

FOREWORD BY MIKE POMPEO

JACK HIBBS

LIVING IN THE
DAZE
OF DECEPTION

**HOW TO DISCERN TRUTH
FROM CULTURE'S LIES**

“Jack Hibbs has been a good friend, colleague, and fellow teacher of the Word for nearly three decades. I highly respect his boldness to expose the deception that has left the church and the world in dazed confusion. His mission, which he does so well, is to prepare the saints for the soon and imminent return of Christ for His church. Jack’s commitment to Scripture is strong, his love for the church is passionate, and his service to the Lord is unceasing.”

—**Amir Tsarfati**, founder and president of Behold Israel

“This is the kind of book you would expect from Jack Hibbs: biblical, bold and prophetic. The book especially stresses the need for discernment in our age of confusion and compromise. It covers a wide range of cultural issues, but always stresses the need to honor God rather than give the woke culture what it wants.”

—**Dr. Erwin W. Lutzer**, pastor emeritus, Moody Church, Chicago

“The most dangerous part of being deceived is that you don’t know you’re being deceived! In *Living in the Daze of Deception*, pastor Jack Hibbs will undeceive you by opening your eyes to God’s truth with the engaging clarity that makes so many (like me) love him. Jack holds nothing back to help you become a better disciple and kingdom builder in a world that seems to grow darker and more deceptive by the day. Get this book now!”

—**Frank Turek**, president, CrossExamined.org; coauthor of *I Don’t Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*

“George Orwell said that to tell the truth in a time of universal deceit is a revolutionary act. The pressures inflicted by evil to bend a knee can make a reasonable man question his own sense of reality. I’ve lived it. In a world where nothing seems to make sense anymore, where we’re ‘living in the daze of deception,’ there can be only one truth. My friend Pastor Jack provides clarity on how to tell when evil is disguised as good. As an investigative reporter, I agree with Jack when he says that what’s happening in America

is subversion. As Jack writes, ‘True love is telling it like it is,’ and *Living in the Daze of Deception* helps us do that.”

—**James O’Keefe**, award-winning journalist; author of the *New York Times* bestseller *Breakthrough*

“Pastor Jack Hibbs’s book *Living in the Daze of Deception* accurately and fearlessly describes the bizarre turmoil experienced by people across the globe the past few years. The origin of this unending chaos is a sea of lies based in delusion, insisting that what we’re experiencing is normal.

“But our times are not normal. *Living in the Daze of Deception* explains the biblical Romans 1 delusions of our day and offers a way forward for any-one who seeks to live with discernment.”

—**Hon. Michele Bachmann**, dean, Robertson School of Government, Regent University, VA

“Jack Hibbs provides a timely and profound discussion on the state of the church and God’s people. It has become increasingly evident that the modern church has lost its mighty impact and isn’t reaching a lost and fallen world. Why? We are too concerned with pursuing happiness and altogether too unconcerned with pursuing God. This book is a must-read for all Christians who want to come out of the daze of deception, suit up in the full armor of God, and truly fulfill the great commission.”

—**Jenna Ellis**, attorney and host of *Jenna Ellis in the Morning* on American Family Radio

LIVING IN THE
DAZE
OF DECEPTION

JACK HIBBS



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This book is dedicated to our children and grandchildren.

*To your children and grandchildren,
and to all those who must navigate the future
starting today with truth and courage,
which will see us through the DAZE ahead.*

With special thanks to Judi McDaniels, whose tireless efforts
and constant encouragement made this book possible.

To my precious family, who sacrificed their time
so that I could write this book by stealing time away from them.

To my beautiful, steadfast, and faithful wife, Lisa,
who has always been my constant companion and sounding board
throughout 45 years of love and marriage
and this amazing life of ministry.

And to my Jesus Christ, who, when I was in
the valley of the shadow of death, gave me life.

