

Prophecy in Perspective

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An Email Newsletter

Our Times - *Prophecy in current events*

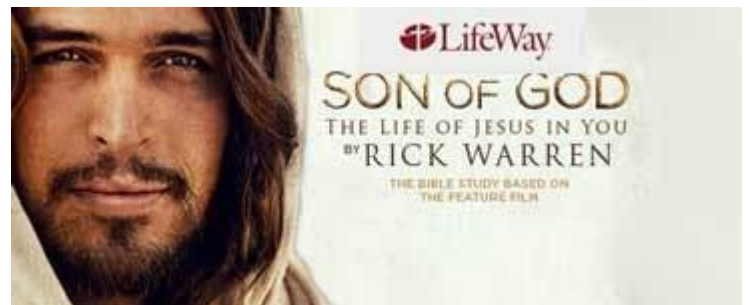
Another Movie About Jesus? Proceed With Caution and Discernment!

"For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him." (2 Corinthians 11:4)

I believe the Jesus depicted in the new movie "Son of God" is actually **"another Jesus."** In the above verse, Paul is gently chiding the worldly Corinthian Christians to be discerning and NOT to receive **"another Jesus."** The Corinthians were focused on popularity and going with the admired trends and thus prone to be easily led astray by clever false teachers and false teachings. This is why he wrote these words in such an ironic, and even, sarcastic way. He wanted to get the message across to them that they needed to use real caution as to what teachers and teachings they listen to. The Amplified Version clearly expresses Paul's sentiments in this verse:

"For [you seem readily to endure it] if a man comes and preaches another Jesus than the One we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the [Spirit] you [once] received or a different gospel from the one you [then] received and welcomed; you tolerate [all that] well enough!" (2 Cor 11:4)

Any movie on the Life of Jesus Christ should be viewed as a teaching about Jesus Christ. This is especially true for the movie, "Son of God." That this is true is shown in the fact that Rick Warren, in cooperation with Life-Way publishers has already written a six part teaching series for churches based on the movie, "Son of God." However, Paul, as well as other Bible writers expressed great caution as to



how important it is for believers to be discerning as to what is being taught about Jesus Christ. This is because Jesus predicted that in the latter days. Matthew 24:4, 5, 11 say: ***"Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many... And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many."***

There have been several movies that have depicted the life of Christ. Most are emotionally moving to the viewer, but the real "proof" is to be found in the accuracy of the portrayal. This is how to determine if the

"Jesus" that is being depicted is truly the Jesus of the Scriptures, or **"another Jesus"** presented to convey the views of false teachers and false teachings.

The movie, "Son of God," is a distillation of the History Channel's "The Bible," which was produced by former "Touched by an Angel" star, Roma Downey, and her husband. It aired last year (2013). Some of the scenes in the made for TV version are used in the movie, the "Son of God." There was a scene of Jesus' encounter with Satan which appeared in the TV version that has been cut in the movie version. This is because many people commented that the actor portraying Satan in the TV version resembled President Barak Obama. Roma Downey announced that this was unintentional and so she completely cut that scene from the movie version. She boasted that Satan will not have any part in the movie...



"For the movie version she said, "I wanted all of the focus to be on Jesus." "It gives me great pleasure to tell you that the devil is on the cutting-room floor," producer Roma Downey told the Hollywood Reporter.. " This is now a movie about Jesus, the son of God, and the devil gets no more screen time." (*Los Angeles Times, 2/18/2014* Satan cut from 'Son of God' after Obama look-alike controversy)

But this is not a choice that Roma Downey has the liberty to make on such a pivotal and strategic matter such as Jesus' victory over Satan at the temptation, or the vital fact of Satan's continual efforts to deceive, hinder and destroy Jesus throughout the presentation of the Savior in all four Gospels, including the Gospel of John, upon which this movie is said to be based. Roma Downey may have thought it was a good idea to leave Satan "on the cutting-room floor," but the Holy Spirit, through the gospel writers thought differently.

Further, the TV version depicting Jesus' encounter with the devil at the temptation, showed the stone actually becoming bread in Jesus' hands. This is unfortunate since the Bible's true record clearly indicates that Jesus **refused** to follow Satan's suggestion to **"command that these stones be made bread."** (**Matthew 4:3**) The Scriptures warn us about the consequences of adding to God's Word: **"Do not add to His words, lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar."** (**Proverbs 30:6; and see also Revelation 22:18-19**)

I will mention a second and third depiction of Jesus and His ministry in this movie which are especially disturbing to me. The second, is the scene of Jesus' raising Lazarus from the dead. John's record of this describes Jesus performing this miracle while standing outside of the tomb where **"He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth."** (**John 11:43**). But, the movie depicts Jesus actually going into the tomb and raising Lazarus by kissing him on the top of his head. Yet, biblically, any such physical contact with a dead body by Jesus would have made Him unclean according to Hebrew law. (Numbers 9:10) This is enough to know that Jesus would never have taken this approach.

