

World Currents!—No.104

Medical Guinea Pigs / 2006 and the Endtime Chessboard

By Maria

Dear Family,

I love you and I'm so thankful for each of you who have made the decision to serve the Lord with us, dedicating your lives to the Lord and others. There are so few like you in the world, and you're very precious, both to the Lord, Peter and me, and the Family. We love you and need each of you!

2. That's why I've been concerned by recent reports of risky activities that could take some of you from us. We don't have one of you to spare as it is, and we certainly don't want to lose any of you!

3. One of our RSs in North America sent us an e-mail that prompted this Letter, because of the possible damaging, crippling, or even deadly consequences for those involved:

4. I wanted to pass along some things that I learned in a conversation with another Family member. He said he'd met an SGA visiting from Mexico who'd come to the States to raise funds. However, the way he is doing it is by applying at a medical center where they test new drugs or treatments for a short period (10 days in some cases), and the person who volunteers gets paid \$4,000 or \$5,000. From what I understand, you apply at the medical center and have a physical exam done, and if you are accepted, then you take part in the tests. I was quite alarmed when I heard this. This Family member went on to explain that others from Mexico have done the same, and someone even came from as far away as India to participate on one occasion.

5. I can see how attractive it is to make a quick \$4,000 for several days of "work." But I would think that a person is taking an awful risk! From the way it was described



to me, you are being their guinea pig while they test whatever it is they have on you.

6. This Family member asked the SGA about it, and he said he had discussed it with his Home and he was given a go-ahead with an "according to your faith" type of approval. Whoa, I'd need more than that to convince me into letting the medical profession in the U.S. do its testing on me, even if it seems like a benevolent cause or a treatment that is "harmless." It's quite a risk. And it seems like "big money" or fast money is the real reason for it.

7. (Mama:) The RS who sent us this e-mail was quite concerned about our people hiring themselves out as medical guinea pigs, and we

were too—even more so after we heard about the horrific results of a recent clinical drug test in England. The news broke right after we'd heard about Family members taking part in such tests in the U.S., and I asked one of our folks in WS to compile a summary for you:

The drug trial that became a nightmare

(compiled from UK press and news wire reports)

Investigators have launched an inquiry into the clinical trial that left six healthy young men in intensive care. Two of the men were “critical,” battling for their lives, while four others remained in a “serious but stable” condition at Northwick Park hospital in north London. The girlfriend of one man said she had been told he “needs a miracle” to survive.

The six were rushed to intensive care with multiple organ failure after being given doses of a new experimental treatment for arthritis.

Myfanwy Marshall told of her shock at seeing her formerly fit 28-year-old lover grotesquely deformed and reduced to helplessness.

Ms. Marshall, 35, said she was roused from her bed by medical staff at 3 AM and told to come to the hospital as soon as possible.

“I walked in and I nearly fainted,” she said. “He is dark and gorgeous. Twenty-eight, a muscly, hunky guy, but here he looked like a 45-year-old man who has had a cardiac arrest.

“He had a tube in his nose, a tube going into his mouth, and a hole in his neck. There were tubes in his hands and something in his groin.”

Her boyfriend looked “like the Elephant Man, completely puffed up,” and his swollen head was a “weird purple and yellow color,” she said. The Elephant Man is a figure in

British history whose head ballooned outwards until his skull was wider than his waist.

“The doctors have said he could die at any moment. ‘His immune system is out of control; he needs a miracle,’ those were their words.”

Ms. Marshall said her boyfriend had impulsively volunteered for the paid medical trial to pay off some bills. He had previously volunteered for other trials with no ill effects, she said.

“They haven’t got a cure,” she went on. “This is a drug they have never tested on humans before, so they don’t know what they are dealing with. It’s completely messed up their vital organs.”

Another victim was named as trainee plumber Ryan Flanagan, 21, of Highbury, north London. His family were told he could not breathe unaided, and his head and neck had swollen to three times their normal size.

Family friend Sarah Brown, 27, told the *Sun* newspaper: “Ryan was a healthy young man and he saw the trial advertised on the Internet. He is at college and was doing it to make a bit of extra money. He told us he would be paid 2,000 pounds (2,900 euros, 3,500 dollars) and did not think there would be any problems.”