Jack Hibbs
Chino Hills, California

CONTENTS

Foreword by Mike Pompeo..... 9

Part 1: Recognizing the Many Kinds of Deception

1. The Daze of Global Deception..... 15

2. Dazed by Spiritual Deceivers 33

3. Dazed by Deceptive Spirits 49

4. Dazed by Doctrines of Demons 65

5. Dazed by Deceptions Within the Church 81

6. Dazed by Easy Believism 99

7. Dazed by the Deceptive Cry for Unity115

8. Dazed by the Deception of New Tolerance ..131

9. Dazed by the Deception of the World147

10. Dazed by the Ultimate Deceiver163

Part 2: Standing for God’s Truth

11. Equipped for Living in the Last Days, Part 1183

12. Equipped for Living in the Last Days, Part 2197

Notes215

FOREWORD

MIKE POMPEO

Sometimes, simple truths told directly, humbly, and with love can affect lives. Pastor Jack's timely work will do that.

I opened my remarks to the American University of Cairo in Egypt on January 10, 2019 with three simple, declarative sentences: "I'm Mike Pompeo. I'm America's Secretary of State. And I am an evangelical Christian." It's an understatement to say it is rare to hear a United States Secretary of State proclaim his faith in such a setting. My own team strongly opposed me saying it. *The New York Times*, the flagship of the mainstream media, declared my remarks had sparked a "revolt" at the university. But these words were both true and important. They needed to be said so that America's adversaries and allies would know my worldview and how I would approach threats to the American people. The central ideas Pastor Jack details in this book make it clear that we should approach the threats to our souls and our faith with equal directness.

Over the ensuing 1,000 days that I served as America's Secretary of State, I always made it my mission to clearly understand the problem,

call it out by name, and develop strategic and concrete approaches to fixing it. From China to North Korea to Iran and so many others, we took the same approach: Be honest about the problem with yourself and the American people, and work hard to find a solution. Too often, Washington politicians tiptoe around issues, afraid to offend someone or some group. But solving a problem always begins with understanding reality. In this book, Pastor Jack uses the same approach to provide Christians with a clear view of the world and how we must respond.

Today, America faces no greater external, earthly threat than the Chinese Communist Party, an atheistic governing body that seeks total subservience from its own people and total deference from other nations. I saw it up close and personal as Secretary of State: This regime has no respect for human rights because it has no respect for human life; indeed, the only thing that matters to the CCP is the continuation of its power. China absolutely seeks to remake the world so that its model of tyranny can prosper. The CCP wants humanity to live in their fog, their daze. Pastor Jack correctly points us toward the deception of our adversaries, via propaganda, and the deception of our leaders by controlling the flow of information so they can advance their agendas. The consequences of such tyranny for Christians—indeed, for all of humanity—can be truly terrible and wicked.

If the United States is to face down its challenges—as it did with Communist Russia—we will need the moral witness of Christianity. We will need a strong, vibrant church that is prepared to remind Americans of the foundations of our freedom, which undoubtedly flow from the Judeo-Christian understanding that we are all created in God's image and are therefore endowed with "certain inalienable rights."

Yet Western nations—originally the defenders of the Christian faith—are working to remove faith from their societies entirely, something Pastor Jack describes in detail in the pages ahead. Today, we are told to place our faith not in God, but in grievance, victimhood, and tribalism.

We are told there is no such thing as God, truth, or good and evil. The true threat to America and all free people lies in this ideology.

Pastor Jack gets it exactly right: If we lose our faith as a nation, we will not survive. We will lack the courage and certainty necessary to confront the CCP, and we will crumble from within.

As this book makes clear, though, now is not the time to despair. Evil is a fact of life, and it always has been. Rather than appease or compromise, we must meet evil today in the same manner as the apostle Paul instructed the church in Ephesus: “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.”

In *Living in the Daze of Deception*, Pastor Jack outlines for all believers how we can do this: by faithfully trusting in Jesus, proclaiming Him as our Savior, and following Scripture.

