

Wonderland

Prophecy - Signs

Wednesday, April 24, 2013

Pete Garcia

"And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold." (Matthew 24:10-12)

We have terrorists in Boston, explosions in Texas, possible nuclear war with North Korea looming, and the Middle East is a tinderbox waiting to explode. There are volcanoes burgeoning and threatening in El Hierro, Yellowstone Park, and Iceland. Earthquakes and sinkholes seemingly popping up at random places. Extreme weather and solar storms battering this world left and right, and somehow it is still all President Bush's fault.

Pop stars and politicians are joining forces to showcase their incompetency by enacting idiotic and illogical legislation. (You know we're in trouble when the administrations [Brain trust](#) consist of actors and musicians).

If you're a conservative politician and you get a parking ticket, you better believe that ABC, NBC, MSNBC, and CNN will be there to provide non-stop coverage of the event. If you're a [Democrat](#) politician and you're caught with under-age prostitutes, you might as well be in the Witness Protection Program for all the coverage we'll see about it. There are Senators and Congressmen, who either through too many drugs, or too much political correctness, can't string a simple [sentence](#) together...yet are the same ones charged with writing the laws in which the rest of us have to follow.

There are random mobs of violent teens robbing stores and beating up the elderly for fun. Mass-murdering abortion doctors with tales so [gruesome](#), it still manages to be ignored by the media. Lone gunmen and left-wing extremist tragically shoot up random civilians and get lots of media coverage until the media finds out they're really left-wing liberals, and then they too are ignored.

It would seem that there is an evil agenda afoot. Furthermore, it seems that something terrible is on the horizon, and the longer we wait for it to happen, the more devastating it will be when it finally does.

We are giving money we don't have to countries who hate us (Egypt & Saudi Arabia), but forcing our friends (Japan, South Korea, & Israel) to come begging on their knees for a few handouts. It's illegal to ask someone for their ID card to vote, but you have to have background check, DNA and urine samples, and a credit check to buy a shotgun. Gas is up, unemployment is up, misery is up, and it seems as if the nuts are running the nut-house.

Have you looked around lately? The world is in desperate need of a superhero.

Don't worry though, Hollyweird has plenty of make-believe Supermen and Batmen to go avenge us. If for nothing else, it distracts for a few hours so we don't have deal with the real world.

But just because our culture has been so utterly desensitized to violence and sex over the last 40 years, don't worry, it has NOTHING to do with how our kids have turned out. Neither does violent video games or prescribing a whole cornucopia of psychotropic drugs to children play any role in the uptick in violence in our society. Between the movies and the drugs, I think most people prefer the distraction to what's really going on in the world...I mean, who can blame them? This world is taking the Looney boat to crazy-town...at ludicrous speed. Up is down, black is white, and right is wrong. Bread and circuses anyone?

The Purposelessly Driven Church

It would seem though, that at a time when the church was destined to make its biggest impact on a lost and dying world, it instead fails majestically. God gave us prophecy ahead of time, so when the time does come, we can say 'look here, God already told us that this was going to happen!' But we don't.

Most churches today don't even know what Eschatology even means let alone any of its tenants. Most churches are lulled back into the comfortable cradle of a spiritual-coma by well-meaning and smiling pastors and pastrix's who psycho-analyze the symptoms, rather than giving you the cure. America's "Pastor" Rick Warren in his multi-million selling "Purpose Driven Life" book states:

When the disciples wanted to talk about prophecy, Jesus quickly switched the conversation to evangelism. He wanted them to concentrate on their mission in the world. He said in essence, "The details of my return are none of your business. What is your business is the mission I have given you. Focus on that!" (*PDL*, p. 285)

But most churches (the 501(c) 3 types) are more concerned about adding new extensions to their church compounds than they are risking losing their congregations by preaching a message of repentance. Pastors are more caught up getting television shows and book deals on how to live your 'best life now', rather than teaching about the real 'catching up'.

Admittedly, I'm painting with a broad brush here, because there are still a few churches out there who preach the word. But more and more, people want their churches like they want their movies...new and exciting! Somehow, we've come to equate comfy pews and grand buildings for spiritual maturity. If we aren't here to be the [salt and the light](#), what good are we?

The few Christians who are awake, look around the world and see the persecution of Christians skyrocketing. Iran, Iraq, Egypt, Zimbabwe, Sudan, China, North Korea, Pakistan, and Indonesia have all but declared war on Christianity. Yep, the world is in a fine old mess which is why many of us now are groaning, crying out "Maranatha" with

ever more intensity. Would we but look back in time to another group of elect who increasingly came under the oppressive thumb of the world as it was then.

"Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage. So God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God acknowledged them." **Exodus 2:24-25**

The Jews spent 400 years in Egypt. It is unsure how long they had it good there under Josephs 'protective care. But at a certain point, the Egyptians grew envious and frightened of the children of Israel...and then enslaved them. But that wasn't a surprise to God. God had already foretold all this to Abraham hundreds of years prior.

"Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete." **Genesis 15:13-16**

Back to the Future

Like the Jews in bondage in Egypt who had come to the point of groaning to God, our pleas for deliverance today do not fall on deaf ears. Jesus told His disciples (and by extension us) at the Last Supper,

"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." **John 14:1-3**

It has been 2,000 years since Christ left Terra Firma. Jesus told His disciples that He is coming back again to deliver us from the bondage of this sin-stricken planet.

Death is the consequence of sin, and we all sin, thus death of all types and manners of delivery have plagued this planet since the days of Adam. Not only do we struggle with death, but with the corruption of man and society in general. We are witnesses to a world falling apart and helpless to affect any change in this whole mess...or so it seems.

Similarly, Muslims share a similar sense of moral indignation at this corrupted world...by which they mean the USA. I mean, they don't call us the "Great Satan" for nothing. Our politicians lie and cheat with increasing brazenness. Our entertainment industry pumps out so much filth, that were it carbon based, they'd have been shut down back in the 80's. But their "holy book", the Koran, does not effectively stamp out the root of said evil. They seek to affect change by acts of violence because that's all they have at their disposal.

• **Qur'an 47:4:** "So when you meet in battle those who disbelieve, then smite the necks until when you have overcome them, then make (them) prisoners, and afterwards either set them free as a favor or let them ransom (themselves) until the war terminates. That (shall be so); and if Allah had pleased He would certainly have exacted what is due from them, but that He may try some of you by means of others; and (as for) those who are slain in the way of Allah, He will by no means allow their deeds to perish." ([Source](#))

As Christians, our battle is not fought with bombs and bullets. Our battle is a spiritual one because Satan and his demonic hordes are the ones behind all the wickedness and wicked people that so frequently turn our world upside down:

"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." **Ephesians 6:12**

Being in battle is an exhausting ordeal. Many of us who battle daily in prayer, pleading, sharing, witnessing, and living out our faith are tired. We are groaning under this burden, but we need to take comfort in knowing that our groaning is not in vain.

Our Lord hears us and knows our struggles. He knows our frustrations and our pain in living in a world that is upside down and falling apart. We are in contact with our heavenly Father who created this universe, and He knows exactly when He will send His Son to return for us. That day is coming. But know this, that even though 2,000 years has transpired, no deed or misdeed has escaped His attention. He will exact perfect justice and judgment upon a Christ rejecting world.

"Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord." **Romans 12:19**

Even though it may feel like we live in a topsy-turvy "wonderland" where increasingly, nothing makes sense. We should as much as possible, live at peace with those around us. Live out your faith as a testimony to a lost and dying world. Share not only the Good News that Jesus Christ died and rose again to give them eternal life, but that all this craziness has already been foretold and actually works out to be good news as well...because it means Christ is coming soon.

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." **Titus 2:12-13**

Against the Grain

In Defense of the Faith

Wednesday, May 01, 2013

Pete Garcia

In ancient Roman times, if one wanted to be a good, moral, citizen, one worshipped and paid homage to the gods and to Caesar. What initially brought the ire of the Roman government down upon the early Church was its refusal to do either.

Early Christians were labeled 'atheists' and 'cannibals' for their refusal to worship the gods and because of their adherence to the Lords' Supper, which many thought was the actual drinking of blood and eating of flesh. True Christianity cost you something back then. If you were in a particular trade or guild, and you didn't worship the god of that guild, well, you soon found yourself out of a job.

If you attended an underground church in those days (usually in the home of another believer), you could be arrested and thrown in prison for "subversive" activity. And under the whims of certain Emperor's such as Nero, Domitian, Marcus Aurelius, and Diocletian, you were killed in the arena for sport.

The [Coliseum](#) that we see standing today, was built under Vespasian, and finished by his son Titus. The money that was used to fund the massive project was money plundered from the sacking of Jerusalem. To add insult to injury, it was then used as a symbol of Rome's control of the masses by offering *panem et circenses* (bread and games) which often included the killing of Christian's and their families to the roaring crowds of thousands. Christians were killed by wild animals, or by gladiator. Whole families were torn apart by lions and bears simply because they would not bend a knee to Zeus, or Caesar.

So it is becoming today, Christians once again find themselves at the wrong end of the religious spectrum. I don't say we are fully in that same level of persecution today, but we can definitely see the clouds forming on the horizon. The only difference between today and the Roman times is that in today's politically correct world, we don't refuse the worship of Zeus or Diana, but that of the gods of tolerance and diversity. But they represent the same things.

Tolerance in and of itself, is not a bad thing. But when tolerance is applied theologically, in that we must tolerate all beliefs, true Christian's must plant their battle flags. There is only one God (Being), and He exists in three Person's: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We tolerate that other people have their beliefs, and we differentiate ourselves from let's say, Muslim nations who do NOT tolerate other religions, but the toleration I am speaking of, is being applied to our belief itself, which of course would make Christianity polytheistic...which means it would no longer be Christian. ([Matt 28:19-20](#))

Likewise, diversity in and of itself is not a bad thing. There is neither Jew, nor Greek, slave nor free, male or female in the body of Christ. We come in from all different

backgrounds and all different ethnicities to form one body, and even in that one body, we are gifted with different spiritual gifts and talents. We are not all ears, or eyes. Some are toes and hands. The picture painted by the Apostle Paul is one of true, cultural and physical diversity. Yet, we all work toward one goal, and that is the glorification and exaltation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation is not found in any other name or person. (1 Cor 12)

In fact, Christianity is unique in its simultaneous inclusivity (all may come) and also in its exclusivity, (only Jesus can save). No other religions, belief, philosophy, etc. offers eternal salvation for simply placing one's faith in the object of worship. ALL other religions demand some form of works based, man-centric effort to become acceptable to said god. Christianity recognizes the fallen-ness and brokenness of man, accepts him or her where they are, and transforms them from the inside out through the regenerating and life-giving work of the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit. (John 14:6)

I think that's what irks the world so much about true Christianity. It's unwillingness to bend on areas such as the deity of Jesus Christ, the inerrancy of Scriptures, the exclusivity of salvation, final judgment, and salvation by grace through faith. IF (and that's a big if), Christianity could be proven wrong on any of these points, it would nullify the whole structure. If a "Christian" denomination or branch of Christianity were to concede on any of these points, it no longer is Christianity, but some aberration of it.

Army Strong or Army Wrong

Recently, an Army Lieutenant Colonel made some astonishing and outlandish [comments](#) about Christians and Christian organizations in an email made available by the American Family Association. In it, 'hate groups' are categorized ideologically into sub-groups: anti-gay, anti-Muslim (misnomer really), anti-immigrant (another misnomer-as no one is opposed to legal immigration), white and black power groups, and "anti"-government groups.

In this list, the LTC equates anti-gay as being as equally intolerable as racism. Considering that he attributes Christian groups as the biggest antagonists to the homosexual movement, does a huge disservice to those Christian African American's who were beaten, arrested, and killed in the Civil Rights movement in the 1960's. Wasn't the **Reverend** Martin Luther King Jr. mixed up in all this? He ignores the fact that the so-called "*Religious Right*" has not lobbied for legislation to segregate bathrooms, buses, water-fountains, or any other public meeting place in light of said aberrant behavior.

The so-called *Religious Right* has not dragged homosexuals out into the street and beat them, nor have they snatched them out of their houses in the dead of night to a lynching. In fact, what he deems the "*Religious Right*", are really just concerned Christians and families who see an onslaught of destructive legislation pointedly targeting them (and us) for destruction and dare to speak out against it.

The areas of contention primarily have been instigated by homosexual lobbyists against traditional families, marriages, or institutions. Anyone remember Chick Fil-A? They're demanding that their lifestyle be embraced by all, despite the fact that there is zero reciprocation for Christians in like manner. We have to accept them no matter what the cost is to Biblical Christianity. It is increasingly coming to the point, that if anyone dares question or stand up for their beliefs, they are ridiculed, marginalized, fired, and cast out.

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

What I find particularly spineless about the whole email, is the blatant rejection of history and reality. For starters, he pulls most of his resources from the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#), in which, everyone knows is completely impartial and unbiased (JOKE).

Secondly, I don't remember Christians flying planes into the World Trade Center or the Pentagon on 9/11. I don't remember a Christian shooting up a Soldier Readiness Center at Ft. Hood. I don't remember any Christians bombing Muslim/Hindu/Buddhist/etc churches and then beheading all who wouldn't convert to Christianity. What reality is this LTC living in? Timothy McVeigh didn't bomb the Alfred P. Murrah federal building out of his love for Jesus. The Branch Davidian's weren't anymore Christian, than Jim Jones was sane.

For the entire list of so-called "Christian" hate crimes, I can quadruple the substantiated evidence conducted by atheistic, Islamic, or other terrorist attacks. Mao Tse Tung, Joseph Stalin, Pol Pot, Kim Dynasty, and Adolph Hitler all promoted a form of [state-worship](#) or atheism (the state is the god) under various flavors of a Marxist-Leninist political ideology known as Communism. They collectively killed over 200,000,000 people. Where is this man's angst against Communist groups?

