

# Friday Church News Notes

## IRAN'S LEADER CLAIMS THE IMAM MAHDI IS LEADING HIM



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In a speech last month the president of Iran said the mystical Twelfth Imam or Imam Madhi is leading him in the direction of the country. In a speech to theology students Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said: "The Imam Mahdi is in charge of the world and we see his hand directing all the affairs of the country. We must solve Iran's internal problems as quickly as possible. Time is lacking. A movement has started for us to occupy ourselves with our global responsibilities, which are arriving with great speed" ("Iran Clerics Rebuke Ahmadinejad," *Breitbart.com*, May 7, 2008). The Imam Mahdi is expected to return to earth and establish Allah's kingdom, and it is thought that Jesus will accompany him. The Imam Mahdi, believed by Shiites to have disappeared as a child in A.D. 941, is supposed to return and reign on earth for seven years before bringing about a final judgment and the end of the world ("Jesus, Mahdi Both Coming, Says Iran's Ahmadinejad," *WorldNetDaily*, Dec. 19, 2006). In 2007 Ahmadinejad said that the Imam Mahdi will bring peace and justice and establish a perfect "one global government" ("Police Storm Home," *WorldNetDaily*, June 23, 2007). According to the Bible, the next event on God's calendar is the Catching Away of church age saints (1 Thessalonians 4:13 - 5:5), followed by the appearance of the Antichrist as a man of peace and a prophet that will accompany him (2 Thess. 2:3-12; Revelation 13). Doubtless one or the other of these men will be accepted by the Jews as their Messiah and by apostate Christians as theirs and by the Muslims as theirs. Mankind will rejoice that the Middle East problem has been solved and the long-awaited "Age of Aquarius" has arrived, but the peace party will be short-lived and the Antichrist will show his true colors, setting himself up in Israel's temple as god and requiring the world's worship at the point of death.

## PSALM 1 AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The following is excerpted from *Training Your Children to Turn out Right*, an excellent book by David Sorenson (Northstar Ministries, 1820 W. Morgan St., Duluth, MN 55811, 218-726-0209, [www.northstarministries.com](http://www.northstarministries.com), [dhs.northstar@charter.net](mailto:dhs.northstar@charter.net)) -- "I know of no greater passage of Scripture dealing with the matter of Christian education than Psalm 1. There probably is no institution in this country that more embodies the counsel of the ungodly, the way of sinners, and the seat of the scornful than the national public education establishment. With its systemic teaching of evolution which mocks creation, it certainly occupies the seat of the scornful. With its institutionalized sex education (that is little more than sex encouragement), it certainly is in the way of sinners. As it tacitly ignores the things of God under the guise of separation of church and state, it certainly is the counsel of the ungodly. The outcome of Psalm 1:1 is to get our families out of the world and to get the world out of our families" (*Training Your Children to Turn Out Right*, 1995, pp. 92, 93).

## Didn't God Create All Music?

Rick Warren of Saddleback Church in California says: "God loves all kinds of music because he invented it all--fast and slow, loud and soft, old and new. You probably don't like it all, but God does!" (Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, p. 65). **ANSWER:** God did create music and He created man with a capability to create and enjoy it, but the world is no longer in the pristine spiritual condition it was when God made it. Man has sinned against God and has created a world in rebellion against Him and against His laws. The devil is called "the god of this world" (2 Cor. 11:4) and "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:2). Music is one of the powerful influences in modern society, and there can be no doubt that the god of this world is intimately involved in helping wicked men create music that will satisfy their illicit lusts. The apostle John taught, "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 Jn. 5:19). If the whole world lieth in wickedness, what does that say about the world's music? Obviously man's wickedness has corrupted the field of music as it has every other thing.



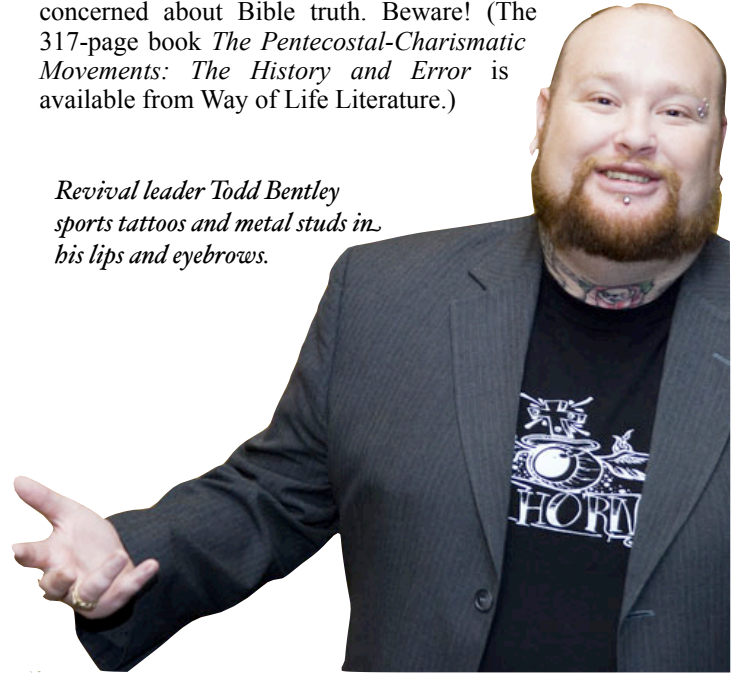
*God loves the kind of music Slipknot plays?  
How could He love what the Devil is so busy using?*