Without Christ, I know that I would be lost. My walk with Him began many years ago at the United States Military Academy at West Point after I was invited to a Bible study led by two upper-class cadets. Though much in the world has changed since then, my faith has remained an indispensable light and my surest support: Through my service in the military, running two small businesses, serving in Congress, and dealing with the challenges facing America as CIA Director and Secretary of State, I have been able to persevere only through God’s grace.

If we have faith, God will work in surprising and wonderful ways to continually prepare us to meet the challenges ahead. I know I would have never possessed the courage to proclaim my faith in Cairo had I not first been blessed years before with the chance to share it with a room full of precocious, rowdy fifth graders while teaching a Sunday school session with my wife, Susan, at Eastminster Presbyterian in Wichita, Kansas. This proved doubly beneficial too: My role often encompassed keeping the boys in their seats—this was the best preparation for a career in international diplomacy!

I share Pastor Jack’s faith and optimism. Jesus Christ overcame our

sin and all sin, forever. He overcame death. Through Him, I know we can overcome the wickedness we face today.

Be unapologetic; be unyielding. Always approach, in love, those who persecute you. Christ can truly change hearts, and it is for this reason that I know you will find this book as encouraging as I did.

God bless you, and always keep your faith.

—Mike Pompeo

PART 1

**RECOGNIZING THE MANY
KINDS OF DECEPTION**

CHAPTER 1

THE DAZE OF GLOBAL DECEPTION

Viewed from NASA's Terra satellite, it gives the impression of a massive meadow of snow or a vast glacier—calm, serene, and mesmerizing. But locals descending the steep, twisting section of Interstate 5 from California's Tehachapi Mountains know better. They understand they are entering the Central Valley's hazardous tule fog and that they should drive with caution. When conditions are right, the thick fog causes unsuspecting drivers to lose their sense of direction with tragic, sometimes deadly consequences. In November 2007, tule fog caused a 108-car pileup resulting in two deaths and almost 40 injuries. The pileup, which included 18 semitrailer trucks, extended for nearly a mile and closed CA-99 for more than 12 hours. The last vehicle collided ten minutes after the initial crash.¹

In today's world, fog, tule or otherwise, characterizes the disorienting daze in which we have entered and now live. Hence the title of this book and the reason why I intentionally substituted the word *daze* in place of *days*.

Usually, when the word *days* is mentioned, most people understand

it to concern a particular time or a period. Certainly, this book deals with a specific time that the Bible says will visit humanity—a time of unparalleled difficulty such as the world has never seen. But my primary focus is to help you identify the daze of deception enveloping us today.

Deception, like fog, acts as camouflage—blurring and concealing what is right in front of us. Safely navigating it requires us to use the same precautions drivers use—take heed of flashing lights or warning signals ahead and keep an eye out for patches of clear sky, or in this case, biblical truth, to act as a guide.

Various dictionaries define *daze* as the inability to think or react properly, to be bewildered or numbed. Synonyms include *stupefy*, *shock*, *confound*, and *distract*. I believe each of these words can be applied to people's reactions to the all-encompassing sinister changes taking place today. More than any time in recent memory, people are demonstrating an extraordinary lack of judgment and the inability to think or act appropriately when it comes to what they believe and how they live. How is this happening? Why like never before in history?

What you are about to read on the following pages is an outline of the many ways deception is influencing our world—and, more importantly, how we as followers of Jesus can equip ourselves to respond effectively to it. My prayer is that you will understand how the strong hand of God Himself will steer you through an otherwise dazed and confused world with hope, clarity, and direction from above.

CAUGHT OFF GUARD

Deception has become so widespread that it affects all of us today. Here is just one example of what I'm talking about: Have you noticed the incredible amount of deceptive misinformation, false reporting, and, as has been popularly called, fake news that has spread through the media these last several years? The answer is yes, of course. All of us who utilize television news, the internet, and social media will readily agree because so much of what is said runs contrary to what we know to be factual. Yet

there are other times when we can't be sure of what's true. Even when a person raises their right hand and swears under oath in a court of law, we're still not always sure whether they are telling the absolute truth. Discovering the truth has become an almost impossible task, leaving us wondering what to believe.

