

The World Ahead

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THE MISSION

“My food is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to finish *His work*.” -- John 4:34

Greetings from Charlotte,

The Charlotte Family Weekend was a huge success, with more than 4,600 people who either attended in person or tuned in to the live transmission of the Sabbath Service. It was a jam-packed weekend with twelve seminars, dances, family games, sporting events—and most of all, warm fellowship. A similar activity is scheduled in Kansas City this weekend, where several hundred are expected to attend. Mr. Jonathan McNair will be the guest speaker. The Work of God in Canada reports that the response to *Le Monde de Demain*, the French-language telecast, has been especially encouraging this year, with nearly 1,200 responses so far. This is a substantial increase over 2017 when we received 723 responses. The Viewpoint channel on YouTube has also grown rapidly, accounting for more than 1.2 million views in 2018. The Living Youth Summer Camp in South Africa got off to a very positive start. There are 42 participating: 19 campers plus staff and mini-campers.—*Gerald Weston*

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

Passover 2019

Important Notice to All Pastors: In 2019, the Passover Service will be observed on Thursday evening, April 18. Please let us know as soon as possible if any of the congregations you serve will need additional Passover Service supplies (bread trays and/or wine trays or glasses) or a copy of the Passover Service recording and letter instructions (available in English, French and Spanish). *To ensure timely delivery and to save on shipping costs, we need this information before February 19 for international congregations and by March 19 for U.S. congregations.*

Also, please let us know of any scattered members who are unable to keep the Passover with a congregation and who need to receive the Passover Service recording and letter instructions for observing it at home. *International requests should be received before February 19 and U.S. requests before March 19.* Please direct your requests to the Church Administration Department at cad@lcg.org as soon as possible.

Charlotte Family Weekend Sabbath Service Video Replay

About 4,000 people tuned in to watch live the Charlotte Family Weekend Sabbath Service and Mr. Weston's sermon. A video replay of the entire Sabbath Service is available at lcgwebcast.org. If you were not able to tune in live, or if you would like to watch the replay, please go to lcgwebcast.org, and under "Stream Site," select "Charlotte Family Weekend." Then, enter the password previously provided (log in to MyLCG to retrieve the password). Mr. Weston used slides at one point in his sermon, and these have been added to the video.

LIVING EDUCATION

Passover Preparation Opportunity

As we head into the home stretch of Unit 3 of "The Life, Ministry, and Teachings of Jesus Christ," our current featured online class, you may feel that you have missed out. Perhaps you haven't had time for the class. Maybe you didn't have access to a computer, tablet or smartphone. No problem! You can still access all of the lessons up to this point, and continue to work at your own pace. Each unit is "stand-alone," meaning you can choose to focus on either "The Early Life of Christ," "The Judean Ministry," or "The Galilean Ministry." Or, if you'd like, you can enroll in our upcoming class, "Passover to the Resurrection," the last in the series of four units. This class will focus on Christ's last Passover with His disciples, His crucifixion, and His resurrection. This would be an excellent way to prepare for this year's Passover!—*Jonathan McNair*

LIVING YOUTH PROGRAM

Living Youth Friday Evening Studies Resume January 4

The online Friday evening Teen Bible Study on January 4 will cover Matthew 21 through 22:14, and will be given by Mr. Sheldon Monson. Join us at 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. The chatroom will be open 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the study.

To join, just visit livingyouth.org, and follow the links to "Friday Evening Bible Study." We are utilizing a new streaming provider this year, so you must access the Bible Study through the links from the Living Youth website, and e-mail alerts are no longer being sent when we go live. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at youth@lcg.org. For those who are unable to make it to the study, archives of previous Living Youth Bible Studies can be found on the [Living Youth website](#).—*Josh Penman*

