

# This Is Why President Obama's Speaking Fees Matter

The president of the United States makes an annual salary of \$400,000 a year for doing one of the toughest jobs in the world. While the pay may seem relatively low compared to CEOs of major corporations, the real payoff for presidents comes once they exit the White House.

President Obama, for example, has been out of office for exactly 99 days and has already earned at least \$800,000—two years' worth of a president's salary—for giving one speech and one interview.

Most of the reaction to Obama's speaking fees has broken out along typical partisan lines. Fans of the former president merely shrug while his long-time critics feign outrage (even if they don't know why they are mad). But many conservative critics of the president think the new money-making ventures are much ado about nothing. Some even say this is how the "market" works.

They are wrong. Such speaking fees are (at least potentially) a form of corruption. Here's why.

The decisions and choices we make today can affect the options that become available to us in the future time. For example, I may spend less money today in order to be able to spend more at a future point in time, such as during retirement. The name for this economic concept is "intertemporal choice."

What we expect or desire to happen in the future can affect the choices we make now. While this concept may appear obvious, it can have significant implications when we apply it to certain groups, such as politicians and government leaders.

Consider the problem of cronyism. Cronyism is a form of

corruption that occurs when an individual or organization colludes with government officials to create legislation or regulations that give them forced benefits they could not have otherwise obtained voluntarily. But such cronyism doesn't have to occur directly. Intertemporal choices, as economist Bryan Caplan explains, can lead to intertemporal corruption:

If a major corporation gives a U.S. senator a ten-million-dollar "gift," it's likely to be punished as corruption. It doesn't matter if the corporation protests, "We're only expressing our affection for this fine senator" or if the senator bellows, "How dare you claim my vote is for sale!" However, if the same senator retires, and the major corporation gives him a ten-million-dollar sinecure on its Board of Directors, it's perfectly legal—and few demur.

The painfully obvious flaw with both norms: Intertemporal corruption is a wonderful substitute for ordinary corruption. A professor is unlikely to give an F to his current girlfriend; but he's also unlikely to give an F to his future girlfriend. A senator is unlikely to vote against a corporation that gives him millions of dollars; but he's also unlikely to vote against a corporation that's going to give him millions of dollars. What comes around, goes around.

If President Obama had collected a \$400,000 fee from the founders of Solyndra, the failed energy company that left taxpayers liable for \$535 million in federal guarantees, the corruption would be obvious. But because he is taking money from companies that benefited from his policies in less obvious ways, we assume no corruption has occurred.

And maybe it hasn't. Maybe Obama never made a decision while he was president in which he considered how it would affect his future finances. But even if he didn't, he's sending a signal to future presidents (just as Bill Clinton did) that if you play your cards right, your tenure in the White House is

an assured path to multi-millionaire status.

This is also why former U.S. military generals should not be accepting “speaking fees” from foreign countries. Even if Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn did nothing wrong in collecting \$45,000 for giving a speech to a Russian propaganda outlet, he set a standard for those who will come after him. If you believe there’s the potential to someday get rich off your country’s adversaries, then you may be tempted to promote policies that are in their interest and not in the national interest of the United States.

The signals we send matter, especially to politicians and government leaders. And if we signal to them that intertemporal corruption is a shrug-worthy offense, we should expect to see more of this type of cronyism in the future.

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# **Do Women Wearing Bikinis**

# Deserve to Be Sexually Assaulted?

A teenager in Australia pleaded guilty to sexually assaulting nine women and girls but was not sentenced to prison. Instead, he was put on two-years' probation. Why? The judge reasoned that, as a Muslim who had immigrated from Afghanistan, "seeing girls in bikinis is different to the environment in which he grew up."

Seriously? This young man assaults nine different women and girls on a beach in Australia, and the court only gives him probation because he came from a different culture?

I understand that in Afghanistan, women are required to be completely covered. And so, it would be quite a shock for a Muslim teen raised in that country to come to Australia and see so much flesh.

It's for that very reason that some believers who come from conservative religious backgrounds avoid going to crowded beaches. They're not into the bikini culture.

I can relate to that personally, which is why I avoid crowded beaches myself. I'm no more comfortable surrounded by women in bikinis than I'd be surrounded by women in their underwear.

But I fully understand that these women are not asking to be sexually assaulted, no matter how they're dressed. And it would never dawn on me in a million years that I had the right to assault them because of their scanty attire. God forbid.

You might say, "But you were raised in America, so this is not foreign to you. You understand the culture, which is similar to Australia."

That's true.

But do you mean to tell me that this 17-year-old teenager from Afghanistan thought that what he was doing was fine? That, as he swam in the water and “spent two hours grabbing women, aged between 15 and 24 years,” he had no idea he was upsetting them?

The court was told that the “defendant grabbed his victims ...” And the Crown attorney, Nick McGhee “said the defendant was seen swimming up to his victims ‘in quite a predatory manner.’”

And he had no idea this was a bad thing? He had no idea he was at a beach where these girls went to swim, not get assaulted? And, after the first girl reacted to him, he still thought they were inviting his predations?