You have probably heard the classic tale of what transpired in the ancient city of Troy when the Greeks constructed an enormous wooden horse, gifted it to their enemy, and pretended to sail away. Their Trojan enemies pulled the horse into the city without realizing that hidden within were Greek soldiers who would sneak out and unlock the city gates from inside so that the supposedly departed Greek army could return and attack. The outcome was that Troy was overtaken and destroyed.

The Trojan horse eventually came to symbolize a deceptive trick or strategy employed when there seemed to be no way to defeat a powerful enemy. Today, you would shake your head if you saw a 25-foot-tall wooden horse roll into your city. But have you thought about what is being concealed by powerful elites, organizations, and governing authorities, or the unexplainable level of secrecy tied to their deceptive views? When you realize that these people and groups often consider you their enemy, the reality of modern-day Trojan horses doesn't seem beyond the realm of possibility. It is also important to understand that wicked schemes come in small packages too—subtly hidden in an element of truth—making them more dangerous and difficult to spot.

I believe that what makes the most recent decade unique is the extent to which misleading information has permeated not only our culture in the West but also globally. An outstanding example is what happened in the wake of the COVID pandemic. No matter what your view or position or the pain and sorrow suffered during the pandemic, one thing is certain: The “experts” and political powerbrokers, along with biotechnology corporations, learned that by controlling the flow of information, they could rapidly advance their agendas.

Quickly following on the heels of the pandemic was a worldwide

outbreak of irrational and even unstable thinking when it came to things like gender identity, marriage, the sanctity of life, and the rule of law. Closer to home, there were questions about national borders and whether America should keep its Constitution. So many things were brought into question, and even more are being challenged today.

What does all this mean? First, deception is continually at work through the conversations, thoughts, and actions of those who reject the very concept of God from their belief systems. I know that sounds brutal, but that's backed by what the Bible says. And second, we must be careful not to dismiss deception as taking place only in the media or the social and political realms. Jesus warned that there would be tremendous spiritual deception in the last days before His physical return to Earth.

THE DAZE OF THE LAST DAYS

What Are the Last Days?

Over the years, I have been asked by many news outlets and genuinely concerned seekers alike, "What are the last days?" I think it is awesome that whenever there is a significant world crisis, the church's phones ring nonstop because people want to know what is happening. The callers on the other end ask, "Could it be that the beginning of the end is near?" or, "Is Armageddon right around the corner?" The world wants answers when things begin to shake both literally and figuratively.

Let me share a scripture that applies to every Christ-follower in the last days: "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15).

Here, and in other verses, it is clearly stated that God's people need to be ready and able to give the answers that nonbelievers are seeking. That means it is incumbent that Christians know and understand what they believe and how that knowledge plays out in everyday life.

When we talk about the last days, you need to know that throughout the Bible, the concept of *last days* appears in a variety of ways: the end of

times, the end of days, the last day, the latter times, the end of the age, or, as 1 John 2:18 puts it, the last hour. Not all those terms speak about the exact same thing, but all of them refer to the conclusion of things, which includes the return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of His kingdom here on Earth.

The events we collectively call the last days are all part of what is called Bible prophecy or biblical eschatology. Bible prophecy is God writing the future in advance so that we can know what lies ahead. Many churches shy away from teaching prophecy out of biblical ignorance, because of the denomination they affiliate with, or because they think it's going to generate fear. Whatever the reason, the refusal to teach prophecy is a shame. The Bible reveals details about the last days to alleviate the stress of wondering what is coming and to prepare us so that we will be ready.

