



## The Burning Bush - Online article archive

### An atheist's empty boasting

"Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth," Proverbs 27:1, KJV.

An Irish biopsychologist, Dr Nigel Barber, believes that religion will be all but replaced by 2041! Dr Nigel Barber's new book, published earlier this year, "Why atheism will replace religion" says the market for formal religions is being reduced by modern substitutes such as sport and entertainment, especially in more developed countries. Barber pointed out that atheists are more concentrated in richer countries and religion will decrease as personal wealth increases. Of religious groups Barber said, "Noisy as they can be, such groups are tiny minorities of the global population and they will become even more marginalised as global prosperity increases and standards of living improve."

The BBC Northern Ireland religious programme, 'Sunday Sequence' carried an interview with Dr Barber on Lord's Day, October 13th, in which he repeated his claims. A recording of the programme is available for a short time at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b03d5c2q>. The interview begins about 14 minutes 20 seconds into the recording.

After the interview there followed a discussion in which one evangelical, Peter Lynas, a Pentecostalist and NI director of the Evangelical Alliance, sought to refute what Dr Barber said. He was successful in pointing out a number of flaws in the biopsychologist's logic, but in arguing that Christianity is growing he was making a serious error of judgment and more importantly, he was contradicting what the Saviour has to say on the matter of the end times.

What passes as Christianity today and which apparently shows signs of increase, is in fact far from being that religion promoted by the Saviour in the New Testament. "Christianity" world-wide is seriously corrupted and by and large apostatised from God and His truth. Therefore, to claim that Christianity is increasing and enlarging is to mistake false forms of Biblical Christianity for the New Testament Christianity.

That does not make boastful Dr Barber's assertions true, however. He claims that the increasing affluence of mankind will undermine religion and remove man's need for God! There is a correlation between rising affluence and departure from God. Of that there is no doubt.

God's Word makes that plain.

"And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end; and thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day. And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God," Deuteronomy 8:13-20, KJV.

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy," 1 Timothy 6:17, KJV.

Riches tend to make man believe that he has no further need of God and His grace! In so far as Dr Barber's observations are based upon this truth then he is correct.

However, the Saviour gives us the definitive revelation of how the thinking and the religious affiliations of mankind will develop as this age nears its end. What He says is often overlooked by Christians and non-



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Speaking of the events which will take place upon the earth prior to His return, the Saviour says: "And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come," Matthew 24:11-14, KJV.

Again, He refers to these events in Luke 18:8, KJV. "I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

He here clearly indicates that true faith will be hard to find upon the earth when He returns because of the labours of the false prophets and the lies they have propagated. Paul repeats this truth. "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived," 2 Timothy 3:13, KJV.

Far from becoming stronger, the number of true believers will decline. That is the teaching of the Saviour. Therefore it is foolish to try and contradict the likes of Dr Barber by arguing for an increasing and enlarging "Christianity". The world is going to be swept by lawlessness and Antichristianity as we near the end of the age. It will culminate in the scenes set forth in Revelation 13, the rise to power of the "Beast", the Antichrist and the adoring of him by mankind.

Far from man turning from religion, Christ says man will turn even more fervently to religion but it will be the religion of a false god!

Man is an atheist by nature, as far as the true God is concerned. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God," Psalm 14:1, KJV. He instinctively rejects the existence, the person, the revelation of God given in the Bible. Adam, in the very first action he took in regard to God after his fall into sin, was to hide from him. "And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden," Genesis 3:8, KJV.

Natural man is still hiding from God amongst the trees of false religion and denial of the Bible.

Man's atheism will end at the return of Christ. The cry of the army of Antichrist as the Saviour visibly descends from Heaven to take vengeance upon His enemies illustrates this. "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Revelation 6:15-17, KJV. The knowledge of the existence of God, long suppressed and repudiated, breaks through in this terrified cry from the lips of wicked Christ-defying men.

Upon the return of Christ, He will establish His millennial kingdom and "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea," Isaiah 11:9, KJV. Man will no longer be able to deny the existence of God.

At the root of atheism is the fact that Christianity is a supernatural religion. That is, man cannot become a Christian by his own efforts or power. Please consider these verses.

"The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one," Psalm 14:2-3, KJV.

"For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: they would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof," Proverbs 1:29-30, KJV.



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"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," John 6:44, KJV.

"And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father," John 6:65, KJV.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," John 3:3, KJV.

To become a Christian one must experience a "birth that is from above" or the New Birth. The sinner is called to faith in Christ by the supernatural working of the Holy Spirit, as is explained in the Shorter Catechism in answer to the question - "What is effectual calling?" "Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, He doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel."

Thus the elect sinner is brought to faith in Christ by the working of God's Spirit within his soul, convincing him of his sinful state and the dire consequences of that; revealing Christ and His love and mercy set forth in the gospel; renewing his will, persuading and enabling him to embrace Christ by faith as He is freely offered to us in the gospel.

Thus, and only thus, is man delivered from his natural atheism. He will remain in darkness and defiance until that moment when, by sovereign grace, he is delivered "from the power of darkness, . . . translated . . . into the kingdom of his dear Son," Colossians 1:13, KJV.

The presence of atheism amongst the nations is not the result of economic upturns or social improvements but rather is the outworking of man's fallen and corrupt nature whereby, in his blind stubbornness, he rejects and repudiates that which the Bible declares and which the creation around endorses in a language universal to mankind.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world," Psalm 19:1-4, KJV.

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15th October, 2013.