

GOINGS and COMINGS...*to and fro*

First, about GOINGS

I remember a day in America, near Boston, Massachusetts where I live. I offered to drive a Japanese pastor around the city. I said: "Where can I *ikamsu* you to now?" The pastor laughed. In modern societies around the world there is a great emphasis on *going* more than on *staying*. I have noticed that the advertisements for new cars in America and Japan present strong appeals to modern citizens in both countries.

The car ads *promise* you personal gains if you purchase their particular brand of transportation. The visual appeal of the product is less important than the *pleasures you will derive* from the product. Many Japanese ads are more *cute (pretty)* than the emphasis on luxury in American cars. Both emphasize wonderful electronics in your new car. Japanese cars, especially the Kiki and smaller cars, show how driving windy country roads will be more fun and exciting. American advertisers are similar, but with much more emphasis on *power*, even in electric cars. Of course, I am told, that the speed limits in Japan are strictly enforced, not so much in America.

A few months ago, at about 1500HRS, I was driving on a very busy expressway that circles Boston. At 120 km/hr I had cars coming up behind me. Japan's expressway limit of 100 km/hr is strict according to GOOGLE. Maybe some of you could tell me how strictly that is enforced? But, American drivers grew up with *speed* and it's hard to remove it from society. Even more relevant in America, recent studies have proved that if during RUSH HOUR police enforced the usual 62 km/hr speed limit on the expressways near major cities, huge traffic jams would shut down these cities. The police, of course, are aware of this. So they are more concerned for reckless drivers on weekends than speeding drivers GOING to or COMING home from work on weekdays. Well, they can't wait to go home after work either!

Car ads in Japan and America promise you to draw closer to nature, as frequently the ad includes beautiful natural scenes; like mountains and beaches. You also will have more friends with this car! But the biggest thing that both American and Japanese cars promise is *HAPPINESS*.

We human beings love to deceive ourselves in what true happiness is. I don't expect that the few hours of driving pleasure (by the way I love to drive) will really change a husband's happiness with his wife, or his children, or his boss. But GOING must be better than STAYING STILL, RIGHT? This morning, I will refer to two conversations or revelations to Daniel of the Old Testament in the Bible, with the angel Gabriel found in Daniel 12 and Daniel 10. Chapter 12 points out the vast changes between ancient and modern societies, and how this fits the angel's description of *the End Times*. Chapter 10 is a prophetic promise of the *Messiah, the Christ* with the prediction of His death, and *apparent failure to save Israel*.

Now regarding the THE END TIMES :

We somehow forget an important question to ask ourselves, especially when we are GOING fast, in a

car or in life. WHERE ARE WE GOING? It sounds simple, doesn't it ?
God's wisdom and power are so far above ours, yet He reveals Himself in the Christian Bible. We read in the Bible that way back about 453 B.C God's message by His angel Gabriel to Daniel prophesied (predicted) our modern lifestyle. In major cities we are all running with comings and goings *or* traveling **to and fro like cockroaches in the kitchen....so desu ne.**

As it says in the Bible, *But Thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased .* (DANIEL 12:4 KJV).

Regarding the impression of hiding the prophecy you might get from the angel's instructions, the words "shut up" and "seal" refer to "privacy" and "veracity," not secrecy. The *Expositor's Bible Commentary* explains this:

In the ancient Near East important documents were "closed up" and "sealed." The original document was kept in a secure place ("closed up") to conserve the interests and rights of all parties to the transaction. In Mesopotamian cultures these "documents" were clay tablets whose veracity was attested to by the cylinder seals the scribes rolled over the bottom section of the tablets, like a rolling pin would push the seal unto the clay. Once a document was thus sealed, it became official and unchangeable. The second tablet, the official copy, likewise was witnessed to by seal. Daniel was to certify by his personal seal to the faithfulness of the foregoing text as an exact transcript of what God had communicated to him through his angel. Thus this record would be preserved to the day when all the predictions would be fulfilled.

Now, let's look at modern society to see that , according to God's message given to Daniel, now is the *Time of the End, or End Times.*

Regarding ***run to and fro*** or speed : the only speed people saw in Daniel's time, 453 B.C., was an invading army of soldiers on terrifying horses! People back in Daniel's day didn't travel like we do today. We might fly 10,000 km just for a vacation. So our traveling **to and fro, a relatively NEW EVENT IN HISTORY,** that we take for granted, is an obvious sign from (Daniel 12.4), that these are the end times.