Raste Khan, one of two men in the study taking a placebo [a pill with no active ingredients] who was unharmed, said his co-subjects “went down like dominoes [a few minutes after the test began]. First they began tearing their shirts off, complaining of fever, then some screamed out that their heads felt like they were about to explode. After that they started fainting, vomiting and writhing.”

The men were recruited by the U.S. company Parexel, for the trial in its 36-bed unit on the Northwick Park hospital campus. On Parexel’s website, those interested in

getting involved in trials are offered a range of incentives. “You’ll receive a thorough medical check-up—FREE! You’ll be paid for your time and inconvenience.

“Free food for the duration of your stay—and NO shopping or washing up! You’ll have plenty of free time to read or study, or just relax—with digital TV, pool table, videogames, DVD player, and now FREE Internet access! You can even just catch up on some sleep!”

Thomas Hanke, chief scientific officer at the German company which developed the drug, said the firm was “devastated” at the “shocking developments” in the testing of a new medicine which had previously showed no safety problems.

Janet Knowles, a partner at the law firm Eversheds, which indemnifies [insures against loss] organizations that run research trials, said that extensive testing was carried out before a drug was given to humans. “But you can never be absolutely sure that the reaction in humans will be the same as it was in laboratory animals.”

Part of the recommended consent form, signed by volunteers, states: “In the event of any significant deterioration in health or well-being caused directly by my participation in the study, compensation will be paid to me by the company.”

But however well regulated or policed early trials are and however well the risks are explained to volunteers, the chance of a severe reaction can never be excluded.

Volunteers simply do not believe that the new drug they are testing for the first time will cause them serious or lasting harm.

8. (Mama:) As you can see, dear Family, the risks of such clinical drug trials are very real, and the results can be deadly! Participating in such tests can rob you of your health or your life, and it’s not worth it for any amount of money. If you asked the young men

who were incapacitated by this test how much money they’d be willing to accept to undergo another one, I’m sure there’s nothing that would tempt them to do it again.

9. Such drug trials are like gambling, in this case with your health and life. The drug company or medical testing company may tell you it’s a sure thing, that there’s nothing to worry about, but that isn’t always the case, as you can see. One uninjured survivor of the drug test mentioned above called it “Russian roulette,” because the only reason he managed to escape unharmed was that he drew a placebo. Otherwise, he might have been in critical condition as well.

10. The companies conducting such tests aren’t going to emphasize the dangers to you, just the benefits—easy money, free time, free food, etc. If they emphasized the dangers, there’d be fewer volunteers than there are now by far! In fact, if you search the Web to find a clear and unambiguous warning on the dangers of medical tests, as I asked some of my staff to do for me, it takes you a while to find one! We did eventually come across the following blunt warning on a UCLA medical site:

Are there risks or side effects in clinical trials?

Yes. The treatments used in clinical trials can cause side effects and other health risks depending on the type of treatment and the patient’s condition. Side effects vary from patient to patient. Some side effects in clinical trials can be permanent and serious, even life-threatening. Also, certain side effects may not appear until later, after the treatment itself is over.

Because clinical trials are research into new areas of treatment, the risks and side effects involved are not always known ahead of time, though efforts have been made to find out what they might be. Patients should be sure they understand both the possible risks and benefits before deciding if they want to take part in a study.

11. (Mama:) Drug companies don't even have to advise test subjects of injuries that have occurred in the past when other subjects have undergone similar tests, as the following news clip explains.

Researchers or pharmaceutical firms may tout an experimental drug as promising, but they are not required to make public the early data to back up the claim. Such information can be guarded as a proprietary secret. In addition, past injuries of people or animals on the drug often may be kept confidential, even if they must be reported to government agencies.—Bernadette Tansey, *San Francisco Chronicle*

12. (Mama:) Some of you may be tempted to think, “Well, the difference between these poor people and us is that we’re the Lord’s children, and the Lord protects and keeps His Own. We can claim His promises of protection, so we don’t really have to worry too much about these things.” We’ll talk about that in a moment, but first here’s another news article, one that’s two years old but still very relevant to this topic:

A college student’s drug trial ends in tragedy

By Alan Zarembo and Benedict Carey, *Los Angeles Times*

INDIANAPOLIS—Traci Johnson believed it was God’s plan for her to leave home to attend a tiny Pentecostal Bible college here, and she prayed every day for the Lord to provide for her tuition.