I believe that this LTC is using his position of authority to impose his political ideology over his subordinates, by mandating from a strictly Democratic Party platform resource and party talking points. His notification to those under his chain of command, were they Republican, would almost immediately be [violating](#) his guidance. As one who leans Republican, were I in his chain of command, would already be in violation of his directives. I remember taking an oath to uphold the Constitution, not uphold Democratic talking points. As a Christian, I am already in violation of being a rebel, because I cannot accept his cultural standards of shifting values.

"When we assumed the Soldier, we did not lay aside the Citizen." - **George Washington**

Biblical Perspective

Christians will continue to come into direct and indirect fire as our national community continues its slide into the moral abyss. We will increasingly come at odds with a culture that increasingly embraces decadence, just as the early Church did when subjected to the polytheistic pantheon of gods the Greeks and Romans had. There is coming a day, and it is here, in which true, Bible believing Christian's can no longer ride the fence impartiality. The world is forcing this upon us, and it will separate us as wheat is separated from the tares.

Christ, Christians, and Christianity are considered a blight to this world. Considering who actually runs this world, I take that as a compliment. But we are more than a stain. We are an irritant. That is why Jesus said the world would hate us...because it hated Him first.

The Pearl of Great Price (Matthew 13:45-46)

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it”

Pearls are not considered Kosher to the Jews. They are formed in an oyster due to an irritation by a foreign object. The oyster secretes a nacre substance to cover the foreign irritant. It does this over and over until a smooth, polished pearl is formed. The Church which Jesus Christ Himself has built is a foreign irritant to this world and to the [god of this age](#). Think about that for a moment.

Be Ye Salt (Matthew 5:13)

“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men”

In the days before refrigeration, salt was used as a preservative. However, salt is also an irritant, try putting some in an open cut. We are to be salt, not only as a preservative, but because our nature is what it is, we are an irritant to the open, bleeding, festering wound that is this [fallen world](#).

Be Ye Light (Matthew 5:14)

“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden”

Light not only provides illumination, which the Gospel does by changing lives. But light also [exposes](#) that which hides in the darkness. Evil prefers darkness, and we expose that, which again, makes us an irritant to the god of this age.

The Bible appropriately calls the gentile nations of this world, the ‘the sea’ aptly describing the unstable nature thereof. Cultural value will shift from generation to generation. What one generation deems inappropriate, the next embraces.

The last generation (religious and non) saw homosexuality as an abnormality. It was even classified by the [American Psychological Association](#) (APA) as a mental disorder. This generation embraces it as normal. This generation views bestiality, pedophilia, incest, and polygamy as aberrant, yet given our track record, you can see where we are heading.

As pilgrims and sojourners traveling through this enemy territory, we are going to be increasingly placed in situations where we are forced to either cower or take a stand.

We are in this world, but not of this world. Remember that our calling isn't to try and convert this fallen world and its institutions to become more Christian, that's been tried before, and it ends in things like the Crusades and the Inquisition.

Our calling is to share the Good News of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world. We can't win the hearts and minds of those who are destined for an eternal hell, the Holy Spirit does that. We are to simply share the Good News and live a life worthy of the calling. As Christians, we cannot serve two masters. Besides, we already have our orders...

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

Romans 12:2

Less than Zero

Witnessing Tools

Wednesday, May 08, 2013

Pete Garcia

"The devil would have Christ prove Himself to be God, by turning stones into bread; but the Holy Ghost shows His Godhead by turning stones into flesh (Ezekiel 36:26)" -
Thomas Watson

The other day I was sitting at home with the family watching some Duck Dynasty, and we got a knock at the door. As usual, my dogs go berserk and I walk over to peek through the glass and to my delight, it was my favorite sort of visitors...Jehovah Witnesses! My wife thinks I'm odd that I get all giddy when they show up, but it's not every day that someone comes to my door wanting to engage me in a theological discussion.

I think most Christians just politely take their brochures and slam the door on them, or if they're feeling a little frisky, go out and challenge them on being in a cult. Either that ends in frustration or argumentatively, it usually is not the fruitful way to approach the situation.

The most important step in any engagement is to bathe your conversation gratuitously in prayer to the Holy Spirit for discernment, and the words to say. Stay courteous and never let the conversation get heated or negative. They need to know the truth just as much as the next person, so either having an elitist attitude or becoming obtuse, doesn't help.

Now, I don't recommend going out and seeking confrontations unless you're really grounded in the Word. Many of these groups deceptively use the same words and phrases that is common vernacular in the Christian tongue, but they have ulterior definitions of what they want it to mean. So, if you're ever in the situation that I find myself in from time to time, take a moment and share the true Gospel with them.

You don't have to be an expert on cults to know how to handle yourself. Bank tellers' study real currency, so that when a fake one comes through their hands, something will not feel or look right. You study the real, so that the counterfeit will make itself evident.

Starting out, I'll listen to their introduction. If they're handing me a pamphlet, nine times out of ten, there is a picture of Jesus on there. I simply start off by asking them who they think that Man was. After they give me a brief 'once-over' of who they say Jesus was, I ask to see their Bible (***New World Translation***), and I show them from their bible how Jesus is God and that God is a Trinity.

The Trinity is probably the clearest and best example to use in sharing with JW's or other groups who believe this way, and if you can show them this conclusively, they might get mad and walk away, but I guarantee you that the seed has been planted.

[BTW, it is WAY more effective witnessing tool if you use THEIR Bible to show them, because if you pull out your own, they will use that to discredit anything you say. I will say that you have to be careful, because many of your tried-and-true passages that you would use in a normal bible such as the KJV or NASB, may sound different because they are either reworded to say Jehovah in any reference to God, and/or they have added or subtracted words so that it fits their beliefs. I've selected some text using their bible to show them, how Jesus is God, how that God is Triune in nature.]

Often times they will start off by using [Deuteronomy 6:4-5](#) and show me that Jehovah God is one God...and to that, I agree with them. I'll even show them [Isaiah 44:6](#) and [46:9-10](#) as other examples to build their case. They will show you Jesus interacting with the Father Jehovah in passages like [Matt 3:17](#) or [26:39](#). It's not that they don't believe Jesus is God, but rather, that He is the literal Son by whom Jehovah created. This is similar to what Mormon theology teaches, in that Jesus is 'a god'. Jehovah Witnesses also believe Jesus was at one time, Michael the Archangel, but was chosen by God to become His son and that salvation is something you have to work for.

So my first question to them comes down to, is Jesus God? I try to build this in a simple, logical manner that shows them a pattern. And for this, I point them to [Luke chapter 4](#). This is where Jesus was being tempted by Satan in the wilderness to worship him, and Jesus rebuked him using their Scriptures saying, "You, therefore, if you do an act of worship before me, it will all be yours." In reply, Jesus said to him: "It is written, 'It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service.'" Then, I show them [Revelation 19:10](#) and [22:8-9](#) where twice an angel stops John from worshipping him, and shows them that worship is reserved ONLY for God. Again, my door-knocking friends and I are still in agreement. So we, using the testimony of three witnesses, are in agreement that worship is reserved only for God. To which they excitedly say yes.

Enter the Curveball

This is where I point them to [John 20:28](#). This is the passage where Doubting Thomas falls on his knees and declares to the risen Jesus, "**My Lord and my God!**"

Jesus neither rebuked him nor stopped him. Then there is usually silence on their part. So I then take them to [Revelation 22:12](#) ask them to read it to me and tell me who that is. Clearly, it is Jesus. ([vs. 16](#) confirms this)

"I am the Al'pha and the O?me'ga, the first and the last, the beginning and the end" (*New World Translation*)

And then too Revelation 1:8:

"I am the Al'pha and the O?me'ga," says Jehovah God, "the One who is and who was and who is coming, the Almighty." (*New World Translation*)

And then I ask them if God (Jehovah) can die, to which of course they don't believe...so I take them to **Revelation 1:17-18**

"I am the First and the Last, and the living one; and I became dead, but look! I am living forever and ever, and I have the keys of death and of Ha'des." (*New World Translation*)

Last but not least, I finish it off with **Revelation 22:16**

"I, Jesus, sent my angel to bear witness to YOU people of these things for the congregations. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright morning star." (*New World Translation*)

By now, there is a sense of worry and frustration building over our conversation like a dark cloud. Again, I ask them, how many God(s) are there? And we go back and read Deuteronomy 6. So then I ask, how can there be one God if Jesus is also God? Are there two Gods? This will almost immediately launch you into the Trinity rabbit hole. I say rabbit hole because they've been taught that the Doctrine of the Trinity came from Constantine and is propagated through the Roman Catholic Church and that it is a false doctrine created by men (black pot meet black kettle). To this pitfall, I avoid caution. Not that we can't prove the Doctrine of the Trinity (although the word Trinity is not in the Bible), but because they'll want to take you backwards through church history pointing out all the faults of the Roman Catholic Church. Stay focused on the scriptures!

If it comes down to it, just know that Early Church Fathers (disciples of the Apostles) believed fully in the Trinity and taught that those who didn't, were NOT Christians:

-Ignatius (30-107AD) -Justin Martyr (110-165AD) -Mathetes (130AD) -Athenagoras (177AD) -Clement of Alexandria (190-200AD) -Tertullian (210AD) -Origen (200-240AD) -Lactantius (285AD)

So using their New World Translation Bible, let's review our Tri-une Godhead and see where their Bible says:

Deity of the Father

- Psalm 90:2 (notice the word use of 'indefinite' as in Micah?)
- John 3:16 (Father sends the Son)
- Isaiah 44:6 (God states He is the ONLY God)

Deity of Christ

- Micah 5:2 (read the last part of that verse) compares with Matthew 2:1
- Isaiah 9:6 (ask them who this speaks of)
- John 8:58 (I would say compare with Ex 3:13-14, but they've changed it dramatically)
- Titus 2:13 (point out that the [the] in brackets means someone added that word in)

- Hebrews 1 (points out that Jesus was never an angel)

Deity of the Holy Spirit

- Acts 5:3-4 (object pronoun of the sentence: who played 'false' to who?)
- 1 Corinthians 2:10-11 (No one knows the mind of God except God)
- 1 Peter 1:2 (perfect scripture with all three Person's of the Godhead)
- Matthew 27:19-20 (baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit-if they were not equal, then why would Jesus command they be baptized in all three names?)

I think that by the end of this exercise, the idea that God is one Being, in three Person's, is clearly shown even in their scriptures, and it is a defining attribute unique to our God alone...which is why so many groups twist and pervert this. Moreover, let me say that if you deny the Deity of any of the Godhead, whether it be the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit, you are not worshipping the God of the Bible.

Cults and pseudo-Christian groups have from the beginning either added too, or taken away from God, in order to make Him fit their belief structure. However, if you take away any one of the three, you have nothing. If you try to make God three gods (*Tritheism*) or make God one god in three modes (*Modalism*), you don't have the God of the Bible. **And if you don't have the God of the Bible, you have nothing, you have less than zero.**

Conclusion

I'm not saying a person has to have a perfect, working knowledge of the Trinity to be a Christian. What sets the cults and the non/pseudo-Christian sects apart from true, orthodox Christianity is that they seek to twist and change the nature and deity of Christ. The doctrine of the Trinity actually works out well to separate the wheat from the chaff. When a person becomes born again, they are indwelt and sealed ([Eph 1:11-14](#), [2 Cor 1:21-22](#)) by the Holy Spirit who reveals that truth to them through studying God's word.

Someone who deliberately twists that truth or denies it outright (apostasy) probably wasn't a born-again Christian to begin with. In fact, the two times of greatest and varied apostasy, began at the beginning of the Church with the Gnostics, and is now raging through the various denominations within Christendom today in many shades and colors.

As we draw near to the end of our age, expect many to come claiming to be Christ, or coming in Christ's name ([Matt 24:4-5](#)). They have no saving knowledge, but are peddling another gospel in which Paul states very emphatically, that they are accursed ([Gal 1:6-9](#)). Thankfully, we are not held responsible for converting people, but only in sharing the Good News with them. I hope this helps. Remember, prayer for guidance in that the Holy Spirit will direct you in what to say, and when to say it.

"If there be one God subsisting in three persons, then let us give equal reverence to all the persons in the Trinity. There is not more or less in the Trinity; the Father is not more God than the Son and Holy Ghost. There is an order in the Godhead, but no degrees; one person has not a majority or super eminence above another, therefore we must give equal worship to all the persons." - Thomas Watson

The Plausible Impossible

Prophecy - Signs

Wednesday, May 15, 2013

Pete Garcia

Cartoon physics is a jocular system of laws of physics that supersedes the normal laws, used in animation for humorous effect. Normal physical laws are referential (i.e., objective, invariant), but cartoon physics are preferential (i.e., subjective, varying). (Wikipedia)

Kids love cartoons. Most of us ex-kids still love cartoons. There is something magical about them, in that we wish a little of it could spill over into our real life every now and again.

Who wouldn't want to be able to draw a door on a wall and walk thru it, while whoever was chasing you hit nothing but solid wall. Or how about running on thin air? I mean, what boy growing up didn't want Popeye arms at one time or another? To dream is human. The ability to escape the weary drudges of reality in a book or movie is what makes books and movies so appealing.

The willingness to suspend rational thought for a period of time is one of the few privileges we humans are actually afforded, and that is part of the gift of imagination God instilled inside us.

Sadly, our ability to believe in the impossible takes a severe beating over the course of our childhood. After twelve years of mandatory, state-sanctioned education, most kids these days enter the workforce hardened against the idea that life exists beyond what they can see and feel. Heaven forbid they attend a university! What little imagination they had left from public education, is quickly snuffed out and replaced with Marxist-socialist-Darwinian mind-fodder. The abandonment of imagination is not solely confined to those outside the church, but also within.

The Barna Group conducted numerous studies over the last two decades, and the findings are pretty startling. 3 out of 5 church attending children (regardless of denomination) either leave that faith permanently, or for an extended period of time after the age of 16.

