North Korea launched a long-range rocket on Wednesday morning [Dec. 12] that appeared to reach as far as the Philippines, an apparent success for the country’s young and untested new leader, Kim Jong-un, and a step toward the nation’s goal of mastering the technology needed to build an intercontinental ballistic missile” (“North Koreans Launch Rocket in Defiant Act” by Choe Sang-Hun and David E. Sanger, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, Dec. 11, 2012, p. 1).

A nuclear-armed North Korea may be part of the “kings of the east” that will attack European armies near Jerusalem shortly before Christ returns (Dan. 11:44, Rev. 16:12-16).

Britain Threatens to Leave European Union

“Is Britain moving inexorably toward the European Union’s exit door?”

“...[T]he British government said it wanted to exercise an opt out of an estimated 133 areas of European police and judicial cooperation to which it had once agreed.

“And [British Prime Minister] Mr. [David] Cameron supported a plan for a new budget for countries that use the euro (which Britain does not), something that would place his nation firmly in Europe’s outer tier. The prime minister has been hinting that he could hold a referendum on Britain’s relations with the union, and one newspaper reported recently that a senior cabinet minister wants Britain to threaten openly to leave the 27-nation bloc. There was no official denial of the report” (“European Union Exit? Concerns Grow for Britain” by Stephen Castle, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, Oct. 27, 2012, p. 1).

If the 10-nation final “king of the North” is formed from the EU, it will not include Britain! God will use a German-led union to take Britain and the U.S. (modern-day descendants of Joseph) into captivity prior to Christ’s return. It will be as if Joseph is sold into slavery again.