Then an unusual opportunity presented itself. Eli Lilly & Co., the pharmaceutical giant based a few miles from Indiana Bible College, was seeking healthy subjects for a live-in clinical drug trial. The 19-year-old freshman told friends that the study was her best hope to stay in school.

The students at the Bible college knew all about the trials. They made perfect

subjects for studies requiring healthy people—and they were used often, receiving hundreds, even thousands of dollars for a few weeks of work.

If accepted into the study, Johnson could make \$150 a day for 49 days for taking a drug known as duloxetine, an antidepressant that had already been given to thousands and was on the verge of approval by the Food and Drug Administration.

Just before the new semester, a Lilly representative called. Her prayers were answered.

A month later, she was dead.

Unknown to Traci, in a previous study of about 1,000 depressed people taking duloxetine for up to a year, seven people had attempted suicide and seven others reported that they had thought seriously about it.

In Traci’s group, almost everyone had some odd reaction to the drug. Some could not sleep. Others could not get out of bed. There was constant bickering. One woman said she was stunned when she felt a powerful urge to run over her husband with the family car.

Two weeks into the experiment, Johnson dropped out of school. Even though she could leave the clinic, she was missing classes and skipped the funeral of her grandfather.

Still, she found time to socialize. And there was a young man, a Christian. “I LOVE his love for You,” she wrote to God about the boy in her diary. “God, please work it out.”

But a week later, the young woman took the multicolored scarf that she wore around her waist and looped it around her neck. She tied the other end to a shower rod and hung herself.

13. (Mama:) I know I’m majoring on the gruesome and horrible aspects of drug trials

here, and I'm doing so intentionally. I want to remind you of the possible consequences of your actions, dear Family, and emphasize the point that you're not necessarily immune just because you're a Christian. This poor young woman wasn't immune to the dangers, as much as she loved the Lord and wanted to serve Him. And neither are you.

14. Yes, you can claim His promises of protection, but you're on pretty shaky ground if you're expecting that protection when you're doing something that's not His will. Are you sure you'd want to tempt God by such actions? Not even Jesus was willing to tempt His Father when the Devil urged Him to jump off the roof of the Temple because, after all, as the Enemy said, "[God] shall give His angels charge concerning Thee; and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone" (Mat.4:5-6). If the Lord Himself wasn't willing to test His Father's protection in such a situation, should you be?

15. I asked Dad to comment on these drug trials, too, to see if he thought it was safe for Family members to do such things and if the money they earned was worth it.

16. (Dad:) To put it bluntly, Family, it's not worth it! You're risking your health, your life, the happiness of your loved ones, the salvation of souls, and your mission on Earth all for a few measly dollars! While you're on Earth you're having an impact for eternity—telling others about Jesus, winning souls and disciples, bringing up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and sharing the Lord's love with all you come in contact with. How can you put a price tag on that? It's priceless, because you're priceless! How can you hire yourself out to the System this way?

17. I know you make a few thousand dollars off of it, but so what? Where's your faith, Family? Can't you trust the Lord to supply

some other way than by prostituting yourself to the medical system? That's what you're doing, you know—selling your body to the ungodly System for a few days or weeks to make a profit off it. Well, I'll tell you, our bodies belong to God, not the System, and they're not for sale for any amount of money!

18. Why can't you trust the Lord to supply? Where's your faith for miracles? Where's your desperation in prayer, your claiming of the keys, the use of your spiritual weapons, your looking to the Lord for answers, for supply? How come you don't put the Lord on the spot and challenge Him to fulfill His Word? After all these years of reading His Word, are you so easily moved by need—or greed—that you would turn to some risky System scheme to make a quick buck rather than trusting the Lord?

19. It's not some sort of coincidence that these young men were hospitalized in a drug trial right after Mama heard about the Family participating in such things. There are no "coincidences" with the Lord, and this situation was a strong warning! If you're thinking of involving yourself in such things, you'd better think long and hard about it, or pray long and hard about it!

20. You'd also do well to remember that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, and you are not your own (1Cor.6:19). You are the temple of the living God, and when you decide to take part in a drug test where you have your body subjected to some sort of unknown chemicals that will have who knows what sort of effect on you, you're doing it to the Lord! You could well be tearing down His handiwork, His worker, His temple!