A growing majority of mainline churches have abandoned a literal understanding of the Bible for a more allegorical one. The first reason is, because modern liberal seminaries churn out legions of pastors who have been indoctrinated not to take the Bible literally. The age of reason promoted the notion that the stories contained in the Bible are too fantastical to really believe: Six-day creation? Global flood? Moses parting the Red Sea? Giants? Calling fire down from heaven? Fulfilled prophecies? Resurrection from the dead?

Therefore, those stories are either watered down or are not taught at all. Secondly, church Sunday school classes (1 hour a week) have to compete with secular education (40 hours a week) and fall woefully short. Not only those, but add in (x number of hours) of secular movies, television, music, and friends that compete for those children's time.

From the moment children are brought into this world, to the moment they set out on their own, the odds are grossly in the world's favor for who has influenced your children the most. And at exactly the time when the Church needed to embrace a literal reading of God's word due to the explosion of archeological and historical evidence surfacing, scientific advancements, and abundance of apologetic and discernment ministries...the majority of churches opt for the easy way out. They rather choose to avoid controversial issues and treat the Bible more as an ethical guide than the Word of God.

Is It Warm in Here, or Is It Just Me?

We have the frog in the pot syndrome. We don't realize that the water is too warm until it's too late. Likewise, we don't realize how far we've come, until we start comparing where we came from. Technologically speaking, we couldn't have had the iPhone without all the preceding individual advancements in communications, photography, and satellites. Imagine trying to explain what an iPhone is to someone who didn't even know what the Internet was.

We Are Not in Kansas Anymore

Prophetically speaking, we've come a long way, baby. It all began with the Zionist movement in the 1890's (with the 1896 Theodore Herzl book **Der Judenstaat**) and culminated with the rebirth of the once, extinct nation of Israel in 1948. That same year, George Orwell prophetically (in a secular way) predicted what the world would look like in the future with his epic '1984'...although he was off by a couple of decades. But the coming together of the European Union, computer technology, banking and media centralization, and political unions that had never happened before were coming together rapidly.

It's as if Satan somehow knew that Israel was the prophetic trigger to watch for, which is why he so desperately tried to finish off the Jews in the Holocaust. All that did though was give the Jews just enough world sympathy to get the votes in the newly born United Nations to grant them statehood, and ever since then, the UN has actively sought to undo it.

Think about it another way. For almost 6,000 years, man was limited to the speed of horse. Then at the same time the Jews were gathering around small, smoky rooms in Europe aspiring to have a homeland of their own, the Wright Brothers figured out how to keep a plane flying in the sky (1903). The Ottoman Empire had to side with the losers of WWI in order to forfeit their claim over what was once called 'Palestine'. Anti-Semitism had to continue in Europe, which fed into the Nazi propaganda machine and culminated in the "Final Solution". World sympathy was just enough to allow the Jews

to reclaim their ancient homeland for the first time in 1900 years. All those things had to happen for Israel to raise the 'Star of David' over Israel and they have been fighting for their existence ever since.

In the meantime, man perfected the atom bomb, broke the sound barrier, and mastered space travel. Technology has continually leap frogged itself into maddening pace that by today, is doubling every 20-24 months. What seemed improbable or impossible back just a few decades ago is now just a matter of time. I mention these to show that they all at one time, were considered impossible. So what does all this have to do with cartoons?

Assessment

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown *it* to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen." (Romans 1:18-25 NKJV)

Although we look back to what the Japanese and German Nazi's did in WWII's concentration camps as ethically atrocious, that did not stop science from letting all that testing go to waste. Not only that, but certain Nazi scientists ([Operation Paperclip](#)) were spared punishment in the aftermath of WWII to continue on with the work to stay ahead of the Soviet threat.

The push is on to create that technological moment when computers can think for themselves (singularity). Religious, governmental, and educational groups have teamed up to try and improve man by artificial means (trans-humanism). Scientists have learned how to manipulate weather. Many speculate that we can trigger earthquake activity. We have [designer](#) influenza's now that could potentially dwarf the Spanish Influenza pandemic of 1918, which killed between 50-100 million people.

Certainly today we can see that on so many fronts, we have crossed into dangerously, [uncharted waters](#).

What was only man's imagination has now spilled forth into the front pages of our newspapers. Man traded God for science, and darkness has taken root filling that void with unspeakable horrors already being unleashed.

The judgments we see coming today in all shapes and sizes, are not God's wrath poured out on mankind, but rather, God withdrawing His divine hand of protection from man's own stupidity. Trust me, when God pours out His wrath onto the earth, mankind will [know](#) it.

In the Theory of Evolution, man has traded his image, that being created in the likeness of an incorruptible God, to the image of corruptible man. Man has sought to remove all mention of the Creator of the Universe from the market place of ideas, and nature (which God created) hates a vacuum. That vacuum became filled with darkness and ignorance, as to how late the hour actually is.

I'll Fly Away

Glory be to God, that we worship not only a creative God, but a God who delights in using the ridiculous and the ordinary, to do the miraculous and the extra-ordinary.

God could have parted the Red Seas by an earthquake. Jesus could simply have shown up in all His glory the first time, smiting anyone who even looked at Him funny. But He came in humility to become the perfect sacrifice for an imperfect people.

Does God have to remove His Bride, the Church at the Rapture? No, He could have had us go through all of its terrible atrocities, suffering either 100% martyrdom, or 100% protection. But that is how I know the Pre-Tribulation Rapture is the most logical choice, because it is the most unlikely.

The Rapture of the Church is by far, the most plausible (could happen) impossible (could never happen) event this world will ever see. The world forgets that the laws of physics and reality do not apply to God. He is outside of both time and space. He created the rules and He will do all that He [pleases](#).

The world will still be reeling in shock from the instantaneous removal of all those Christians in whom the Holy Spirit indwells, that no amount of media spin could deal with the obviously blatant truth of what just happened. In fact, that truth is so strong, it takes God to intervene and make them believe a lie, all those who had previously rejected the truth...

"And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thessalonians 2:11-12)

God's heart is that none should perish, but all come to repentance and salvation. But if you've heard the message, and put it off, or scoffed at it, you may never get that chance again. If you have not trusted in Jesus Christ, do not harden your hearts, because today is the day. We are not guaranteed tomorrow.

"For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him." (1 Thessalonians 5:9-10)

Fire in My Bones

Prophecy - Signs

Wednesday, May 22, 2013

Pete Garcia

Most everyone I meet at church or work tends to not get as excited about the Rapture and other end-times events as I do. For that matter, apologetics and end-times prophecy as a whole are not the most popular subjects of our day.

I think the main reason is that it hits too close to home. People don't want to think about the world they've come to know and love, is actually in its death throes. Most well-meaning people want to be pampered these days with kind, sweet sermons and feel-good theology. They want to be told that God is just itching to bless them financially and physically. They're told that true spiritual growth is based on emotional experiences, not in studying their dusty Bibles.

The growing trend within Christendom today is to have large, theatrical styled church services. The focus is on making the attendee *feel*, rather than know. The sheer number of these churches and the amount of money they generate do not lie. The problem in this, is that these seeker –friendly, purpose-driven churches thrive on making the experience of the attendee, memorable and enjoyable, regardless of what they actually walk away knowing.

Their philosophy is that we have to tailor the message around the culture, not the culture around the timeless Gospel message. Don't worry studying about the prophetic word, the Rapture or the 2nd Coming, because that is way down the road, and we have work to do now. So the impetus shifts from the eternal Gospel, to the social gospel. It feeds the belly, but starves the soul.

"Blessed *are* those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down *to eat*, and will come and serve them." (Luke 12:37 NKJV)

Just take a stroll through your local bookstore. Notice that in the Christian section, there are dedicated shelves upon shelves filled with book after book, all about making you a better a you. Pastor and teachers, feeding the flock humanistic feel-good philosophy. They're all basically the same book as Rick Warren's "Purpose Driven Life", but just with a different face on the cover. Now, compare them to your favorite eschatological teacher and you'd see the vast difference in the sheer number of books that move off the shelves.

Woe Woe Woe

I realize that a lot of what I write is in the arena of rebuking a fallen nation. As Jimmy DeYoung often says, 'I am not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet', so my rebuke does

not carry the same weight as say Jeremiah's or Isaiah's. Although I am not a prophet, I certainly can empathize with Jeremiah and his very unpopular message from God.

"O Lord, You induced me, and I was persuaded; You are stronger than I, and have prevailed. I am in derision daily; Everyone mocks me." (Jeremiah 20:7)

Jeremiah's message was the impending [judgment](#) that was coming upon the prosperous and backslidden nation of Judah. The Babylonians were coming, and all of King Manasseh's prophets were giving him nothing but good news. They were the ultimate 'yes-men' and they intensely disliked Jeremiah's message of 'doom & gloom'. But history bears out that it happened exactly as Jeremiah said it would. If the Jews had tried to fight Nebuchadnezzar, they would be crushed. If they surrendered, they would still be imprisoned, but God put a 70 year time table for that penance. After 70 years, they would be allowed to return by a [Persian king](#).

Many of us today who have heeded God's calling to pray, read, write, teach, and preach, are gaining nothing but an increase of vitriol and ridicule from those whom the message is directed...both "Christian" and otherwise.

Dave Hunt wrote an article akin to this back in 1991, entitled "[Are We Too Negative](#)". In it, he was saying that even back then, apologists and discernment ministries were receiving much flak from the so-called "Christian" ministries for being too 'divisive and negative' for simply holding to a Biblical standard...and that was 22 years ago!

Apostasy brings about our failure to perceive the danger until it is too late. We tend to think that apostasy will come in this gigantic wave of evil, marked full of red-flags and warning flares that will go off like firecrackers and alert the Christians to wake up.

Realistically, it comes in small steps of compromise, and moves a believer and those who would come to Christ just a little bit further away via [incrementalism](#). Like wading out into the ocean at low tide under the bravado of false confidence, you inch forward with each step until you pass a point of no-return, by then you're too far out to make it back to shore safely before the waves overtake you.

Many of our modern day denominational churches dismiss the study of Bible prophecy as a sensational distraction to the work at hand that must be done. They say that Christ will return when He returns, and we don't need to waste our time focusing on that. They also say that teaching prophecy is divisive and the church already has enough issues to deal with. They say we should be focused on feeding the poor, sheltering the homeless, evangelizing, and building missions around the world, not pie in the sky stuff that may not happen for another 1,000 years.

What I don't understand is, why does it have to be an either/or proposition? Can they not teach the soon return of Christ and help the needy? I mean, they can still teach the parables and the Sermon on the Mount and help the needy. Why not the Olivet Discourse? Can a church simply not teach a third of the Bible without fear of dividing that church?

According to the Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy (J. Barton Payne), there are 1,239 prophecies found in the Old Testament and 578 prophecies in the New which totals 1,817 prophecies. These 1,817 are dispersed in 8,352 verses which make up 27% of the 31,124 verses in the Bible.

As to the sensational nature of prophecy, I agree that there have been those that have greatly abused it for personal gain. But LOTS of doctrines have been abused by many [wandering stars](#), so we shouldn't throw the baby out with the bathwater on this.

As to the divisive nature of Bible prophecy, there is none. What is divisive is how we choose to interpret that information and I would further argue, that if you simply took the Bible for what it says, in context, it would be the least divisive doctrine we hold too. Besides, I've personally known MANY churches who have argued or split over much more trivial things like the color of the carpet, where money should be spent, hiring a new pastor, or whether they should build a bigger church or not. So if a church is so inclined to argue, at least make it something worth arguing over.

When [Gideon](#) went up against the Midianites and the Amelekites, God had him select his army based on a simple standard of criteria. Select those who never let their guard down and stopped watching. Out of the 10,000 remaining, Gideon went into battle with just 300 and God gave him the victory even though they were vastly outnumbered.

We are to do good works in the here and now, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't stop looking up in hopeful expectation that today might be the day Jesus returns for His bride.

Jesus instructs us multiple times to be watching and to be watchful for His return. The Apostle Paul reiterates this in [1 Thessalonians 5:1-4](#) as not even needing to explain the when, because we who are watching would already know.

I think those of us today who are watching, would whole-heartedly agree that we are indeed at the last hour. I don't know if there is any prophetic significance to this, but we see this played out in the very last hour of Christ's life;

"Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Matthew 26:40-4)

If we are not fixated on looking up for His return, we will become fixated on the cares of this life.

"But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly." (Luke 21:34)

Ministries who refuse to teach Christ's soon return, do so because they are fixated on the things of this earth. They are fixated on building their own little kingdoms here instead

of looking for that city whose builder and maker is God. Jesus warns us ahead of time what the consequence would be if we don't:

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:19-21)

So our message is not popular. Our message is not politically correct. One day, our message will be considered hate-speech. Our job is not to be man-pleasers, but God pleasers. Were we to have that 'fire in our bones' to keep preaching the word, regardless of the cost.

It caused Jeremiah to have a ministry of torment and persecution, and ultimately cost him his life. But that was 2,500 years ago. He has been in glory all this time, and still has eternity to look forward too. May our prayer be that we be found worthy and accounted for the calling God has laid before us for our lives.

Then I said, "I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name." But *His word* was in my heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding *it* back, And I could not. (Jeremiah 20:9)

Rumors of War: Part I

War News

Wednesday, May 29, 2013

Pete Garcia

"And 'you will hear of wars and rumors of wars'. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet." (Matthew 24:6)

Europe at the turn of the 19th century was a continent embroiled with political intrigue and nationalistic ideations. The Austro-Hungarian Empire was the great royal dualistic power at the center of Europe. To the east there was the Slavic provinces and Czarist Russia. To the west Spain, Great Britain and France. The Austrians were aligned politically and militarily with their German neighbors to the immediate north, but there had been growing rumblings between France and Germany. Throughout the various provinces of the Austro-Hungarian provinces, political and nationalistic factions were stirring and threatened unrest. Militarization, hyper-nationalism, and a swelling arms race was well on its way, as European nations began jockeying for the preeminent position as top military power.

