

A GREAT Question For These Times

Gabriel L. Mancino



they will not stop at anything they imagine to do!" (Gen 11:6).

Youtube clips, some with science professionals, suggest that earthquakes and climate change, etc may be being caused by unbelievably-powerful installations such as **HAARP in Alaska** (there ARE others elsewhere in the world). Vibration has been used at low wattage to locate underground oil and gas deposits (HAARP's power is multiplied millions of times more! [a billion watts?!]).

The endless ingenuity of **Serbian mega-genius, Nikola Tesla**, (1856-1943) included technology that may now be perfected into **Weapons of Mass Destruction**, though that wasn't Tesla's purpose. Sci-fi profited from his mind, but not before bankers, industrialists and others milked and betrayed him. His Plan for **free electric power—including for cars—**would have made oil irrelevant! Google: **Nikola Tesla: The Forgotten Wizard**, and **The Tesla Conspiracy: Mark DeMucha** (many Parts, but great!). His vast work was taken after he died, and classified Top Secret. He was odd, but a super-genius, nonetheless.

In whatever way increased "natural disasters," etc. are occurring, **GOD** said that such "signs" of **"The Grand Finale"** in burning, dissolving elements should shock us and awaken us to prepare! Did you see in verse 9 (above left), that **God wants** us to repent and turn completely to Him... and that He doesn't want us to perish? **God never did** want us to perish. **"The God of the Old Testament,"** which some like to say was *cruel*, closes the Old Testament, telling us that He is sending **"Elijah"** to turn people to God and to each other **"before the dreadful day of the Lord...so that I do NOT strike the earth with utter destruction"** (Mal. 4: 5,6).

The Great Question of Peter in v.11, 12 he briefly and clearly answers in v. 13,14. Holiness is the only preparation for life and for death, as well as eternity. The "faith pilgrims" of Heb. 11 perfectly saw *that* (see inside), for they were looking for the same "city" that we **ALL** should be looking and preparing for! **Question: Are YOU prepared?**

MORE GREAT QUESTIONS: Jesus asked, **"For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"** (Mark 8:36,37). Obvious answer. Your **SOUL** is more important than anything in the world...and so is your neighbour's! Powerful world banker, J. P. Morgan, went against Tesla (above)...one reason being that Tesla wanted to give the whole world **FREE** electric power. God only knows how much good is being kept from this world by human sinfulness! God stopped man at Babel's Tower (Gen.11:1-9). Babel's next time is final! (Rev.17,18). Be ready!!

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"AGAINST HOPE!"

Something to consider...
"when things look hopeless"

Gabriel L. Mancino



Last month's front page article was titled: **"A Decade of Hope."** This article presents a blending "flip-side feature," for holding on to **hope** is **often a battle!** Our hope can appear to be smashed repeatedly. Many examples encourage us to never give up! Imagine a kind of "cheering section," in the arena of life, saying to us: "Yes, yes, yes! Go, go, go! You can do it!"

Hebrews 11, in the Bible, "paints a picture" similar to the encouraging stadium scene above. Heb. 11 is called "The Faith Chapter." For some reason, God especially lifts Abraham up to our view as **an example of faith and hope.**

The Bible does *not* lift Abraham, Moses or any other (including angels!) during or after Bible times above Jesus Christ. There has never been any other

person or being equal to Christ, nor will there ever be—except God Himself. One reason Abraham is used to illustrate faith and hope is because Abraham was *only* human, whereas Jesus was *Divine [God]*, as well as human.

In Genesis 17, God called Abraham to walk a *perfect* walk in front of Him! Wow! You could say, **"Impossible! No Hope!"** This is an important and exciting point. Referring to how we obtain "salvation from sin," the Bible says: *"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be guaranteed to all the descendants; not to that only which is of the law [i.e. Jewish], but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, (as it is written, 'I have made you a father of many nations') in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did—; who, against hope, believed in hope, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, 'So shall your descendants be' "* (Rom. 4:16-18).

(continued inside)

Though AGAINST difficulties, we may ALL become "NATURALIZED CITIZENS" of another world—"heaven"—and your citizenship is to start NOW! But people are so much "at home" in this present world of sin. A little girl walked straight for the first time, after having a corrective operation. She burst into tears as she fell into her mother's arms, saying "Mommy, I'm all crooked!" A man, used to riding bicycle with crooked handlebars, had them straightened by someone...then fell off! He, too, thought straightness was crookedness. A woman in polluted NY went upstate and complained "The air is so pure it made me sick." The Prodigal Son (Luke 15) was never "at home" while in "a far country"—no, not until he got back to his father's embrace...where we ALL belong! NOW.

“AGAINST HOPE”

(continued from front page)

The part above in brackets that starts “as it is written,” is a quote from Gen.17 from which I mentioned God calling Abraham to walk “perfectly.” **Impossible?** Add to that God’s promise to him of having as many descendants as the stars in the sky and as the sand along the shore. Abraham and his wife were both too old to have children!

Hopelessness roots in self-centeredness. God’s dealing with and promise to Abraham was not exclusively for himself and the Hebrew (Jewish) people, but it reaches out to embrace us all who follow God “in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham”(v.12). God’s true people must get beyond *themselves* and “*their group*,” and must reach *others*...in the spirit and manner of Christ!

I hope you ALL the very best GOOD in every aspect of life... despite difficulties you face. Immeasurably higher than *this*, however, is that “very best” I desire for you in matters that are *spiritual* and *eternal*. The eternal far outweighs the earthy. As Samuel Chadwick prayed, “be *thoroughly practical*, AND “*intensely spiritual*.”

