



**Is Your  
Future  
Secure?**




# Is Your Future Secure?

Security in life is naturally something we all cherish. To have the security of family, of home, of finances, of employment and of friends brings us happiness and contentment. Parents are concerned for the security of their children; governments are responsible for the security of their citizens. We appreciate the police officer on the street, the security personnel at the airport and every measure taken to ensure that we can live in the absence of fear and uncertainty.

Yet we do live with the knowledge that our personal security, and that of the planet itself, is limited by the forces that are at work around us leaving humankind constantly exposed to all kinds of danger.

The United States of America, in August 1945, dropped atomic bombs from two B-29 Superfortress Bombers on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, ushering in the nuclear age. In 1947 the famous "Doomsday Clock" first appeared on the cover of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, a magazine which publishes information on global security issues. At its inception the minute hand was positioned seven minutes to the figurative midnight hour.



The minute hand has moved backwards and forwards over the years but never far from midnight. With the USA and Russia still retaining huge nuclear arsenals and the capability to launch an attack in minutes, a doomsday scenario can never be far away. Other countries too have clearly demonstrated their ambition to acquire and use the nuclear bomb.

The world's leading scientists are also very concerned by the serious effects of climate change upon the planet. Environmental damage has already caused destructive changes resulting in floods, storms and drought, which leave behind a trail of death and devastation.

Since September 11, 2001 international terrorism continues to threaten the safety of many countries around the world. Millions across the globe suffer and die through the spread of incurable diseases, while the lives of millions more are cut short needlessly by food shortages and lack of basic sanitation. Because of the cruelty of abortion, millions of unborn children everywhere will never see the light of day.

Almost every day we hear of a road traffic accident that claims a life, of attacks on the elderly and violence on our streets; ***the truth is, we are vulnerable in an insecure and uncertain world.***

Even if we do enjoy a long and full life, the inevitable fact remains; ***everyone dies.*** Life is not permanent; time will end for each of us. Important as the issues of personal and global security are, the vital question is, ***"Do I have eternal security?"***



# Infinity, Eternity or Nothing?

The universe, in which this small planet earth exists, appears immensely vast and limitless. Its millions of galaxies contain billions of stars of such dimensions and distances that to call it *infinite* seems appropriate! Yet, as science testifies, there are limits to its matter and measurements. The universe is amazing but not infinite.

But there is Someone greater than the universe. The Bible states, ***“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”*** – Genesis 1:1. God the Creator is infinite, but more than infinite, He is *eternal*. The Bible teaches that He ***“inhabiteh eternity”*** – Isaiah 57:15. Simply put, God dwells in timelessness without beginning or end.

The writer in the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes says, ***“He hath set eternity in their heart”*** – Ecclesiastes 3:11.\* God made man in His image, the reflection of Himself, so that, unlike the animal kingdom, man is conscious of the eternal and, like the God who made him, will exist forever.

(\* American Standard Version)

At the dawn of the new millennium in the year 2000, as Sydney Australia began its celebrations, the word ***‘Eternity’*** was emblazoned across the Sydney Harbour Bridge. This was thanks to the work of a Christian who for years sought to remind men and women of eternity by writing the word with chalk in elegant copperplate style on pavements and elsewhere throughout the city. ‘Eternity’ displayed across the bridge was a fitting tribute to the labour of Arthur Stace and a potent reminder to the world; ***time ends and then eternity.***

If God is greater than all, higher than all and wiser than all, then we can look to Him for answers to the predicament of man, and find personal hope and assurance for the future in Him.

