In spite of the fact that it is entirely unscriptural, *The Young Messiah* has been endorsed by some 50 Christian leaders, from Catholic to “evangelical,” including prominent Southern Baptists. Johnny Hunt, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Georgia, and former president of the SBC, says, “*The Young Messiah* is incredibly entertaining but just as much, it is spiritually inspiring and stimulating as we contemplate what the early years of Jesus’ life entailed. You MUST see it.” Jay Dennis, pastor of Church at the Mall, a Southern Baptist congregation in Lakeland, Florida, says, “I want every pastor, priest, Christian leader, follower of Jesus and even those who are not believers to see *The Young Messiah*. You will be taken into an atmosphere where you are captivated at how Jesus must have dealt with being fully human and fully God.” The movie is loosely based on the novel *Christ The Lord: Out of Egypt* by Anne Rice, who writes erotic/occultic fiction. In 1998 she turned from atheism to Roman Catholicism, but in 2010, she quit “being Christian” because she refuses to be “anti-gay, anti-feminist, anti-secular humanism, and anti-science.” *The Young Messiah* follows the mythical journey from Alexandria, Egypt, to Jerusalem of a seven-year-old, long-haired “Jesus” and his parents. The child Jesus performs miracles, including raising the dead, but he doesn’t know that he is the Son of God. This is clearly a false christ, which the Bible so forcefully warns about (e.g., Mat. 24:4-5; 2 Cor. 11:4). The true Christ knew who He was, did not have to be helped by His parents, and He did no miracles until the wedding at Cana at the beginning of His ministry at age 30. “But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother’s breasts” (Psalm 22:9)

**HUNDREDS OF INDIAN AND NEPAL WOMEN MURDERED AFTER BEING BRANDED WITCHES**

In a mere two year period between 2012-2014, as many as 127 women were branded as witches and hung in Jharkhand, a state in eastern India (“127 women were branded witches,” *The Hindu*, Mar. 16, 2016). The same thing happens often in Nepal. Earlier this month, a mob burned alive a 40-year-old woman in Chitwan district, Nepal, after a shaman fingered her as a witch who caused the drowning of a boy. “Hundreds of lower-caste women are thought to suffer abuse at the hands of ‘witch hunters’ every year in Nepal” (“Nepal mob burns ‘witch’ alive,” *The Telegraph*, Mar. continued on next page...
HUNDREDS OF INDIAN AND NEPAL WOMEN...

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18, 2016). When a woman is suspected of causing an event such as an accident, sickness, or death, charges are trumped up against her and a gullible population take matters into their own hands. The murders are motivated by idolatrous superstition as well as revenge and greed. Anuja Agrawal, a professor at Delhi University, says, “Often there are long-term animosities between the perpetrators and victims which translate into witch-hunt. Witch-hunt is a convenient mechanism to get rid of not only women but also entire families” (“Greed for property and power behind Jhakhand witch hunts,” Hindustan Times, Sep. 19, 2015).

ARCHAEOLOGISTS FIND EBONY STYLUS AT UR

In late 2015, archaeologists working at ancient Ur found an ebony stylus for inscribing cuneiform on clay tablets. This is the first ebony object found there and is further evidence of the city's trade with the Indus civilization in South Asia (also known as Harappan and Meluhha). Elizabeth Stone of the State University of New York at Stony Brook, who is co-leading the Ur excavations, says, “There are texts that speak about the ‘black wood of Meluhha,’ but this is our first physical evidence” (“City of Biblical Abraham Brimmed with Trade and Riches,” National Geographic, March 11, 2016). The Indus civilization was a major commercial empire with trading ventures as far as Mesopotamia and Sheba in southern Arabia. The Indus people are mentioned in the writings of Mesopotamian kings such as Naram-Sin of Akkad, grandson of the famous kingdom builder Sargon. Indus ships had a capacity as large as 20 tons, equivalent to a modern 40-foot shipping container (“Digging in the Land of Magan,” Archaeology, Archaeological Institute of America, May/June 1997). They traveled across the Indian Ocean to ports on the Persian Gulf near modern Bahrain and up the Euphrates River to Ur, Akkad, Babylon, and other cities. Indus ships also traveled to the port of Al Mukulla on the southern tip of the Arabian peninsula in the modern Gulf of Aden. (For more about the ancient Indus Civilization and its international trade, including a PowerPoint presentation, see the “Queen of Sheba” section of Bible Times and Ancient Kingdoms, available from Way of Life Literature.)