Because we should be familiar with our Bibles, God expects us to know what His Word says about future events. Throughout the ministry of Jesus, the religious leaders continually attacked Him regarding His doctrine of salvation, His doctrine of faith, and interestingly, His doctrine concerning the last days. In Matthew 16:1, the Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus, asking that He show them a sign from heaven. Here is what He said:

When it is evening you say, "It will be fair weather, for the sky is red"; and in the morning, "It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening." Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times (Matthew 16:2-3).

I love how subtle Jesus is. You hypocrites! You can forecast the weather but can't discern the times and signs of the last days. May that never be said of you or me.

What Are the Signs of the Last Days?

Detailed volumes have been written about the signs of the end of

the age, and we should understand these signs. By giving you just a few indicators of what will happen during the last days, I believe I can make my point that this is the time in which you and I live.

Scripture says that men would be haters of God, lovers of pleasure, lovers of lust and evil, and lovers of the things of this world while, at the same time, becoming loveless and uncaring toward the general population and the welfare of their fellow man (2 Timothy 3:2-4).

No one can deny that each of these behaviors is now commonplace. But I ask you: By what standard are we to judge that any of the behaviors I just mentioned are wrong? Do you make that judgment call? Do I? Or do we allow popular opinion or government agencies to decide for us? The only reason any of these questions arise is that God is nowhere present in the hearts and minds of people. Practically speaking, they are haters of God. Think about it. If there's no God, then there are no rules. And when there are no rules, there is lawlessness. And when there's lawlessness, there's nothing left but me, myself, and what I want, and then everything becomes acceptable for me.

We also know that before Christ returns, demonic doctrines will flood our world, resulting in a widespread apostasy or departure from faith in God. Now, don't get the idea this means there are some strange, fuzzy creatures lurking around in the shadows, trying to trick people. If that were true, they would be easy to identify. What is true is that demonic powers have commandeered church pulpits and corrupted the gospel's message, weakening or wiping out the faith of those sitting in the pews—just as Scripture warns.

The Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons (1 Timothy 4:1).

The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and

they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

God's Word has gone missing in many houses of worship today. Ministries are preaching messages of self-centeredness, prosperity, and me-ism versus sound doctrine. Can you see how this disconnect has allowed Christ-followers to be confused by the daze of deception? This is why we see believers who cannot distinguish right from wrong and have departed from biblical orthodoxy while embracing a secular form of Christianity.

How, then, can we inoculate ourselves against deception? How can we know the truth? In some instances, we may never know the truth when it comes to politics, some military scheme or venture, or a business deal gone wrong. But when it comes to spiritual realities, there's only one way to know the truth. That, of course, is the Bible—the inerrant, perfect, never-changing Word of God. When the church—the ground and pillar of all truth—proclaims the whole counsel of God from the Bible, deception will not and cannot take hold.

THE EVENTS OF THE LAST DAYS HAVE BEEN DESIGNED

...to Validate God

The global crises of our day—the saber-rattlings of war, the lack of trustworthy leaders, the potential collapse of national economies, the controversies over cryptocurrencies, and the government overreach during health pandemics—may not make sense to you and me. But rest assured, they do to God. What do I mean by that? Isaiah 46:9-10 says,

Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, “My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.”

Isaiah 45:21-22 elaborates further on this same truth:

Tell and bring forth your case; yes, let them take counsel together. Who has declared this from ancient time? Who has told it from that time? Have not I, the LORD? And there is no other God besides Me, a just God and a Savior; there is none besides Me. “Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.”

Only God knows the future, my friend. And the fact that the God of the Bible tells us what is going to happen before it comes to pass validates that He exists, He alone is God, and He will accomplish all that He desires.

Are you perplexed? Are you looking for answers? Turn off your TV, close your laptop, set down your phone, and pick up the Bible. I have lost track of how many times I have had a conversation that goes something like this:

“Pastor, how can I know if God is real?”

“Open the book, read it, and watch what happens.”

“But isn’t that brainwashing?”

“Absolutely!”