Of course, you may believe that before this universe existed there was nothing and beyond this universe there is nothing. But can such a worldview really answer the origin, meaning and purpose of life? ***Can nothing times no one equal everything?***



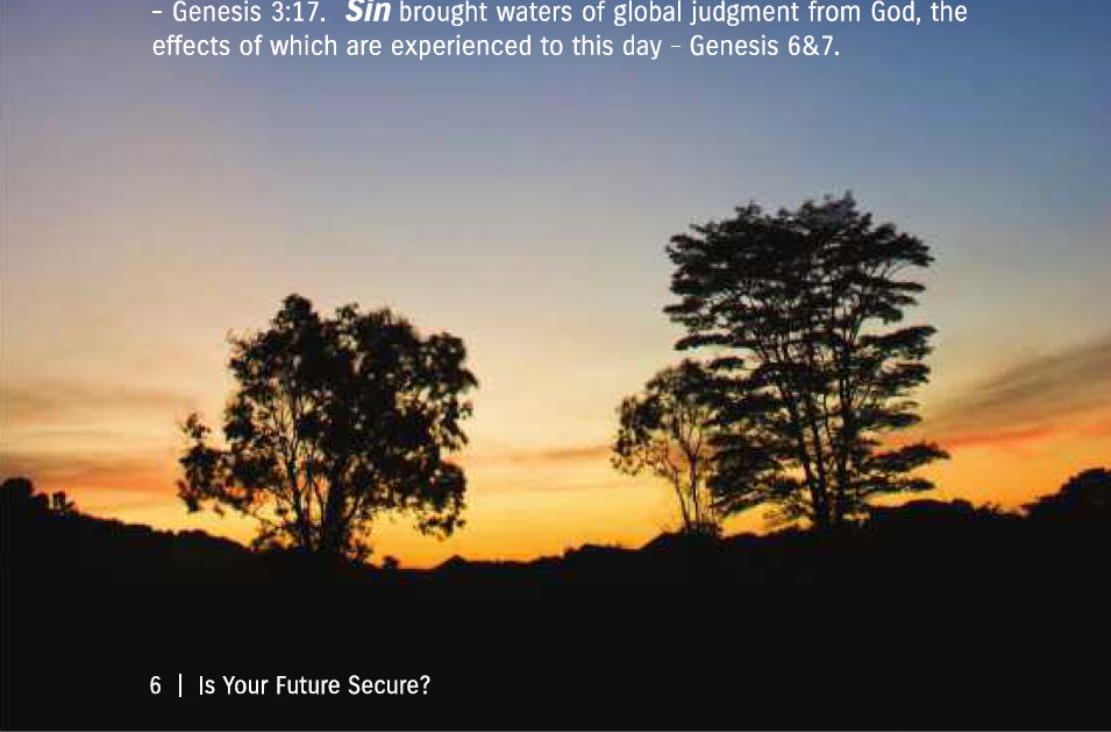
# What's Wrong with the World?

If God is the Creator as the Bible affirms, then what went wrong with this world and particularly the man He placed upon it? Why is the human condition inherently sinful, rebellious and selfish? Why is our existence only transient and abruptly ended by death? Why does nature often become so destructive in the form of tsunamis, earthquakes, volcanoes and hurricanes? Is this the kind of world God wanted?

The Bible gives the answer: ***“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned”*** – Romans 5:12. One small word, ***sin***, explains why man is in the place of alienation and under condemnation from God. ***Sin*** is the reason God's world is out of harmony and so often displays its ragged edges. ***Sin*** brought God's curse on the earth, subjecting it to the bondage of decay – Genesis 3:17. ***Sin*** brought waters of global judgment from God, the effects of which are experienced to this day – Genesis 6&7.

When God created man, He placed him in a beautiful garden with the responsibility of taking care of it, and the privilege of enjoying its lush provision of fruit. Adam had complete freedom to eat from every tree in the paradise of Eden except for one: ***the tree of the knowledge of good and evil***. God placed a prohibition on this tree because it represented something exclusive to Himself which man did not need and should not have, apart from Him. This tree so named represented ***moral independence***, the ability to decide for oneself the difference between good and evil, or right and wrong. God therefore established His ***moral authority*** over man, warning him that to disobey His word and eat of this tree would mean death – Genesis 2:15-17. Sadly, Adam chose to disobey. His wife fell for the deceitful words of the Devil, who had made himself known in the guise of a serpent; she ate some of the fruit and gave some to her husband, who also ate it – Genesis 3:1-6. In his pursuit of independence, Adam rebelled against God, and with this act of disobedience, brought ***sin*** into the world.