The judge also noted that the young man had a difficult background, having lost his father in 2011.

But how, exactly, does this lessen his guilt before the court? How, precisely, does this mitigate his responsibility?

It is all too common for convicted criminals to have troubled pasts, and our prisons would be nearly empty if judges looked the other way because the guilty party was raised without a dad. (I don’t mean to sound uncaring here. I’m simply talking about a judge doing his or her duty.)

As for the idea that the teen came from a different culture and therefore was not fully responsible, how far will the courts take such logic?

“Your honor, I killed my daughter because she disgraced the family by dating a non-Muslim boy.”

“Your honor, I poisoned my son because he apostasized from the Islamic faith and became a Christian.”

“Your honor, I burned down the TV station because one of the hosts made disparaging comments about the Quran.”

“Your honor, I butchered the cartoonist because he mocked the prophet Muhammad.”

“Your honor, that’s just what we do in our culture. Please understand I wasn’t used to your way of doing things, and I’ll do better next time.”

Would the judge accept arguments like these? Hardly. (Or perhaps this same judge would accept such arguments. That’s what is really scary.)

What if you came from a cannibalistic culture where tribal disputes were settled with knife fights, and the winners ate the losers? How would this play out in court?

“Your honor, yes, it’s true that I roasted and ate my neighbor, but it’s a cultural thing. If I had lost the fight, I assumed he would have done the same to me. So, can I go home now?”

It’s bad enough that these girls and women have to deal with the trauma of being assaulted and groped. It’s even worse when the court sympathizes with their attacker rather than with them, finding a reason to look the other way. And what kind of message does this send to other Muslim immigrants, who will surely hear of this court case in the days to come?

Ironically, if an Australian woman living in Afghanistan decided to dress as she did in her home country, she’d be lucky to escape a mob assault on the streets, let alone experience leniency from the court. Yet in Australia, a young man guilty of multiple sexual assaults is let off the hook because of his Muslim background.

This is being open-minded to the point of utter foolishness. It sets a very dangerous precedent, too. {eoa}

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# 11 Obvious Signs of a Personality-Driven Church—Part 2

*This is part 2 of a two-part series. To read part 1, click [here](#).*

I have been striving since the early 1980s to help the church follow in the way of Jesus and the apostles. That being said, one of the earmarks of the first century apostolic church is how the church edified itself in love (see Eph. 4:16) and was led by a team of leaders whose primary purpose was to equip the church to perform the work of the ministry (see Eph. 4:11,12). Read this second half of the article which delineates traits five through 11 of the personality-driven church.

## **5. The leader draws attention to himself.**

Paul warned of leaders who would arise, drawing disciples after themselves (see Acts 20:30). This takes place even today even in spite of the fact the apostle Paul said that in all things Christ should have the supremacy (see Col. 1:19). There are some leaders who brag so much about the great things they are doing that the people's attention and emotions are drawn more to them than to the Lord or to the church. When a leader does this, ultimately, danger and a huge fall is not far away since God humbles the proud and exalts the humble.

## **6. There is no room for other leaders to develop.**

In personality-driven churches, people with a high upside regarding their leadership capacity usually get frustrated

because there is no opportunity for them to use their gifts. Especially those in the congregation called to the fivefold ministry as found in Ephesians 4:11. In these churches, there is a culture of “serving the pastor” (to the exclusion of serving the church) and enhancing “his ministry”, more than being equipped for the work of the ministry (see Eph. 4:12). In healthy churches, the lead pastor is constantly strategizing to develop and release people to their divine assignment in the church and marketplace.

### **7. The lead pastor has no accountability.**

Usually, a personality-driven church is led by a narcissistic and or insecure leader who shies away from personal accountability. Even if they have denominational or structural accountability, it is not functional. These leaders do not want to be told what to do in their personal life or church. The very fact that they created the environment for a personality-driven church lends to the fact that they have lifted themselves up in regards to self-importance, which makes it difficult for them to listen to anyone else.

### **8. The government of the church is autocratic and highly centralized.**

In personality-driven churches, there is strict control over what is said, what is done, what is marketed as well as the appearance of all things. Of course, even healthy churches are careful about their communications, public persona and marketing, but personality driven churches have “over the top” control in all these areas. Consequently, there is a “top down” leadership style that is autocratic, highly centralized and very structured. When dealing with the leaders and department heads of their ministries, the senior leader of this kind of church just gives direction, presents his vision and expects everyone just to follow orders without being a vital part of the strategic process.

## **9. There is no room for critical thinking and creativity.**

Personality-driven churches discourage open dialogue about the true condition of their congregation as well as critical thinking and creativity. By “critical thinking,” I am not referring to being critical about the church—even healthy churches should discourage the spirit of criticism in their congregation—I am referring to the ability to learn how to think logically, to analyze and to problem-solve. Thus, personality-driven churches do not encourage people to be self-aware and think for themselves. All major thinking, strategy and creativity has to emanate from the senior leader or it is not viewed as legitimate.

