



SUGAR LAND BIBLE CHURCH
"BRINGING THE BIBLE TO LIFE FOR 38 YEARS"
1982- 2020

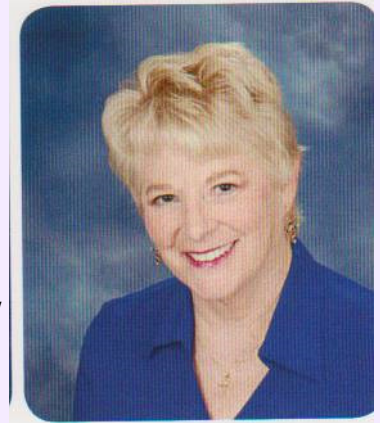


THE CORNERSTONE

July 2020

Sugar Land Bible Church's Beautiful Flower Garden

People who come to SLBC will notice that the entry way is dressed in a colorful array of plants and flowers. This beautiful garden is carefully attended by a faithful member (Judy Ober) who is shy in desiring recognition for her hard work. Hard work it is, Judy keeps the seasonal plants and perennials' well watered and weeded as the seasons change. When the flowers and plants begin to fade Judy makes sure that they are replaced by new plants and it is an every changing scene.



OBER, Judy

If you should see her, please give her a hardy thank you for her dedication.



Missions for the Month



VILLAGE MINISTRIES
INTERNATIONAL
508 West Vandament, Suite 305
Yukon, OK 73099

In this new era of dealing with a global virus and its ramifications, village life is seeing even more challenges. Many villagers are day laborers, relying on what they earn each day to feed their families.

The government shutdowns have prevented most of them from working, making daily survival even more challenging and rendering the purchase of scarce sanitizing materials practically unthinkable.

Rural areas of third world countries are typically made of village clusters. These clusters amount to multiple generations of family members, similar to rural farming communities in America. Since these clusters are usually separated from each other by some measure of distance, the real threat of exposure to the coronavirus comes when the villagers interact with those outside their own cluster. This occurs when taking their goods to trade with others for their needs or attending church. In locations where using remote technologies to stay in touch are non-existent, our missionaries and their staff have been traveling from cluster to cluster, applying social distancing, to minister to their people. Please join us in praying for these villagers who are living in ever increasingly difficult situations and our missionaries as they serve their spiritual needs and provide a little food as the Lord provides. God is able.

In His service.

Dan



Dear Dan,

Greetings, I write to let you know what is on the ground now. Stephen, one of the pastors of the mountain churches, is doing a great work during the lockdown that I have to let everyone know about. He grouped the church members into small numbers and was visiting them outside their homes. It was great encouragement to them and the members are doing well.

We are still trusting the Lord who only can handle the situation. Let's continue in prayer.

God is able.

In His service.

James, Ghana

**Andy Woods—Pastor**

Signs of the Times for 2020

(Part 5)

In our first installment, we observed that the Bible places much emphasis on the signs related to Christ's return (Matt. 24:33; Luke 21:28; Heb. 10:25, etc.). Observing these signs helps us ascertain that general time of human history in which we find ourselves. We noted that if the signs of the Tribulation period are rapidly approaching, and the rapture of the Church precedes the Tribulation period, then the rapture must be coming even faster. Thus, we began to ask ourselves, what are some of these signs that are now setting the stage for the coming Tribulation period? We selected the following *seven* signs as deserving of analysis to be

covered in this series:

1. Signs related to Israel
2. Signs related to international politics
3. Signs related to economics
4. Signs related to technology
5. Signs related to spirituality
6. Signs related to society
7. Signs related to understanding Bible prophecy

Therefore, this series is dedicated to exploring the *seven* signs related to the soon return of Jesus Christ. As a result of this teaching, may we all grow in our understanding of the unique time in which we now live.

1. Signs Related to Israel

There are several signs meriting discussion concerning the modern state of Israel. These include Israel's miraculous political rebirth in 1948, recapturing of Old Testament Jerusalem in 1967, ambition to rebuild her third Temple, and a desire to live in harmony with her hostile neighbors. In our last installment we focused upon Israel's ambition to rebuild her third Temple. In this installment, we will focus on *Israel's desire to live in harmony with her hostile neighbors*.