The prophecy that ***knowledge shall be increased*** is seen in current history as the general population in most of the world until the last few centuries was uneducated. The overwhelming explosion of knowledge, so evident in Wikipedia, Youtube – “How to do it” videos, and the media in general, also puts us in the End Times.

Knowledge increasing over the thousands of years is also apparent in the *time piece or clock*: Daniel's time piece a sundial..., today a SEIKO Prospex... or a cell phone with the Coordinated Universal Time which counts one second equaling the time it takes for **9,192,631,770** energy transitions in a cesium atom. **I'm sure you all knew that! :)** But what you might not know is that God sent His angel Gabriel to record a prophetic message that would be fulfilled by events of COMING until the END OF TIME ITSELF.

We might feel sorry for this *low tech Daniel* until we realize that the man bringing him God's message, was not human at all; but God's angel, Gabriel. Daniel 10:4-6 AAT says, *I saw a man dressed in linen, and around his waist a belt of gold from Uphaz. His body was like a precious stone.*

His face looked like lightning. His eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and his legs looked like gleaming brass, and when he spoke, he sounded like a noisy crowd.

I'd trade in my SEIKO Prospex for that experience anytime, wouldn't you? But much more than a religious experience, every human being should long to hear what the angel from God said next to Daniel:

*"Daniel, **a much loved man**, pay attention to what I am telling you and stand up straight for I have now been sent to you."* (Daniel 10:11) A SEIKO watch won't buy that kind of message from God. Only close fellowship with God allows messages of His Love. Everybody needs to be loved. Knowing and hearing God Himself tell you that He loves you is priceless.

Here is A WORD ON GOD'S HOLY MESSENGERS.

GOD has invisible messengers, called angels, who can appear to men when GOD wills it in 453 B.C. and also to Christians today.

A few examples of angels in the New Testament period are: Gabriel met Mary to tell her that she was chosen for Messiah's supernatural birth; A host of angels announced Jesus' birth in Bethlehem to the lowly shepherds with their flocks; Jesus' disciples saw angels at His grave site on Easter Sunday; God's angel supernaturally released Peter from prison as he was awaiting execution by King Herod; the Apostle Paul in a ship about to be destroyed by a typhoon in the Mediterranean Sea found God's angel bringing Jesus' promise of safety to him and all aboard the ship; and in the letter to the Hebrew Christians about A.D.70 Paul says : *Christians, keep on loving one another. Don't neglect to welcome guests. This is how some without knowing it had angels as guests.* (Hebrews 13: 1-2) That should keep us Christians on our toes! *So desu ne !*

Now about COMING:

Now there are GOINGS and COMINGS predicted in Daniel's discourse with God's angel Gabriel in 453B.C. , not just a future society's habits as in Daniel 10 . Daniel had an earlier conversation with God's Angel (Daniel 9) which contains the announcement of the Greatest Coming to the human race since He created our planet: **The Coming of Messiah (that is Anointed One), Jesus , to save men from God's just condemnation because of our sins .** The Bible says in Daniel 9: 25-26 LAB *Now listen! It will be forty-nine years plus 434 years from the time the command is given to rebuild Jerusalem, until the Anointed One comes! Jerusalem's streets and walls will be rebuilt despite the perilous times. After this period of 434 years, the Anointed One will be killed, His kingdom still unrealized.* The '49' years was expressed by the angel to accent the end of Israel's captivity in Babylonia, and, the '434' years , marking time until Messiah would be killed. Daniel soon saw the first part of this prophecy himself. Cyrus, soon after he had conquered the Babylonians, issued a proclamation encouraging the Jews to return to their land. The best was yet to come!

Later this month much of the world recognizes Jesus' Birthday, Christmas, the COMING of the *Anointed One* (the Christ) as in Daniel 9. Yes, many of you know that He was actually born in Bethlehem

in late Spring or early Summer. This was when Roman records show that Caesar called for the taxation that brought Joseph and a pregnant Mary to Bethlehem, because Joseph had to register in the town of his ancestors. That choice by Rome was likely based on better weather for traveling. But it is wonderful to see that God shows up and acts whenever people might get the message that Jesus is His Son. God is always meeting people where they are at, so to speak. This Holiday still has that fact hidden behind the materialism. A Christian doctor friend of mine did research in medical school and proved that hospitals in America have the lowest death rate and fewest number of patients at Christmas. God loves all people but very few in this world know who God really was and still is, nor what He did for all of mankind by His sending His Son to planet earth.