## **10. The lead pastor leads a narcissistic lifestyle.**

In personality-driven churches, the lead pastor attempts to live a lavish lifestyle because they have a sense of entitlement that everyone owes them something because of their “greatness.” Instead of being motivated to serve and feed the flock, the primary motivation of the personality-driven leader is the desire (conscious or unconscious) to be served. This is, of course, in direct contradiction to the clear teachings of Scripture as found in Jeremiah chapter 23; Ezekiel 34 and John 10. The godly shepherd will lay down his life for the flock; the personality-driven pastor will sacrifice the church for their own benefit and pleasure.

## **11. The church doesn't outlive the lead pastor.**

In personality-driven churches, the likelihood that the church survives after the lead pastor is gone is very slim. This is because the whole ministry was built upon the gifts and abilities of the lead pastor. It may have been a megachurch; however, it did not have a foundation of strong secondary leaders with a pool of potential successors who could take the reins of the lead pastor role. (Which is why some megachurches do not last beyond the first generation of their founding.)

Even in the case of denominational churches where they choose a replacement for the lead pastor, usually said successor does not have the charisma to keep the church moving forward, resulting in a great demise in attendance and vision. In healthy churches, there is a multi-generational vision that perpetuates the life of the congregation way beyond the years of the tenure of the lead pastor.

In conclusion, while there is no such thing as a perfect church on this side of heaven, my prayer is that this article will inspire churches to become healthier and pursue the way of Christ and His apostles in regards to local church culture.  
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## **The Next 100: Evangelicals Will Like Where President Trump's Agenda Goes Next**

After wrapping up his first 100 days in the White House on Saturday, President Donald Trump plans to hit a new set of issues, including religious liberty, tax reform and school choice, a White House official told The Daily Signal.

“We want to have legislation that has a profound impact on religious liberty, one that has profound impact on education, that has profound impact on health care,” Helen Aguirre Ferré, White House media affairs director, said in an interview Friday.

Ferré added:

These are just some of the issues we are working on that's

going to be absolutely critical going forward, not putting a timetable on it. But having something relevant and important is much more important than saying we're going to do it in the first 100 days. It would be nice to say we did it in the first 100 days. But it's not necessary.

She said Trump would prioritize supporting the military and veterans, as well as school choice for parents frustrated with failing public schools.

"Keep your eyes open for religious liberty," Ferré said. "It's going to be an issue. The president made a commitment about the Johnson [Amendment] and I think he's going to keep that commitment."

The Johnson Amendment, named for Sen. Lyndon Johnson of Texas years before the Democrat became president, restricts churches from engaging in political expression at the risk of losing their tax-exempt status.

Trump said during the campaign and at the National Prayer Breakfast earlier this year that he was committed to doing away with the rule. Legislation exists to do so. However, many conservatives have urged the president to go further in an executive action to protect religious expression.

Regarding specifics on what action Trump would take on religious freedom, Ferré said only: "Stay tuned."

This past week, the administration rolled out a tax reform plan to reduce rates and eliminate specific deductions. Trump also announced discussions with the leaders of Canada and Mexico on renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement. These will be high priorities in coming months, Ferré said.

She said the White House continues to work on a proposal to repair the nation's highways, bridges, airports, and other infrastructure, which Trump previously has said would be

leveraged by private funds.

“Our infrastructure is in dire need and as a developed nation and the leader of the free world, we are the most behind when it comes to investment in infrastructure,” Ferré said. “We know that we need at least \$1 trillion to be able to improve our infrastructure and bring it up to speed, and we have a lot of foreign competition in that regard.” {eoa}

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## **Walk in This Biblical Martyr's Incredible Courage Through This Unlimited Source**

I know all Scripture is ultimately about God. Still, I find myself putting undue emphasis on the other, oh-so-human characters in the story. I'd always walked away from Acts 7 in awe of Stephen. What faith! What courage! What knowledge of Scripture! But one day, I saw it.

Stephen isn't the hero of this story. The Holy Spirit is.

Now when I read this passage, the role of the Holy Spirit jumps out like it's written in neon lights. Here's what I see:

The Holy Spirit gave Stephen his edge. Stephen was in this situation in Acts 7 because of what happened the chapter before. The Holy Spirit filled Stephen with “faith and power,” enabling him to perform amazing signs and wonders (Acts 6:8-10). The religious leaders didn't understand this, so they dragged him to the Sanhedrin under charges of blasphemy.

The Holy Spirit gave Stephen the words to say. During Jesus' ministry, He said this to His disciples: "But when they arrest you and hand you over, take no thought beforehand or premeditate what you should speak. But speak whatever is given you in that time, for it is not you who speaks, but the Holy Spirit" (Mark 13:11).

Stephen's situation was exactly that. Face shining like an angel (Acts 6:15), he stood before the Sanhedrin and gave a comprehensive history of God's people, while the faces of the religious leaders flamed with anger.

Stephen's message was all about the Spirit. The chapter might sound like a history lesson to us, but the Holy Spirit was hurling a verbal spear right at the Sanhedrin's unbelieving hearts. Every time God had changed the system or sent the Israelites a message, they had resisted, turning to idols or killing the messengers—like they were doing now. Acts 7:51 was the clincher: "You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you."