***“No God for me!”***, is still the cry of millions who seek to live their lives independently of God and according to their own moral standards; but the legacy of man without God is a history stained with the blood and tears of humanity.



# The Man from Another World

**Does God care about the condition of this world? If He is God why is evil allowed to exist? Why do the innocent suffer? Is all humanity left to struggle on earth while He remains comfortable in heaven? How can we ever reach or know Him? These are legitimate questions which many ask and to which God has provided the answers.**

The good news is that He has reached down to us by sending **His Son** into the world. There was a man on this earth who unashamedly claimed that His birth was not His beginning. He clearly stated that He came from another sphere to fulfill the greatest mission ever undertaken. **His name is Jesus** – Matthew 1:21-23.

Jesus spoke of His place of origin and divine mission in the plainest of terms: **“For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me”** – John 6:38. And again, **“I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly”** – John 10:10.

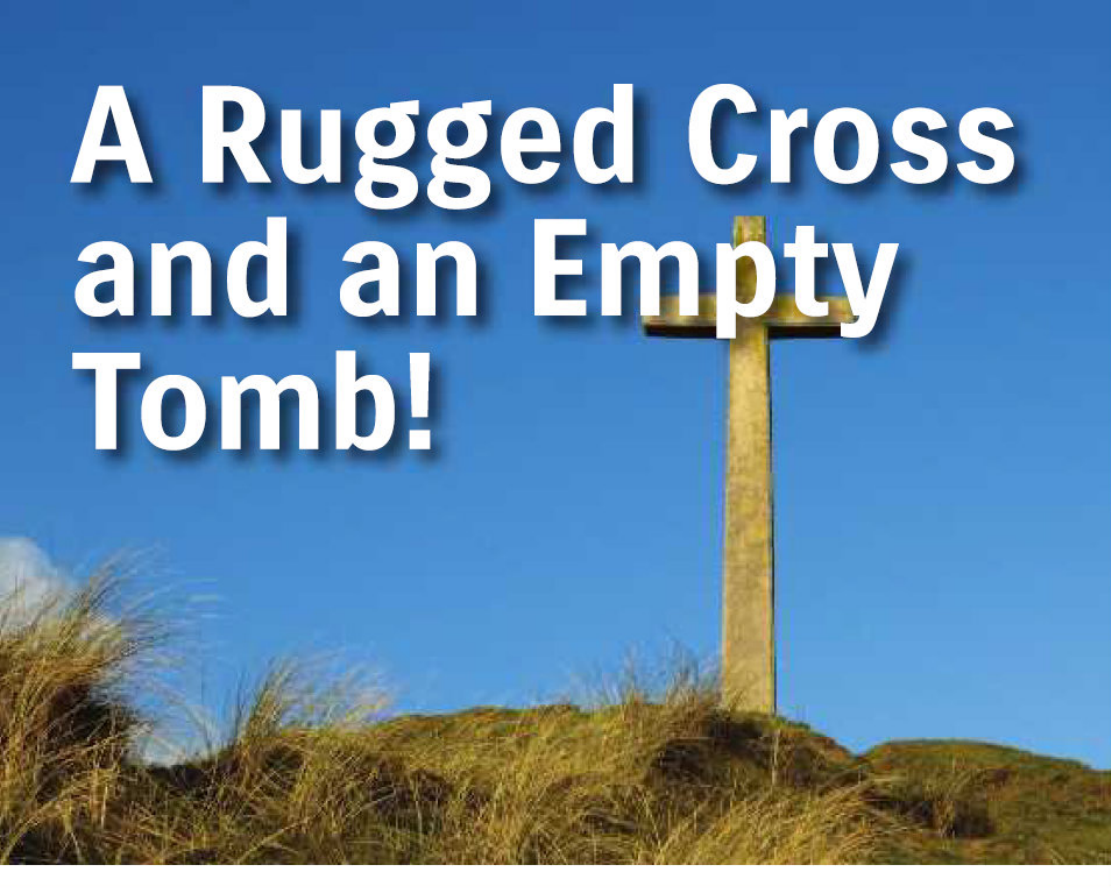
Many view Jesus as merely the founder of Christianity or a good moral teacher of example and virtue, but as Christian author J Blanchard states, **“To rank Jesus as the greatest, wisest, best or most influential man who ever lived is not to dignify Him but to degrade Him and to miss the whole point of who He was and what He did”**.<sup>\*</sup> What Jesus preached and taught could only have been the words of He who spoke as the Son of God, the Creator and Lord of all. If He is not the Son of God then His teaching is not only at best meaningless, but at worst ludicrous.