In this dirty, messed-up world, you and I need a good brainwashing—we need to let the Bible get inside and scrub away all the gunk accumulated throughout the day, let alone a lifetime. God’s Word cleanses and straightens out our thinking. Whether you’re uncertain if God is real or if He is trustworthy, I promise those assurances will come through His Word.

Today you should ask yourself, “What did the God of antiquity do? And how did it relate to what He said in advance that He would do?” If you take a careful look at the historical proofs regarding what the Bible says in answer to those questions, you will realize that you can trust God with every detail of your life.

...to Validate the Bible

If you question whether God exists, you probably have doubts about the Bible too. Doubts like, *Are the Bible's claims accurate? Can I rely upon it for life's answers both now and in the future?* The answer is a resounding yes, and yes! But don't take my word for it. Second Peter 1:19 tells why you can trust in the fulfillment of every part of God's Word: "We have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place."

The King James Version translates "prophetic word confirmed" as "a more sure word of prophecy," which, in the Greek language, means "firm, faithful, permanent, or morally true and certain." God's past performance in fulfilling written prophecy

The fact that the God of the Bible tells us what is going to happen before it comes to pass validates that He exists, He alone is God, and He will accomplish all that He desires.

settles the question as to whether He can and will fulfill what He has promised to you now and in the future. To back that up, I need to give you only one word: *Israel*.

To those who were alive in 1947 or before, Israel was ancient history. It didn't appear on a modern map. But for prophecy to be fulfilled, Israel had to become a nation again, and on May 14, 1948, it did just that. After 2,000 years of the Jewish people being in exile, Israel came to life again! It was literally born in one day, just as the Bible said it would be (Isaiah 66:8; Ezekiel 37:12-13). In all of history, no other nation has been a nation, lost its status as a nation, and then been reinstated as a nation.

No other book or person can make the accurate prophetic claims that the Bible does. *The History Channel* and others will often cite purported prophets like Nostradamus, who had a dismal record of being right in his predictions. Biblical prophets had no such leeway—they had to be

100 percent accurate. This is how you can tell the difference between God's prophets and false prophets.

Are you sensing the world's darkness creeping in and slowly causing you to feel a bit foggy, even dazed? You can rely on the "sure word" of the Old Testament prophecies, which 2 Peter 1:19 compares to "a light

God's Word inspires
confidence that
translates into hope
and moves us
beyond merely
surviving to thriving.

that shines in a dark place." Are there circumstances beyond your control pressing against you? Flee to the Word! Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

Scripture doesn't give us some esoteric mystery that we need to contemplate while sitting on a rock. It provides us with the wisdom and understanding we need to navigate our way through life. Understand-

ing how biblical prophecy is unfolding will increase your confidence in the Bible as a whole. God's Word inspires confidence that translates into hope and moves us beyond merely surviving to thriving.

...to Validate Jesus Christ

From the moment He entered this world, Jesus Christ has been under attack. He was mocked and ridiculed, destined to become a common curse word. I mean, watch someone slam a door on their finger and listen to what comes out of their mouth. I've never heard anyone say, "Oh, Buddha!" or "Oh, Mohammed, that really hurts!" But they have no problem inserting Jesus' name in that kind of exclamation.

I find it significant that only one person in all of history has drawn such universal attention, ire, and hatred. But it's to be expected because Satan hates Christ. He will do anything and everything he can to neutralize the Son of God. What is awesome about the unfolding of prophetic events is that they validate the reality of who Jesus is.

Jesus never hid the fact that He would be crucified, and He knew

that even His disciples would doubt He was the Son of God when it happened. This is what made His words to them so vital to their faith. “Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that *I am He*” (John 13:19). Notice the phrase “I am He.” Jesus was saying, “I am telling you things before they happen so that when they do, you will know that I AM.” To the Jewish ear, that was one bold statement!

