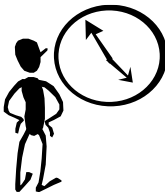


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Time of Assembly



Sunday:

Bible Study 9:00 a.m.

Worship 10:00 a.m.

(every other week)

Worship 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 p. m.

What is Your Future?

By Jefferson David Tant

There is something that I believe comes into the minds of every living being from time to time. And that “something” is “What is in the future for me — tomorrow, next week, next year, ten years?” Some seeking to know, go to fortune tellers who are good at guessing. Then there are some who carefully make plans for their future.

For many young people, the future may simply involve what’s going to be done during the summer vacation, or what career should be pursued, and obviously of importance is the question concerning who to marry.

But far and above all these questions is the question “Where will I spend eternity?” That is the ultimate “future.”

I’m afraid that far too often, eternity is not in the minds of many young people. If they have any interest in eternity at all, it is something for the future, when they get older. There are three serious problems with this thinking.

1. Some young people don’t make it to their older years. I can’t count the number of young people in their teens, or even younger, who have died and gone to their eternal reward, and sadly, some may not have been prepared to die. Oh, they may have intended to become a Christian and serve God someday, but “someday” never came. It’s not on the calendar.
2. Another problem with delay is the fact that at times they get so caught up in the world that they cannot escape its hold on them. It may be that Satan has so enticed them with sin that they cannot seem to break loose. Or it may simply be that things of the world that may not be sinful in themselves, whether riches or earthly pleasures consume their thoughts and time, so that there is little, if any, time for God.
3. The end may come at any moment in time. We are not told when the world will come to an end, but it will happen. And when that moment comes, it will obviously be too late to make any preparation.

Wise King Solomon wrote some words of wisdom in Ecclesiastes 11:9: *“Rejoice, young man, during your childhood, and let your heart be pleasant during the days of young manhood. And follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes. Yet know that God will bring you to judgment for all these things.”* Obviously, it is not wrong to rejoice and experience pleasant days, but be sure that the course you pursue is in keeping with God’s guidelines.

This is not to say that there will not be any days of trouble or discouragement that will come. Satan doesn’t give up easily.

Christ told the story of a rich man who had everything he could want, but his riches did not provide for his eternity.

"Then He said to them, "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions." And He told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man was very productive. "And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?' "Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.'" "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' "So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:15-21).

The rich man may have been thinking, “I have it all. I’ve got riches and a good life. What else would I need?” Sadly, he found out what else he needed, but it was too late. It would have been good if he had heeded the words of wisdom that God’s Word has given us.

"Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that" (James 4:13-15).

The young man or woman who is not committed to Christ may be thinking, “I’ve got plenty of time. I’ll get my life on the right track later.” But as James said in the preceding verses, you don’t know for certain what tomorrow, next month, or next year will bring. There are two things that could happen.

1. You could die from some unexpected disease or accident, or
2. Christ may return.

Remember that He said that the end would be sudden and unannounced. *“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone”* (Matthew 24:35-36).

The words of the wise Solomon should be taken to heart, as he encouraged young people to *“Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, 'I have no delight in them'"* (Ecclesiastes 12:1).

You can’t go wrong in following Solomon’s admonition.

LISTEN & SILENT
are spelled with the
same letters
Think About It ☺

The Witness

By Jefferson David Tant

We are all familiar with the role witnesses fill in our lives. If we have a document that needs some verification, we go to a Notary Public and sign it, and then the notary places a seal on it as proof that the notary has been a witness to my signature.

With respect to court trials, “guilty” or “innocent” is often determined by witnesses' statements. They testify as to the truth or falsity of the evidence that is presented, and the witness testifies under a pledge that he will speak “the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.”

There is an interesting passage in the 89th Psalm concerning a witness. “*My covenant I will not violate, nor will I alter the utterance of My lips. Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David. His descendants shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me. It shall be established forever like the moon, and the witness in the sky is faithful.*” Selah (Psalms 89:34-37).