The Son of God came to earth as **“the Saviour of the world”** – 1 John 4:14. He not only shared in the human experience of hurt and pain but He was able to reach out and touch men and women with healing power, bringing to them the warmth and fullness of God's love. Ultimately He died upon a cross for our salvation. The gospel proclaims that **He who made us actually died to save us**. In the Lord Jesus we find the answer to our deepest need; forgiveness and relationship with God.

(\* J. Blanchard, *Is God Past His Sell-by Date?*, Evangelical Press.)



# A Rugged Cross and an Empty Tomb!



The answer for human sin is found in the atonement that the Lord Jesus Christ made on the cross outside the city of Jerusalem at the time of Jewish Passover in A.D. 33. In a paradoxical way, the climax of man's rebellion was reached when Jew and Gentile united at the cross to reject the Son of God, yet it is through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross that God can offer us forgiveness. What men meant for evil, God meant for good. The fact that the Lord Jesus was able to take the place of those under God's condemnation and actually endure their punishment is what makes His cross unique in all of history - **"He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself"** - Hebrews 9:26; **"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly"** - Romans 5:6.

The Lord Jesus knew exactly where, how and why He would die. His death was no accident but rather the fulfilment of His Father's will. When Roman soldiers nailed Him to the cross, contrary to how it may have looked, they were not taking His life; instead He was actually giving

His life as a voluntary sacrifice. The Lord Jesus described it this way: **"Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father"** - John 10:17-18. Before the Lord Jesus expired in death on the cross by the action of His own will, He said in triumph, **"It is finished"** - John 19:30. This meant that the work His Father had entrusted to Him was fully accomplished and therefore the problem of sin was answered, to God's eternal satisfaction.

On the third day after His crucifixion, the Lord Jesus took His life back again when He rose from the dead. By the power of God, and just as He had promised, He came forth victoriously from the realm of death, never to die again! When Peter and John arrived that very same day at the tomb in which His body had been laid, all they found were the linen burial clothes. It was angels who said to the first visitors at the sepulchre, **"Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen"** - Luke 24:5-6. The tomb was empty and it still is!

It is because the **Saviour lives** that the forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life can be guaranteed to all who believe in Him: **"The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"** - Romans 6:23. Knowing Jesus as Lord and Saviour gives the assurance of **eternal security!** To be saved is to be safe!





Faith, as defined in the Bible, is firmly based upon reality, and the evidence that confirms such reality. One of the most noted men in the Biblical record was called Abraham. God made great promises to him, and the Bible says, **“Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness”** - Romans 4:3. But why did he believe God? Because of the evidence! The God of glory appeared to him while he was living in Ur of the Chaldeans, and called him to leave his country, people and father’s house for another land. God gave him the assurance of posterity and blessing, the outcome of which was the Jewish people, and ultimately Jesus Christ, the Messiah and Saviour. Abraham left his native land not knowing where he was going, but his faith was in the reality of God who had spoken to him. Abraham was willing to trust God even for what he did not know or understand - Genesis 12:1-5; Hebrews 11:8.

Many, of course, will deny the authenticity of the Bible narratives, but at least this much is clear, the Bible presents faith as both rational and logical when it comes to believing in God, for the Bible affirms the reality of God. Abraham’s, or any other believer’s faith, is not the stuff of dreams, fantasy or imagination; rather it is **firmly focused in the living God.**

Can faith then explain everything? Do Christians know all the answers as to the origin, meaning and complexity of life? Not at all! There is a difference between the evidence for reality and being able to explain the nature of that reality, but the latter does not negate the former.