The announcement “I AM” is the same one made by God to Moses on Mount Sinai. God commissioned Moses to go to the children of Israel with a message of freedom, but Moses wanted details. He asked God, “Who do I tell them sent me?” God answered him, saying, “I AM WHO I AM.’ And He said, ‘Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you’” (Exodus 3:14).

What does “I AM WHO I AM” mean? Was God trying to avoid giving Moses His name? On the contrary, God went far beyond merely stating His name. He revealed an essential component of His character to Moses. He was letting Moses know that the eternally present, self-existing God will be there in every situation and circumstance. The New Testament attaches that same theology to Jesus. All the names and attributes of God given in the Old Testament are given to Jesus Christ in the New Testament. We see this in Revelation 1:8: “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,’ says the Lord, ‘who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.” The Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, refer to God, but Jesus is the one “who is, who was, and is yet to come.” Add the statement that Jesus is “the Almighty,” and you cannot escape the fact that Jesus and God are one. The God who said, “I will be with you in every situation” is the same God who sent His only Son to provide salvation and eternal life (see John 10:28-29; John 3:16). What comfort. What joy. What a God and Savior!

As the days grow darker and our world races to its conclusion, the prophetic events of the last days indisputably validate Jesus as the soon

and coming King. “Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Revelation 19:10).

...to Validate the Messiah's Identity

As tough as the events of the last days may be, they are meant to give us understanding. In Daniel 12:4, an angel tells Daniel, “You, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.” When you read this verse in the original Hebrew language, it implies that last days’ events will cause a turning of a key or will cause a door to open. It was as if the angel said, “Something is going to happen, but until then, Daniel, seal up the book. All you’ve been shown isn’t for now, so don’t worry about it.”

Most scholars believe, and I agree, that the word “many” refers to the Jewish people in the latter days. They will anxiously run to and fro through the Bible seeking God’s purposes. I believe that they are going to look to what has been revealed through the prophets. Daniel says that knowledge will increase, and some people have said, “Well, that’s the explosion of technology. Daniel was prophesying the rapid growth of technology.” There certainly has been an explosion of technological knowledge, but the announcement given in Daniel was to God’s people, His city, and the nation of Israel, *for the future*. I believe a time will come when Israel pursues and hunts and searches the Word of God for a clearer understanding of the prophets and their words regarding the Messiah.

What about you? Have you searched prophetic scriptures for understanding? Do you know where in Scripture Jesus’ birthplace was foretold—written some 500 years before His physical birth?

You, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are little among the thousands of Judah,
yet out of you shall come forth to Me
the One to be Ruler in Israel,
whose goings forth are from of old,
from everlasting (Micah 5:2).

And its fulfillment?

When he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet:

‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are not the least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you shall come a Ruler
who will shepherd My people Israel’” (Matthew 2:4-6).

How about the prophecy that in death, Jesus the Messiah would become the perfect sacrifice?

Sacrifice and offering You did not desire;
my ears You have opened.
Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require.
Then I said, "Behold, I come;
in the scroll of the book it is written of me.
I delight to do Your will, O my God,
and Your law is within my heart" (Psalm 40:6-8).

And its fulfillment?

When He came into the world, He said:
"Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,
but a body You have prepared for Me.
In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin
You had no pleasure.
Then I said, 'Behold, I have come—
in the volume of the book it is written of Me—
to do Your will, O God.'"

Previously saying, "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings,
and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in

them” (which are offered according to the law), then He said, “Behold, I have come...to do Your will, O God.” He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (Hebrews 10:5-10).

I don’t know about you, but I can’t think of anyone else who has ever had his birthplace and manner of death—something that no one can exercise any control over—accurately predicted and fulfilled. The mathematical odds alone are astronomical, if not impossible.

Since prophecy validates Jesus as the Messiah, why should we continue seeking Him until He returns? There are many reasons, but John 1:1-4, 14 offers a powerful one.