Now I am bringing us to the New Testament part of the Bible, leaping ahead 461 years to the summer of A.D. 27. as Jesus meets a Samaritan woman at a well. After He tells her things that only a prophet could know about herself, He tells her something more important for her eternity, and ours as well.

The woman said, "I know that Messiah (called Christ) is coming. When He comes, He will explain everything to us. Then Jesus declared, "I, the one speaking to you – I am He." (John 4: 25-26 NIV) The Samaritans were hated by the Jews. Here was a Jewish prophet declaring He is Messiah, as foretold to Daniel by God's Messenger, Gabriel. She may have known this prophecy in the book of Daniel from the Jewish Scriptures since Holy Spirit brought the thought "*Messiah is coming*" to her mind. She believes in Jesus and then gets her friends to come and meet Him. It was also in A.D. 27 that Peter was the first apostle to confess that *You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God. From that time on (Mt 16:21 NASB) Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem...suffer..be killed...and be raised up on the third day.* They kept imagining that His words were an analogy of something...they were slow of heart, as He often said of them. But, they stayed the course with Him. I am encouraged by Jesus' Apostles when I think how often I am slow of heart with Jesus' instructions and leading in my life. I hope to encourage my fellow Christians that He will accomplish His plan for your life...**but Christians, we must stay the course, as the early disciples did, even if much of what's happening makes no sense to us.**

Just three years later, Spring A.D. 30, as Jesus predicted, and as God had promised in Daniel 9:25, so many years earlier, Jesus was crucified. This was 434 years after the command to rebuild Jerusalem was given. Messiah's *unrealized Kingdom* (Daniel 9:26) was about to be realized! For after He was buried, He was resurrected on the third day as He promised His followers. JESUS IS ALIVE!

This God of the Bible has a Son who conquered death for mankind, that is anyone who is willing to listen to Jesus' Gospel and believe in Him. For a sinner is transformed the instant...say **microsecond** if you please...that he believes the Message the Bible presents about Jesus: Jesus gave Himself over to the Jewish Leaders via the Roman soldiers for His crucifixion, to fulfill many Old Testament prophecies for Messiah, especially, quote: *And certainly He was pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our sins, by His punishment, we were saved and by His wounds we were healed.* (Isaiah 53: 5 circa. 740 B.C.) Jesus went about doing good, healing broken minds and broken bodies; but, His death on the Cross as the substitute for me...for you ..as SINNERS, heals our SOULS...if we ONLY BELIEVE. *But to all who did accept Him, and trust in His name, He gave the right to become the children of God.* (John 1:12 WMS).

The New Testament was written in the *common street dialect* Greek, so occasionally the best meaning is found in the original. The word *right* in the original Greek is the word *exousia* meaning not just a right; but **authority**. Therefore, God gives every believer in Jesus the authority to become children of God and, even greater than that, for at their departure from earth each Christian becomes **a son of God** : *for we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is!* (1 John 3:2 NIV)

The Christian's authority on earth already means bold access in **prayer** to the Throne of God, where Jesus sits next to the Father; and power to resist and defeat the Ruler of this world, Satan, in our everyday living; and to bring Jesus's Good News to sinners as ambassadors of God. Christians are in this COMING and GOING, *to and fro* hectic world like everyone else. But only a Christian can answer the question “Where are you going?” Christians know where they are GOING!

Speaking of GLORY

You might ask, if God's angel Gabriel , looked so glorious, why did God's Son look like an everyday citizen in Israel? We tend to worship what our eyes see, more than what is really in front of us, *man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.* (1 Samuel 16:7 NAS) The Bible tells us that Jesus *existed in the form of God* (thus Glory in appearance as Deity) *...but He emptied Himself taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.* (Philippians 2: 6-8 NAS) God wanted men to love Him for who He is: His total person-hood, especially His character, not only for His awesome appearance, GLORY. Jesus revealed God totally (except for visual Glory) as He told the Apostle Philip, *If you have seen Me you have seen the Father* (God). (John 14:9 AAT). It is also important to note, that Daniel became so physically ill by seeing Gabriel who had the glory of God upon him, that that angel had to revive him. (Daniel 10:16). **Kind of difficult for Jesus to make friends if they kept passing out, I think!** But He did make friends, and disciples who believed in Him to carry His Gospel to the ends of the earth. The Glory of God is also seen in Jesus' miracles, such as raising Martha's brother Lazarus from the grave, as well as in God's revelations of His Presence, as the angel Gabriel to Daniel.