Another sign related to the nation of Israel is that Israel must have an interest in living side by side with those bent on her destruction. The prophesied event that will begin the Tribulation period will be a peace treaty between the Antichrist and unbelieving Israel. We find this event predicted in numerous passages. For example, of this future Antichrist, Daniel 9:27a says, "And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week." "The many" here is a clear reference to Israel (Dan. 11:33). Revelation 6:1-2 similarly portrays the Antichrist as coming as a rider on white horse to bring peace not only to the nation of Israel, but also to the entire world, when it says, "¹Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, 'Come.' ²I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer." We know that these verses are describing the peace that the Antichrist will bring in since in the immediately following second seal peace will be taken from the earth. The subsequent verses (Rev. 6:3-4) say, "³When He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, 'Come.' ⁴And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that *men* would slay one another; and a great sword was given to him." Quite obviously, peace cannot be taken from the earth (Rev. 6:3-4) unless it is first established upon the earth (Rev. 6:1-2). First Thessalonians 5:3 similarly depicts the rapid erosion of the pseudo-peace that the Antichrist will introduce, when it says, "While they are saying, 'Peace and safety!' then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape." This peace treaty with the Antichrist will guarantee Israel's survival. This reality explains why when Israel is later invaded by a

coalition of nations during the Tribulation period (Ezek. 38:18-19), this invasion will take place while Israel is “living securely” while “at rest” (Ezek. 38:8, 11). Yet, all these prophecies eradicating Israel’s false peace cannot be established until the Antichrist first brings in peace of some kind for national Israel.

When Israel enters this peace treaty with the Antichrist, she will do so falsely thinking that the Antichrist is indeed her long-awaited Messiah. In her deceived state she will believe that the false peace given to her by the Antichrist will be a lasting peace. The subsequent Tribulation events will awaken her to the fact that her true protector is Jesus Christ and not the Antichrist! This reality explains why the prophet Isaiah indicated that Israel’s initial peace treaty with the Antichrist will be a treaty with death or hell itself. For example, Isaiah 28:15 says, “Because you have said, **‘We have made a covenant with death, And with Sheol we have made a pact.** The overwhelming scourge will not reach us when it passes by, for we have made falsehood our refuge and we have concealed ourselves with deception.” Isaiah 28:18 similarly predicts, **‘Your covenant with death will be canceled, And your pact with Sheol will not stand;** When the overwhelming scourge passes through, Then you become its trampling place” (emphasis mine).

If all of this is true, then Israel must first be in a mindset where she wants a peace treaty with her neighbors. She must be first in a political mindset whereby she wants to enter a treaty with her hostile neighbors, or with some greater power who can protect her from her hostile neighbors, in order to guarantee her survival. In other words, for the stage to be properly set for the fulfillment of these prophecies concerning Israel’s future peace treaty with the Antichrist, Israel must first have the proper political psychology. Is this not the very thing that we see happening today? Israel is in a desperate position where she wants peace with her neighbors. Although Israel wants peace, her neighbors, except for at best two of these nations that surround her (Egypt and Jordan), really do not want peace with her.

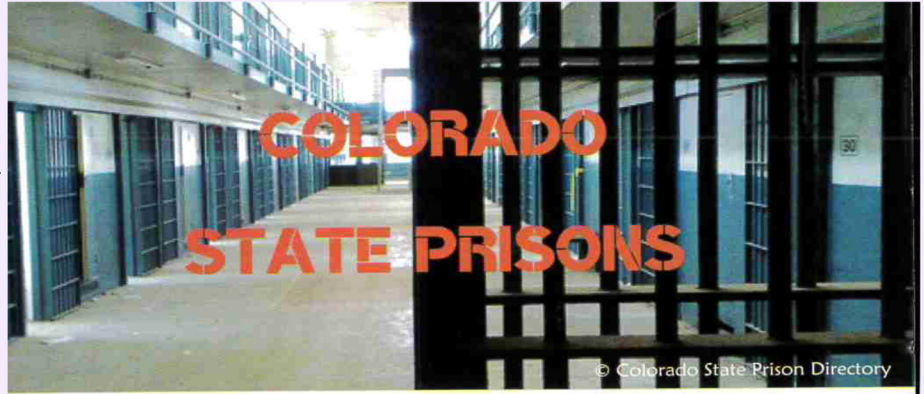
When you look at a map of the Middle East, you see that the nation of Israel is really only a speck of a country among a sea of Islamic theocratic dictatorships that have sworn to drive Israel into the Mediterranean Sea. Islam, which is the key influencer of all the nations that surround Israel, furnishes the motivation for such hostility. Muslims falsely, yet sincerely, believe that Jerusalem represents a holy site to their religion since this city represents the place where Mohammed allegedly ascended back to Allah. They hold this belief although the word “Jerusalem” never once appears in the Koran. Interestingly, the name “Jerusalem” appears close to eight-hundred times in the Bible. Thus, next to Mecca and Medina located in Saudi-Arabia, Jerusalem represents the third holiest site to modern-day Islam. Because a non-Islamic nation currently controls that part of the region, Israel’s very existence is looked upon by these Islamic countries as a usurper against Allah. Therefore, these nations, rather than wanting merely an independent and sovereign Palestinian state within Israel’s borders, frequently speak of that part of the world as needing to be liberated from “the river to the sea.” “The river” represents the Jordan river and “the sea” represents the Mediterranean Sea. In other words, by using this expression it becomes apparent that they want Israel to give up ALL territory that she presently resides upon. In other words, their ultimate agenda, masquerading as a two-state solution, really entails the complete eradication of Israel.

