

Divine Director

God directs every action of every player in this great drama of life. This does not make us robots. Rather, we are clay in the hands of the Potter (Rom. 9:20-21). What a comforting place to be—once God gives you the faith to believe it.

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon only believed it after getting banished by God into the field for several months to eat grass like a cow. (I'm not saying he needed humbled or anything.) Here's what the king finally realized:



"All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, but He does according to His will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; and no one can ward off His hand or say to Him, What has Thou done?"

Not even religious people like to hear that all is of God. And yet all is of God. That's 2 Cor. 5:18. In my opinion, the sooner people accept that all is of God, the faster they'll progress in the things of God.

It is hard to fight against "all is of God." And yet it's even harder to regurgitate breakfast through a five-part stomach. ■

Martin Zender's Clanging Gong News

"If I know all mysteries and all knowledge, but have no love, I am a clanging gong" --1 Cor. 13:1-2



Two out of three isn't bad.

Everyone plays their part; even morons

God has given every single person in this universe a role to play. Some have lead roles, some supporting roles; some are good guys, some are bad guys, some haul around the equipment, or adjust the lights, or cater the meals, but all are necessary. There is not one person in this world who is expendable or unnecessary—no, not even morons.

An aside to the reader

Please do not deny that there are morons in this world. You know that there are morons galore on this planet. I'm not saying it's their fault, and neither am I saying that we should look down our noses at them as if it is. I'm just saying that these people exist. Agreed? Go ahead; be honest and admit it. It's okay; it may even be fun. Do not, for the sake of "loving your neighbor as yourself," be a moron-denier. Loving your neighbor and admitting the existence of morons are not mutually exclusive activities. God can certainly give you the ability to love your moron neighbor as yourself; I have done it myself.

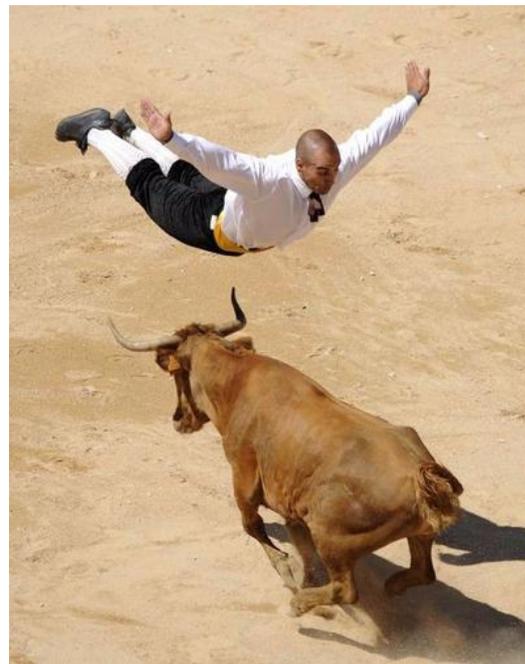
Go easy on 'em

Try to suppress your natural human tendency to condemn the players on this stage who have been cast in villainous roles, or even moronic ones. Do you see me condemning them? No, not at all. I am merely pointing them out. I remind you that God Himself has cast these players. I didn't invent this, it's Romans 9:17-24—the famous Potter and clay passage. God wrote that, not me, although I have been accused of having made it up. (I wish!) It is God Who purposely makes vessels both of honor and dishonor; He makes the wise, as well as the stupid. *God does this.* Believe me, if I had invented something as jaw-dropping as this, I'd have been bragging about it by now.

Hell, why not help 'em

Just because God made the less-than-bright, does not mean we should not try to help them. That would be fatalism. After all, God made dust too, but we still douse it with lemon-scented Pledge.