## Another Phony Charismatic Revival

Some charismatics are calling the current frenzy at Ignite Church in Lakeland, Florida, a “revival” in the lineage of the “Toronto Blessing” and the “Pensacola Outpouring.” The meetings, which are led by Todd Bentley, have been running nightly since April 2. The Ignite Church meets in a reconditioned building supply store and is pastored by Steve Strader, son of Karl Strader, former pastor of the defunct Carpenter’s Home Church in Lakeland. It was at Carpenter’s Home in May 1993 that another “revival” broke out under the ministry of Rodney Howard-Browne, who calls himself the “Holy Ghost Bartender.” People laughed hysterically and staggered around like drunks and charismatics travelled from far and wide to participate in this nonsense. The church grew phenomenally for awhile, but eventually it went belly up. Another of Strader’s sons, Daniel, was found guilty of swindling investors, including church members, out of their money. Daniel went to prison, and in 2005 Carpenter’s Home Church sold its property. Todd Bentley wears metal studs in his ears and eyebrow and is covered with tattoos. Spirit slaying and “healings” are a big part of his ministry. He lays his hands on people’s heads and yells, “Bam!” and they often fall down. After an elderly woman fell at one Lakeland meeting he told the crowd, “She doesn’t know why she fell down,” but the women laughed and said, “Because you pushed me!” After he prayed for her three more times, she said she could hear “better” (Charisma Online, April 23, 2008). This is not the miraculous healing we see in the ministry of Jesus Christ and the apostles. Charismatic prophets are prophesying that this is the beginning of a national revival and that entire cities will be “shut down.” The Pentecostal-

Charismatic movement has been lurching from one strange unscriptural thing to another for more than 100 years. An important milestone was passed in the 1960s when the Pentecostal experiences spread through the denominations and Roman Catholics were accepted as Spirit-filled brethren regardless of whether they pray to Mary and love the Mass and exalt the Pope. With each passing decade the movement becomes more unscriptural and less concerned about Bible truth. Beware! (The 317-page book *The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements: The History and Error* is available from Way of Life Literature.)

*Revival leader Todd Bentley sports tattoos and metal studs in his lips and eyebrows.*



### Beware of Modern Textual Criticism

The modern Bible versions are built upon the foundation of modern textual criticism, which is the application of modern theories to the recovery of ancient documents. With very few exceptions, the fathers and architects of this “science falsely so called” have denied the infallible inspiration of the very Scripture they handle. That was true in the 19th and 20th centuries and it is still true today. The editors of the United Bible Societies Greek New Testament fall into this category, including Bruce Metzger, Matthew Black, Allen Wikgren, Kurt Aland, Barbara Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, and Roman Catholic Cardinal Carlo Martini. According to Metzger, for example, Jonah is a “popular legend” and Job is “an ancient folktale” (Metzger and May, *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*). The UBS Greek New Testament, in turn, is built upon the foundation laid by men such as Eberhard Nestle

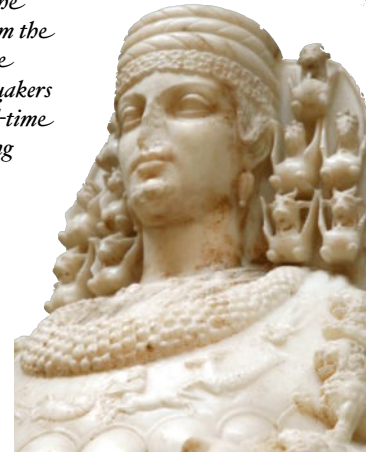
(1851-1913), editor of an influential Greek New Testament of 1898, author of *Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the Greek New Testament* (1901), and co-editor with Kurt Aland of the *Novum Testamentum Graece*. Nestle unhesitatingly denied biblical infallibility. In his *Introduction to textual criticism* he claimed that it is possible that the authors of the New Testament did not write what they “thought or intended to be read” (p. 23). This is a complete and bold denial of divine inspiration. Like most other fathers of modern textual criticism, Nestle believed the Bible was to be treated like any other book. “...the task and the method [of textual criticism] are the same for all literary productions.” Beware of modern textual criticism. (For much more extensive documentation we recommend the 292-page *Modern Bible Version Hall of Shame*, available from Way of Life Literature.)