The Spirit enabled Stephen to forgive his enemies. As Stephen was stoned, Scripture tells us again that he was "full of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 7:55a). As he died at the hands of those who claimed to have the corner on religion, he did something unfathomable: he forgave them (Acts 7:60). Nothing but the Holy Spirit's power could produce that kind of radical grace.

It is appropriate to acknowledge the steadfastness and courage of our beloved martyr, Stephen. But let us never forget the God who indwelled and empowered him.

The Holy Spirit stood before the Sanhedrin that day. The Holy Spirit spoke words of truth. And, as the accusations and stones flew, the Holy Spirit ministered peace to our brother, Stephen. May we never try to explain that Spirit away. {eoa}

Excerpted from the *She Reads Truth Bible*, publishing by Holman

# Prophetic Word: 'The Brothers Are Returning to Joseph'

Recently Darla Martini and I were on the phone (The Hub, Central Arkansas Worship Center), we were having a conversation concerning honor, respect and what is happening within the body. Darla was sharing with me how individuals who once were a part of her life in ministry, but had separated through the years, were now reaching out to her. As I listened, the LORD spoke to me and said, "The brothers are returning to Joseph." God then began to give me a prophetic download concerning the coming restoration of the former, for the glory of the latter.

In Genesis 42, we have the first return to Egypt with the brothers of Joseph. Famine had hit the region, and the effects were devastating. It would be the first time that Joseph had seen his brothers, who many years prior sold him into slavery. Joseph had been through some extreme difficulties that were not his fault but would one day position him for a time that would bring glory to God. Joseph would go from the pit into slavery and from a position of authority into prison. From prison, he would eventually be granted another position of authority, but this time he would be the second in command of all of Egypt. When the brothers return to Egypt seeking grain, Joseph would recognize his brothers, but he would remain hidden as he put them through a rigorous test and questions found in Genesis 42-44.

The LORD spoke...

*The brothers are returning to Joseph. I have many who have*

*suffered the cost of being my servant. I have many who have done what was right, but be sold out because of jealousy. I have many who have served me no matter the devastation, but have often found themselves in prison cells. I have many who have said yes to me, but at the moment of potential freedom, the lies and manipulation have kept them in the depths of prisons. These who have been my Josephs have lived a life that has been dedicated to my glory. I am positioning them in promotion. Their time is near as I am moving aggressively in restoration. The time of Promotion for Joseph is near, and with this promotion, I will restore the relationships that were broken. I am causing the brothers to come back to Joseph. In the midst of a spiritual famine, the brothers are returning because I will use those like Joseph to restore the family of God. I have not punished you. I have not abandoned you. I have positioned you to receive the brothers of the former as the restoration will release the portion of promotion. There will be favor returned to those who come back, and there will be increase added to those who are willing to receive the brothers of the former. The latter Glory is upon you and I am releasing Favor and Increase."*

## **Have You Wept?**

After receiving this word from the Lord, my own mind began to think of the hardships that I have had to endure. The trials of enduring lies, manipulation and financial loss. The moves from one location to another. The temporary moments of freedom, only to find myself back within a prison. As my mind went through memory lane, the Lord spoke to me again and asked, "Have you wept for your brother? Will you weep for restoration?"

In all honesty, I have wept, but I have wept for me. I have wept for my wife and my children. I have wept for those in the church and other ministries. However, I have not wept for my brother (and sisters) who brought about the chain of events

that forever shifted my life. I had forgiven the individuals and done so quickly so that I wouldn't harbor any unforgiveness or hatred towards them. I even went through deliverance so that unforgiveness would not get hold of me. And yet, God was asking me if I had wept, and was I willing to weep.

Truth is that there are people in the body of Christ who will sell you out. Whether it's over jealousy, envy or hatred, they will do you wrong. But here's the kicker: Because they are a part of the body of Christ, God loves them and wants to use them. It's very easy for us to categorize them as those who never truly knew Christ. And that may be the case; however, we must not be the determining factor to decide what lies between them and the Father. What God is wanting to know is whether or not we are willing to weep over them when they return in their famine.

### **The Famine Will Direct the Return**

The brothers found themselves in a natural famine, but unknown to them, Joseph had been made aware of this famine prior to its developing. Joseph had prepared the land for the seven years, and by this time, the word would be known that Egypt had portions that could help families. So Israel (Jacob) told his sons to go to Egypt to ask for grain. It would be easy for us to say that the brothers never intended to go to Egypt to restore their relationship with Joseph. They had no plans for repentance and forgiveness; they were simply looking for something to eat.

Many who have done you harm aren't going to come back into your life because they are seeking forgiveness. Like the brothers, they are going to return because of a famine. They are starving in the land and they are needing food. Granted, I am not talking about eating in the natural, as I am saying that a spiritual famine has invaded their territories and they are looking for the grain in which they can survive. The

(spiritual) famine is going to direct their return to you. Like Joseph, you have remained dedicated to the Lord—although sold out, imprisoned, lied about, manipulated and so much more. You have remained faithful to the Lord. Your faithfulness to say yes, no matter the pain that it caused you, shows you stayed true to the Lord. God is positioning you for your promotion, and with that promotion, there will be restoration. There is a unique opportunity to increase the abundance over your life and what you are willing to weep for (over); you will see the favor of the Lord releasing an outpouring over your lives.