Whatever *comings and goings* we have in our lifetime, believing that Jesus came for you personally, not just mankind, is the key to eternal life. Therefore you too may know without a doubt where you are GOING. Jesus' kingdom , *unrealized at His death* (Daniel 9:26), **is being realized now** in the hearts of people who accept Him, one by one, all around the earth. Accepting His Gospel (Good News) is accepting Him.

CAN ANYONE TODAY HAVE A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THIS GOD OF HISTORY?
Daniel's God is still God today.

Daniel heard God's angel Gabriel's prophetic messages about the history that *would happen just* before the end of history, the end of the world. But he also was blessed by the angel's message that he was *a man much loved* (Daniel10:11) But, if you don't know it yet, God has already said “I love you all”

2000 years ago as Jesus said in (John 3:16 AAT) --- *God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that whoever believes in Him would not perish but have everlasting life. You don't need to meet an angel to tell you that God loves even you!* History, both recorded in the Bible and in non-Christian historical documents, makes conclusive evidence that Jesus paid that price for you to experience God's love personally by only believing that He died on the Cross, was buried, and He was raised from the grave three days later.

The Bible says,

If with your mouth you confess "Jesus is the Lord," and in your hearts believe "God raised Him from the dead," you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)

You all are much loved by God, but only by believing in His Son Jesus, the Messiah, can you experience God in your life. You can know this awesome God who is over time...but will meet with you daily...here and now. In (1 John 1:3 NAS) *For our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ* May I invite you to call on Jesus today to save you from your sins, putting your trust in Him who paid the debt for your sins on His Cross. That purchase, payment for your sins, continues on until you see Jesus through your death, or at His 2nd Return to Earth. For after all those who will ever believe have believed, **Jesus will realize His Kingdom on earth** with His Second Coming when He comes in His Glorious Appearance as the Bible says in

(1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 AAT) *When the order is given and the archangel calls and God's trumpet sounds, the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are still living and left behind will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we'll always be with the Lord.*

Christ died for sins, once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring us to God

(1 Peter 3:18 NAS). God never says no to sinners asking for forgiveness, trusting in Jesus' Sacrifice, nor to Christians asking for a closer walk with Jesus. God is not a respecter of persons in this regard. **If you are struggling to believe in Jesus and feel you want to but can't seem to, then remember Jesus's promise:** *Keep on asking, and the gift will be given unto you; keep on seeking, and you will find; keep on knocking, and the door will open to you. (Matthew 7:7 WWMS)*

Christianity is a religion of **revelation**. God was **revealed** in the Flesh in His Son Jesus, this **revealed** by the Bible; as well as personal **revelations** as when a person experiences receiving Christ by faith when Holy Spirit **reveals** that Jesus' Gospel is true, to a heart hardened by sin. This is the best news for modern man who is *running to and fro*. The prophecy to Daniel proves that God calls our modern period *the End Times*. Although we are drawing closer to Judgment Day and Jesus will be the Judge, none of us knows how long a life God will give us. All men should feel a sense of urgency to know God as history draws to a close. Even more so, all men should feel a sense of urgency to know God as their lives are drawing closer to a close. The Bible says in (Hebrews 9:27 KJV) *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the Judgment.*

Non-Christians: God wants to bring you into His Family through Jesus' blood shed on His Cross about 2,000 years ago. You can *know* where you are GOING by believing in Jesus and His blood shed to

wash away your sins.

For you Christians who know God through believing in Jesus as 1 Peter 3.18 declares, you have been brought to God. The same God who commands angels and holds the planets, stars, and Universe together. I want to share with Christians something important that you should know from Daniel's experience. **Special revelations and great nearness of God are often to prepare Christians for being braver soldiers, making them more courageous in order to accomplish exploits for the cause of Christ.** These experiences with God actually highlight our reliance on God's Word and strengthen Christians in their innermost being.