My recommendation is: No matter what line of salvation you're in (mental, emotional, physical, spiritual), do not lead a life of head-banging frustration if there are just some unwise people



in this world who you cannot save. Paul says after one and a second admonition (Titus 3:10), give up. In other words, don't beat a dead horse, folks. If the horse is alive, it will respond to the first or second whap to the flank. No re-

Go ahead; love your moron neighbor as yourself

sponse? Then forget it. Drink hot tea, go to bed, and have sweet dreams. It's not your fault that some people just can't be helped, and neither is it theirs. There is no condemnation for anyone; God has a plan for us all.

I love it when that happens.

Remember: It is completely normal to become upset and frustrated at stubborn, unrepentant people; I do it all the time—well, I do it a lot less than I used to. Just don't condemn the people. Do not judge them. Judging is God's business, and since He made 'em, He knows exactly what it will take to change 'em. ■

Revelation 101



The Lord Jesus Christ is coming. Does that sound scary? Some people think so because they don't know Him. Who is the Lord Jesus Christ? Is He not our Savior? Our Savior, then, is returning to Earth. How could that possibly frighten anyone? It will frighten those who do not yet know Him as Savior. He is not coming to punish, however, but to awaken. The world needs a huge wake-up call to Christ's Saviorhood, and it's going to get it. Big Time.

Thank God that we have received our wake-up call in the gentle nuances of everyday life. Okay, well, not exactly. I guess I'm speaking of "gentle" in relation to, say, ninety pound hailstones. It has taken many trials to break us and awaken us to our need for God. God is gracious in that He is going to do that for everyone. It's just that for some who are stubborn and hardened (and we are all still this way to some extent), it will take more.

UNVEILING

I realize, as I say this, that God is the One Who has ultimately hardened humanity (Rom. 11:32), but that's not the point. Hardened people require monumental shocks.

Here is another name for the book of Revelation: "**Monumental Shock.**"

The main purpose of the unveiling of Jesus Christ is to do what the title of the book says:

NOT YET—except for you It is not yet time for Christ to be unveiled to the world. God still hides Himself, revealing Himself only to those whom He nudges awake. It is the rarest of gifts to be chosen to believe NOW. Take time today to thank Him for graciously granting you faith (Phil. 1:29).

to unveil Jesus Christ—to unveil Him to a spiritually deaf and dumb world. And what do you know: "The Unveiling of Jesus Christ" is the title of the book; it is man, not God, who has called it, "Revelation." The first sentence of the book, however, is the *inspired* title, and the inspired title is, "The Unveiling of Jesus Christ." How picturesque.

We sit on the brink of a one-world government. The Arabs still hate the Israelis, only more so. We have the capability of destroying the planet with nuclear weapons. Rogue nations are about to get nukes. We are now engaged in a religious war, East against West, and vice-versa. In addition, the apostasy of the church is in full bloom. I speak of Christianity. Not only the political entities, but the religions of this world must be felled before the return of Christ—Christianity included. What you are seeing today in the pews of the western world is not the truth of Christ, or of Paul, but of apostasy *from* the truth. This began shortly after Paul's departure and is nearing its apex. It will blossom in all its terror when this whitewashed nation and the West in general assumes the mantle of world domination. This coming world domination of West over East is, in my estimation, the chief sign that we are experiencing the last days of this eon, or age. It is not the end of the whole world, or of God's entire purpose, but only of this age.

There is much more to come. Revelation does not end things, it begins things. It's the beginning of a new beginning.

Here is a new angle on the book of Revelation: How does the future look to God and Christ; what does it mean to *Them*? We are conditioned to think of what it means to us, but I challenge us to broaden our perspective. When we see the big picture in relation to a God Who is the Savior of all mankind (1 Tim. 4:10), we will look through the hard process toward the glorious goal—and be comforted. ■

BIRTH PANGS

IT'S ONLY A CRISIS, FOLKS

The Unveiling of Jesus Christ is the "pinch point" where evil eons turn to good. There is one hell of a birth pang coming. But here is a helpful bit of information: IT'S ONLY A CRISIS. I'm serious. What is a crisis? The Japanese have a two part symbol for the word; the two symbols depict 1) trouble and 2) opportunity. This is God's "opportunity" (necessary evil) to prepare the world for blessing.