Further, in the movie, the body of Lazarus looked fresh, yet in the biblical record, Martha testified, **"Lord, by this time he stinks: for he has been dead four days!"** (**John 11:39**) The point being that Lazarus was dead long enough for the spirit of Lazarus to have departed the body and for decomposition to have been well under way, thus further emphasizing the fact that he was really deceased and not simply unconscious. In addition,

the record in John makes clear that Lazarus was **"bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin."** (In the movie, Lazarus' face is depicted as uncovered before he is raised.) **"Bound hand and foot with grave clothes"** was the condition that Lazarus was in when he **"came forth,"** from the grave with Jesus and all the others standing outside of the tomb. **(John 11:44)** Yet, for some reason, Roma Downey, her husband, and their film advisers which included (but aren't limited to): Joel Osteen and his wife, preacher T.D. Jakes (a Oneness Pentecostal Modalist, non-Trinitarian), and Pastor Rick Warren, despite Paul's caution **"Do not go beyond what is written" (1 Corinthians 4:6)** chose to depict Jesus as raising Lazarus, not by calling Him forth, as the mighty Word of God, but by kissing him back to life!

The other (third) depiction of Jesus' ministry and teaching that is disturbing to me is at the scene of the Last Supper. There Jesus is shown to quote John 14:6. The full quote of this important verse is: **"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'" But, the movie version has Jesus saying only the first half of this verse to His disciples, leaving off the all important "No one comes to the Father except through Me."**

I should note that Roma Downey is a graduate of the University of Santa Monica, which is a New Age school, with a degree in Spiritual Psychology. I believe Roma Downey is a New Ager. Could it be that Roma Downey and her husband, Mark Burnett, as well as their spiritually diverse and theologically lightweight team of ecumenical advisors did not want to offend any other religions? It would seem so!

Yet, Jesus was very clear about who He was and He was unambiguous about the need for all who are lost to trust in Him as their Savior in order to be saved from their sins. In the Scripture, Jesus was clear that there is no other Savior. He was and is the One and Only Son of God. At the beginning of the movie Jesus tells Peter (?) in the boat that His purpose was to "change the world." Yet Jesus clearly said that He came to preach the gospel, and to seek and to save that which is lost!" (Luke 4:18; 19:10) The Jesus of the movie seems to be unclear about the gospel! This is why I believe the "Jesus" of the movie, "Son of God," is actually **"another Jesus,"** and not the Jesus of the Bible! We should take Jesus' warning about the latter day and the arising of false Christs. Be careful not to surrender your biblical discernment over movies, books, or teachers simply because they are popular or well promoted. Especially in these days when we are seeing prophecy being fulfilled with great clarity, we need to follow Paul's admonition to **"Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." (1 Thessalonians 5:21)**

Of course, this will take courage for pastors and leaders take a stand against the strong tide of the times. Yet this is just what Bible believing Christians are called to do! What a great opportunity to witness about the true Jesus Christ Who died for the sins of the world and rose again, and Who is coming back again by pointing out the false depictions of Jesus so prevalent today in the media, and replacing them with a clear testimony of the true Son of God from the Word of God, the Bible. **"For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."** (Galatians 1:10) The producers want Christians and churches to use this movie to tell people about Jesus, but far better to skip this movie and just show them the Jesus of the Bible.

Is Gog and Magog Preparing for their Big Power Play of Ezekiel 38-39?

The Guardian and many other news outlets reported on the surprise visit of a Russian warship docking in Havana Harbor. With the massive Russian military build-up apparently because of the unrest in Ukraine, many are wondering what Putin is up to.

Russian Spy Ship Docks in Havana During Surprise Visit to Cuba

Arrival of Viktor Leonov SSV-175 warship follows announcement by Russia that it plans to increase military presence worldwide. A Russian spy ship has slipped into Havana for an unannounced visit, a day after the country's defense minister announced plans to expand Russia's worldwide military presence.



The Viktor Leonov SSV-175, part of the Vishnya class of intelligence ships, quietly entered Cuban waters this week and docked at a cruise ship terminal on Thursday, its crew casually taking in the view of the old colonial section of the Cuban capital as passersby looked on in surprise.

Russian warships have come and gone in Cuba since the collapse of the Soviet Union, usually with much publicity and the opportunity for Cubans to visit the ship. This time there was no mention in the Cuban state-run media.

