

# THE SABBATH SCOOP

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## Feast of Trumpets: a Day of Light!

The giving of light to a darkened world seems to be a theme of the Feast of Trumpets.

by Gregory Dullum

Coming up on Sept. 10 is the Feast of Trumpets, one of God's annual Feast days. On God's sacred calendar, this day is the first day of the seventh month.

### The Jewish New Year

The Jews consider Sept. 10 to be the first day of their new year. Some of us may have calendars that say, "Jewish New Year." Other calendars say, "Rosh Hashanah." Look up Rosh Hashanah in the dictionary and it says, "the Jewish New Year festival, held on the first (also sometimes the second) day of Tishri (in September). It is marked by the blowing of the shofar, and begins the ten days of penitence culminating in Yom Kippur."

Isn't the Jewish New Year in the spring just before Passover?

"Actually there are two New Years in Judaism. One, according to Biblical time reckoning begins on the first day of the month of Nisan or Abib, which means Spring. This month is roughly equivalent to our April. 'And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, this month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you'—Exodus 12:1, 2.

"The other, New Year's Day, which the Jews officially recognize and celebrate, is the first day of the seventh month according to the Jewish calendar, and is called the month of Tishri.

"In Leviticus 23:24 we read—'In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a Sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation' " (*The Gospel in the Feasts of Israel* by Victor Buksbazu, 1954, p. 22).

Why is Tishri 1 considered New Year's Day by the Jews when God said the new year should begin prior to Passover in the spring? Buksbazu ex-



Photo by Gregory Dullum

On the first day of creation, which may have been the Feast of Trumpets, the Spirit of God hovered over the waters, and God said, "Let there be light!"

plains it this way: "The ancient Rabbis believed the Lord created the world in the first week of the month of Tishri. Therefore the first day of the seventh month is considered the beginning of creation and the beginning of the year, and hence the present Jewish time reckoning" (p. 23).

Although it's just TRADITION, tradition usually has a *basis in fact*. And this tradition also is logical. Would God have created Adam and Eve in the spring when plants are just blooming? What would they eat? It makes more sense for them to have been created in the fall, at the time of harvest, when food was plentiful.

### A Time of Re-creation

If Jewish tradition is true, creation (or more accurately, re-creation) began on Tishri 1—the Feast of Trumpets—about 6,000 years ago. If so, let's see what happened on the very first Feast of Trumpets:

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was

on the face of the deep" (Gen. 1:1-2).

Verse 1 describes the original creation. When the earth was created, God "did not create it in vain" (Isa. 45:18a). The word translated "vain" is the Hebrew word *tohuw*, which means "waste," or "emptiness." The earth was NOT created as an empty wasteland. It was "created to be inhabited" (Isa. 45:18b).

In verse 2 of Genesis 1, we read, "the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep." The English words "without form and void" are from the Hebrew words *tohuw* and *bohuw*. The earth was NOT created in *tohuw*, but by verse 2 it was *tohuw*. The word "was" in verse 2 can be translated "became" and it is so translated in Gen. 19:26. The earth BECAME waste and confusion *after it was created*. Why? What happened between verses 1 and 2 of Genesis 1?

What happened was Lucifer's rebel-

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lion (Isa. 14:12-15, Ezek. 28:12-17, Rev. 12:7-9). When the smoke cleared, the earth was left as a dark, cloudy, water-covered orb.

The “seven days of creation” DO NOT describe the *original* creation of the earth. They describe the re-creation or restoration of the earth, as the mess left behind from Satan’s rebellion is cleaned up.

### First Ever Feast of Trumpets

Beginning with the second sentence of Gen. 1:2 and on through verse 5, we read what happened on the first day of re-creation, which *could have been* the Feast of Trumpets: “And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So evening and morning were the first day.”

Three specific things happened on this first day:

1. The Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters. God came to earth.
2. God spoke, “Let there be light” and there was light.
3. God divided the light from the darkness.

Who did the creating? Who was in spirit form before becoming flesh? Who spoke the words of the Old Testament because He was called the Word? Who may have brought light to a darkened world on the very first Feast of Trumpets?

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life

was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. ... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:1-5, 14). It was the Word—who became known to us as Jesus Christ—who brought light to a darkened world! If tradition is correct, on the very first Feast of Trumpets, Jesus Christ came to earth, hovered over the waters in spirit form, spoke words, created light, and separated light from darkness.