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

I don’t mean to sound mystical, but if I understand John correctly, when we read the Scriptures—the Word—from cover to cover, we are looking into the face of God. We are looking at the manifestation of Jesus’ life, ministry, and heart in printed form. Even if you are a doubter, that does not take away from the fact that Jesus Christ, the Messiah and Savior of the world, is the physical manifestation of the Word of God (John 1:1).

...to Get Our Attention

Are you uneasy about what the future holds? That is a legitimate concern. It seems as if nearly everything has become unpredictable. Jesus said

in Luke 21:26 that men's hearts will fail them "from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth."

I am not trying to sound alarmist, but what will happen when governments and world economies collapse? What is going to happen when people can't find work, and when they do, inflation and shortages have eaten away their ability to get food for their children? Living in a million-dollar home or driving an expensive car will not matter if you are hungry. We live in a plastic credit-oriented society, built literally out of cards. James 5:2-3 foresaw this type of predicament:

Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.
Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will
be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You
have heaped up treasure in the last days.

These types of wake-up calls are all around us—each designed to grab our attention. I believe that we need to examine ourselves in this and so many other areas. What, if any, changes do we need to make regarding our commitment to Christ? We can no longer afford to be spectator Christians. Those days are over. Now is the time to be hot-hearted for God, fervently loving the brethren, and living out the Word.

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching (Hebrews 10:23-25).

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

When you hear messages taught on the last days, it might be tempting to adopt an attitude that says, "They don't apply to me because I'm

saved. I won't be here after the rapture to see what happens during the tribulation." Please don't let that kind of thinking take hold, and let me explain why.

There is a Scripture passage concerning the last days that I have not mentioned yet, but I want to give it to you here—Matthew 24:4-8. When questioned about the sign of His coming and the end of the age, Jesus told His disciples,

Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, "I am the Christ," and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.

Deception, nations at war, drought-producing famines, kingdoms against kingdoms (in the original Greek language, *ethnos* means "ethnic," so this refers to blacks and browns against whites, and reds against yellow, and vice versa), pandemics, and earthquakes—Jesus' words sound like today's news report. Why do I bring this up? Because in the middle of all that calamity and sorrow, Jesus said, "See that you are not troubled." You might assume that I'm suggesting you put on a happy face and think positive thoughts, and everything will be fine. Not so. I appreciate how the late Dr. Ed Hindson put the difficulty of prophetic events into perspective when he said,

Bible prophecy is not given to us to scare us but to prepare us.
It is not given to us to frighten us but to invite us.

What great words of encouragement! But is prophecy able to extend such an invitation? Yes, it can. Like Dr. Hindson, I believe that prophecy in Scripture prepares us with the perfect invitation.

Jesus said, “These things [prophecy given in advance] I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Jesus overcame sin, death, and hell itself to spare you from the wrath of God Almighty. The promise of heaven and eternal life awaits. You need to hang on to that, and so do the people around you.

Like you, your neighbors, friends, and co-workers are watching the world come unhinged as prophecy unfurls, and they are probably scared. You have to wonder: *Where do they go when things get rough, and they don't have anywhere or anyone to turn to?* Is it Prozac? Smirnoff and Jack Daniels? Entertainment? If that were all I had to hold me up, I'd be worried too.

You can use the last days' events as a catalyst to introduce yourself to neighbors you haven't met yet. Knock on their door and say, “Listen, you may think I'm a lunatic, but I want you to know that I'm a Christ-follower. And with all that is going on right now, I am praying for the neighbors on our street. Do you have any prayer requests?” It is doubtful they will throw you off their porch and slam the door in your face. They'll probably say, “Yeah, you know what? Layoffs are coming at my company. We don't have any savings. Can you pray that I'll keep my job so that I can take care of my family?” Seize that moment! Pray a short prayer, say amen, and promise to keep praying.

In these days of deception, we must seek God-given opportunities to share the truth and love of Jesus Christ. Let's not allow any open door, literally or figuratively, to go to waste.