But militant nationalism wasn't the only thing stirring in the hearts and minds of men. New ideas had been simmering in the various academic circles some 40-50 years prior, about where man came from, what man was, and where man should be. If proven true, these radical ideas would shake the old traditions to the core. These ideas were studied, shaped, and reasoned upon by Europe's brightest scholars, and would be the very ideas that helped provide much of the justification for the 20th century's greatest atrocities.

1900-1939

Vienna, Austria in particular was a political and ideological hotbed. Stomping grounds to infamous heavy-weights like Stalin, Hitler, Tito, Freud, and Trotsky. They honed their philosophical and political skills in backlit, smoky rooms, before they went on to perform their role on destiny's stage. [Marxism](#) at its roots, was a relatively new political worldview that divided the world up between the haves (bourgeoisie) and the have-nots (proletariats). The ultimate goal of Marxism was to take the power away from the minority, give it back to the many and form a classless society in where everyone got their fair share. It was an appealing idea, but untested.

During this same time period (1870-1914), there was an ideological "axis of evil" that leaned upon each other for validation, and in augmented the socio-economic-political leg of Marxist socialism and Fascism. These three worldviews would form the tripartite pillars that would provide the foundational support for the motivations behind the wars that devastated much of the 20th century. More accurately, they were the undercurrents that swept a generation of idealists along into their watery graves of time.

1. *Darwinian evolution* as proposed in books like "The Origin of Species" and "The Descent of Man" fueled the flames of atheism, eugenics, and race. But not to lay the

blame solely on Darwin's feet, but his work was taken and used as justification to believe that there were various hierarchies of superiority amongst different ethnicities. White Europeans were considered superior to the dark skinned, the Slavic and Jewish people. Darwin's adopted the term "survival of the fittest" from Herbert Spencer, which gave birth to the racially motivated ideas of Aryanism and Eugenics. Hitler used this as scientific justification for the "[The Final Solution](#)".

2. *Psychology* was still in its relative infancy, and atheistic doctors like Nietzsche and Freud (who had been influenced by Darwin) propagated ideas that men were not made in the image of God, but were soulless evolved animals driven by sexual desires and ruled by the id, ego, and superego. He viewed the monotheistic religion of Christianity and Judaism, as the "opiate of the people". Lenin and Stalin shared this same view. The Nazi's embraced Nietzsche's "Will to Power".

3. *Anti-Semitism* was also on the march across much of Europe at the turn of the century, and offered up the Jews as a common point of consternation that people could blame their problems on. The Communists pointed to the "rich Jews" as the bourgeoisie, and the Nazi's looked at them as biologically inferior. Communist had their [Pogroms](#), and the Nazi's their concentration camps.

By 1914, Europe was a dangerous, swirling tinderbox of ideas and hyper-nationalism just waiting to explode...and all it needed was one little spark.

The "War to End all Wars"

The spark had come in the form of a baby boy, born on July 25th, 1894, in Obljaj, Bosnia. Almost 20 years later to the day, the actions of this boy would forever change the course of modern history. So fate had it, that on June 28th of 1914, **Gavrilo Princip** [assassinated](#) the Archduke of Austria, Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie in Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina. Little did he know, or could know, that his actions would lead to a declaration of war only a month later.

The Great War would go on to kill over 20 million people over the next four years. The aggressive use of modern weaponry and chemical weapons changed the nature of how wars were fought. Armies would no longer face each other in flank on battlefields, because tanks, planes, artillery, and machine guns would make such attempt an exercise in suicidal futility. At the end of this war, the first failed effort at uniting the world under some form of global leadership was attempted through the doomed "League of Nations".

Germany was forced to pay exorbitant amounts of 'war damages', further hobbling their already crippled economy. Those reparations as well as loss of territory to France formed the embers that were still glowing bright some 20 years later. These embers would stoke the fires for a Second World War. Whether Gavrilo's action then was the straw that broke the camels back, or perhaps he was just the perfect excuse Germany and Austria needed for starting a war. Either way, the fuse of war had been lit, and a chain of events would be set in motion that could not be undone.

"For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." (Matthew 24:7)

1939-1991

WWII was really a perfect storm of; leftover unfinished business from WWI (Germany), fascist ideations (Italy), and aggressive Imperial expansion (Japan). These three nations formed what was then known as the Axis Powers (or the [Axis of Evil](#)). Germany had suffered a humiliating defeat and surrender at the end of WWI.

A young war veteran named Adolph Hitler was able to ride on the backs of people's misery and anger all the way to the office of Chancellor. Adolph led the increasingly powerful National Socialist Party (Nazi's), which sought to seek revenge on the rest of Europe for what they perceived as unjust and perpetual punishment. He successfully fixated all of the German's problems on the Jewish minority, then systematically and legally, stripped them of their rights as citizens, pooled them together in ghettos, and then hauled them off in boxcars to concentration camps. Benito Mussolini in Italy thought it was his destiny to reestablish the power of the Roman Empire again, through fascism. Seeing as nature hates a vacuum and all, Japan, sought to capitalize on the diminishing influence of the British Empire in Asia, and plunge in to take their place.

In the human toll, more than 55 million people died during WWII with all sides suffering heavy losses. The war had ended in 1945, and introduced again, a new way of fighting. For the first and only time in our history, atom bombs had been detonated over two Japanese cities (Hiroshima and Nagasaki), which would forever change the face of war. Mankind now had the means to completely annihilate itself off of the face of the planet.

Almost as soon as the bullets had stopped flying, the Allied Powers became divided over Berlin into two camps: Great Britain, France, and the United States on one side of the Iron Curtain, the Soviet Union and China on the other. We soon entered a new kind of détente war...called the [Cold War](#), which would last for another 40 years. Greece, Korea, Cuba, Vietnam, and Afghanistan were just a few of the conflicts that would keep east pitted against west in the struggles against perceived tyranny. These wars would not always be fought head on, but through rumor, influence and proxy until the Iron Curtain and the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991.

Assessment:

I realize that I'm painting with a pretty broad brush here, but there is simply not enough space available to capture the more than 117 major conflicts over the course of the 20th century in today's letter. With an estimated 167 million deaths due to war, the 20th century ranks as THE [bloodiest](#) century on man's historical ledger. It is as if we had left the 19th century with its pretty horses and neatly dressed marching armies, and plunged into an age of mud, tanks, airplanes, machine guns, and chemical weapons overnight.

And as terrifying as this rapid modernization was, the untested ideological theories set forth and embraced by men like Nietzsche, Darwin, Marx, and Hitler were far more

devastating. Their political, economic, and philosophical worldviews were the motivational undercurrents that led to the great wars of the 20th century. Not only that, but they still control people today, solely because every generation brings in a new crop of leaders who believe that they can apply these same failed principles today and get it right the 'this time'.

Mixing increasingly destructive weapons to an arsenal while systematically removing the ethical barriers to use them, has always been a recipe for disaster. And while it is true that war has always been amongst fallen man, what Jesus was declaring in His Olivet Discourse was that war, along with all the other signs, would increase in both intensity and frequency just as a woman who is moving closer to giving birth. No preceding century had seen the level of bloodshed that our parents' generation had. And if our understanding of Scriptures are to be correct, no generation will see as much death and destruction as ours will.

"And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened." (Matthew 24:22)

Rumors of War: Part II

Prophecy - Signs

Tuesday, June 04, 2013

Pete Garcia

The United States is the most powerful nation on earth. In fact, the U.S. is the most powerful nation this world has ever seen, yet there is no mention of a great superpower that fits the description of the U.S. in the pages of our Scriptures.

As students of Bible Prophecy, we know that the Bible lists only four major power-blocks in the end-times; a Revived Roman Empire, the Kings of the East and South (directional from Israel), and Russia. Based on this glaring absence, logic leads one to believe that something terrible or unexpected happens to us. We will become less relevant to Bible prophecy, than Libya or Ethiopia...who are mentioned.

We also believe that there are yet still four major conflicts that the Bible states must happen. These are: Psalm 83, Isaiah 17, Ezekiel 38-39, and Revelation 19 (Armageddon). With the exception of Armageddon, we aren't sure when these events will happen, or in what order they will happen. All we know, is that the prophetic stage has been set and the actors are all waiting in queue. As [Gavrilo Princip](#) was the spark for World War I (and subsequent events), all we are waiting for now is for that prophetic spark to get these last-days chain of events in motion.

1991-2013

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the U.S. on September 11, 2001, President Bush then famously [called out](#) the “Axis of Evil” as being Iraq, Iran, and North Korea. But if we are to be truthful about the matter, and really look at who is the ‘powers behind the thrones’, then I would have to disagree. The truth be known, only one of those countries really fits that definition. The real geo-political “Axis of Evil” is China, Saudi Arabia (Sunni)/Iran (Shiite), and Russia. These four nations are the puppet-masters who control and influence all of the following nations: the United States, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, North Korea, Venezuela, Vietnam, Cambodia, Cuba, and the former Soviet satellite countries as well as numerous global terrorist networks.

The Russians and Chinese have increasingly (and tactically) used their position as Permanent Members on the United Nations Security Council, to thwart any western intervention against rogue regimes which are actively seeking to destabilize the world...primarily North Korea and Iran. The UN General Assembly is increasingly being used against the United States and Israel.

Saudi Arabia

I included Saudi Arabia on this list, since they are the main exporters of radical Sunni Islam known as [Wahhabism](#). 15 of the 19 hijackers on 9/11 were Saudi nationals...yet the U.S. to date has not officially declared Saudi Arabia as a state sponsor of terror. The number one terrorist in the world for 10 years, was a Saudi man named Osama Bin Laden. The reason we haven't, is because the Saudi's have used OPEC and its control over oil as an economic stick and carrot against and for U.S. foreign policy since the early 1970s. We have remained invested in keeping the Royal Monarchy in power because they keep our dollar propped up by selling oil only in US Dollars.

But times they are a changing, and the further we sink into debt, the more other nations are looking to spread their fiscal eggs into different currency baskets. We always thought we had them over a barrel, it seems we just put ourselves over one. Like the new kid on the block who, unlearned in the harsh ways of the old world, befriended a dealer...but it wasn't heroin we got hooked on, it was cheap oil...and that addiction to cheap oil has driven a wedge between the US and Israel ever since. The [King of the South](#) could include a united Sunni front under the leadership of Saudi or Hashemite royalty.

Russia

Much of Putin's motivations have been an enigma to the West as to what exactly is driving his seemingly contradicting positions. On one hand, he advocates helping radical Islamic regimes like Iran and Syria, by building their nuclear reactors and selling them chemical weapons. On the other hand, he's waged a relentless campaign against Islamists in his own country, mainly the Chechen Muslims in the Caucasus regions. On one hand, he is for arming Syria to the hilt, but on the other, he's actively courted Israel by seeking a joint-development and management venture in Israel's newly discovered vast natural gas fields that lie off their coast.

Putin is seeking to further destabilize the region by arming Israel's neighbors so Israel will either have to turn to Russia for help, or Russia can move in and "protect" the gas fields by force in the event that Israel is no longer able to do so in the event of all out war. Warm water ports might be worth the risk, but Turkey, Greece, or Cyprus could contract out such ports if the rubles were right. There is no other logical reason (i.e. the costs outweigh the benefits) why Russia would risk open war with the U.S. or NATO over Lebanon or Syria. [Ezekiel 38-39](#) points to such a scenario.

China

China's ruthless use of economic sabotage, cheap (slave) labor, and reverse engineering has allowed them to become the number two exporter of manufactured goods in the world (behind the EU). They've used this influx of wealth to not only sell us our own goods, but to loan us the money to buy them. The U.S. borrows [money](#) from China, who in turn uses the money off the interest we pay them, to modernize their weapons and armies, which allows them to modernize their Army, Air Force, and Naval capabilities. China has had the ability to man a 200 million-man army for some time now, but what they lacked was the ability to project that strength (logistically) beyond their immediate borders. Now we see how this makes [Revelation 16](#) possible.

Iran

Formerly known as Persia up until 1935, Iran was considered a friend of the West (or at least not an enemy) until radical Shiite revolutionaries under the Ayatollah Khomeini overthrew the Shah in 1979. Ever since then, they have bounced between enemy number 1 and 2 on our list. They are the number one/two spot (along with Saudi Arabia) as state sponsors of terrorism. Their leadership's current objective is to achieve the status of a nuclear-armed state and bring the world to state of chaos so they can receive their messiah, the 12th Imam.

Having threatened Israel's existence numerous times, the Jews would never let this happen. They align themselves with Russia in [Ezekiel 38-39](#) as those who would come against Israel.

The Proxies:

Syria-Russia/Iran

As I noted back in this [article](#) from November of 2011, Assad will not go quietly into the night. He saw what they did to Qaddafi, Zine el-Abidine and Mubarak and knows there is no benefit to stepping down. He still has his stronghold in and around Damascus, through central Syria to the coast. Those military officers and politicians who previously defected from his regime only left the most loyal behind, which in a way, has strengthened Assad's grip on what remains. He is still receiving arms and munitions support from Russia, Iran, North Korea, and China, as well as militia support from Iran and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Between his regime and the various terrorist factions seeking to overthrow him, the West has been reluctant to openly support anyone, as both sides have been guilty of committing serious atrocities. The Al Nusra Front, which has risen to be the most serious challenge to Assad, is really Syria's version of Al Qaeda. The US does not want to be seen as openly supporting Al Qaeda, which is why we tried to backdoor weapons to them through Libya (think Benghazi). The real goal in the Syrian revolt is not freedom from Alawite oppression, or even seizing Damascus, but Assad's vast chemical weapons stores.

The "freedom fighters" want them so they can turn them on Israel and Israel of course will never let this happen. So when uncertainty occurs, we must return to the Scriptures to see how all this will play out. [Isaiah 17](#) notes the complete and immediate destruction of the world's oldest continually inhabited city Damascus overnight. In fact the whole region is turned into an uninhabitable area. It does not stretch one's imagination to see that Israel possesses the [technology](#) to bomb Syria into a fine powder if forced too.