Let's look at Daniel to illustrate my point that special nearness experiences with God prepares us for greater exploits for the Lord Jesus **despite our weakness.** In (Daniel 10.9 AAT) it says: *I heard him speak , and I listened to him, and as I listened to him, I fainted face down on the ground.* During this revelation by God's angel Gabriel, Daniel was overcome with weakness. Yet, he was ordered to **stand up straight and pay attention.** God reveals more of Himself to Christians who are asking God to have impact for Him in this sinful world. I challenge you, Christian...as I challenge myself, to stand up as His soldier , paying attention to His Word and His Spirit. We Christians have the very Spirit of God within us. Because of Christ's bringing us to God through His death for our sins, we actually are physically better equipped than Daniel to experience special nearness to God. God didn't leave Daniel flat on his face. For the Bible tells us in (Daniel 10 : 10 AAT) *Then a hand touched me and roused me to get up.* **God may humble us for more courageous service, but He will touch us with His power to complete every command.** What a glorious example of EARNEST PRAYER to God Daniel left for us.

In fact Daniel's historical revelations was God's answer to his fervent prayers. In (Daniel 9.23 AAT) the Bible says: *When you started pleading a message went out and I have come to tell it to you because you are loved very much.* Can you believe it? **Your prayers can move God's hand...get angels sent on missions ...get sinners saved...get to the End of your life with joy to see Jesus.** You might say that God can't love me as much as Daniel! God loved you enough to send you Jesus. Now that you believe in Jesus, God loves you *even more.* For when God looks at or listens to a Christian, He loves them as He loves His Only Begotten Son. He loves us *even more* because we belong to the Beloved, Jesus. If you hang around me for long, you will probably often hear me say **“Prayer is the Victory.”** I often say this when I don't have the answer for something in my life or the church. Yes, I don't always have the answers, folks. But I know Who does.

A few years ago when I felt discouraged I had a simple situational message from Jesus. After many years of trying to persuade a member of my original family to consider Christ , I was sad as I was exiting her home. I noted the beautiful white hyacinth flowers like a wall around the front of the her house. As I remarked to myself that the glory of these flowers was like Jesus' glory which gives life, He whispered that: *You and Dorothy are on the Life side of that glory; your family member is still on the Death side.* The Bible quotes JESUS : *I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE.* (John 14:6) So with Jesus is eternal life...rejecting Him while still alive means that without Him there will be eternal death.

As a Christian you start everyday with Jesus by your side, and God's Spirit inside as your Helper, and a Loving Father in Heaven pulling strings in the whole Universe to fulfill God's good plan for your life.

He often reveals things in the WORD and by the SPIRIT to convince you that *I AM ON YOUR SIDE*.

Remember folks that

CHRIST'S COMING GUARANTEES CHRISTIANS THEIR GOING TO HEAVEN

We Christians have found the answer to the mystery of *Where am I going?* We found that mystery because God personally revealed it to us by a very special *coming, the Coming of His Son, Jesus Christ*.

THE FINAL COMING

Next week we will be singing with other Christmas songs, the song *Silent Night*--

Silent Night, Holy Night, all is calm all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child
Holy Infant so tender and mild
Sleep in Heavenly Peace, Sleep in Heavenly Peace

When little baby Jesus returns to Earth at His Second Coming , He won't be a tender and mild baby Jesus, but the Holy Righteous Judge of Planet Earth and all its inhabitants. There will be no Peace on Earth for even the dead shall be raised to face Jesus as their Judge on the Day of The Lord. Only His Followers, all Christians, who will then be at His side, will have peace.

Non-Christians : God wants to bring you into His Family through Jesus' blood shed on His Cross about 2,000 years ago. You can *know* where you are GOING by believing in Jesus and His blood shed to wash away your sins.

Christians – You know where you are going. I encourage you to earnestly pray to God for a close walk with Jesus while you are here on Earth.

Christians and non- Christians : I would be honored to pray with you at the “Lift” sign after the closing music. Dorothy will play an old hymn that encourages Christians to pray like Daniel , *Sweet Hour of Prayer*.

Happy Trails with Jesus.

Christian Bible Quotations: KJV- Kings James Version, AAT- An American Translation,
LAB- Life Application Bible, NIV – New International Version, NAS – New American Standard,
WWMS – Williams Tranlation