MAN WHO SHOT IDAHO PASTOR SAYS MEDITATION STARTED IT

The following is excerpted from “The Man Who Shot Idaho Pastor,” Lighthouse Trails, Mar. 10, 2016: “A ‘manifesto,’ written by former Marine Kyle Odom, the 30-year-old man who shot Idaho pastor Tim Remmington, reveals that his life started to change drastically when he began doing meditation to relieve stress while in university. The meditation experiences led him into contact with familiar spirits (which he thought were aliens) and eventually led to two suicide attempts and then the shooting of Pastor Remmington. While Lighthouse Trails is not saying that every person who practices meditation is going to go crazy and start...continued on next page...
shooting people, we stand by our warning of 14 years that meditation does introduce meditators to demonic realms. For most, this realm seduces people into a complacent deception, and they may even appear more peaceful. For other meditators, like the student at Le Tourneau Christian University who graduated and told his parents he was now an atheist, they turn away from their Christian faith. Satan has many different methods of stealing a soul. And for some, these demons torture and torment a person, until they can eventually become like Kyle Odom. The occult (Satan’s domain) is not to be tampered with. When you consider that over 90% of the Christian colleges and seminaries are introducing contemplative spirituality (a belief system that incorporates meditation) to the lives of their students, it should make every Christian shudder and every Christian leader repent for allowing this into the church. ... [Contemplative guru] Richard Foster told his contemplative followers that they needed to say a prayer of protection before practicing contemplative prayer. Why would one need to do that, unless he is entering demonic realms? Meditation leads one to believe that God is in everything and all is connected together. This belief is an anti-christ religion, and that is why when people practice meditation, they are going to be influenced by familiar spirits. ... As we read the news story about Kyle Odom today, we were reminded about contemplative mystic Thomas Merton, who likened a contemplative meditation experience to an LSD trip. Odom’s manifesto expressed many experiences that sound like a bad LSD trip; but it wasn’t LSD—it was meditation, the very thing that most Christian leaders are either promoting or remaining silent about.”

SEEKING IMMORTALITY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Russian Dmitry Itskov is one of the world’s billionaires who is seeking immortality through technology. His 2045 Initiative aims to create an android capable of downloading someone’s personality within 30 years (“Media mogul Dmitry Itskov,” The Telegraph, Mar. 13, 2016). Itskov, who is “100 percent sure it will happen,” says, “The ultimate goal of my plan is to transfer someone’s personality into the new artificial carrier. Different scientists call it uploading or they call it mind transfer. I prefer to call it personality transfer.” Other billionaires who are seeking immortality through technology are Google founder Larry Page, Oracle CEO Larry Ellison, and venture capitalist Paul Glenn. Page, who funds a company called Calico (California Life Company) with the objective of curing old age, believes that there is no need for humans to start dying once they hit their 80s (“Larry Page Lists 5 Things That Google Will Conquer,” Business Insider, May 15, 2014). Ellison says, “Death makes me very angry,” so he created the Ellison Foundation to find a way to cheat death. Glenn funds the Methuselah Foundation, which claims that “the first person to live to be 1,000 years old is certainly alive today.”

The Bible gives both the bad news and the good news about death: “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23).
The Name of the God of Jacob

“The LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee” (Psalm 20:1). “Why does He call Himself ‘the God of Jacob’? I think there are a number of suggestive thoughts. Perhaps the first is that He is the God that the poor sinner needs, for Jacob was a poor crooked stick from the time he first came into this world right on through the years. The name Jacob means ‘the grafter’ or ‘the cheat,’ literally, ‘the heel catcher.’ A man who would trip another by catching his heel. It is like the thirsty in every one of us; what heel catchers we are! But God is known as ‘the God of Jacob’ because He wants you and me to know that He is the God who is interested in poor sinners. And then again I think the thought of ‘the God of Jacob’ suggests the God of the individual. God singles people out. ‘I am that man’s God,’ and He singled you and me out. We can look up into His face and say, ‘You are my God.’ And then there is this thought that He is the God of patience, and what patience He had with Jacob! He took that crooked man and chastened, educated, and taught him by discipline until at last when an old man he became a quiet, patient, godly worshiper. We read that Jacob, when he was dying, ‘worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff’ (Heb. 11:21). It took him a long time to reach that place, but he attained it at last. What patience God has had with some of us!” (H.A. Ironside commentary on Psalms).

Wycliffe Bible Translators Killed in Middle East

The following is excerpted from “Four Wycliffe Bible Translators Murdered,” Christian Headlines, Mar. 18, 2016: “Four Bible translators have been murdered by militants in the Middle East, Bible translating ministry Wycliffe Associates, reports. According to Wycliffe, a raid took place on the translators’ office. Two of the translators were shot and killed, while another two died of wounds from being beaten. The last two managed to protect and save the lead translator by lying on top of him while the militants beat them with their now-empty weapons. The militants also destroyed translating equipment, including Print on Demand equipment, books, and translation materials. However, Wycliffe says the militants did not destroy the ‘computer hard drives containing translation work for eight language projects.’

In information

The Friday Church News Notes is designed for use in churches and is published by Way of Life Literature’s Fundamental Baptist Information Service. Unless otherwise stated, the Notes are written by David Cloud. Of necessity we quote from a wide variety of sources, but this obviously does not imply an endorsement. We trust that our readers will not be discouraged. It is God’s will that we know the times (1 Ch. 12:32; Mat. 16:3) and that we be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. The News Notes remind us that the hour is very late, and we need to be ready for the Lord’s coming. Are you sure that you are born again? Are you living for Christ? “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof” (Rom. 13:11-14). This material is sent only to those who personally subscribe to the Fundamental Baptist Information Service mailing list. To SUBSCRIBE, go to http://www.wayolife.org/wayolife/subscribe.html. TO UNSUBSCRIBE OR CHANGE ADDRESSES, go to the very bottom of any email received from us and click “Manage My Subscription.” Way of Life Literature, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fihns@wayolife.org.