### About 4,000 Years Later

Let’s move ahead about 4,000 years to the Feast of Trumpets in 4 B.C. What happened on or near that particular Feast of Trumpets?

To find out, we must back up to the summer of 5 B.C. “There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ... So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord” (Luke 1:5, 8-9).

There were 24 divisions of priests that served each week throughout the year, beginning in the spring. The division of Abijah was the eighth (1 Chron. 24:10). Because all the priests served during the week of the Passover, this was actually the ninth week of the year in God’s sacred calendar (that begins in the spring). Zacharias served in *early June*.

“And so it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived” (vv. 23-24). Elizabeth conceived about June 15.

“Now in the sixth month [six months after June was December], the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. ... The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is born to you will be called the Son of God. Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren” (vv. 26-28, 30-31, 35-37).

About six months after Elizabeth conceived, Mary conceived and became pregnant with Jesus. John was born in the spring of 4 B.C., around the time of the Passover. Jesus was conceived six months after John was, and Jesus was born six months after John was. John was born in the spring so Jesus was born in the fall of 4 B.C., around the Feast of Trumpets!

This is *pure speculation*, but it’s possible that Jesus Christ may have been born on the Feast of Trumpets! It was certainly at this time of their year! If He were born on this day, what would that mean?

It would mean Jesus *came to earth* as a baby *on the Feast of Trumpets*. What did the apostle John say about Him?

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. That was the true Light which gives light to every man who comes into the world” (John 1:14, 4-5, 9).

Later, John quotes Jesus as saying, “As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world” (John 9:5).

John also wrote: “Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life’” (John 8:12).

On or about the Feast of Trumpets in 4 B.C., Jesus Christ did three things:

1. He appeared on this earth in physical form.
2. He *brought light* to a DARKENED world.

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## Know Your Bible

by Charles Nenninger

1. Who said, “This is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh”?
2. Who was Saul’s Father and Jonathan’s grandfather?
3. In what book is this scripture: “And behold a white horse and he that sat on it had a bow”?
4. What was the name of Queen Esther’s husband?
5. What was the first city mentioned in the Bible?

(Answers on page 5)

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# WAITING TO BE HEALED

We know the promises. We know the examples. We followed the instructions. Now what?

by Gregory Dullum

We all have read the PROMISES of healing:

- "...For I am the LORD who heals you" (Ex. 15:26).
- "And I will take sickness away from the midst of you" (Ex. 23:25).
- "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).
- "...and by His stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53:5).
- "And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up" (James 5:15).

We all have read the EXAMPLES of healing:

- Naaman, the commander of the Syrian army, was not even an Israelite. He was healed of leprosy when he dipped in the Jordan seven times (2 Kings 5:14).
- King Hezekiah wept and prayed to God and was granted 15 more years to live (2 Kings 20:1-6).
- David prayed, "LORD my God, I cried out to You, and You have healed me" (Ps. 30:2).
- Malachi prophesied of Christ, "The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings" (Mal. 4:2)—and the Gospels are FILLED with examples of Jesus having mercy on the multitudes and healing all the sick who came to Him.

Many were healed in the early days of the Church. The sick were laid in the street so the shadow of Peter passing over them might heal them (Acts 5:14-16).

We have all read the INSTRUCTIONS on what to do when we are sick:

"Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. 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 the faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up" (James 5:13-15).



NAPS photo

Once we have done all we can do, what do we do while waiting to be healed?

We know the PROMISES. We know the EXAMPLES. We followed the INSTRUCTIONS. And yet, some of us are sick. We're waiting to be healed. God has not healed us of our afflictions. Why not? Are we doing something wrong? Doesn't God love us as much as those whom He did heal?

## Moses, David and Paul

What do Moses, David, and the apostle Paul all have in common? They were all SERVANTS of God. They were all CLOSE to God. They were all LOVED by God. They will all *be in the Kingdom of God*.

What else do they have in common? They are all DEAD. And they all died *without being healed* by God. If we are waiting to be healed by God, we are in *good company*! Let's look at these three examples.

God wanted Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. Moses protested, claiming he was unable to speak properly; perhaps he had some type of speech impediment. He told God, "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue" (Ex. 4:10).