On Wednesday in Moscow, the defense minister, Sergei Shoigu, said Russia planned to increase its military projection abroad, including in Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua.

Ezekiel 38 and 39 predicts that Russia will gather strength from Middle Eastern, predominantly Muslim countries that are sworn enemies of Israel, and attack Israel in the latter days. Russia's present threats and manipulations toward Ukraine, may well be part of a developing scenario which will culminate in Russia and



her allies attempting to invade Israel. Ezekiel 38:13 indicates that the leader of Russia will not be threatened by passive nations that will stand by and simply watch, while issuing nothing more than diplomatic platitudes and rhetorical questions. We are certainly seeing this attitude with President Obama, and Secretary of State John Kerry, who are weak in their defense of Israel and generally passive in their actions and policies toward Russian build up and political power plays. Russian President Putin knows that he has about three more years of weak American leadership to make

his aggressive moves globally. The appearance of this Russian warship in Havana seemed to be timed with Secretary of Defense, Chuck Hagel's announced intention on Monday (2/24/2014) of cutting America's military strength to that of pre-World War II levels. This seems to perfectly time the arrival of this Russian War Ship to harbor just 100 miles off the coast of the United States. The War of Gog and Magog could certainly be setting up at this time.

More Movies Coming Out on the Bible

There is yet another movie coming out about a biblical character, this time, it is about Noah. Creationist, Ken Ham, believes this one is going to be riddled with inaccuracies to the Bible's account. Here is some of what He says about this movie:

Is the Movie Trailer Promoting the Blockbuster film *Noah*—to be Released in March—Part of a Hollywood Con?

Why would I even suggest that? Well, if you watch the movie's trailer, it seems that the film might be compatible with the biblical account of the Flood and Ark of Noah. But I believe the trailer was put together very carefully and cleverly to attract Christians and Jews—those who might be inclined to pay to see the film and not speak out against it. In fact, many Christians and Christian organizations have already come out publicly to say they can't wait to see this movie. But what will *Noah*, with movie star Russell Crowe, really show? Should Christians promote this movie just based on what Hollywood is letting them see?

We have heard from various sources—including two close friends of AiG who watched a rough cut of the film—that it is not at all faithful to the biblical account in Genesis. The final movie will probably be very unbiblical in some bizarre and shocking ways.

For example, the main characters of the movie are Noah, his wife, and three sons—and one little girl they rescued after all in her family were murdered by an evil tribe. She was badly injured when they found her, but Noah's wife placed healing nectar on her stomach and she later grew up to become the eldest son's wife. For the longest time she was barren in the womb until Noah's wife convinced Methuselah to bless her womb—against Noah's wishes.

Noah at first is portrayed as a humble yet strong good man—a father and husband who protected his family from the evil that had come upon the world. But as he helped build the Ark, he was portrayed more like a basket-case who was convinced that his family was the last generation. He repeated over and over again that God would not let them repopulate since God would replant Eden without man and perfection would be reestablished with the "innocent animals" God brought on the Ark. Even when Noah's eldest son brought news to the family on the Ark that his wife was expecting, the movie's Noah said essentially, "If it is a male, he shall live. If a girl, I will kill her because it is not God's will for man to repopulate." (*Around the World with Ken Ham*, Newsletter, answersingenesis.org/blogs/ken-ham/2013/11/19/dont-be-taken-in-by-the-noah-movies-promotion/)

As we see with the movie about Jesus, "Son of God," and with this movie about Noah, or any media rendition of stories and events from the Bible, especially in these End Times, while we are watching for the coming of the Lord, we need to be **discerning** and to **test all these things by the Word of God**. God will not bless compromise of His Word, but He will bless faithfulness!

"But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." (1 Peter 4:7)

Prophecy in Perspective, Copyright, vol. no. 66 - February 28, 2014

*(Note: If you would like to interact with Dr. Downing concerning this newsletter, views, etc. you can "blog" with him at prophecyinperspective.com. If you would like to subscribe to this newsletter at no charge, please send your name and email address to: sgdowning@bellsouth.net. Also, you can purchase his book, "Good News From a Far Country", a study in the book of Daniel [\$15]; "Becoming Mighty in Spirit...through Revelation's Prophecies" [\$10]; or his latest book, "Becoming Mighty in Spirit...through Developing a Prophetic Walk...A study in the lives and ministries of Elijah and Elisha" [\$10] by contacting him. **Dr. Downing is teaching his NEW book, "God's Unfolding Purpose and Unfailing Power." Contact him for space availability and location and/or to obtain a copy of this book.***