21. Even tried and tested drugs are hazardous and can have all sorts of side effects. How much more can these experimental drugs wreak havoc with your body and your mind, perhaps for years! And their effects might not show up right away, maybe not till

long after the test. For that matter, what if that drug affects the children you have in the future? Are you willing to risk their health or lives too?

22. Doctors don't really know much about the human body and what these sorts of drugs will or won't do. That's why they're testing them out on human guinea pigs, to see what sort of effect they have. If they don't work as well as they should or they have bad side effects in the tests, well, those doctors and scientists will probably feel bad about it, but it's no skin off their nose in the end—but it could be plenty of skin off yours, or who knows what other body parts it could cost you! Why risk it?

23. You also have to remember that the Enemy is out to get you because you're one of the Lord's children. If there's any way that he can get in to these tests to cause you pain or harm, he'll do so—and you're on his turf, his territory, in a situation where your health is governed by men of science rather than men of God. You're leaving yourself open to attack by the Enemy and his forces, or for some sort of disease or accident that could incapacitate you even if there's no problem with the drug you're testing. What if you catch something from an infected needle? For that matter, what if you catch a disease from someone else in the drug trial, or from the doctor or nurse or medical equipment?

24. These drug trials just aren't worth it, any way you look at it! Why play Russian roulette with your life and your health and your ministry for the Lord? You may come out of it just fine, but you may not. Why risk it? The seemingly easy route of turning to the System for a few fast dollars may cost you for the rest of your life, and may cost others the help or love or salvation you could have given them had you lived, or had you been healthy.—And I'm not just talking about participating in drug trials for extra money. I'm talking about anything risky that you might be tempted to do for quick money, anything that is going to put your physical or

spiritual life at risk, anything that is a reproach to the “cause of Christ,” anything dangerous! It's just not worth it!

25. Don't be one who has to stand before the Lord and say, “If I only had.” Be one who can stand before Him with satisfaction as He tells you, “Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into My joy!” I'm looking forward to seeing you do so! I love you! (*End of message.*)

26. (Mama:) Please take Dad's counsel seriously, dear Family. He loves you, and so do Peter and I. The Lord loves you, and He loves to see you healthy and well, wooing and winning others for Him. Your mates in the Family love you and need you as well, and so do the lost. Please don't risk your health and happiness and life for a few dollars as a medical guinea pig—or for any other unknown venture. You're priceless, and we can't spare you!

2006 and the Endtime Chessboard

27. In this next message, I want to share with you some information the Lord recently gave as a result of a warning dream that focused on Endtime events and the need to prepare. While the dream wasn't specific as to what would take place and exactly when it would happen, I had several people hear from the Lord about it, and each time the Lord confirmed this warning, saying that something major may happen this year that will play a significant part in Endtime events. (A few prophecies indicated that these events might take place before August 2006.) When we asked the Lord whether we should inform you about it, He said that we should—that it would be a good reminder to continue diligently preparing in spirit, so that we're ready for whatever may come.

28. You may be tempted to think that it's not worth it to prepare yourself in spirit, because nothing may happen. But while we

may not always understand the intricacies of the spirit world and why the Lord would give us a warning that He may choose to delay or that may not come about in the way we originally thought it would, we can always trust that He reveals these mysteries to us for a reason.

29. Our Husband wants us to be prepared in every way possible, even when we don't know exactly what we're preparing for. It's also good to remind yourself that many things rest in the balance of choice, our readiness for the final days, world conditions, and the choices of world leaders. Sometimes the event the Lord warns us about is behind the scenes and unseen to us, but is nevertheless part of the unfolding of Endtime events. Other times the signs are more obvious, whether it's a natural disaster, a recession or war, a significant event that affects our whole work, etc.

30. In speaking of these coming events, the Lord said: "There is a very good possibility that the events to come will take place on U.S. soil. Much depends on the choices of the Evil One, the choices of various world leaders, and even the choices of the U.S. populace as a whole, but that country is worthy of judgment for its deeds. Its cup of iniquity is nearly full, and the time of My judgments is almost come.

31. "However, the repercussions could touch other countries as well. The nations of the world are connected in many ways, and what affects one deeply often affects many others to one extent or another. There are many ties that bind the nations to each other, and a sudden jerk on one tie is often felt far away through the network of ties. I would not have My brides pass over this warning with the feeling that it's for someone else, for Homes in another country or area, or not likely to affect the Family at all. For what I say to one, I say to all: Be ready. Be prepared."