Israel, which is about the size of Vermont or Rhode Island, represents less than one percent of all Middle Eastern territory. Yet, what does the world community today say concerning Israel? Well, if Israel would just give up a little more territory, peace would come to the region. Consequently, world community unrelentingly places Israel under duress to cede land in exchange for the illusory promise of lasting peace. Acquiescing to further territorial demands will not pacify Islam but rather will have the opposite effect of making Islam’s ambition to destroy Israel all the easier. This is the identical scenario that is predicted in the pages of God’s Word concerning the last days where you have the tiny nation of Israel desperate for somebody to come along and guarantee her security and national existence. Thus, this present political and psychological reality represents the perfect storm that is setting the stage for the fulfillment of Israel’s “deal of the century” with the Antichrist that is predicted in Daniel 9:27a. In other words, the stage is clearly being set for the eventual brokerage of her “covenant with Sheol.”

All of this to say that Israel’s ambition to live in peace alongside her hostile neighbors who have vowed her very destruction constitutes therefore a key sign demonstrating that we are rapidly approaching the events of the Tribulation period. Having completed our discussion concerning signs related to Israel, we will begin to focus on signs related to international politics in our next installment.

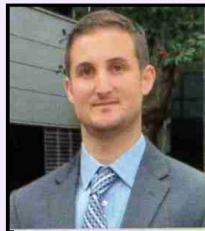
(To Be Continued...)

I have been the volunteer chaplain at Colorado State Penitentiary for just over four years, and for most of that time we've held a regular Saturday evening praise and worship service for the lower security men who perform most of the inmate work for the facility. There is a small core of Believers who attend faithfully and have grown in their walk with the Lord and their desires to minister to other men here. To that end, we held an outreach event in January, a celebration of the new year and an opportunity to invite men who do not attend regularly or have never attended the service. The event was conceived, organized and orchestrated by the core group whom I affectionately call the diakonoi. One of their goals was to offer an opportunity for men to support the Lord's work outside the facility, and they identified two ministries to share the funds collected. Village Ministries International was one of the ministries chosen.