God promised to heal Moses' speech impediment, so it wouldn't be a problem: "So the LORD said to him, 'Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the LORD? Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what to say'" (vv. 11-12).

Moses, however, didn't accept God's

offer to help him. "But he said, 'O my Lord, please send by the hand of whomever else You may send'" (v. 13).

Now, God became angry with Moses. "So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and He said, 'Is not Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well. And look, he is also coming out to meet you. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. Now you will speak to him, and put the words in his mouth. And I will be with your mouth and his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do. So he shall be your spokesman to the people. And he himself shall be as a mouth to you, and you shall be to him as God'" (vv. 14-16).

There is no record of God ever healing Moses of his speech impediment. Moses died unhealed.

King David had been healed many times in his younger days. But when he was old, he suffered from an ailment that did not allow him to keep warm.

"Now King David was old, advanced in years; and they put covers on him, but he could not get warm. Therefore his servants said to him, 'Let a young woman, a virgin, be sought for our lord the king, and let her stand before the king, and let her care for him; and let her lie in your bosom, that our lord the king may be warm.' So they sought for a lovely young woman throughout all the territory of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to the king. And the young woman was very lovely; and she cared for the king, and served him; but the king did not know her" (1 Kings 1:1-4).

Although David may have received some warmth and comfort from Abishag, there is no record of him ever being healed of this ailment. In Chapter 2, verse 10, David died—unhealed.

The Apostle Paul suffered from an ailment he called his "thorn in the flesh." He told the church at Corinth: "And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.'"

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## Smile Awhile

"A merry heart does good, like medicine" (Prov. 17:22). Here is this month's dose:

If at first you don't succeed ... then you shouldn't try parachuting.

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Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor. 12:7-10).

Three times Paul prayed to be healed by God of his thorn in the flesh. Some think this may have been an eye affliction affecting his sight. Through his *physical* weakness, Paul was made stronger *spiritually*.

He didn't give up; he didn't quit. He didn't lose faith because he wasn't healed. He had someone else write his letters for him—a secretary called an amanuensis—and he went on *doing God's work* and *living God's way*.

No one can say that Moses, David and Paul were *NOT loved by God*. No one can say they *lacked faith* in God. And yet, they were *NOT HEALED* of their physical infirmities. So what did *they do*? They *did the work of God* and *lived God's way the best they could* in spite of their sickness.

### What Should We Do?

What should we do after we have been anointed, while waiting to be healed?

**1. Examine ourselves.** If we did something wrong physically that caused our bodies to become weak, we should look for something to remedy the situation: get lots of rest, drink plenty of fluids, take vitamin C, etc.

**2. Repent if necessary.** Sometimes sickness is caused by sin and sometimes it isn't.

God told the Israelites to obey Him and He would not put diseases on them (Ex. 15:26). From this we may conclude that at times diseases may be punishment for sins. In his instructions to the church, James writes, "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 5:15). Sometimes our sicknesses are caused by sins. If we have sinned, we need to repent.

On the other hand, when Jesus and his disciples encountered a man who had been blind from birth, they wondered whose sins had caused the blindness. Had the baby sinned in the womb or had the parents sinned and the baby had to bear the penalty? Jesus told them, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him" (John 9:1-3). Not all disease is the result of sin.

**3. Look for lessons we can learn from our sickness.** We are given various trials in life to help us build character and pre-

pare us to be humble, loving, caring, compassionate kings and priests in the Kingdom of God. We'll be better able to understand the sufferings of others if we have suffered ourselves. Paul said his infirmity made him stronger.

**4. Realize that, sometimes we suffer, not to teach us a lesson, but to teach lessons to those around us.** It may not be OUR FAULT at all that we are sick. Others who know us have a lesson to learn and God is using our sickness to *teach them* a lesson.

**5. Never give up hope for healing.** God told Paul after three times, "knock it off, Paul. I'm not going to heal you of this, so get used to living with it." Until God tells us the same thing, I don't see anything wrong with following the example of the parable of the persistent widow, who begged the judge for justice every day until he became weary and gave her what she wanted (Luke 18:1-6).

Jesus used this parable to teach us that we should always pray and not give up. He said, "And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?" (vv. 7-8).

If we keep praying for healing, God *may still heal us in this life!* IT HAS HAPPENED BEFORE!

