

February 20, 2024

Dear Members and Friends,

According to the Gregorian calendar which is used in the USA and the Western world, the month of February is the shortest month of the year. Every month in the modern calendar consists of at least 30 days, except for this month. February only has 28 days and 29 on a leap year which happens to be this year, 2024. Why is the most widely used calendar in the world so inconsistent in the lengths of its months? And why is February the only month with the fewest number of days?

According to *Britannica.com*, "The Gregorian calendar's oldest ancestor, the first Roman calendar, had a glaring difference in structure from its later variants: it consisted of 10 months rather than 12. In order to fully sync the calendar with the lunar year, the Roman king Numa Pompilius added January and February to the original 10 months. The previous calendar had had 6 months of 30 days and 4 months of 31, for a total of 304 days. However, Numa wanted to avoid having even numbers in his calendar, as Roman superstition at the time held that even numbers were unlucky. He subtracted a day from each of the 30-day months to make them 29. The lunar year consists of 355 days (354.367 to be exact, but calling it 354 would have made the whole year unlucky!), which meant that he now had 56 days left to work with. In the end, at least 1 month out of the 12 needed to contain an even number of days. This is because of a simple mathematical fact: the sum of any even amount (12 months) of odd numbers will always equal an even number—and he wanted the total to be odd. So Numa chose February, a month that would be host to Roman rituals honoring the dead, as the unlucky month to consist of 28 days.

"Despite changes in the calendar as it was altered after Numa's additions—alterations that include the shortening of February at certain intervals, the addition of a leap month, and eventually the modern leap day—February's 28-day length has stuck."

In 45 B.C., the first Roman or Republican calendar was reformed by Julius Caesar and became known as the Julian calendar. In 1582 AD, the Julian calendar was replaced by the Gregorian calendar, as the "Julian calendar was miscalculating the length of the solar year by 11 minutes. That 11 minutes added up year after year, and by the 1570s, Pope Gregory XIII and his peers realized that their calendar was off by 10 days!... The new calendar recalculated the leap years to make the average length of a year more accurate" (compare *familysearch.org*).

The Gregorian calendar did not change the order of the days of the week (for instance, the Sabbath and Sunday, as determined correctly by the Julian calendar, were maintained exactly as the same days determined by the Gregorian calendar). That means, in 1582, when ten days were omitted, October 4, a Thursday, was followed by October 15, a Friday. In addition, the length of the month of February was not altered, either.

With all superstition aside and although it may not seem like a big deal having fewer days in the month, one thing is for sure. Time is short. And time goes by fast. While society may be preoccupied with this month of February being a "leap year," our understanding about time is that it is indeed short relative to the fulfillment of prophecy. Our lives are like a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away (James 4:14). What we do with the time we have is important. How are we using our time, not just from a physical standpoint, but also in a spiritual way?

It is quite alright to enjoy our lives, doing things that make us happy, but at the same time, we need to ask ourselves the following questions: Are we making good use of our temporary physical existence in God's eyes? Are we also doing what God expects of us? Are we doing the Work of God? Are we watching what is going on in the world and do we see how certain events fulfill biblical prophecy? God tells us to watch world events, that are surely coming to pass. And this is what He says to His people, the Church of God: "Surely the

Lord GOD does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets... The LORD GOD has spoken! Who [of God's true servants] can but prophesy?" (Amos 3:7-8). God's true servants have been given the "spirit of prophecy" (Revelation 19:10), so they can comprehend what the Bible declares in advance.

These are indeed interesting times right now all over the world. I believe this year 2024 will prove just that. The events that have been happening currently tie in well with what the Bible reveals. What's happening in Israel and other parts of the Middle East is no coincidence. We explain in our free booklet *The Fall and Rise of the Jewish People* which was published in February 2017, that the city of Jerusalem and the State of Israel will be the focus of many world events in the not-too-distant future. We are now seeing prophecies about Jerusalem and the State of Israel come to pass and ongoing developments show us that the prophesied "Great Tribulation" is not far away. This booklet explains why God is angry with the Jewish people and how they will fall in an upcoming World War but then will ultimately rise again when their eyes are opened to God's Way of Life in the Millennium and the Great White Throne Judgment, when God will bestow honor, mercy and grace upon them.

What's happening in Europe is also no coincidence. The war between Russia and Ukraine is interesting as the Bible reveals that they will in fact collaborate and ultimately combine forces with other Far Eastern nations, such as China, to fight against Europe, just prior to Christ's return. Currently, we don't see that happening, but this will change and could also come unexpectedly and catch many off guard. A powerful European leader of German or Austrian descent is destined to manifest himself.

Although it appears at this point that there is presently no key figure who is emerging to be THE leader over all of Europe and especially over ten European core nations or groups of nations, that will change, and it will also occur quickly and unexpectedly, except to those who are watching and who understand why these things are occurring. We know from the Bible what will occur. Germany WILL rise together with Europe to be the world's leading superpower but then will fall again. Our recent free booklet *The Rise and Fall of Germany and Europe* explains in detail this certainty.

What's happening in the USA with its continuous downfall, especially in the political field, is no coincidence either. The upcoming elections for the next presidency will bring about a leader who, even though possibly well-intentioned, will not make things better but will make things worse, not just for this nation, but for the whole world. This is not to say that God's people should in any way be involved in political elections or that they should vote for a candidate. God will decide, not man, whom He puts into power to fulfill His plan (compare Romans 13:1). We also understand that Satan is the god and ruler of this world, but he can only do what God allows him to do. And it is in God's hands for what He decides and whose minds He opens. Daniel 2:21 states: "He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding." We also read in Daniel 4:17 that "the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, Gives it to whomever He will, And sets over it the *lowest of men.*"

The future for America and English-speaking nations is inevitable as the Bible abundantly points out. America and Britain WILL fall at first and we are already seeing a glimpse of that. Are we spiritually ready for what's coming? Much more is revealed in our free booklet, *The Fall and Rise of Britain and America* to help us better understand and to prepare for what is indeed just ahead of us.

As our time is short, we must not waver and lose focus on what is truly important. Rather, we must always remain vigilant to what is happening in the world, redeem the time (Ephesians 5:16) and trust in the one True God who can help us accomplish our destiny. (Please read our free booklet, *God Is... Our Destiny*). May God be with us always!

In God's service, and with Christian love,



Michael Link