Jacob, another man of faith listed in Heb.11, was the grandson of Abraham. Jacob was the son of God’s promised miracle-child to Abraham and his old wife. That miracle child was Isaac. Jacob is another example of facing impossibilities **against hope**.

Bible biographies can have you on the edge of your seat! Jacob’s story is told in Genesis 25-49. In older age, when food was scarce due to famine, he sent ten sons to Egypt to buy food where they had heard there was plenty for sale. His son, Joseph, who he thought had been killed years before, was now second leader of Egypt, and controlling all food sales. One of the ten sons was imprisoned as a spy, while the other nine returned home from Egypt with food. They were to bring their youngest brother the next time they came, in order to prove their story was not false. When Jacob heard all of

this, he cried out: “*Joseph is gone, and Simeon is gone, and now you want to take Benjamin away: all these things are against me!*” (Gen. 42:36). In that instant, Jacob felt that his hope was gone. “**Against me**” literally means “*upon me*,” like heavy loads, speeding my death, and more than I can bear. Oh, what a glorious surprise was in store for Jacob and the whole family!

Sometimes **questions** are asked, that are actually **statements**. A well-known one in the Bible says: “*What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?*” (Rom. 8:31). The context makes it plain that God’s provision for us through Christ puts us “on the winning side”...and that writer spoke from long and **hostile** experience! The Bible has thrilling examples of victory in the face of **impossibility**. Yet, it is gross error to suggest that if you “walk with God,” then nothing “bad” will happen...that you will always have great health, plenty of money, etc.

The front page mentions Heb 11—“The Faith Chapter.” **True faith** is closely linked to **genuine hope**. I say “genuine” hope because the majority of folk build their hope on “sinking sand,” rather than “solid rock.” In the words of the great 17th century Englishman, John Bunyan, many are trusting in “**Vain Hope**.” Bunyan’s classic book, *Pilgrim’s Progress*, vividly tells how you can have a **well-founded hope**, but that it must be maintained through great difficulties—“**against hope!**” Some editions of his book have the original Bible verses in the margin. Bunyan was brilliant AND Biblical.

Faith’s “Hall of Fame” in Heb.11 includes ALL, not just “the good bits.” “*By faith*” people saw wonderful things take place that we would all love to experience—so the chapter tells us. **But it doesn’t miss a beat in the music of faith**, as it tells of “*others*” (v.35-38) who faced **horrific** things that the average person would instantly avoid and reject. What a list!

A shocking feature is that Heb. 11’s “*faith models*” did not see the outward

“evidence” of their faith and hope, yet they still believed. Notice—“*These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth* (v.13). The “*others*” (v. 39, 40) had a similar report: “*And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.*” A true, God-given faith and hope has the power from inward witness that is greater than outward “evidence.” I say that carefully. And, yes, I desire to see fruit, too, especially *spiritual* fruit!

Something that is in all-out warfare “**against hope**” is “*this present world*” (as in Gal. 1:4 & Titus 2:12— where “world” also means *age, time* or *life*). The people in v.13 above were assured fully, they held tightly, and confessed unashamedly. It called them “*strangers and pilgrims*”—like foreigners... immigrants! None of us are “home” yet, but we will *all* arrive there one day...in one of two places! *These* people made it clear by words and by life that they were looking for “*a better country; a heavenly*” for they knew that “*God had prepared them a city!*” (v. 16). If they had wanted to, they had plenty of opportunity to return to where they had come from (v.15). Those who say they are walking with God, while at the same time are so very much at home “*in this present world*,” are lying to themselves. John says “*If any love the world, then the love of the Father is NOT in him*” (1 Jn 2:15). The world is “**against hope**.” Yet, like the people in Heb. 11, our lives may clearly prove what direction we are going, and for what purpose and by what motivation we are living.

A man had deeply sympathised with another’s terrible rope burn. His pity was limited, however, *until* one day a young cow, whose rope *he* was holding, ran off, pulling its rope through *his own* hands as he held on, and painfully tore his flesh. **THEN**, he knew *by experience*, what he knew before only *in theory*! The Old Testament tells us that God sympathised

with the hurting and anguish of man, whom He had created. Yet, God’s sympathy and compassion did not remain in the clouds of heaven, but descended to earth in Christ, where the rope was pulled through *HIS* hands!

In view of this, **the writer of Hebrews encourages our embattled hope**, saying: “*For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin*” (4: 15), then again, “*For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted*” (2: 18). In all temptation Jesus faced, including directly from the devil himself, Jesus did not sin—“*yet without sin*” (above).

“**Good Friday**” (2 April) recalls Jesus’ death on the Cross. Even facing the Cross, Jesus maintained His life-long loving submission to the Father. St. Peter describes that “*Passion*” in these words: “*For to THIS were you called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously*” (1 Pet. 2:21-23).

Peter says that facing the Cross, Jesus “*committed Himself to God, who judges righteously*.” We are called to follow Jesus as described above. The situation wasn’t easy for Jesus, nor for many others then and now. Things often seem to make no sense at all to you and me, either...**but don’t give up hope!** I have often quoted Abraham’s words long ago: “*Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*” (Gen.18:25). Abraham’s **question** was really a **statement** about God. He knew that God **WOULD** do what was right, so he could **hope against hope!**

How much of today’s great suffering is being purposely done and allowed—*by MAN*, not by *God*? No wonder King David chose to fall into the hands of God rather than the hands of man! (1 Chron. 21:13). **His hope** was in God and His great mercies! All of London needs to whole-heartedly seek and find this God of mercy... **even “against hope.”**

We meet at Christ Church on the corner of Brent Street and Heriot Road in Hendon (NW4) at 5:45 pm Sundays. Nearest Tube: Hendon Central.