A secure future requires faith in the present. The call of God in the gospel is for faith in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. This is more than merely consenting to the historical facts about Jesus. Faith in Christ is faith in **the truth.** Faith is a conviction of the heart that results in surrender of the will to Him who is the personal revelation in human flesh of all that God is. The Lord Jesus alone could say, **“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me”** - John 14:6.

# The Fairy Tale of Faith?

The Bible states the necessity of faith in relation to God: **“Without faith it is impossible to please Him”** - Hebrews 11:6. However, there are those who claim that faith is nothing more than a term used by religious, superstitious people to excuse their ignorance and compensate for an absence of any evidence supporting a rationale for the worldview which they blindly follow. Faith belongs to the world of fantasy and dreams. While such may be true of many religions and ideologies, it is certainly not applicable to Biblical Christianity.

# When the Curtain Falls



One day we will play our final part on the stage of time and the **curtain of life** will fall for each of us. We cannot tell when and how, but **the certainty of death is the prescription of all men**. Described as “the king of terrors and the terror of kings”, death is the enemy of man. Cold, relentless and cruel, it makes its onward march over the centuries respecting neither age nor gender.

It was the Lord Jesus who spoke of the eternal and real worlds of heaven and hell. He described two men, one rich the other poor, in **life**, in **death** and in **eternity** - Luke 16:19-31. Through relating their experience He was letting us see beyond time into our future.

But how can a God of love send people to hell? **His holiness** demands that He judge sin. **His justice** condemns the guilty, **but** the good news is that **He is rich in mercy** - Ephesians 2:4. God does not want to send anyone to hell but rather He desires to take all to

heaven. The Bible states, **“God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth”** - 1 Timothy 2:3-4.

That is why He gave His only Son to die! **“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”** - John 3:16.

Remember, your eternal destiny in the next world is not a matter of chance but of choice.