Look at Sarah and Abraham. God had promised Abraham when He called him that He would make a great nation of him (Gen. 12:1-2). It was 25 years later when Isaac was born. Do you think Abraham and Sarah wanted children all their lives? Could they have prayed for children when they were 25? Is it possible that they prayed for a son *every night* when they were 25? 30? 35? 40? 45? 50? 55? 60? 65? 70? 75? 80? 85?

Do you think Abraham and Sarah *tried having children* ALL THIS TIME, but every month they were disappointed when Sarah didn't get pregnant? God finally healed Sarah's barren womb and they had Isaac when SARAH WAS 90 YEARS OLD and ABRAHAM WAS 100. They had to *wait a long time*, but they WERE HEALED.

Not ALL Bible healings were *instantaneous*. The wives of Jacob sometimes WAITED YEARS for their wombs to be opened. Sometimes their wombs were healed, *only to go barren again*. The physical healing was only TEMPORARY.

ALL physical healing is only TEMPORARY. In the end, *we all will die*. Everyone in the Bible who was *ever healed* all DIED eventually. Not one of them is alive today.

There is a wonderful line in the movie, *Hard Rain*. In this movie it rains all the time and a town is flooded. Someone

asks the sheriff, "Are we all going to die?" The sheriff answers, "Yeah, we're all going to die. Just not today."

Our human existence was not intended to *last forever*. We are all going to die. (Just not today). So we must learn what we can while we can, from the trials we have in this life.

I'd like to change that movie line a little and ask instead, "Are we all going to be healed?" And the answer is, "Yeah, we're all going to be healed. Just not today."

### We Will All Be Healed

Here is the good news: Coming Sept. 10 is the Feast of Trumpets. It pictures the *return of Jesus Christ* to this earth! After Christ returns, *ALL will be healed!* Those who died with sickness will rise in the resurrection *completely healed*, with NEW, SPIRIT BODIES!

Moses will be able to speak eloquently. David will no longer be cold. Paul will be able to see.

Many Bible prophecies tell of the healing that will come in that day:

- "In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness" (Isa. 29:18).

- "In that day the LORD binds up the bruise of His people and heals the stroke of their wound" (Isa. 30:26).

- "The eyes of those who see will not dim, and the ears of those who hear will listen" (Isa. 33:3).

- "And the inhabitant will not say, 'I am sick'" (Isa. 33:24).

- "Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees... Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing" (Isa. 35:3, 5-6).

THERE IS NO STOPPING THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS from coming Sept. 10. When the sun sets on Sept. 9, it will be here! THERE IS NO STOPPING THE RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST! We don't know when He is coming, but we know that *every day brings us one day closer*. One day, it will be here, just as sure as the Feast of Trumpets will be here Sept. 10.

Are we, who are sick, all going to be healed? We have read the promises. We have read the examples of healing in the Bible. We have followed the instructions. And we have seen the prophecies of the future. Yeah, we're all going to be healed. Just not today.

But a day is coming when we will all be healed. *If we are not healed today, and if we are not healed in this life, WE WILL BE HEALED ON THAT DAY*. Our wait will be over. God speed that day!



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3. He *separated the light from the darkness*, because we who follow Christ are part of the light, and we are to be *SEPARATE from the world* (Mat. 5:14-16, Rev. 18:4, 2 Cor. 6:14-18).

### About 2,000 Years Later

Let's jump ahead about 2,000 years to some date in the future. The Feast of Trumpets is a shadow of things to come (Col. 2:16). What future event do we picture on the Feast of Trumpets?

"Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Mat. 24:30-31).

The Feast of Trumpets pictures the return of Christ! When will He come back?

"But of that day and hour no one knows, no, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only" (v. 36). Only the Father knows the day and the hour. We can't know the day or the hour *for certain!*

But we can know the SEASON! "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is very near, at the very doors" (vv. 32-33).

In what season is Jesus *likely* to return?

Revelation 12:13-14 says part of the church will flee and be protected for "a time, times and half a time" or 3-1/2 years in her place in the wilderness. WHEN will we flee? *We don't know.* But look what Christ said: "And pray that your flight may not be in the winter or on the Sabbath" (Mat. 24:20).