32. (Mama:) What should we be prepared for? The Lord said: "These times prepare the

way for the confirming of the Covenant; they pave the way for the rise of the Antichrist. But it remains to be seen if the Evil One is ready to play this piece on the chessboard yet, and what square he will move it to. Will he move it or another piece? Is he ready for the endgame? If he moves it, will he move it to the square marked 'disaster,' 'crash,' 'war,' or some other square that causes great confusion, that creates a need for his greater presence on the world scene? Will this piece, this little horn, work on casting down some of the other pieces on the chessboard?

33. "The Endtime chess game proceeds and he ponders his moves. As his opponent, you must be thinking ahead and considering what you would do if he made this or that move. What would you do if there was a crash, a major disaster, or an outbreak of war? Have you considered these things carefully and prayerfully and come up with any sort of contingency plans, how you would respond? It would be good for you to do so, for any good chess player can outwit his opponent if he thinks far enough ahead."

34. (Mama:) As the Lord says, it's not only a matter of us being prepared, but it's also a matter of how the Devil chooses to proceed. Regardless of what move he chooses to make, however, we can still do our part to prepare. We can pray, too.

35. The Lord said: "Pray that these things happen at My perfect time for you. I would give you as much time as possible to get prepared and get ready for the events that will bring in the last seven years. Pray for My will to be done, and work with a will and a passion so that you will be ready, whether the time is early or later."

36. (Mama:) He gave us a few specific tips for our preparation: "You know how to be prepared for disasters, the crash, war, and upheavals. There is much written on these things in the volume of your books and publications, if you will study that counsel and apply it. ...

I always supply for you, My dearly beloved children, but it is important that you have your house in order. It is important that you are truly cultivating your friends and contacts and supporters, the members of your greater church, who will help to care for you and provide for you when the evil times hit. ... If you do what I have told you to do, you will be more than prepared for any eventuality.”

37. (Mama:) It’s important to remember that there is an intense behind-the-scenes war being waged. The direction that the battle goes is dependent on our prayers, our readiness, our choices, the choices of others, and the Lord’s timetable. He may give us a warning to stir us out of complacency, so that we won’t become lethargic in our training because He knows we’ll need to be strong and ready to face what the future holds, even if He then chooses to delay this sign of the End a little longer.

38. The steps of preparedness force us to grow spiritually, to take up our spiritual weapons and become more proficient in our use of them. And the fact that the Lord warns of a possible impending event this year should spur us into action more quickly to do what we can to strengthen our spirits and to ensure that we’re reaching the world and witnessing to those He wants us to reach at this time.

39. How are you doing in your spiritual preparedness? Are you being faithful to hide the Word in your heart, to practice with the spiritual weapons, and to become proficient in the art of war? Or have you grown comfortable or complacent, not really striving to progress? If Endtime events began to unfold this year, would you be ready? Would your flock be ready? Are

you faithfully feeding them and preparing them for the Endtime?

40. These are good questions to ask yourself occasionally, because it’s easy to settle into a routine, either physically or spiritually. You won’t want to be caught unawares, though. You’ll want to be ready, as a skilled and proficient fighter, who, when the Endtime events unfold, will be ready to face them. That doesn’t necessarily mean you’ll “feel” ready and able to deal with all that unfolds, but you will have the assurance of our loving Husband’s care and His ability to see you through whatever comes.

41. Of course, we shouldn’t be fearful of what might happen. Our Husband and Protector will be with us through any event, as He always has been, and He can guide us through it. He wants us to be prepared, to have our armor securely attached, and our spiritual weapons in hand, ready for action. Are you ready? If you don’t feel prepared, you can ask the Lord to show you how to be strengthened in spirit, what personal steps you can take to increase your faith. You can prepare!

42. We love you, dear Family, and trust that you’ll take this warning to heart and ask the Lord how you and your Home can be ready for whatever may come. The Lord uses warnings to keep us on our toes, vigilant in spirit, so that we can be prepared and can continue our important work for Him. So take it to heart and do your part to work with a will and reach the lost in the time we have left. I love you!

Preparing with you in spirit,
Mama

Note: If you’re interested in sharing more about the Endtime with your Active members, General members, friends and relatives, and they’ve read “The Future Foretold,” the Aurora books “The Rise and Fall of the Antichrist” and “From the End to Eternity” provide a good overview of our understanding of future events.