

A Strange World

Commentary for January 1, 2014 — Interview with Oz Radio

The article for January 2014 is "Oz Internet Radio Show" where I am interviewed by one host in Australia and his co-host in California. The discussion topics are wide-ranging in scope, discussing the important issues of life: the nature of God, the nature of salvation, and the nature of death. Read first the "[January 2014 Newsletter](#)."

Strange things are discussed in the interview, and some of these events, supernatural events, are outside our normal lives. Some are biblical events, coincidental events that occur through God's actions and those of His agents, even Satan. For example, the events that occurred to Job in Job chapters 1 and 2 are a series of strange "coincidences" that happened to Job, who correctly identified God as being responsible for the strange confluence of events.

All non-physical beings discussed in the Holy Scriptures are strange to us. All miracles are strange because they are outside normal human experience. Most compelling are the physical resurrections done by God through the prophet Elijah (2 Kings 4:8–37), by Jesus (raising Lazarus), and by the apostle Peter (Acts 9:36–41). These events are also very strange to us. Most strange of all is Jesus' resurrection to spiritual life, from which we all will benefit.

Even mundane current events can be strange. The current political situation in the Middle East defies logic. Below is a "Letter to the Editor" in the *Financial Times*. It accurately describes the inexplicable un-reality of political relationships in this troubled part of the world:

"A Short Guide to the Middle East"

"Sir, Iran is backing Assad. Gulf states are against Assad!

Assad is against Muslim Brotherhood. Muslim Brotherhood and Obama are against General Sisi.*

But Gulf states are pro Sisi! Which means they are against the Muslim Brotherhood!

Iran is pro Hamas, but Hamas is backing Muslim Brotherhood!

Obama is backing Muslim Brotherhood, yet Hamas is against the US!

Gulf states are pro US. But Turkey is with Gulf states against Assad; yet Turkey is pro Muslim Brotherhood against General Sisi. And General Sisi is being backed by the Gulf states!

Welcome to the Middle East and have a nice day."

**• K.N. Al-Sabah, London EC4, UK
Letter to the Editor, Financial Times, August 22, 2013**

* General Sisi is the Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian Armed Forces, as well as the Minister of Defense, since August 12, 2013.

This situation is absurd but accurate. A few months ago, the Muslim Brotherhood was the dominant political group in charge of the Egyptian government. That government was deposed by the Egyptian military. Last week the military government designated the Muslim Brotherhood as a "terrorist organization," making it a crime to be a member of that organization.¹ Many members were jailed. International politics is very strange.

The Middle East is in chaos. Great chaos in nations and regions usually results in mass death, destruction of property, economic disruption, change of national borders, and movements of people. Often these occur simultaneously or in close sequence. Some borders will expand and new territories encompassed. Other borders shrink. Some countries are born; others die. All large-scale changes occur at God's direction (Deuteronomy 32:8; Daniel 4:32; with Acts 17:25–28), not by chance. God is in total control, even when evil occurs.

Your birth was a strange event, although you didn't realize it at the time. Life came from life, which is normal, but YOU did not exist.² God caused, through processes He created (uniting sperm and egg, then growth and development), for a body to be formed within your mother's body. At birth a spirit of man (that was first in Adam, Job 32:8; Proverbs 20:27; Ecclesiastes 3:21; Zechariah 12:1; 1 Corinthians 2:11) unique to you combined with the flesh of the created body. This occurred at the moment of your first breath when you became a living soul, linking you through your ancestors to Adam (Genesis 2:7; 1 Corinthians 15:45). Even birth suddenly seems strange when this process is understood as the Bible describes it.

Death is equally strange. **"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it"** (Ecclesiastes 12:7). Our glorious resurrection to spiritual life will be the ultimate new experience, far different from everyday eating, drinking, working, learning. After our resurrection, nothing will be strange. We will be with God and Christ:

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead [God the Father] shall also quicken your mortal bodies BY HIS SPIRIT that dwells in you."

• **Romans 8:11**

Truly, the Holy Scriptures supply the basic information of the important events in our lives. Strangeness diminishes but wonder remains when we allow God to explain from His Word the details of our place in His creation — past, present, and our glorious future. **"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive"** (1 Corinthians 15:22).

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¹ It is widely believed that ex-members of the Muslim Brotherhood along with fundamentalist military officers were involved in the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in October 1981.

² You did not have any type of "preexistence" before your birth from your mother. God's knowledge of you (for example Jeremiah 1:5 and other verses) does not indicate preexistence. Jesus was the exception. He existed before He was born of Mary. He was the son of God before He enfleshed:

"And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. ... The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven."

• **1 Corinthians 15:45, 47**