### **Releasing of Provision**

In Genesis 45, we read where Joseph is finally revealed to his brothers and how he wasn't ever destroyed; rather, he was elevated. My question to you (the reader): If you are the brothers, are you willing to repent for the things you did? My question to you (the reader): If you are Joseph, are you willing to receive the brothers back into your life? Relationships will never be the same as they were before; however, there can still be restoration for the releasing of the provision. When damage has occurred within relationships, forgiveness can be applied and received, but the relationships will never be what they once were. It's a reality we must understand. Although this is the case, we can still receive those individuals in our lives. Why? Why should you or I receive them back? It's really simple: There is a famine in the land. You cannot be a person who professes that you want revival but is not willing to release the provision for revival. When you are like Joseph, you have to remember that God didn't promote you to keep you elevated above others for self-gratification, rather, your promotion is for the provision of the latter.

### **The Father Arrives**

In Genesis 46, we read the beginning of the return of The

Father Jacob (Israel) returning to see that His son, whom he loved, in the land of Egypt. This is an amazing story of how a Father never gave up on his abandoned son. Although this took place naturally, this is a type and shadow of what God is going to do in the Spirit. When Joseph receives the brothers, it creates the opportunity for the Father to return—not only return but to settle in the land. The difference between the former and the latter is just that. The former had moments of the presence of the Father, but the latter is going to open the door for the arrival of the Father. Do you understand that the Father is coming to dwell in His glory?

Whether you are a brother or a Joseph, it should be the desire of our hearts to see the Father arrive. Get ready. The brothers are returning to Joseph! {eoa}

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## **The Biblical Key to Experiencing God's Promises Right Now**

At the moment of your salvation, a supernatural transformation happened that made you into a new person. This is what Paul affirmed to the Corinthians: "Therefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things have passed away. Look, all things have become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

In theological speak, this transformation from old to new is called “regeneration.” But inside this big word is another word that actually provides a great word picture for happened when you accepted Christ. It’s the word “re-gene.”

### **‘Re-Gened’ in Christ**

Being re-gened implies that your DNA has changed. And as we know, DNA is the carrier of all genetic information, which determines almost everything about you: hair and eye color, height, your shape and some behavioral predispositions. Some of us were born with skinny genes. And others have genes that might be what are called “loose-fitting.”

Your regeneration in Christ, however, didn’t start you over with a new set of genes, but you were literally injected with the genes of God. Keep reading.

### **God’s Seed in You**

In John’s first letter, he instructs, “Those who have been born of God do not sin, because God’s seed abides in them” (1 Jn. 3:9). The Greek word for “seed” in this verse really reveals the idea of what happens here. It’s *sperma*, from which we get the word “sperm.”

In other words, at your salvation, God’s DNA was placed in you. With this, you were re-gened you into His family and His kingdom. But that’s not all! God’s DNA in you means that you contain the qualities of who He is.

Think about that. You contain the DNA of God. And the unfathomable outcome of this is that you already have so much of what you’ve been praying for. Because God is love, joy and peace, for example, you don’t need to beg Him to give you these things. But rather, seeds of these fruits are already planted inside of you—they just need to be nurtured and developed.

## Grow the New Life in You

The way to develop the new life that's already in you is to water it with God's Word running through your mind and mouth. Grow your joy with Nehemiah 8:10d: "The joy of the Lord is [my] strength." Mature your peace with Philippians 4:6a: "[I will] be anxious for nothing." Or develop your love with 1 John 4:16b: "Whoever lives in love lives in God." (By the way, my new book, *Activating the Power of God's Word*, from which this article is adapted, explores 16 declarations like these designed to transform every area of your life.)

Remember, you might not always feel the qualities of the new life in you. But God's Word is more real than what you feel. And the reality is that God says you are brand new. So you just have to renew your mind to think and speak like it, and over time you will begin to live like it. {eoa}

**Kyle Winkler** equips people to live in victory. His mobile app, *Shut Up, Devil!*, is the #1 spiritual warfare app; and his book, *Activating the Power of God's Word*, uncovers 16 strategic declarations to transform your life. Kyle holds a Master of Divinity in biblical studies from Regent University. Get daily encouragement from Kyle on Facebook and Twitter.

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## Where Do Angels Fit Into the End-Times Drama?

Angels don't preach the gospel—at least not yet. But they are sending various messages to prophetic people in the body of Christ even now.

The Lord spoke to me clearly about the angels of abundant harvest coming into the nation. He's talked to me about the angels of transition. He's spoke to me this month about angels coming to trouble the water, delivering people from past hurts and wounds and bringing payback.

But what role do angels play in the end times? What place do these ministering spirits have in the unfolding drama that is the last days? Where do we find them as Jesus Christ returns for His glorious bride without spot or wrinkle? Angels play a vital role.