## Quaker Pagans

The following is an excerpt from “Are the Quakers Going Pagan,” Religion News Service, April 28, 2008: “[There is] a small but growing movement of Quakers who also identify as pagan--a trend that may or may not exist in other Christian traditions, but certainly not in such an organized, public fashion. Across the board, the number of Quakers is dwindling, to roughly 100,000 in the U.S. But if Quakerism continues to catch on among the estimated half million pagans in the U.S., those who embrace both traditions predict that could reverse the Quakers’ downward trend. ... In the last decade, this dual faith has sprung up around the country, including Quaker-pagan gatherings, seminars, an extensive presence on the Internet, and even explicitly Quaker-pagan congregations. There may be only several hundred Quaker pagans, but among American Quakers, their presence can be distinctly felt. ‘It seems that now, in most liberal meetings at least, you can always find a few members that identify as pagan,’ says Stasa Morgan-Appel of Ann Arbor, Mich., who has facilitated a Quaker pagan interest group since 2002. Quakers--officially the Religious Society of Friends--are divided into four main branches, three of which are explicitly Christian. Pagans have been generally joining the liberal fourth branch, the Friends General Conference, which counts 30,000 members in North America, including Morgan-Appel. Liberal Quakers are less tied to the Christianity and instead hold established

Quaker practices, such as unprogrammed pastor-less meetings, as the basis of their faith. Because of that flexibility, many liberal Quakers no longer see Jesus as divine, and some don’t believe in God at all. Paganism generally refers to nature-based religions that pre-date both Christianity and Judaism. Think witches, druids, pentacles, Wicca. ... people adoring goddess and nature...”

*When Paul arrived in Ephesus, he turned so many people away from the Pagan worship of Diana, that he turned the city upside down. Quakers are simply bringing back the old-time religion of this lost, God-rejecting world.*



## Beware of *The Shack*

The following is excerpted from “The Shack: Father-goddess Rising,” Lighthouse Trails Research, April 23, 2008: “Many are crediting *The Shack*, the novel by William P. Young, with revolutionizing their faith. With themes of overcoming loss, working through anger, and restored relationship between man and God, Young’s novel has excited many within the Body of Christ. Young has appeared on CBN, and has garnered fans across the country. *The Shack*, continues to sell briskly. Yet, in the midst of such enthusiasm, does *The Shack* glorify Jesus Christ--or contradict the Bible with a false image of the Lord our God? The novel’s main character, Mack Philips, has lost his daughter. She has been murdered, her bloodied dress found in an isolated

shack. Four years later Mack receives an invitation from God to spend time with the Trinity in the very shack where the dress was found. Nowhere in the Bible do Father, Son, and Holy Spirit simultaneously assume physical forms on earth. The Shack, however, portrays Jesus as a carpenter, the Holy Spirit as an Asian woman, and God the Father as a large black woman named ... Papa. ... At one point the book’s version of Jesus praises the fictional Father-goddess, exclaiming, ‘Isn’t she great?’ In the entire Bible there is not one single reference to Father, Son, or Holy Spirit--or to any of His angels--as female. ... There is an apparent dismissal of the importance of Scripture, which is reflected in slippery theology found throughout the novel. Young writes,

‘Nobody wanted God in a box, just in a book. Especially an expensive one bound in leather with gilt edges, or was that guilt edges?’ ... The Father-goddess of *The Shack*, it seems, is never about guilt or punishment. She benignly informs Mack, ‘I don’t need to punish people for sin.’ ... An excellent writer, Young plays to emotion and touches on legitimate hurts and concerns. The author excels at imbuing his deity with attributes of love, forgiveness, and mercy, and this is what many people have responded to. Increasingly in novels and movies the Lord is blithely used as one of the characters and given words from the mouth of man.”

## Conclusion

Friends in Christ, do not be discouraged by any of this. It is God's will that we know the times (1 Ch. 12:32; Mat. 16:3) and that we be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. These things remind us that the hour is very late, and we need to be ready for the coming of the Lord. Are you sure that you are born again? Are you living for Christ day by day? "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:11-14). This material is sent only to those who personally subscribe to the Fundamental Baptist Information Service list. To SUBSCRIBE or UNSUBSCRIBE or CHANGE ADDRESSES go to <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbis/subscribe.html>. Way of Life Literature, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org). David Cloud is the director of Way of Life Literature and author of the Friday Church News Notes.