

A Nature Walk through Revelation

When you step outside at midnight and the temperature is still in the 90s, you don't need Al Gore to tell you about global warming. The temperature charts featured in his movie and book *An Inconvenient Truth* show the ten hottest years occurring during the past fourteen. After experiencing the ten hottest days and nights of this year, which have also set records for high temperatures and the number of days over 100 degrees Fahrenheit, I am convinced that global warming is upon us. People in the San Fernando Valley, Saint Louis, and New York probably don't need convincing either.

Or, are we simply in the midst of Revelation 16? Is God pouring out his wrath? Have the seven last plagues begun? Does our understanding of Revelation change our response to current conditions?

Bill McKibbin, commenting in the July 11 issue of *Christian Century* on the science mentioned by Gore and NASA's chief climatologist, James Hansen, says "we need, as a planet, to be emitting less carbon dioxide inside of ten years—an enormous task given that China and India are finally beginning to use power in appreciable quantities (and not for luxuries but for the second light bulb or first refrigerator in a house)." He suggests it is mandatory that churches help lead the way. "Mandatory because by now this is a theological issue. All the forces of nature that we used to call 'acts of God' have become, at least in part, acts of humankind" (29).

An Inconvenient Truth ends with suggestions for what you personally can do to help solve the climate crisis. If you believe that Jesus' coming will end the climate crisis, does that absolve you of any responsibility for change?

And how does the current crisis between

Israel, Lebanon, and Hezbollah affect your reading of Scripture?

This issue of *Spectrum* is devoted to the Bible, and the reading of it. How we choose to do so or not promises to play a large role in our future—and not just in our own personal salvation. How we respond as a church and culture, and in society, are impacted, too.

We have assembled an incredible array of authors in this issue, from across the spectrum of Adventist theology and beyond, to inspire your reading. The journey through Scripture is travel literature at its best. This summer, give yourself a treat. Take a nature walk through Revelation. Let Robert Alter show you the joys of a literary reading of the Bible. Consider John Brunt's reading of Scripture as you worship on Sabbath. Discover the Bible again for the first time.

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