# The Foundation of Hope

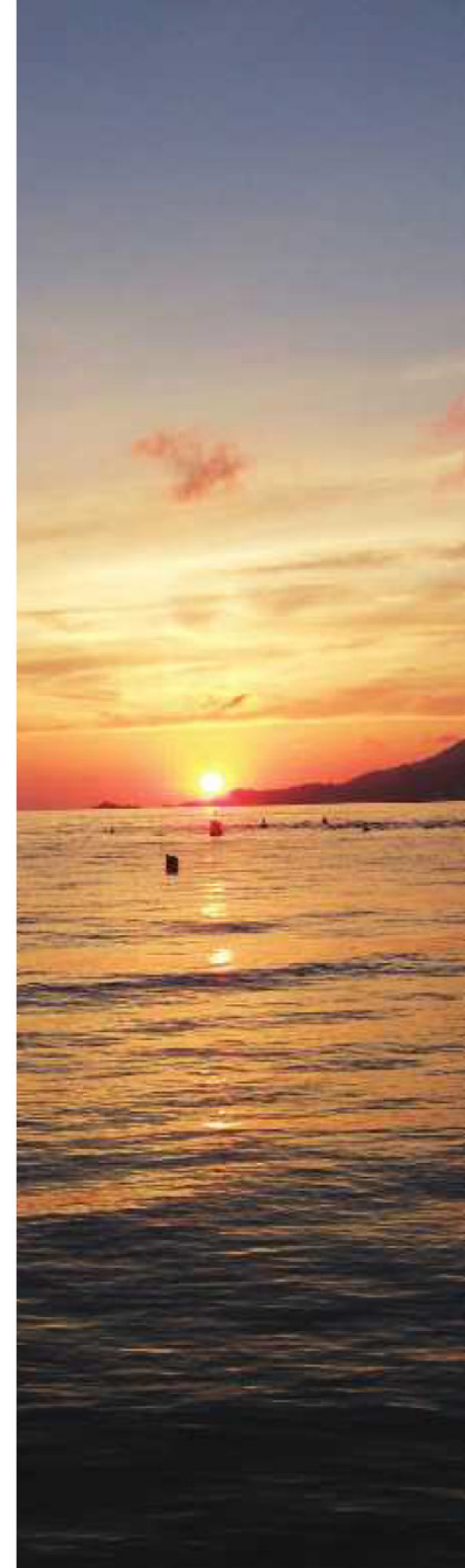


Saul of Tarsus was a Jew with persecuting zeal against the name of the Lord Jesus and all Christians who followed Him. He was however, uniquely converted on the road to Damascus and commissioned by the Lord Jesus to take the gospel among the nations – Acts 9:1-19. He obeyed, and around A.D.49, ultimately arrived on the continent of Europe at Macedonia, an area which is now part of modern Greece. He made his way to the city of Philippi and from there he travelled west about 100 miles to a place called Thessalonica. Here Saul, now known as Paul, preached the gospel under severe persecution and left behind many followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Shortly after his departure he wrote a letter to them confirming **the extent of salvation** and telling how the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus is **the foundation of Christian hope** in life and death.

Salvation not only gives the assurance that at death the believer in the Lord Jesus will arrive securely in heaven, but it includes much more. Salvation offers the hope of bodily resurrection for those who die, and

the change to immortality for those who are saved and alive at the coming again of the Lord Jesus. One day when He comes, it will be in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, that the body of every saved person will be changed – 1 Corinthians 15:51-54. First, the bodies of Christians who have died throughout the centuries will be raised again in power and glory. Then those who are still alive on earth at His coming will be transformed, and together they will meet the Lord in the clouds of the sky. From there He will lead them right into heaven itself and forever they will enjoy the fullness of His presence. Paul wrote of the sure foundation of such a hope: ***“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him ... For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord”*** - 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17.

What is your hope for the future?  
***Are you eternally secure in Christ?***





# Seeing into the Future

With knowledge of the dangers, men can predict what may be ahead for this world and warn of potential nuclear war and environmental disaster in the future, but it was the Lord Jesus Christ who told of future events with absolute certainty. He told His disciples that His death would be by rejection and crucifixion. Indeed, not only did the Lord Jesus predict it months before it actually happened, but the Old Testament prophet Isaiah spoke of the manner and meaning of Christ's death over 700 years prior to its fulfillment: ***“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and***

***the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all”*** – Isaiah 53:5-6. How did Isaiah and all the other prophets know of such things? There can only be one answer; they knew by revelation from God, for only God knows the future!

The Lord Jesus also spoke of future events concerning the nations of the world. He told of days of great tribulation coming, in which there will be enacted the greatest deception men have ever known through the work of a False Prophet and a World Ruler, under the control of Satan. These will be days when God will judge the world for its rebellion and rejection of His Son, and take possession of what is rightfully His. It was the Lord Jesus who described the severity of this time in startling words: ***“And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved”*** – Matthew 24:22.

In the last book of the Bible, called the ***Revelation of Jesus Christ***, the Lord Jesus further expanded and confirmed the details of events leading to His coming to earth in glory, when the final battle at ***Armageddon*** will take place, and Christ will establish His kingdom in this world – Revelation 1:1-3; 16:12-16; 19:11-21; 20:1-6. At that time the words which have been recited by millions for centuries will find their true fulfillment: ***“Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven ...”*** – Matthew 6:9-10.

Does all this sound farfetched and typical of this type of literature? Consider these words: *“Nineteenth-century Oxford scholar Henry Liddon drew attention to the fact that Jesus fulfilled to the letter no fewer than 332 Old Testament prophecies ... It has been calculated that twenty nine Messianic prophecies were fulfilled in the final twenty four hours of His life alone”*.\* Hardly coincidence! It is very reasonable to believe that if so much of the word of God has already been fulfilled then the remainder of the warnings, promises and prophecies will find their answer in reality some day soon.

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(\* J. Blanchard, *Does God Believe In Atheists?*, Evangelical Press.)

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(John 3:16)

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