When it's winter in the northern hemisphere, it's summer in the southern hemisphere, and vice versa. If we, who are in the church, scattered all around this world, pray this prayer, *and it's answered affirmatively by God*, we probably will NOT flee in *summer or winter*. That means we will flee in the *spring or fall*.

When did the ancient Israel flee Egypt? In the *spring*. If we flee to a place of safety in the spring—just as Israel left Egypt in the spring—three and a half years later brings the return of Christ to the fall of the year—*possibly* on the Feast of Trumpets!

We CANNOT know for certain the day Christ will return. But *what if* Christ returns to this earth on the Feast of Trumpets a few years from now? What will

happen on that day?

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ... And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He would strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ...

"And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh" (Rev. 19:11, 14-15, 19-21).

Three things will happen when the Feast of Trumpets is fulfilled:

1. Jesus Christ appears *in person* on earth for the third time.

2. He brings the LIGHT of God's government, peace and truth to this dark, evil world.

3. He SEPARATES light from darkness. Evil is separated by being killed or cast into the lake of fire.

### Conclusion

Although it's only through *tradition* and *speculation* that we claim these three appearances of Jesus Christ happened or will happen *on the Feast of Trumpets*, we can be fairly certain that they happened or will happen *at this time of year*. And since the Feast of Trumpets is at this time of year, it's a good time to reflect on these things.

THREE TIMES Jesus Christ *appeared* or will appear on earth and *separate light from darkness*. As we go forward, let us be determined to be true followers of Christ, to walk in the light, and to be the light of the world. Because someday in the future, when the Feast of Trumpets is fulfilled, Jesus Christ will come back, with a goal to banish darkness. Then there will be ONLY LIGHT, and it will *shine forever*. Let us all be *part of that light!*

### Know Your Bible Answers

1) Adam. 2) Kish. 3) Revelation. 4) Ahasuerus. 5) Enoch.

## Fun Fact

of creation, history, holidays & the Bible



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS  
Wild eagles generally live 20 or 30 years but in captivity, eagles may live 50 years or more.

## Witerature

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

*Enthusiasm Makes The Difference* by Norman Vincent Peale, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967, p. 223.

### A Simple Philosophy

"S. S. Kresge, founder of the immense empire of nearly a thousand retail stores bearing his name, had the cool, quiet enthusiasm that smashes barriers and achieves spectacular results. ...

"I once asked him the secret of his amazing life. 'I have a simple philosophy,' he said, 'go early to bed; get up early; don't eat too much; work hard; help people; don't let anything get your goat; tend to your own business; be enthusiastic; and always keep God in mind.' With this simple philosophy, he went through life building, always building, with enthusiasm and faith."

Ps. 5:3; Prov. 6:9-11, 23:2; Eccles. 9:10; Rom. 15:1; Ps. 37:1; 1 Thes. 4:11; Rom. 12:11; Ps. 1:2

## Quotable Quotes

"Always keep your head up but be careful to keep your nose at a friendly level." —Max Forman

## Memory Scripture

"But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night." —Ps. 1:2

# What Does the Bible Say About the Death Penalty?

by Gregory Dullum

Pope Francis recently decreed that the death penalty is “inadmissible” IN ALL CASES.

“Pope Francis’ decree that the death penalty is ‘inadmissible’ in all cases could pose a dilemma for Roman Catholic politicians and judges in the United States who are faced with whether to strictly follow the tenets of their faith or the rule of law.

“Some Catholic leaders in death penalty states have said they’ll continue to support capital punishment. ...

“‘In the past, it was acceptable to say that the Catholic church had a position that the death penalty was acceptable in some circumstances. That’s no longer true now,’ said Marci Hamilton, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania’s Program for Research on Religion. ‘I think it’s going to make it difficult for Catholic jurists to uphold the law as written’ ” (“Pope’s decree could put U.S. pols in bind” by Amy Forliti, Associated Press, *South-east Missourian*, Aug. 7, 2018, p. 4A).

The pope’s decision to not allow the death penalty is CONTRARY TO BIBLICAL TEACHINGS.

In God’s nation of ancient Israel, there were many crimes that God said *deserved the death penalty*, including:

• **Murder:** “He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death” (Ex. 21:12).

• **Kidnapping:** “He who kidnaps a man and sells him or if he is found in his hand shall surely be put to death” (Ex. 21:16).