North Korea-China

Admiral Mike Mullen once said, "The only predictable thing about North Korea, is their unpredictability". So when we think of North Korea, we have to realize that not all of their random acts of aggression are based on the whim of the Kim.

As Bashar Al Assad's regime is both a proxy and beholden to the Ayatollah of Iran, so to is North Korea's hermit-kingdom's relationship to China. Both North Korea and Syria would have collapsed long ago, had it not been for the benevolence of their overlords.

So when we look at North Korea, we can't think of them as an autonomous entity, because in many ways, they are tied at the hip. They exist solely because China continues to support them. They take their marching orders from China's communist leadership, and Beijing shrouds her true intentions from the West in almost complete secrecy.

The secret is, is that North Korea doesn't need long-range missiles, nor a high-yield uranium warhead to be a threat to the US or Europe. They have acquired a Cold War tactic known as FROBs. Consider North Korea's ability to place a low-yield, miniaturized warhead inside a "weather" satellite and have that orbiting the earth. They could detonate that at altitude (300 km's up) when and where they choose too, causing whatever nation lies beneath the blast-cone to instantaneously be sent back into the 1800's. We continue to dismiss them as an archaic regime that lacks the technology to be a relevant threat to us, but consider this information from the [Washington Times](#):

"North Korea's long-range missile orbited a satellite that weighs only 220 pounds. Can a nuclear warhead weigh so little? North Korea's so-called Space Launch Vehicle could deliver against the U.S. heartland any of the following nuclear weapons:

Using the technology of 56 years ago, the United States in 1957 deployed the MK-9, a nuclear weapon weighing 120 pounds with a yield of 15 kilotons, as powerful as the

9,000-pound Hiroshima bomb (10 to 15 kilotons), but with weight reduced to nearly 1 percent.

Using the technology of 51 years ago, the United States in 1962 deployed the W-45 missile warhead, which weighed 150 pounds with a yield of 15 kilotons.

Using the technology of 49 years ago, the United States in 1964 deployed the W-58 Polaris warhead, which weighed 257 pounds and had a yield of 200 kilotons some 20 times more powerful than the Hiroshima bomb. The W-58 was deployed 19 years after Hiroshima.

North Korea has been working on nuclear weapons for 19 years, but using modern 21st-century technology, with access to copious declassified U.S. materials on nuclear-weapons design, and with help from Russia, China, Pakistan, Iran and others.”

Assessment

It is increasingly clear that the U.S. had to rise to preeminence out of the two World Wars in order to prevent Europe (Revived Roman Empire) from utterly destroying itself, and to serve as the economic catalyst that would re-energize the world after its restructuring.

We were the economic engine, sufficient in size, natural resources, and manpower which enabled the following nations to either find shelter under (Israel, Europe, Korea), or to rise up against (China, Russia, and Islamic Powers) us. Almost every nation on earth owes the U.S. in some form or fashion for our blood, sweat, and dollars for their current resurgence and capabilities.

But as the Scriptures point out by our awkward absence, our usefulness in the prophetic course was directly tied to our faithfulness to our Creator. It would seem that both had run their course. As we turned from God, He simply allowed our wishes and returned the favor. The American shelf-life has expired, and it has become clear that we are now THE major impediment to a global one-world order.

God has allowed our enemies to be both numerous, and to rise up, both from without and within our borders. They are numerous, and increasingly volatile, with the weapons of war that could end all life on this planet were it not for [The Restrainer](#), holding events at bay. But in order for all those end-time scenarios to line up and come to pass as so many of us have expected, for so long...a major realignment in the World's order would need to take place.

So what would immediately and effectively end the American experiment? What could wean the world's dependence on the mighty US Dollar? What would demand an immediate restructuring of the world's political, militaristic, and economic orders?

I don't need to tell you...

"For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober." **1 Thessalonians 5:2-6**

The Wise Shall Understand

Prophecy - Signs

Wednesday, June 12, 2013

Pete Garcia

"But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase." Daniel 12:4

Imagine if you will that one-day scientists abandon the flawed and completely illogical theory of Darwinian Evolution. Imagine all that science could accomplish without having that biased monkey hanging on their neck like a dead albatross?

For many of these men and women, it would revolutionize the way they analyze a problem. Rapid advances in our civilization came because men like Isaac Newton, Nicolai Tesla, and Albert Einstein did not follow the status quo.

Like the harnessing of electricity, or the invention of the printing press...mankind's great leaps forward in time propelled understanding to a new level. A new paradigm opens up and thus spins off subsequent discoveries like an endless Fibonacci Spiral. What has largely kept men at bay was our own preconceived notions about what was logical, feasible, and possible. Because of that reason, knowledge was often bottlenecked in various points throughout the course of human history.



A great discovery is made, and there is an explosion of new ideas that spiral out from that one and continue until it reaches a point when further progress becomes frustrated or stifled. And whether that roadblock comes in the form of a government, a church, or just our preconceived notions about how to do something. It would seem that man's capacity for increased knowledge comes in brilliant, brief flashes...followed by long periods of darkness.

A great example of this is in our understanding of the prophetic scriptures, or in how we have come to know what we know.

Most of the Early Church Fathers (ECF) believed in a literal return of Christ and a literal kingdom that He would establish one day in the end times. ([Daniel 2:44-45](#), [Isaiah 65:17-25](#), [Revelation 20](#)). I imagine we would have had considerable more information about what their thoughts on the prophetic texts were, but the ECF soon became valiantly engaged in battling the Gnostics, Judaizers, pagans, and skeptics for the better part of 250 years against them making inroads into the Church. They fought just to keep the basic tenets of Christianity intact. They were able to do all that, and still face ten periods of intense persecution by a pagan Roman Empire. ([Smyrna](#))

The Sealing

However, beginning in the year 313, Constantine legalized Christianity with the *Edict of Milan*. Christianity went from being persecuted and fringe, to being accepted and legal. Over the course of the rest of that century, instead of Christianity going out into the world, the world would come into Christianity. ([Pergamum](#))

As Christianity became more acceptable to the establishment (Roman Empire), political correctness got its toe in the door of the church. I imagine it was not very popular to be preaching that Christ would soon return and destroy all the kings and kingdoms of the world, while under the watchful eye of an Emperor. Allegorizing scriptures provided a way for priests and bishops to remain politically correct and still keep their jobs. This had begun in earnest by an early “Christian” mystic named Origen in the 3rd Century.

A century later, a Christian priest named Jerome was commissioned to translate the Bible into Latin, finishing around the year 405 A.D. Around that same time, a Christian theologian named Augustine of Hippo (who had been influenced by Origen), had begun applying that same method of allegorizing the scriptures to all of his interpretations of the Bible. This type of hermeneutics would create a new strain in Eschatology called ‘Amillennialism’.

‘Amillennialism’ denied that Christ would literally return to earth, but that the Kingdom was spiritual and ever-present. Since Augustine was in large part, the ‘doctrinal-father’ for the Roman Catholic Church (RCC), ‘Amillennialism’ became THE eschatology for most of Christendom. Moreover, as the RCC gained power and authority, they retained their clerical power by making the Latin Vulgate the only legal and acceptable translation of the Bible. The only people still able to read and speak Latin were the clergy within the RCC, which ensured that they would have a monopoly on anything that was called “Christian” for the better part of 1,000 years. ([Thyatira](#))

Removing the Veil

However, *the times they were a changing*. A scholar named John Wycliffe in the 1380’s had handwritten a new translation in English. Another man followed Wycliffe not long after named John Hus (burned at the stake) who also began handwriting Bibles in

English. The first printing press was invented around 1450 (Guttenberg) and the first book to ever be printed was the Guttenberg Bible in 1455 (in Latin). The first English Bible ever printed was the Tyndale Bible (1526). Now that the Bible was available in something other than Latin, and could be mass-produced, there was an explosion of interest into Christianity. For the first time since the early church days, people could read the Bible in their own language. They did not have to rely on a priest to tell them what a Bible said.

The early 1500s brought about a long overdue desire for change within Roman Catholicism. The Reformation began as a protest-movement led by a Catholic monk named Martin Luther who was sick of how corrupted the system had become. With the selling of indulgences for the absolution of sins, the “good-works” salvation system, and the abuses by RCC clergy, Luther had finally had enough. On October 31st, 1517, he nailed his *95 Theses* to the door of the Wittenberg Castle church in Wittenberg, Germany. The rest as they say is history. Protestant groups began popping up all over Europe as the word was put into the vernacular of the common man. Although the “protesters” may have corrected many of the doctrinal abuses on orthodox Christianity by the RCC, their major failing was that they kept the Catholic Eschatological viewpoint of Amillennialism. ([Sardis](#))

The First Great Awakening occurred toward the end of the 1700’s, and Protestant Missionaries were sent around the world to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. An evangelistic movement broke out in Ireland in the mid-1800s called the ‘Plymouth Brethren’. They came together and began to study their Bibles in a literal manner shaking off the confines of denominationalism altogether.

Just as Martin Luther **rediscovered** the soteriological doctrine of salvation by grace through faith, so too did these Plymouth Brethren **rediscover** some long, lost truths. The result of returning to a literal understanding of the entire Bible, led them to the conclusion that the Bible is a) dispensational, b) Pre-Millennial, and c) that they were somewhere near the end times. Therefore, it wasn’t that John N. Darby and company created Pre-Millennial Eschatology out of thin air, but really, only **rediscovered** what had been hidden in plain sight for almost 2,000 years. ([Philadelphia](#))

“About the Time of the End, a body of men will be raised up who will turn their attention to the Prophecies, and insist upon their literal interpretation, in the midst of much clamor and opposition” **Sir Isaac Newton**

Precept upon Precept

Sir Isaac Newton wrote more about biblical prophecy than he did on any other topic. He was particularly fascinated by the books of Daniel and Revelation. Nevertheless, even with all his mental genius and boundless energy to write and study the prophetic word, he remained largely “ignorant” of prophetic events that even the average Bible prophecy student today takes for granted.

Here at the Omega Letter (now Rev310.com), many of us looked up to (and still do) Jack Kinsella as not only a pastor, but also a mentor. He provided a straightforward and simple understanding of not only Bible Prophecy, but of what it means to be a Christian living in these last days. Jack's mentor was Hal Lindsey. Hal's mentors were most likely men like Lewis Sperry Chaffer, Cyrus Scofield, and Clarence Larkin. Larkin and Scofield picked up on what the Plymouth Brethren had been doing, which simply was returning to a literal understanding of the Bible. Thanks to those men, we know that we are in that last church age that precedes the coming of our Lord. ([Laodicea](#))

Each group or generation of men learned from the previous, and that knowledge was passed on, built upon, and measured against the current events of that day. So we here today, are the recipients of over a 150 years of accumulated learning and study. This learning has been greatly accelerated by the use of the Internet, study bibles, commentaries and teachings. What had been hidden to many in Christianity only a century ago, has come to light with the return of national Israel to their ancestral homeland. But even as early as 1919, Cyrus Scofield noted in his Scofield Study Bible, that Israel HAD to become a nation again because a literal reading of Ezekiel 36-37 demanded it. I imagine he caught a lot of grief for including that in his Bible back then...that was...until 1948.

However, we only know what we know today, because we have stood on the shoulders of giants. Not only do we benefit from their diligent study and willingness to follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit, but also, we have accumulated more history than them.

We have had the privilege to see Israel become a nation again. We have seen the formation of revived Roman Empire via the Europe Union, coming together into a single political and economic body. We have seen the collapse of the Soviet Union and the reemergence of Russia. We are now seeing Red China rising and the US declining. We are seeing the push for a New World Order that will one day lead to a one-world currency, religion, and political body. We are seeing the signs of increasing natural disasters in both frequency and intensity. We are seeing technology moving at a frightening pace that allows men to play god and computers to become like men. Communications have become global with an instantaneous reach. Artificial intelligence is leaving the realms of science fiction and becoming reality. There is in increased fascination with the supernatural, occultic, and unexplainable.

Closing Thoughts

Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, "My lord, what shall be the end of these things?" And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand. Daniel 12:8-10

Once again we are reaching that point in time where the prophetic text has been studied, preached, taught, and dissected so many ways...by so many great teachers, that it seems impossible that we could still pull any new information out of what we already know.

Any study, about any verse of the Bible is available many times over in either written, audio, or video formats. I do not know what else can be brought out of the most intensely studied book in the history of the world.

These are indeed exciting times, but the watchmen can grow very weary in seeing how rapidly the world is sinking into spiritual and moral depravity. It weighs heavy on our hearts. We are instructed to be ready, to watch, and to lift our heads up when these things *begin* to happen.

Nevertheless, there is one other thing I do know, and that is we will have the privilege of seeing what the prophets, apostles, early church fathers, and those godly men of old, longed to see. If we are patient, and watching, we will be that generation in the not too distant future who hears the shout, the voice of the Archangel, and the Trump of God calling us home.

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also. **John 14:1-3**

Even so, Come Lord Jesus!

The Superman Syndrome

Prophecy - Signs

Wednesday, June 19, 2013

Pete Garcia

Since the dawn of time, man has spent much of his time looking up, dreaming of the day when he too could spread his wings and fly. Like the ill-fated Icarus, the pull of earth was just too strong to let men soar above where eagles dare. That is not to say we haven't tried.

In the 11th century, a [monk](#) in England had fastened make-shift wings to his body and jumped off the tower of the Monastery he was serving at. He ended up gliding some 200 ft. before crashing and breaking both his legs. Others have tried at various times, and even Leonardo DaVinci, despite his masterful architectural drawings, never got off the ground. It wasn't until the 20th century that two Ohioan men were able to pilot a rudimentary aircraft for 1,760 feet.

The desire to have super-human powers has always been a very attractive ideal for men of all ages. I suppose that this was in some form or fashion, unknown to us today, the reason that the Nephilim were able to interbreed with human women, and thus spawn what we today would call mythology. It is based in the reality that where we are limited physically, our imagination knows no bounds. It is this cause that propels man to find a work-around for our own physical limitations.