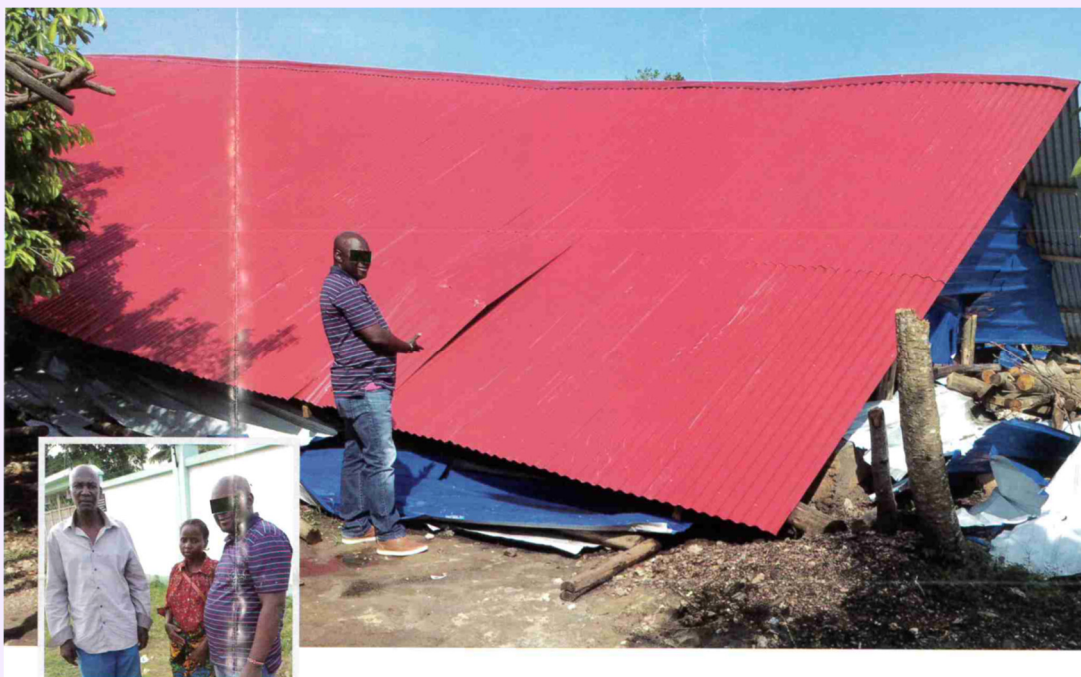


Many of the men live on state pay, typically between sixteen and twenty dollars a month, plus whatever their family is able to send in periodically. So their generosity and response to the grace message is humbling and a source of joy for us. We pray that our Heavenly Father will, through you, use their gifts to be a blessing to fellow Believers they may never know in this life but with whom they share a bond in the Body of Christ.

By His Grace,
Don Brightwell, Chaplain

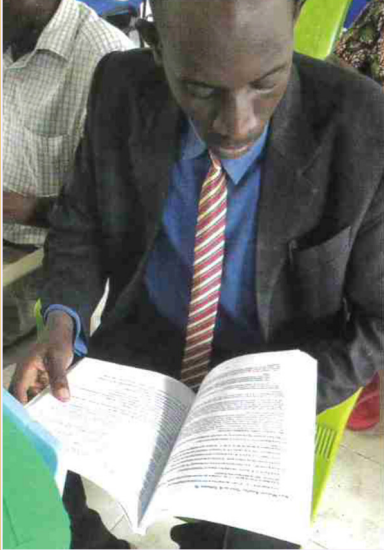


Travis Eden recently joined the Village Ministries' Board of Directors as an Associate Member. Travis is from Fredericksburg, Texas and is a graduate of Texas State University with a degree in Mass Communications. He seeks to serve the Lord as a humble and faithful bond-servant. He loves his family and enjoys spending time with friends.



Our church has been destroyed three times and now we have located to another place.

The Church in Zanzibar Destroyed by the Muslims.



the **Time** is **Now**

Our church has been destroyed three times and now we have located to another place. We have not given up and this conference came at the right time when / needed encouragement. We have been encouraged and we have been taught to study and teach, thank God since we met and we can see the fruits. Thank you so much and come back soon.

Pastor Matthew

Zanzibar is 98% Muslim. Mosques are everywhere and Christian churches are not

allowed to construct new buildings and are even hampered in rebuilding existing buildings. Thank God, we have faithful people who have been called to serve in this area. They have planted churches and are serving the Lord Jesus sacrificially. The persecution here is so real. Several pastors have lost their lives in recent years, including a Catholic priest who was shot at the gate of his church a few years ago.

Church facilities and members face persecution at the hands of radical Muslims and many churches have been torn down or burned. Some pastors have even been beaten and jailed for preaching the gospel. As this persecution continues, God has seen the church grow and many miracles have happened even among the Muslim families.

During my time on Zanzibar conducting three Foundations Workshops, I was questioned by the police on three separate occasions asking why I was there. At one point, they took my passport and took pictures after it was reported that I was a foreigner. I just let the police know that I was visiting

friends and nothing more. The last day of the first workshop, we received a sad report from a pastor who was attacked by a mob of Muslims. His house was burned down with all of his belongings and the church was knocked down and they attempted to burn it as well. The pastor was chased and hit on the head. He received treatment and is doing well. I was able to visit him and learned that this is the third time that Muslims have attacked this particular church and the local authorities have no interest in the matter. The pastors here are so hungry for the Word. Most of them had never had the type of training that the workshop provided. Even in the strong heat (85-95F) I would teach for 9-hours every day. Every day we had a group of pastors and key leaders who did not miss a single minute of the training. We gave out copies of Foundations as well as extra copies of the Essentials booklets so they could share with more people at their home churches. The excitement on their faces and their many questions show that the pastors need more of this type of

training. The persecution on Zanzibar is real, but I am excited to go back next year and do more workshops. This is where we need to go. **The time is now.**

Peter, Kenya



VillageMinistries.org

Scripture of the month - 1 Corinthians 10:31

Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.