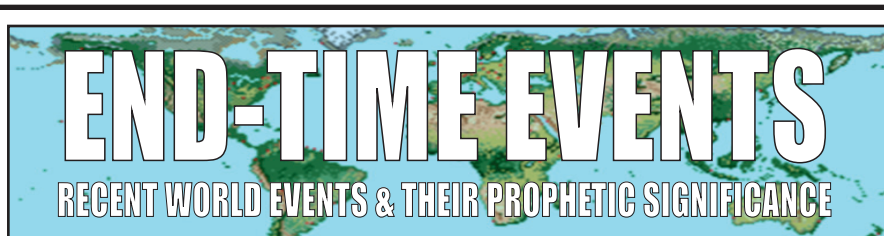
• **Rape:** “But if a man finds a betrothed young woman in the countryside, and the man forces her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die” (Deut. 22:25).

• **Allowing a vicious animal to kill:** “But if the ox tended to thrust with its horn in times past, and it has been made known to its owner, and he has not kept it confined, so that it has killed a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned and its owner shall be put to death” (Ex. 21:29).

• **Sorcery:** “You shall not permit a sorceress to live” (Ex. 22:18).

• **Idolatry:** “He who sacrifices to any god, except the LORD only, he shall be utterly destroyed” (Ex. 22:20).

• **Profaning the Sabbath:** “You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall



## Another Quake Rocks Lombok Island; 82 Dead

“A powerful earthquake struck the Indonesian tourist island of Lombok, killing at least 82 people and shaking neighboring Bali, as authorities today [Aug. 6] said thousands of houses were damaged and the death toll could climb.

“It was the second deadly quake in a week to hit Lombok. A July 29 quake killed 16 people and damaged hundreds of houses, some of which collapsed in Sunday evening’s magnitude 7.0 temblor, killing those inside. ...

“Many victims were treated outdoors because hospitals were damaged in the quake while the nighttime search and rescue effort had been hampered by electricity and communications blackouts.

“‘The estimate of victims continues to grow,’ Sutopo [Purwo Nugroho, National Disaster Mitigation Agency spokesman] said.” (“Quake rocks Indonesia’s Lombok island, 82 dead” by Ros Idin and Stephen Wright, Associated Press, *South-east Missourian*, Aug. 6, 2018, p. 7A).

One of the signs that Jesus Christ gave to signal his return and the end of the age is “earthquakes in various places” (Mat. 24:3, 7).

surely be put to death” (Ex. 31:14).

• **Disrespecting authority:** “Now the man who acts presumptuously and will not heed the priest who stands to minister there before the LORD your God, or the judge, that man shall die. So you shall put away the evil person from Israel” (Deut. 17:12).

• **Rebellious children:** “If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or his mother, and who, when they have chastened him, will not heed them, then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him to the elders of his city .... Then all the men of the city shall stone him to death with stones; so shall you put away the evil person from among you, and all Israel shall hear and fear” (Deut. 21:18-21).

• **Cursing father and mother:** “For everyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. His blood shall be upon him” (Lev. 20:9).

• **Adultery:** “The man who commits adultery with another man’s wife, he who commits adultery with his neighbor’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress, shall surely be put to death” (Lev. 20:10).

• **Marrying a woman and her mother:** “If a man marries a woman and her mother, it is wickedness. They shall be burned with fire, both he and they, that there be no wickedness among you” (Lev. 20:14).

• **Homosexuality:** “If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their

blood shall be upon them” (Lev. 20:13).

• **Bestiality:** “Whoever lies with a beast shall surely be put to death” (Ex. 22:19).

Why was there a death penalty in Israel? “So shall you put away the evil person from among you, and all Israel shall hear and fear” (Deut. 21:21). It removed the evil person from society so he could not influence others, and it caused others to fear to do these things in the future.

We, as individuals, are not to murder people (Ex. 20:13). It is not our job, as individuals, to execute criminals. But God gave governments the authority to use capital punishment to put away evil and keep a civil, orderly society.

“Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same. For he is God’s minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil” (Rom. 13:1-4).

Not every crime deserves the death penalty. Usually, only the most hideous crimes are punished with death. God commanded that the death penalty be used in ancient Israel, and it’s still a good idea today, to remove evil from society and to make all citizens “hear and fear.”