Comic book heroes put to the big screen provides the entertainment of seeing men with godlike powers, who routinely and spectacularly triumph over evil. I think deep down, most people want to see justice done in a way that is fitting to the crime...which is what almost never happens in real life. Instead, we deal with the mundane reality that the fantastical rarely happens, politicians almost always act out of self-preservation, and crime seemingly does pay. Judging by the shattered box office records for the newly rebooted Superman movie "Man of Steel" this weekend, I'd say that this country is in desperate need of a hero.

The original creators of Superman were two children of Jewish immigrants named Joel Shuster and Jerry Siegel. They were able to translate a superhuman (or Kryptonian) with the exact attributes that are characterized by what would today be considered, Christian, to a would-be messiah for all of mankind. He was self-sacrificing, honest, morally incorruptible, and always around when needed. Ironically, the fictional Superman bares a strong resemblance to Jesus Christ. Consider these:

- Kal El, from the House of El (El is Hebrew for God)
- Father sent him from another place to earth to be a 'god' amongst men
- Kal El's (Clark Kent) earthly father was a humble farmer. Jesus's earthly father was a carpenter. Compare Clark's parents, Jonathan and Martha, to Jesus's earthly parents, Joseph and Mary

- Clark's father Jonathan dies when Clark is young, Joseph is not mentioned in the Gospels beyond Jesus's trip to the synagogue at the age of 13.
- Kal El is revealed to the earth when he is 33 years old. Jesus died on the cross at Calvary at the age of 33.
- Superman routinely sacrifices himself for the salvation of the people of earth...the ultimate superhero. Christ died once, for the sins of all mankind.

There are many other allusions to the Christlikeness of Superman, but I think you get the point. Most of these are already well known, but it's ironic to me, that a world that hates the real God-man, has wholeheartedly embraced the false one. Superman is amicable, because he only shows up when he can help those in need. Jesus was hated because He pointed out man's real problem, which is sin.

Man of Steel vs. the Lamb of God

Jesus walked the earth in the days before cameras or even the self-portrait was available, so other than the few text that [speak](#) of His appearance, we really don't know what He looked like. The only people that had the ability to preserve an image of their likeness, was those of Greek and Roman royalty.

It always amazes me that Jesus is consistently portrayed as an effeminate white guy, with soft-blue eyes and curly brown hair. He seemingly always carried around a baby lamb, or walked around with one hand in the air with two fingers extended.

If people only read their bibles, they'd know that is so far from the truth, it is laughable. If people truly saw what He looked like now, they would have the exact same reaction that the Apostle John did...which is that they would fall over dead. Jesus's sheer awesomeness is simply too overwhelming for us to take in, in our human form.

Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. (**Revelation 1:12-17 NKJV**)

Here I Am

In a way, it is the same issue the Jews had in recognizing Christ the first time He came. They were expecting a conquering king, instead, they got the suffering servant. They couldn't accept that He first had to come to die for our sins ([Genesis 22:2](#); [Isaiah 53](#); [Psalm 22](#)) before He would come as a Conquering King ([Daniel 2:44-45](#), [Psalm 2](#), [Zechariah 14](#)). They wanted a Superman to throw off the shackles of Gentile oppression, once and for all.

When Christ came, He came lowly and meekly. He had to come as the “suffering servant” who would become the ultimate sacrifice who would take away the sins of the world. His frequent appearances in the Old Testament are called **Christophonyms**, and would foreshadow the incarnation of God in human flesh. But it is WHY He would come that is implied in numerous passages as various ‘types’:

- He was the Seed of Woman who would crush the serpent’s head ([Gen 3:15](#), [Revelation 1:18](#))
- He was the skin of the slain animal that God provided Adam and Eve ([Gen 3:22](#), [Rev 13:8](#))
- He was a type of the Ark Noah was saved by (Pitched inside and out) ([Gen 6:14](#), [1 Peter 3:20](#))
- He was Melchizedek, in whom Abram tithed too ([Genesis 14:18-20](#), [Hebrews 6:20](#))
- Isaac was a type of Christ on Mt. Moriah, who carried his own wood up and willingly allowed himself to be a sacrifice ([Genesis 23](#), [John 19:17](#))
- Joseph was a type of Christ, betrayed by his brothers, and cast into a pit to die ([Genesis 37](#), [Matthew 26:45](#))
- He was the Rock in the desert that Moses struck for water to drink ([Exodus 17:6](#), [John 4:14](#))
- He was the serpent on the staff that Moses lifted up ([Numbers 21:8](#), [John 3:14](#))
- Jonah was a type of Christ that would be in the belly of the whale for 3 days and 3 nights ([Jonah 1:17](#), [Matthew 16:4](#))
- Daniel’s 70 Week’s Prophecy would tell them exactly when Christ would come ([Daniel 9:25-27](#))

Assessment

The Old Testament held so much evidence of the pre-figuring of Christ coming, that no one then was without excuse for not knowing. The Resurrected Christ used the Old Testament exclusively on the road to Emmaus, to show those disciples ALL of the Scriptures that pointed to Him. So it wasn’t a matter that the information wasn’t there, it was that they chose not to believe it. Instead, they were waiting for someone who looked like Samson and conquered like David. Jesus **warned** them that that they would not accept His testimony, but would in fact, accept another who came in his own name.

This man, this Antichrist, will one day **ride** in on the scene, and will for all intents and purposes, be the “superman” that the world has been waiting for. And like the Jews who missed the mark at Christ’s first coming, the whole world will embrace this one who comes with “all signs and lying wonders”.

This Antichrist will be heralded by the False Prophet, who looked like a lamb, but spake as a dragon ([Rev 13:11](#)). They will be unlike anything the world has become accustomed too, because these men will have real power. Superpowers, like those ‘mighty men of old’ and the superheroes we’ve come to idolize over the years. The world will finally get the heroes they think they need, but instead, will have front row seats to the greatest time of tribulation this world will **ever** see.

There is a divine irony to this all though. We who have placed our faith and trust in Christ, will one day be 'caught up' (aka...flying) to meet Christ in the air. We (the mild mannered meekly folk) will one day rule and reign as 'kings and priests' with the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords forever. We will have put on incorruption, immortality, and will be like Christ, because we will see Him as He is.

For us, the battle was won 2,000 years ago on a Cross at Calvary. For now, we simply need to live like the victor's Christ said we should be living like. Christ overcame the world already, and when we placed our faith in Him, we by default, became 'overcomers'.

This last piece may be a bit of holy speculation on my part, but I think an ominous horror shock-waved through the Sanhedrin crowd that day when they pressed in on Jesus to respond to their blasphemous inquisition. I don't want to even imagine the flash of divine vengeance that flashed through His eyes at that moment...

...the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Jesus said, "I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." (**Mark 14:61-62**)

And this is what they will see...

...I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written:

KING OF KINGS AND
LORD OF LORDS. (**Revelation 19:11-16**)

Superman doesn't have anything on Jesus.

Even So, Come Lord Jesus!

Different Seasons

Witnessing Tools

Wednesday, June 26, 2013

Pete Garcia

I was adrift back then, Without anchor or sail. My happiness was pleasure, My freedom, my jail.

Spring

"I have seen the God-given task with which the sons of men are to be occupied. He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end." (Ecclesiastes 3:10-11 NKJV)

We all come to Christ at different stages of our life. Some are young, some are old. Some are battle scarred, and some starry-eyed. Our salvation rests not with from whence we came, but to WHOM we came too. Jesus said "I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and NO man comes to the Father except by Me." (John 14:6).

At some point, the Holy Spirit drew us unto Christ and our salvation was sealed into the Lamb's Book of Life forever. How we rejoiced at the burden of condemnation being lifted off of our formerly damned souls.

What did we do with this new found freedom in Christ? We laughed, we prayed, we studied, and learned. Our eyes were opened to the reality that there is life beyond this life. Worlds and dimensions beyond that which we could scarcely fathom...all of which lie just beyond the reach of our mortality.

Summer

"For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was turned into the drought of summer. Selah" (Psalm 32:4)

But there came a time, when we learned not so enthusiastically (oh we've heard that one before) and we prayed a little less. Old ruts are easy to fall back into, and the path becomes a little less uncomfortable. Somewhere along the way, we start to recognize old familiar territory, and to our flesh, brings some comfort.

As a child, summer was a time of fun and play. But we are no longer children, and work will not wait for cooler temperatures to arrive. The sun beats down mercilessly on all who have to sweat and toil under her harsh rays. As with fire, she is a useful servant, but a cruel master.

It was to this idea that Christ pointed to the [parable](#) of the sower and the seed...speaking to those who fell along the stony path. These having no depth to their roots, they were

scorched under the sun in all its strength. We Christians also live under the weight of that same sun, but our Root is Christ, and the depths of Him are forever.

Looking back at the summers of our youth, we thought we would live forever. We thought then that we were on top of the world. I spent my summers at a river, without a care in the world. How little did I know then, what I know now. I enjoyed my moment in the sun, because I did not have to toil in her heat. I was living for the moment, and that moment is long gone.

Metaphorically speaking, the world is our sun. It beats down on us relentlessly. It does its best to grind us down. Where can we go to find shade when the world surrounds us? We must seek sanctuary in His word, for it provides both shelter for our souls, and quenches the thirsts that draws us dry each day. The Psalmist David knew all too well where to go in the heat of the day...

"He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake."
(Psalm 23:2-3)

Fall

These days, I look squarely at the man in the mirror and see in my eyes a life spent doing my own will. I am quick to remind myself of how little I knew back then, as if it somehow justifies the way I lived my life. The scars and the years wear on my soul like barnacles on a ship hull. A constant and aching reminder that many waters travelled, gathers hangers-on.

Where is this liberty I keep hearing about? Where is this freedom? Why do I feel like the same man, on the same boat, adrift and aimless when so many around me have joy and direction? I sought a different view. I sought another way. Surely there is truth and freedom, liberty and purpose to be had if only I could make something fit in this hollow shell, I call my life

It was when I realized that I am adrift because my sail remain furled. I was directing the boat by hand, paddling with my own strength. Only when I relented and opened up my sail so that the Spirit could move me where He needed me to go, did I find that freedom in Christ. It was then that I rested not in my own efforts, but in God's ability to move me effortlessly and purposely, to the port of His destination.

Many try to wear Christianity as they would their own shoddy clothes. Christianity is not something you can put on Sunday mornings and take off during the week. Although we are clothed in our skin, we do not wear our skin, because it is part of us.

Likewise, a Christian who tries to live as if he or she is not one, will only find pain and misery. That was how I spent most of my life. I did not embrace who I had become, because I had not let go of who I was. Likewise, my liberty cannot come in what I do in my own efforts, but in who is a part of me, or rather, in [Whom](#) I am a part of.

Jesus said;

“Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matt 11:28)

My rest and my liberty are not tied up in what I have to do for God, but what God has already done for me. It is in realizing that it's not about me, but about Christ. I realize that I learned this lesson late in life, or in the fall of my life, but it has come exactly when God wanted it too. Like the wise king Solomon, He allowed me to go through my own trials of futility and error, to exhaust all these other choices before coming back to Him.

"Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, "I have no pleasure in them" (Ecclesiastes 12:1)

Winter

Things die in the winter. They hibernate and sleep. We bundle up and stay inside. The day begins to lose its light. The sun loses its strength. We know that this present world has turned a corner. We have moved into the final stretch if you will, of God's plan of final plan of redemption for this dispensation. They say it is always darkest just before the dawn, and we wonder just much longer the night will continue on.

May we, who see the days growing darker spiritually, remember the Hope that lies within us and not lose the faith. May we keep running the race and finish strong. May we all stand strong until that day the Lord calls us up to be where He is. I pray that I can be all that I am exhorting you to be.

We will all experience loss in this life, as well as tribulation. But it is these moments that shape us and mold us for our real life in eternity. It is comforting to know, that this life, no matter how bad it may be, will be the worst we ever know.

"Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

It's the End of the World and We Know It

Prophecy - Signs

Wednesday, July 03, 2013

Pete Garcia

As is the case with Bible prophecy in the last days, things are starting to get stacked on top of each other with some rapidity. I was hoping that I could unpack some of this and maybe put my thoughts to paper and help clarify it as much to myself, as I could for you.

The Fig Tree has come to represent a symbol of national Israel. Enough of the Old Testament can be used as text proof to validate this belief ([Judges](#), [1 Kings](#), and [Jeremiah](#)). So when the Jewish people used a phrase like that, they meant it as a symbol of the state of their kingdom...much like American's today associate the "stars and stripes" or the "bald-eagle" as national symbols of the United States. It was common knowledge then, and it is today to most Jews.

The Parable of the Fig Tree in [Luke 21](#) is curious in that it also includes "all the trees", in which we know from [Judges](#), was a euphemism to refer to their national status.

For the better part of 500 years, the entire Middle East fell under the sway of the Ottoman Turks. There were no individual nations, only provinces of the Ottoman Empire. At the end of World War I, the Ottoman lay defeated and their empire [carved](#) up into political entities by the victors in Europe. So it is with this in mind that I returned to some familiar verses and sought to maybe look at this perplexing parable in light of more recent events...

"Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. (Matthew 24:32)

Then He spoke to them a parable:

"Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near." (Luke 21:29-30)

All three parable examples cite **the when**, of when one would see the branch budding, or becoming tender and putting forth leaves. Well, I got to thinking...what season comes before summer?

Spring

There hasn't been a time either this century or last when a period was labeled as such in any part of the world. The closest we come to it was in the *Prague Spring*, in which was coined back in 1968.

There were also the Revolutions of 1848 that had been referred to as *Springtime of the People*, but nothing had the ring like of our recent **Arab Spring**. Initially, the Arab

Spring had the flavor of a “people’s revolution” that jumped borders and overthrew the establishments. But those Egyptians seeking western-styled democracy were greatly disheartened and disillusioned when the Islamic ‘Muslim Brotherhood’ took advantage of the ensuing chaos and quickly organized into the most powerful group, wrenching the revolution out of the hands of those who were truly seeking change.