### **1. Angels Worship God in the End Times**

"Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voices of many angels, numbering ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands ..." (Rev. 5:11). Angels have been worshipping God since they were created, and will continue this ministry for eternity. As we grow closer to the last of the last days, we should take a hint from the worshipping angels and focus on Jesus.

### **2. Angels Hold Back God's Winds of Judgment**

"Then I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind would not blow on the earth or on the sea or on any tree" (Rev. 7:1). Angels can be instruments of judgment or can help believers avert judgment. Judgment, when it comes, comes in God's timing.

### **3. Angels Sound the Trumpets of Judgment**

"And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them" (Rev. 8:2). The angels are entrusted to blow these all-important trumpets, signaling judgment. Matthew Henry's Commentary explains, "Still the angels are employed as the wise and willing instruments of divine Providence, and they are furnished with all their

materials and instructions from God our Saviour. As the angels of the churches are to sound the trumpet of the gospel, the angels of heaven are to sound the trumpet of Providence, and every one has his part given him.”

Check out Jennifer’s prophetic word on the angels of abundant harvest.

#### **4. Wage Spiritual Warfare in Heaven**

“Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was there a place for them in heaven any longer. The great dragon was cast out, that ancient serpent called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world. He was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying: ‘Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down’” (Rev. 12:7-10). Angels war on our behalf also. They are mighty!

#### **5. Preach the Gospel**

As I started out saying in this column, angels don’t preach the gospel—at least not yet. We know that because an angel appeared to Cornelius and told him to go find Peter so he could share with him the gospel (Acts 11:13-14). If the angel were permitted, the angel would have done so. But in the end times, the angels will preach the gospel: “Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the eternal gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth, to every nation and tribe and tongue and people” (Rev. 14:6). {eoa}

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# As North Korea Continues to Test 'Diplomatic Patience,' Rex Tillerson Urges the UN to Act

As planned at the beginning of the month when the United States assumed the rotating presidency of the United Nations Security Council, a foreign minister-level meeting of the council was held Friday afternoon in New York City.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson chaired that meeting, which featured a discussion about how to deal with the continued provocations of North Korea and the danger posed by its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs. On behalf of the U.S., he gave the following speech:

According to U.N. Security Council Resolution 2321, a stated objective of this council is North Korea's abandonment of its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs.

For the past 20 years, well-intentioned diplomatic efforts to halt these programs have failed. It is only by first dismantling them that there can be peace, stability, and economic prosperity for all of Northeast Asia.

With each successive detonation and missile test, North Korea pushes Northeast Asia and the world closer to instability and broader conflict.

The threat of a North Korean nuclear attack on Seoul, or Tokyo, is real.

And it is likely only a matter of time before North Korea develops the capability to strike the U.S. mainland.

Indeed, the . has repeatedly claimed it plans to conduct

such a strike. Given that rhetoric, the United States cannot idly stand by. Nor can other members of this council who are within striking distance of North Korean missiles.

Having for years displayed a pattern of behavior that defies multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions, including 2321 and 2270, and erodes global progress on nuclear nonproliferation, there is no reason to think that North Korea will change its behavior under the current multilateral sanctions framework.

For too long, the international community has been reactive in addressing North Korea. Those days must come to an end.

Failing to act now on the most pressing security issue in the world may bring catastrophic consequences.

We have said this before and it bears repeating: the policy of strategic patience is over. Additional patience will only mean acceptance of a nuclear North Korea.

The more we bide our time, the sooner we will run out of it.

In light of the growing threat, the time has come for all of us to put new pressure on North Korea to abandon its dangerous path.

I urge this council to act before North Korea does.

We must work together to adopt a new approach and impose increased diplomatic and economic pressures on the North Korean regime.

The new campaign the United States is embarking on is driven by our own national security considerations, and it is welcomed by many nations who are concerned for their own security and question why North Korea clings to nuclear capabilities for which it has no need.

Our goal is not regime change. Nor do we desire to threaten

the North Korean people or destabilize the Asia Pacific region. Over the years, we have withdrawn our own nuclear weapons from South Korea and offered aid to North Korea as proof of our intent to de-escalate the situation and normalize relations. Since 1995, the United States has provided over \$1.3 billion dollars in aid to North Korea, and we look forward to resuming our contributions once the . begins to dismantle its nuclear weapons and missile technology programs.

The ., for its own sake, must dismantle its nuclear and missile programs if it wants to achieve the security, economic development, and international recognition that it seeks. North Korea must understand that respect will never follow recklessness. North Korea must take concrete steps to reduce the threat that its illegal weapons programs pose to the United States and our allies before we can even consider talks.

I propose all nations take these three actions beginning today:

First, we call on U.N. member-states to fully implement the commitments they have made regarding North Korea. This includes all measures required in Resolutions 2321 and 2270.

Those nations which have not fully enforced these resolutions fully discredit this body.

Second, we call on countries to suspend or downgrade diplomatic relations with North Korea. North Korea exploits its diplomatic privileges to fund its illicit nuclear and missile technology programs, and constraining its diplomatic activity will cut off a flow of needed resources. In light of North Korea's recent actions, normal relations with the . are simply not acceptable.