A woman's birth pang is an excellent analogy. My wife birthed three children. With our firstborn, Melody felt like she was dying. Ten



minutes later—strangely enough—tears of joy ran down her face for the joy of holding her son.

God's pangs are sharp, but mercifully short. All the pain will be forgotten in light of the ensuing glory. No pain/no glory. This seems to be God's way. ■

Q&A

You always talk about how God is love. But have you forgotten that He is a just God as well? Which is greater—His love or His justice?

God's love *and* His justice met at the cross. As you consider what Christ suffered for the sake of our sins, how can anyone say that God's justice has ignored the problem of Sin? The six, terrible hours at Calvary settled the sin issue once and for all. Now, God can luxuriate in His love. *If only we could learn to do the same.* ■

Rants & Stuff

The Apostle Paul says we should not murmur (Philippians 2:14). Therefore, I shall rant.

We're all human; even Jimmy Page



He just wanted to look around

I suppose that the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, OH, is one of those few places where an employee can wear sunglasses indoors and get away with it. This was the case with Robert, anyway.

I perused the Halls of Rock not long ago, standing at The Wall—a tribute to the band Pink Floyd. The white wall contained black, handwritten verse—verse that I had not bothered to read in previous visits; verse that I would not have read now, were it not for Robert.

An older man in a white mustache accosted me, breathless. “Do you know that Roger Waters himself wrote this verse? We hung him from a

cable one afternoon, and he wrote this in his own hand. Have you read it? It’s about the fleeting nature of fame. It’s about self—about discovering self. It’s about pain and humility. It’s about waking up and appreciating life before it’s all too late. It’s about revelation, man. It happens to all of us, even rock stars.”

It took me a while to realize that this gung-ho grandfather—wearing dark sunglasses cheap enough to make ZZ Top proud—was an employee of the Rock Hall, and dedicated to the proposition of unveiling the human side of the sometimes cold machinations of Rock music.

Before letting the Floyd Revelation sink fully in, Robert launched into the Zeppelin Encounter: “There I was late last year,” he said, “standing at the door, staring down at people’s wrists to make sure they had their wristbands on. Suddenly, I see a wrist without a band. I look up to say, ‘Excuse me, sir, but you need a wristband,’ and who do I look into the eyes of, but Jimmy Page. *Jimmy Frickin’ Page! Led Zeppelin guitar god, right? Forget about it!* He looks at me and says, ‘I was wondering if you’d mind if I just walked around a little bit. I won’t cause any trouble.’



“Can you imagine that, kid? He wants to be one of the crowd, to sink into the mass of humanity. I’ll never forget that. Will you?”

I was almost too stunned to answer. “No,” I said. “Thanks to you, Robert, I never will forget it.”

Humanity beats with a common heart

Humanity beats with a common heart, yes, even those hearts accompanied by bass drums and electric keyboards. The sun shone that day in the Rock Hall, even through the fog of fame, frenzy, destruction, and death. It shone from without—through the glass prisms overhead—but also from within. It is much harder to see from within. One needs help to see that; one requires accompaniment. A single instrument, alone, does not a symphony make. God brings enlightenment—sometimes from behind sunglasses, and sometimes face to face. ■

Romans 11:36—The Simplicity of God

Romans 11:36 is one of my favorite verses, and the simplest explanation of God and the universe: “**All is out of God, through God, and into God.**” It’s so simple that a six-year old could probably understand it—well, maybe a mature seven year-old. All things started in God, all things exist because of God, and all things end in God. Easy, right? And yet this truth is hid from

the so-called wise and prudent of this age, the kind of folks who love the elongated verbal hyperbole of the so-called intellectuals. If you want to know truth, adopt the mind of a child. Our Lord, drawing a little one to His breast, said: “Whoever, then, will be humbling himself as this little child, is the greatest in the kingdom of the heavens.”

The least shall become the greatest. I’m pretty sure that this is a divine principle. ■