Isaiah 19:2 states;

“I will set Egyptians against Egyptians; Everyone will fight against his brother, And everyone against his neighbor, City against city, kingdom against kingdom.”

Allegedly, the United States, under the administration of President Barak Hussein Obama, [facilitated](#) the launching of the Arab Spring back when he spoke at the University of Cairo in June 4th, 2009.

They believe that he (or someone in his administration) gave the Muslim Brotherhood the green-light to initiate the revolution against Hosni Mubarak (Egypt’s former President for Life). What we are not sure of is, whether they foresaw the self-immolation [event](#) in Tunisia that got the ball rolling. Either way, once things got rolling, it looked as if it would sweep across all of the Middle East in just a matter of months.

The *Arab Spring* turned three-years old this year, and although events have quieted in North Africa relatively speaking, they have moved with a vengeance into both Syria and the Arabian Peninsula. Iran has proven to be the major provocateur in both arenas.

Iran is supporting the establishment in Syria and attacking the establishment in Qatar and Saudi Arabia. The Spring movement has also moved into Turkey and is threatening to bring instability to Tayyip Erdogan’s quasi-Islamic government. Either that will firmly ensconce Erdogan’s grip on the nation, or it too will slip from his hands into a more radical regime. The US has an airbase there and has invested a lot of effort into making them a valuable partner in NATO. If their regime looks like it will collapse, most likely a military coup would ensue.

De-Nile

"The waters will fail from the sea, And the river will be wasted and dried up. The rivers will turn foul; The brooks of defense will be emptied and dried up; The reeds and rushes will wither. The papyrus reeds by the River, by the mouth of the River, And everything sown by the River, Will wither, be driven away, and be no more." (Isaiah 19:5-7)

Egypt is not mentioned in the battle of Ezekiel 38-39 which lists the godless coalition that comes against a newly revived Israel in the last days. Neither is she mentioned in the coalition that surrounds Israel in Psalm 83. So it is very interesting to me that Ethiopia and Egypt have [entered](#) into a war of words over the building of a dam.

Egypt’s leadership is under the impression, that the dam is a secret project funded by the Israelis and the Americans. The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam would be built

inside the national borders of Ethiopia, but those same waters serve as the source to the Nile River which provides the very livelihood to Egypt.

The Burden of Damascus

The burden against Damascus.

“Behold, Damascus will cease from being a city, and it will be a ruinous heap... (vs. 12) Woe to the multitude of many people Who make a noise like the roar of the seas, and to the rushing of nations that make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters! The nations will rush like the rushing of many waters; But God will rebuke them and they will flee far away, and be chased like the chaff of the mountains before the wind, Like a rolling thing before the whirlwind. Then behold, at eventide, trouble! And before the morning, he is no more. This is the portion of those who plunder us, and the lot of those who rob us.” (Isaiah 17:1, 12-14)

As of late, King Abdullah II of Jordan (Sunni) has been hosting a multi-national war-game aimed at, if nothing else, the prevention of Syrian civil war spillage into sovereign Jordanian territory.

What is interesting, is that you have the prominent members of the Gog-Magog Alliance (Russia and Iran) actively lined up on one side with the Syrian President Bashar Assad (Alawite-Shia), against the rebel groups, which consist primarily of varying factions of different Sunni Muslim terrorist organizations backed by the US, EU, and Saudi Arabian affiliates. Even more interesting, is that the war-game hosted by Jordan was called [Operation Eager Lion](#).

“Thus says the Lord God: “On that day it shall come to pass *that* thoughts will arise in your mind, and you will make an evil plan: You will say, ‘I will go up against a land of unwallled villages; I will go to a peaceful people, who dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates’— to take plunder and to take booty, to stretch out your hand against the waste places *that are again* inhabited, and against a people *gathered from the nations*, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell in the midst of the land. Sheba, Dedan, the merchants of Tarshish, and all their young lions will say to you, ‘Have you come to take plunder? Have you gathered your army to take booty, to carry away silver and gold, to take away livestock and goods, to take great plunder?’” (Ezekiel 38:10-13)

Another interesting bit, comes from Michael Rubin in the same CS Monitor article:

“In Washington we can convince ourselves we withdrew [from Iraq] per political agreements, but a lot of the propaganda in the region, especially the Iranian-backed propaganda, suggests we fled in defeat,” Rubin says. “One of the perceptions we’re trying to reverse is the perception among many of the Gulf monarchs, and the king of Jordan, that we dumped Hosni Mubarak way too quickly.”

Assessment

Although not fulfilled yet, it does seem very coincidental that all of these current events are seemingly stacking up, one atop the other with such rapidity as we have seen as of late.

In keeping with the idea that the most Christian nation in the world is aggressively turning its back on God, September 11, 2001 would be a great point of demarcation. Prior to 9/11, most American's preferred to be comfortably numb to the goings on outside the borders of our nation. The previous military adventures outside our borders (Gulf War, Bosnia, and Haiti) were relatively inconsequential to most of the population of the US.

9/11 really forced us to once again pursue our enemies in a "War on Terror" which would cause us to be firmly planted back in the middle of the Middle East. There was no getting around this.

What if Al Gore had won the 2000 election? Would he have put 'boots on the ground' in the Middle East? Or would he have pursued the policies of his former boss and mentor, Bill Clinton, whose preferred method of battle almost exclusively involved air strikes. (Anyone remember [Mogadishu](#)?)

It is no accident that President Bush pulled out the win in 2000. Just like it is no accident President Obama is now the Commander in Chief. He, like most democrats, loathe the mechanisms and the responsibilities of actually having to wage a war, so it is no surprise that we have thus far, steered clear of Syria.

The speed of which we pulled out of Iraq, which had some structure prior to our war there, left a power vacuum that the different sects are eagerly exploiting today. The speed at which we are removing ourselves from Afghanistan (very little structure...ever), will likely leave an even more devastating vacuum in that part of the world, which will quickly get filled by chaos and bloodshed. (Nature hates a vacuum!)

I understand that President Obama 'inherited' these wars from his predecessor, so I am not faulting him for being there. There is however, much to fault him for in the subsequent managing of these wars since he took office...but even this is not accidental.

God [appoints](#) kings and sets up rulers. This not only serves as a punishment and a reward for those nations who either reject or accept God's sovereignty over said nation, but they line up with the events God has on His calendar.

Coming is the day, when the forces arrayed around Damascus will flee like the 'rolling things before the whirlwind'.

Coming is the day, when Sheba, Dedan (Saudi Arabia), the merchants of Tarshish (Europe), and all of her young lions (Europe and US) will ask 'from afar'..."Have you come (against Israel) to take a plunder?"

The Bible predicts that in the last days, Israel will be reborn as a nation in unbelief (or not in covenant with God), and will increasingly be left to her own devices. ([Zech 12:2-3](#)) The world will grow in resentment of her existence, because it reminds Satan (who is the [god](#) of this age), that his time is just about over, and he is not happy.

For my fellow 'watchmen on the wall', all I can say is, buckle up folks, it's about to get interesting!

Even So, Come Lord Jesus!

Pre-Wrath Debunked Part I

In Defense of the Faith

Wednesday, July 10, 2013

Pete Garcia

Let me start off by saying that many teachers and theologians I respect hold to a Pre-Wrath eschatological viewpoint. Just because one believes the Rapture is Pre-Wrath, does not mean they are a heretic, or apostate. It simply means they have a different starting point for when they think the Rapture could occur. They come to this conclusion wrongly though, for a variety of reasons, all of which I will gladly debunk here today.

The Pre-Wrath position has been argued and made popular by men like [Robert Van Kampen](#) and Marvin Rosenthal. It posits that the rapture of the church takes place after the Seal judgments found in Revelation 6, but before the “Wrath of God” starts. In order to arrive at this position, you’d have to change or manipulate six key concepts in the Scriptures:

1. The Restrainer as the Holy Spirit ([2 Thessalonians 2:7](#))
2. The unity of the believers making up the Body of Christ ([Galatians 3:28](#))
3. The principles of the Biblical truths are irrelevant ([Genesis 18:25](#), [2 Peter 2:7-9](#))
4. The flow of the Bible is irrelevant ([Revelation 1:19](#))
5. The 70th week of Daniel (time of Jacob’s trouble) is not just about Israel ([Daniel 9:24](#))
6. There is a difference between the “wrath of man” and the “Wrath of God”. ([Revelation 6:15-17](#))

The Bible very clearly lays out key markers along the way to show the shifts in change of administration; the fall from grace, the flood, the call of Abraham, the giving of the law at Mt. Sinai, the Messiah on the cross, Pentecost, and the 70th Week of Daniel. These events very clearly, and often in painstaking detail, mark significant changes in the administration of God’s dealing with mankind. So too must sound doctrine be built off of clear concepts and fundamental ideals that the Bible spotlights predominantly.

Where churches get in trouble, is when they try and build doctrine off of vague text, or take passages out of context, as such is the case with passages about snake handling ([Mark 16:18](#)) or baptizing the dead ([1 Cor. 15:29](#)).

Where the Bible 'changes gears', it does so in a clear and straight forward fashion. There is no ambiguity too it, no second guessing.

We need to remember that anyone can twist the Bible to say anything they want it to say, if they try hard enough. If that weren’t the case, you wouldn’t have the plethora of denominations (Christian or otherwise) that we have today. The key, is to have a consistent view of scripture. The Pre-Wrath view is not consistent.

When the resurrected Jesus walked with the disciples along the road to Emmaus, He pointed out ALL the scriptures (the Old Testament) that pointed to Him, beginning with Moses. The Apostle John didn't go into any details about what was said, but we can make an assumption, that Jesus starts off with the books of Moses, which means He would have started in Genesis. So let's start there as well.

The Principle of It

Both Enoch ([Genesis 5:21-25](#)) and Noah ([Gen. 6:8](#)) serve as examples of God's demonstrative mercy upon the antediluvian world.

In Enoch's case, God 'took him' up without seeing death prior to the flood. One critic of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture scoffs at the notion that Enoch could be used, seeing as he was taken up hundreds of years prior to the flood. I gently reminded him, that people lived for hundreds of years back then, so it would have been within the realm of a lifetime.

Interestingly enough, Jude tells us that of all the words that Enoch would have spoken in his 365 years of life, the only recorded one we have is his foretelling of the time when the Lord would return to exact judgment on an evil world coming WITH His saints ([Jude 1:14](#)).

Out of the entire antediluvian world alive at that time (possibly in the billions), only Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. So he, along with his family (totaling 8 persons) went alive onto the ark with the animals and THEN God brought judgment onto the earth.

Some might say, Noah wasn't taken from the earth, he had to endure the flood. True, but consider these two points:

In the building of the ark, Moses chose the word "[kopher](#)" in the Hebrew, which means essentially, 'atonement' or 'ransom' to describe the covering of the ark both inside and out. This is the only time in Scriptures that it is used this way.

Secondly, the ark rose above the earth as the flood waters lifted it up. That might seem inconsequential to some, but it wasn't as if Noah had to work to keep the ark afloat. He didn't even steer it, because it landed exactly where God wanted it to land. This is also telling in that God, in His longsuffering, allowed mankind to drop down to less than ten people before cataclysmic judgment was wrought upon the whole earth. We will see this same principle applied later with Abraham and Lot.

"Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18:25 NKJV)

The first thing we should start out by showing from Scriptures, is that NO WHERE does the Bible show God's people suffering His wrath along with the wicked.

This principle, as laid out in the second half of Genesis 18 is quite extensive, even going down from 50 people to just 10. Even for just 10 people, God was not willing to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. This just isn't an Old Testament principle, the Apostle Peter reiterates it in his epistle as well ([2 Peter 2:7-9](#)).

We see that God saved Noah BEFORE the Flood. God rescues Lot BEFORE the destruction of Sodom. Both Noah and Lot prefigure that great schism that God would establish with Abram and the Jewish nation.

Here is one of those great 'schisms' in the administration of God's grace as we move forward though, in that dealing with Israel, God allowed them to go through tribulation. Granted, God had eternal and irrevocable covenants with the Jewish people ([Gen 15, 17; Exodus 2:24; 2 Samuel 7](#)) and conditional covenants with Israel, based upon their obedience and disobedience ([Exodus 19:3-9, 24:1-3](#)).

When Israel strayed, God allowed their enemies to become numerous and overcome them. When they obeyed, nothing was withheld from them. This was the case until their final 70 year captivity by the Babylonians, when God revealed His most extensive and detailed plan, to His prophet Daniel, that the Jews had a set time remaining for them.

When God gave Daniel, through the angel Gabriel, the [70 Weeks Prophecy](#), it was specifically given to Daniel's people (the Jews) and to his holy city (Jerusalem). It was to confirm ahead of time, what events would transpire for the Jewish people.

Israel would have a total of 490 years, as it would be broken up by 70 weeks of years. At the 483-year mark, or the 69th week, their Messiah would be 'cut off' but 'not for Himself'. He would be sacrificed, in other words, for the sins of the people. What God doesn't mention, is that there would be an almost 2,000-year gap, between the 69th and 70th week.

Two points to make here are, no one I know of has argued that the Church existed before Jesus established it in principle in [Matthew 16:13-21](#) and in fulfillment in [Acts 2:1-4](#). Instead, they argue that either the Church was grafted into Israel ([Hebrew Roots](#)) or that the Church replaces Israel ([Replacement theology](#)), neither of which are either scriptural, or logical.

Secondly, in what God chose NOT to reveal to Daniel, a Jew, about His plans for the future. When Daniel inquired, Gabriel essentially said, don't worry about it, this will get unveiled at a later time. ([Daniel 12:8-10](#)).

And so the 'mystery' of the Church, along with the other [five mysteries](#) would be revealed some 500 years later by none other than the Apostle Paul.

Assessment

Dr. Chuck Missler is fond of saying that “[pattern is prologue](#)” in terms relating to prophecy. In terms of the Greek mindset, we expect prophecy to be: prediction + fulfillment= true prophecy.