Third, we must increase North Korea's financial isolation. We must levy new sanctions on . entities and individuals

supporting its weapons and missile programs, and tighten those that are already in place. The United States also would much prefer countries and people in question to own up to their lapses and correct their behavior themselves, but we will not hesitate to sanction third-country entities and individuals supporting the .’s illegal activities.

We must bring maximum economic pressure by severing trade relationships that directly fund the .’s nuclear and missile program. I call on the international community to suspend the flow of North Korean guest workers and to impose bans on North Korean imports, especially coal.

We must all do our share, but China accounting for 90 percent of North Korean trade, China alone has economic leverage over Pyongyang that is unique, and its role is therefore particularly important. The U.S. and China have held very productive exchanges on this issue, and we look forward to further actions that build on what China has already done.

Lastly, as we have said before, all options for responding to future provocation must remain on the table. Diplomatic and financial levers of power will be backed up by a willingness to counteract North Korean aggression with military action if necessary. We much prefer a negotiated solution to this problem. But we are committed to defending ourselves and our allies against North Korean aggression.

This new pressure campaign will be swiftly implemented and painful to North Korean interest.

I realize some nations for which a relationship with North Korea has been in some ways a net positive may be disinclined to implement the measures of pressure on North Korea.

But the catastrophic effects of a North Korean nuclear strike outweigh any economic benefits. We must be willing to

face the hard truths and make hard choices right now to prevent disastrous outcomes in the future.

Business as usual is not an option.

There is also a moral dimension to this problem. Countries must know by now that helping the North Korean regime means enabling cruelty and suffering.

North Korea feeds billions of dollars into a nuclear program it does not need while its own people starve.

The regime's pursuit of nuclear weapons does not serve its own national security or the well-being of a people trapped in tyranny.

I ask the community of nations to help us preserve security and protect human dignity.

In one of my first trips as America's secretary of state, I looked across the DMZ at the haunted land of North Korea. Beyond the border is a nation of sorrow, frozen in time. While the world sees the gleaming buildings of Pyongyang, the blight of oppression and starvation has swept this land for over 60 years.

But even though the present condition of that country is bleak, the United States believes in a future for North Korea. These first steps toward a more hopeful future will happen most quickly if other stakeholders in this—in the region and the global security join us.

For years, North Korea has been dictating the terms of its dangerous course of action.

It is time for us to retake control of the situation.

We ask the members of this council and all other partners to implement a new strategy to denuclearize North Korea.

As if in response to that speech, North Korea launched yet another ballistic missile test. The missile appeared to be aimed, like many others, toward the Sea of Japan, but exploded less than a minute into its flight while still over North Korean territory.

President Donald Trump, who was attending the NRA Leadership Forum in Atlanta, was briefed on the launch. A short time later, the White House issued a very brief statement:

The administration is aware of the most recent North Korean missile test. The president has been briefed.

The president has said a “major, major conflict” is possible with North Korea if diplomatic pressure doesn’t resolve the matter. Late last week, the ballistic missile submarine USS Michigan arrived for a rare port-of-call in South Korea—a clear demonstration of American force projection—and the USS Carl Vinson and Carrier Strike Group 1 arrived off the eastern coast of North Korea over the weekend.

CSG 1 includes the *Vinson*, the *Arleigh Burke*-class guided-missile destroyers *USS Michael Murphy* and *USS Wayne E. Meyer*, the *Ticonderoga*-class guided-missile cruiser *USS Lake Champlain* and at least one nuclear attack submarine, likely a *Los Angeles*-class vessel. They have been joined by the *Arleigh Burke*-class *USS Fitzgerald*, which was already operating in the area, and elements of the South Korean and Japanese navies.

According to Jane’s, the surface components of CSG 1 have the following capabilities:

- *Vinson* carries 100 aircraft, both fixed wing and helicopter, including four fighter squadrons: The “Bounty Hunters” of Strike Fighter Squadron 2 that operates the F/A-18F, the Blue Blasters of Strike Fighter Squadron 34 that flies the F/A-18C; and the Kestrels of Strike Fighter Squadron 137 and Golden Dragons of Strike Fighter Squadron 192, each flying the

F/A-18E;

- C-model F/A-18s can carry 15,000 lbs. of ordinance, while the larger E- and F-models can carry 17,000 lbs. They all have a combat radius of 390 nautical miles;
- Fitzgerald, Murphy, Meyer and Lake Champlain, combined, carry hundreds of Tomahawk cruise missiles, each capable of accurately hitting land targets 1,000 miles away;
- Fitzgerald, Murphy and Meyer each has one 5-in. gun, while Lake Champlain has two, capable of firing a 70-lb. projectile up to 13 nautical miles away at a rate of 16-20 rounds per minute;
- Lake Champlain also carries eight harpoon missiles that can destroy enemy ships over 60 miles away; and
- Michigan's armaments are classified, but it is speculated to be carrying carrying over 150 Tomahawk cruise missiles, and has the capability of landing a Navy SEAL team.