COMMENTS

The Importance of Patience: The Apostle Paul urged Christians to develop the mind of Jesus Christ (Philippians 2:5). The Scriptures describe the patience of Jesus (Revelation 1:9), and tell us that God is patient (Romans 15:5), that patience is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22), and that true saints of God develop and exhibit this important quality (Revelation 13:10). We are encouraged to be patient and persevere during trials (Romans 12:12; James 1:4) and to trust in God (Psalm 37:7) as we seek to build character and learn important lessons (Psalm 25:5). We are also admonished to be patient and gentle in our dealings with others, so we can truly reflect the mind and character of Jesus Christ and our Father. Paul wrote, “pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness” (1 Timothy 6:11). He also wrote, “Now we exhort you... be patient with all. See that no one renders evil for evil” (1 Thessalonians 5:14–15). The Apostle Peter even stated, “when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God” (1 Peter 2:20). True Christians should not be impatient, impulsive, vindictive, or seek to get even. If we have the mind of Jesus Christ, we will strive to develop this godly quality of patience.

Have a profitable Sabbath,
Douglas S. Winnail

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NEWS AND PROPHECY—December 27, 2018

U.S. Military at Crisis Level: A newly released report by the bipartisan National Defense Strategy Commission noted that America’s military is in dire condition ([Defense News](#), November 14, 2018). The Commission warned “The U.S. military could suffer unacceptably high casualties and loss of major capital assets in its next conflict.... It might struggle to win, or perhaps lose, a war against China or Russia. The United States is particularly at risk of being overwhelmed should its military be forced to fight on two or more fronts simultaneously.” The report continued, “U.S. military superiority is no longer assured and the implications for American interests and American security are severe.”

The bipartisan commission was created by the U.S. Congress in July 2017. It includes Democrat and Republican experts whose purpose is to report directly to Congress as they assess the state of U.S. defenses and the military. Because of the unique nature of the commission, their report is especially important and more likely to be accepted by leaders of both major political parties.

This report fits with end-time Bible prophecies that warn of the demise of Israelite-descended nations—like the United States. Long ago, God warned He would “break the pride” of Israelite power—and this includes the U.S., Britain, and other British-descended nations (Leviticus 26:19). One element of national pride is military might! But *why* will He break the pride of these Israelite nations? God tells the people of those countries that “you do not obey Me, and do not observe all these [God’s] commandments” (v. 14). As this “pride” of U.S. power continues to be broken, the nation’s influence in the world is also fading. For more insights into how America fits into Bible prophecy, read or listen to [The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy](#).

Social Media-Inspired Violence: Social media was designed to “connect” people through the Internet. However, we are witnessing the rise of a new phenomenon: social media-inspired violence ([Deutsche Welle](#), November 11, 2018). Social media platforms are now being used by individuals and governments to spread false or intentionally misleading content in order to promote violence and unrest. According to a recent Facebook-commissioned study, “Misinformation spread online has been linked to violence in Sri Lanka, Indonesia, India, Mexico, the United States and Germany.” A recent UK study “found that crimes against refugees were more likely to take place in areas where Facebook use was high and at times when the far-right, populist Alternative for Germany (AfD) party was sharing anti-refugee posts to its page.”

There is also “growing evidence that an invisible tipping point exists; that some people become so obsessed with the distorted version of reality they see online they feel compelled to act,” and social media is the vehicle used to push some people to this tipping point. According to the Oxford Internet Institute, “The networks and spaces they create online are entirely geared towards creating a culture in which hate, denigration and dehumanization of other people is made acceptable.” Without the connective access that social media provides, such *networks of hate* would be much more difficult to create.

By itself, social media is not the cause of this violence—it is only the vehicle used to encourage the violence. How people use social media is the problem. The Bible provides powerful principles that Christians must consider when using tools like social media. King Solomon warned, “In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is wise” (Proverbs 10:19). Social media platforms and Internet blogs certainly provide plenty of opportunities to express a multitude of words. The Apostle Paul also set an example for Christians to “give no offense in anything” (2 Corinthians 6:3). To learn more about wise principles for using social media, read or listen to [“Tame the Social Media Monster!”](#)—*Scott Winnail and Francine Prater*