God is claiming that His covenant will endure forever, for what He has promised will come to pass, and He calls as witnesses to the promise He has made — the sun and the moon. We consider the sun to be counted upon to rise in the east every morning. That was established at the beginning of Creation, and it has done its job diligently for untold thousands of years.

“Then God said, ‘Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth’; and it was so. And God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also. And God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good” (Genesis 1:14-18).

The sun is proof that it was created. No one can dispute it. Those who claim that the universe just created itself must admit that this is but a myth, with no factual evidence to back it up.

Now consider the Psalmist’s words about the moon. God’s covenant “*shall be established forever like the moon. And the witness in the sky is faithful.*” The moon itself has no light. Its light is a “*witness in the sky*” that the sun exists. We might imagine someone who only comes out at night and has never seen the sun, but by seeing the moon in an eclipse, this person can perceive and know that the sun exists. And these are witnesses that the Creator, God, also exists.

Now, concerning Jesus Christ, what is the evidence that he exists, and that he is who he claims to be? Some claim that God is a myth, and Jesus is a fairytale. They are called “atheists.” A “theist” is one who believes in God, and when you put the “a” before the word, it negates the word. In the same way, we have “healthy” and “unhealthy,” or “lawful” and “unlawful.”

There are many religions in the world, and all have a founder or originator -- Hinduism,

(Continued on page 6)

Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Shintoism, Islam, Mormonism, Scientology, etc. The question is, "Where is the evidence that proves the founder of any of these myriads of religions is divine?" What proof is there that Buddha, Zoroaster, Muhammad, Vishnu, Joseph Smith, Charles Taze Russel, Ellen G. White, or whoever else is the founder of a religion is a divine being or had evidence from God to found a religion and should be followed?

This isn't a new question, as we can go back many centuries and consider the worship of Zeus, Baal, Aphrodite, Dagon, Athena, Osiris, Jupiter, and the multitude of other "divine" beings. It is said of the Athenians that they had some 33,000 different gods, and statues of the gods were seen all around the city. In fact, as the apostle Paul visited the city back in the 1st Century, he wrote: "*For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you*" (Acts 17:23).

In studying various religions, I have only found one individual other than Christ who claims to have had a prophecy made concerning him, and that is Mohammad. He goes back to the Bible and refers to the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy and a prophecy that was made to Moses.

"Jehovah thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken" (Deuteronomy 18:15, ASV).

Mohammad claimed he was the prophet mentioned in that passage. There is only one problem, and it is a great problem. Mohammad was not one of the brethren of Moses. Mohammad was an Arab. He was not a Jew. The lineage of Moses descended from Abraham through his son Isaac. The lineage of Mohammad descended through Abraham's son Ishmael, not through Isaac. We see where Ismael's descendants settled in Genesis 25:17-18: "*And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, one hundred and thirty-seven years; and he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people. And they settled from Havilah to Shur which is east of Egypt as one goes toward Assyria; he settled in defiance of all his relatives.*" Thus Ishmael's descendants were Arabs, and Isaac's were Hebrews, the Jews.

So, who is the prophet that God raised up from the brethren of Moses? He would be a Jew, a descendant of Abraham through his son Isaac. In Matthew 1, Christ's genealogy and birth are given in the 25 verses of the chapter. "*The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. To Abraham was born Isaac; and to Isaac, Jacob; and to Jacob, Judah and his brothers*" (Matthew 1:1-2). Then the listing of the names of each succeeding generation is given down to Matthew 1:16: "*and to Jacob was born Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.*"

To further establish the point, consider what God told Abraham concerning his descendants. "*But God said to Abraham, 'Do not be distressed because of the lad and your maid; whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her, for through Isaac your descendants shall be named. And of the son of the maid I will make a nation also, because he is your descendant'*" (Genesis 21:12-13).

As noted, Christ is from the lineage of Abraham through Isaac and Mohammad is from the lineage of Abraham through Ishmael, who was not the son of promise. The Arab nations have descended from Ishmael, and it is evident that they are a large people, even as God promised Abraham.

Some Bible scholars claim there are some 400 prophecies of Christ in the Old Testament, and he fulfilled every one of them centuries later. What more proof do we need?