The president also spent the weekend reaching out to allies in the Asia-Pacific region, garnering support for a tough stance on North Korea. He spoke Saturday night with Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte and Sunday with the prime ministers of Thailand and Singapore in separate phone calls.

The goal, according to administration officials, is to apply both diplomatic and economic pressure on the Hermit Kingdom. The president has also been in continuous contact with his Chinese and Japanese counterparts regarding the issue.

The North Korean nuclear test facility at Punggye-ri has appeared to be prepping for a sixth test, according to numerous reports from the region. The Trump administration has been signaling that such a test could be a "red line" that will trigger a much stronger response from the U.S. and its allies. {eoa}

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## **4 Important Principles for Stewarding Your Prophetic Dreams**

If you have ever awakened from a full night's sleep feeling tired because it felt like you were in a war all night, you probably were. Did you know that there is no day or night in the spirit world? It may be surprising, but our spirit is always awake, even when our body is asleep.

I think of some dreams, which I call "reality dreams," as memories of an experience we had as we slept. They are real experiences that our spirit has with the spirit world while our soul is sleeping. A great example of this is Joseph's famous dream found in Matthew 2:13-14. Another type of God-dream is what I call "virtual reality dreams." This kind of dream is actually a vision of the mind that we have while we sleep and remember when we wake up. Virtual reality dreams, or visions of the night, are to your spirit what movies are to your natural man. Nebuchadnezzar had one of these kinds of dreams in Daniel 2:31-36. We know it was this type of dream because it was symbolic and needed an interpretation.

### **Dreams Can Change Your Life!**

A friend of ours told us how his son's marriage was restored by a dream. His son and daughter-in-law were in a year-long, ugly custody battle over their only son. Their marriage was over, and although the husband had had a change of heart and wanted to reconcile with his wife, she remained hurt, angry and bitter. She refused any counsel. She broke all ties with the family and would have nothing to do with any of them.

The night before they were to go to divorce court, his daughter-in-law had a dream. In it she saw herself standing at the edge of a beautiful meadow. Her husband was standing in the middle of the field, and suddenly Jesus appeared in the field. He looked over at her, smiled and then walked through the meadow to her husband and gave him a hug. The scene changed. Her father-in-law was now standing in the center of the field and again the Lord appeared. He looked over at her a second time and smiled while He embraced her father-in-law. In the next scene, she saw herself standing in the field of flowers. Jesus appeared off in the distance, walking through the meadow toward her. Just as the Lord reached out to embrace her, she woke up. She knew the Lord was giving her the grace she needed to restore her relationship with her husband. She got out of bed at five o'clock in the morning and called her husband. They reconciled that very day and lived happily ever after!

#### **4 Truths About Dreams**

Dreams are an amazing way to hear God. There are some important things to remember about dreams, and here are four basic truths I think are important for any believer who wants to grow in their dream life:

**1. Not all dreams are from God.** We can hear from four sources in the spirit realm—our spirit, the Holy Spirit, angels and evil spirits—and this is true even in our dreams. Not all dreams are from God.

**2. Just because we have dreams does not necessarily mean we are prophetic.** Remember, even wicked people in the Old Testament had dreams. Interpreting dreams is what makes us prophetic.

**3. Colors, numbers and other symbolic occurrences in dreams are very important to the interpretation of the dream.** But even as we learn to recognize consistencies in this symbolic

language, we need to remember that ultimately, the interpretation of dreams belongs to the Lord.

**4. If we want to have more dreams, we need to become good stewards of revelations we receive.** It is a great idea to put a notebook or recorder by your bed before you go to sleep. Pray and tell the Lord, "Your servant is listening." As soon as you have a dream, write it down or record all of the details you can remember, including the way you felt about the dream while you were having it. To have more dreams, become good stewards of the revelations received.

## **Job's Insights Into Dreams**

There is much to know about the mysterious world of dreams. Job gives us some insight into the nature of dreams and their purposes:

"For God speaks once, yes twice, yet no man does not perceive it. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls upon men, in slumber on their beds, then He opens the ears of men, and seals their instruction, that He might turn aside man from his purpose, and conceal pride from man. He keeps back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword" (Job 33:14-18).

Job says the dreams of God often go unnoticed. And he reinforces the fact that virtual reality dreams are visions of the night. He goes on to explain that many times, God uses dreams to change our attitude. If our soul is resisting the Lord, He waits until we are unconscious and then changes our heart through visions of the night. He even says that these midnight encounters can keep us from hell.

If dreams are that powerful, then I want to propose to you that a dream can impact your destiny, turn your heart towards God, bring clarity to a situation and even bring insight to problems in your life that seem hopeless. If that's the case, then let's be a people who notice the dreams God gives us and

stewards them well!

There is so much more to know about dreams and visions. John Paul Jackson, James and Michal Ann Goll and Cindy Jacobs have all written amazing books on the subject with deep insights into this language of God. I highly recommend their books.

Are you a dreamer? What are you doing to steward your dreams well? I'd love to hear about your process in the comments.  
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