In the Hebrew mindset, pattern is prophetic. A great example of this is the Passover. In fact, all the feasts would serve as an example of God’s prophetic calendar. So too, we have in the Rapture of the Church a picture in view of a Jewish wedding, and how the model of that ties in with building of the bride of Christ and our ‘catching up’ prior to that great and terrible day.

The Pre-Wrath and Post-Tribulation eschatological positions simply do not FIT any model that can be related back to the Jewish wedding allusion as referred to in [John 14:1-3](#).

One of the main problems with the Pre-Wrath position, is there is no consensus in the Pre-Wrath community on when it starts, since the Rapture for them is not tied to the imminent return of Christ, but watching certain events transpire.

If they believe that the Church has to go through at least the first six Seal Judgments, then the judgments themselves become the mile markers...and that would be totally based on the perspective of the audience alive when they happen.

To the early church, they may have viewed a certain Caesar or emperor as the Antichrist. To the church in the Dark Ages, it may have been Mohammed. To the Medieval Church, it was the Pope. To the World War II generation, it was Hitler. See how this works? That’s part of what makes it such an untenable position.

Pre-Wrath posits that the Church would by and large jump like rats from a sinking ship the moment true persecution comes knocking. While that may have a ring of truth to it here in the west, it hasn’t happened elsewhere in the world who are presently experiencing great persecution.

The church in [Smyrna](#), (the persecuted church) was promised ten periods of persecution. Those periods came and went, and it did not have the intended effect that Satan had hoped. Instead of stomping out the church, it caused it to spread even further and faster which is why Satan had to resort to a more subtle plan of attack, which would come in the subsequent churches by means of corruption.

While I would agree that many who claim to be Christian here in the US might abandon the faith IF persecution did rise up in earnest, I would wager they weren’t Christian to begin with. The Apostle John noted even back then that...

"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us." (1 John 2:19)

The truth is, is that the Bible was written for the common man. Sure, it has levels and applications that would baffle theologians for millennia, and could be read in any number of ways that can make debaters of the best of us.

The atheist and skeptic read its pages and remain completely ignorant of its content, while the cultist must take passages out of context to make it fit whatever particular spin they want to sell. The missing ingredient that makes the Bible impossible for the unregenerate to understand is, the Holy Spirit.

So while there are many views on how the end will occur, only one can be correct.

When you stand back and take a look at the picture in its totality, you see clearly that God's plan is not a haphazard one, chocked full of inconsistencies and unknowable truths.

God wants us to know His plan. But He also wanted to keep it a secret until the right time, which is why He waited until the Apostle Paul to reveal it.. .Stay tuned for Part II.

Maranatha!

Pre-Wrath Debunked Part II

In Defense of the Faith

Wednesday, July 17, 2013

Pete Garcia

Last week we spent time looking at the principles of why Pre-Wrath is wrong, and how Pre-Tribulation is the proper, biblical view of eschatology. The problem I notice right off the bat with the Pre-Wrath position is that it wants you to get wrapped up in the confusion of the minutia.

Recently, Alan Kurschner and Chris White did a YouTube [video](#) attempting to debunk Dr. Jimmy DeYoung over the Pre-Tribulation Rapture. Why Jimmy, as opposed to Tommy Ice or Chuck Missler, I don't know, but what I hope to show you here is the clear and understandable teaching of the doctrinal position that the Pre-Tribulation Rapture holds in our Scriptures.

The Flow of Things

The Apostle Paul's first recorded epistle is believed to be by most scholars, the letter to the church in Thessalonica. In this, Paul mentions the return of Christ in each of the chapters in this five chapter epistle.

When we get to chapter four, we see that Paul introduces what is known as a 'musterion', or mystery that had never been revealed before of the 'harpazo' or in English, the 'catching up'.

Jesus hinted at it in [John 14:1-3](#), but Paul here lays it out in plain view. Here we'll see how 1 Thessalonians 4 & 5 flow together quite nicely and in the proper order. (vs. 4:15-5:4)

"For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words. But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when **they** say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon **them**, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And **they** shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief."

Aside from the Apostle Paul's teachings on the subject of the mystery of the 'harpazo', we can look at the structure of it first, both in his epistles and in the Revelation of Jesus Christ as given to the Apostle John.

What is beautiful here, is that nothing has to be forced, and nothing has to be tweaked or taken out of context, or put into a different context to make it fit. It just fits perfectly if you allow it too. Likewise, in the Revelation, John is instructed to divide the book up into 3 parts...

Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. (Revelation 1:19)

The book divides itself up quite easily into three parts without the need of chapter numbers. Guesswork not required for this venture. Chapter 1 is what John saw, the resurrected Christ walking amongst the seven golden candlesticks (the churches). Chapters 2 & 3 was the seven actual letters to the seven churches. Then, in chapter 4, a dramatic shift in both scenery and language takes place...

After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this." Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. (Revelation 4:1-2)

But the voice like a trumpet speaking seems a little familiar. If it does, it's because we'd seen the same phrase in a previous chapter...

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send *it* to the seven churches which are in Asia...(Revelation 1:10-11)

So for the rest of the Revelation (chapters 4-22), we see from John's perspective in heaven, looking upon what was happening down on earth.

Skeptics will point to the fact that John was caught up to "show him things that would take place after this" while the Church itself wouldn't need be shown these things...since we will be in the future as compared to when John wrote it.

First of all, as Abraham's attempted sacrifice of Isaac was *type* of Christ's ultimate fulfillment, so too is John's catching up a *type* of what will happen to the Church. No one has an issue with seeing the picture with Isaac on the altar, but apply that same principle to the Church in [Revelation 4:1-2](#), and it suddenly is a bridge too far. To me, that is a very inconsistent way to interpret the Scriptures.

In chapters 1-3, the church is referenced 19 times. During the next 18 chapters (4-22), the churches or even the word church, is not mentioned even *once*.

Those who are mentioned are; the saints, martyrs, twelve tribes of Israel, earth dwellers, those who dwell on the earth, and the inhabitants of the earth.

If the church *did have* to go through the Tribulation, even partway, why is there no mention of them? Clearly, John was familiar with the term "ecclesia" since he had to write it 19 times in the first 3 chapters. We shouldn't make it a habit to argue from silence...unless that silence is absolutely deafening...at which point God is trying to drive home a point.

Key Text

Next, we will look at key text given to the church exclusively, that promises not for endurance through the 70th week of Daniel, but to be kept entirely from that period of time altogether.

Remember, that in this life, we do have tribulation (i.e....what the world and Satan throws at us), but Jesus said He overcame the world, so be of good cheer.

This tribulation is NOT the same as the time specifically prescribed to Israel in [Jeremiah 30:5-11](#), [Daniel 9:26-27](#), [12:7](#), and [Revelation 11:2 & 13:5](#) as the last week (7 years) broken up into two sections of 42 months, 1260 days, times, time and half a time.

Pre-wrath subscribers point to the text "[great-tribulation](#)" as being only the last 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation in what the church is kept from. They take this from the Olivet Discourse passage in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21.

Arguably, the Olivet Discourse is difficult to parse if you're looking for a point of debarkation in which the church would exit, 'stage-left' in that passage.

I think it's difficult for one, in that all those general signs (wars, earthquakes, famines, etc.) have appeared in man's history all throughout history. Jesus references these as increasing as birth pangs, but gives no idea as to when and where the Church is in all of this. Either He forgets to mention where the Church is in all this, or He knew that Paul and John would later explain this in detail to the Church. Either way, again, the **focus** is not on the Church in the passage, but Israel. Two points I'll make here are:

1. Almost all scholars agree that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are intended to different audiences. The Gospel of John, which has most application to the Church, has no Olivet Discourse. Instead, we have the Upper Room Discourse, in which Jesus first hints of the Rapture in chapter [14:1-3](#) and reveals the Helper (Holy Spirit) role in this coming change of administration in [14:15-18](#), [15:26-27](#), [16:5-15](#).
2. Jesus spoke the Olivet Discourse, well, on the Mount of Olives. The same place He intends to return to earth at in [Zechariah 14](#) and which the last battle is waged at (overlooking the Valley of Meggido). He was speaking to His Jewish disciples about the last days. They were still under the impression that the very next thing to happen was the Kingdom coming to Israel ([Acts 1:6](#)). Again, the Holy Spirit chose what to reveal, and what NOT to reveal at that particular time. It would be given to Paul to reveal these things some 20 years later.

So Paul, who was given the ministry to the Gentiles, and to the founding doctrines of the Church, points out in almost all of his epistles, which we Christians, are NOT to look forward to the arrival of the Antichrist, but to our [Blessed Hope](#), which is when Jesus Christ returns for His bride.

Paul NEVER instructs the Church to ready herself for the 'wrath of God'. Paul NEVER instructs the Church to hoard food, take up arms, or otherwise prepare for intense persecution from the antichrist system. Instead, Paul says at the idea of the Rapture to "therefore comfort one another with these words."

If the Church in the last days was to experience a winnowing through intense persecution, wouldn't the Apostles have warned us? They had no issue warning us against apostasy, and the general deterioration of society in the last days.

The concept of the "Wrath of God" is ALWAYS directed towards those who willingly reject God. The Seal Judgments may be a culmination of man's wickedness as at least the first four horseman would imply, but it is only because God allows it.

And then you have very clearly the end of Revelation 6 where the unregenerate on earth even come to the understanding that the Wrath of God was upon them, for who else is the Lamb but God in the flesh? Revelation 6:15-18 states:

And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”

Whereas the Christian may face ‘[chastening](#)’ from God, and tribulation in general from the world, the Christian NEVER faces the “Wrath of God”. Our wrath was taken by Christ on the Cross of Calvary, the moment we asked Him to forgive us of our sins, and in trade we put on His righteousness.

- For the **wrath** of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, **Rom 1:18**
- and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. **1 Thess 5:10**
- For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, **1 Thess 5:9**

So then how can one take comfort in the notion that one was about to enter what Jesus said was the worst time in human history?

For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened. (Matthew 24:21-22)

Assessment

The Pre-wrath subscribers point to the use of the word ‘elect’ in the text to show that the ‘elect’ equals the Church. Well, a simple word [search](#) would prove that the ‘elect’ was a term used both in the Old and New Testament, as well as to certain angels. So using the word elect simply means one chosen by God...which speak of Jews, the Church, as well as Angels.

I am not a spokesman for Dr. DeYoung, and I’m sure that he is more than capable of fighting his own battles. But I do hold deep respect for Chris White, who has done some excellent scholarly work battling legalism and the Hebrew Roots movement, so his pinpoint attack on Jimmy seems strangely odd to me.

Most of the Pre-Wrath teachers/subscribers I am familiar with tend not to be die-hard Pre-Wrath folk altogether. They seem drawn to it as we’ve blown past the previously held key dates familiar to Pre-Tribulation types (those linking 1948+70=2018-7=2011) according to [Psalm 90:10](#). Pre-Wrath seems to be more logical then, if you can throw in some ‘[blood-moons](#)’ and Jewish feast dates as well as the continuing deterioration of the world at large to try and pin point us somewhere in the Seal Judgments.

It’s tempting, but it’s sloppy.

God is precise. Jesus went to the cross exactly 483 years to the day of when Gabriel told Daniel he would. Jesus died precisely at Passover to be that 'lamb that takes away the sins of the world'. ([John 1:29](#))

I could have easily turned this into a four or five 'part' with the amount of scriptural evidence that stacks up against the Pre-Wrath theory, but I simply don't have the time. I hope it's been of some benefit to you the reader as a simple explanation, from an unlearned writer to the common man (and woman!). Thanks, and God Bless.

Maranatha!

The Little Horn

Prophecy - Signs

Tuesday, July 23, 2013

Pete Garcia

Imagine if you will, that World War II did not end in an Allied Victory with tickertape parades and sailors kissing nurses. What if the Third Reich had pulled us into a stalemate by not invading the Soviet Union, but focusing their entire energy and inventories into Western Europe first?

What if they had managed to create a breakthrough in atomic energy ahead of the US? What if they effectively blockaded Great Britain's coastline with mines and submarine warfare and holding the tiny island nation hostage? Imagine what Hitler would have done with the power of an atom bomb?

Now imagine a seasoned Nazi state some 60 years in the making. As terrible a regime as the Third Reich was, imagine them with our modern technology at their disposal. The Holocaust would not have ended in 1945 but would be an ongoing process of ethnic cleansing ridding the world of one undesirable after another. Extermination camps would litter the European map just as North Korean and Chinese prison camps do in their countries today.

Luckily for us, history books tell a different story. In the end, the Reich lay in tattered pieces and Hitler succumbed to his own madness in a bunker in Berlin. The West cheered and the East reorganized, and the rest is as they say...is history.

The More Things Change...

But underlying all of the worlds' periods of war and peace, simmers a dark undercurrent of evil that slips about through all the different ages of man. The same one who caused Judas to betray his Christ, also moved through the various Caesar's to bring the hammer down on the fledgling church. He injected pagan religions to the world and introduced heresy to the church. Everywhere he has gone, he has left corruption, violence, and death in his wake.

He goes by many names: Heylel Bin Shachar, Lucifer, the Devil, [the Nail](#), and Satan. His arsenal includes an innumerable army of demonic beings with their own rank and hierarchy and is an excellent character study of man's fallen nature over these last 6,000 years.

So, although regimes come and go, what hasn't changed is man's corrupted nature prone to self-destruction.

The pace of advancements in technology is increasing so rapidly that most people don't fully understand the awful power it could wield in the hands of the wrong people. The Bible states that a man [is coming](#) who will take advantage of the ever-controlling

technology and use it to rule the world with an iron fist. Every tyrant who has come before him will pale by comparison in his ruthlessness and his genius for dominating the world. He is the rider on the white horse, and the world will cheer his arrival.

Restrained

The Holy Spirit is the Restrainer as mentioned in 2 Thess 2:7, and what He restrains isn't evil necessarily around the world, because we've had evil ever present since Adam's fall. What He restrains is two-fold in this present dispensation:

1. Satan is restrained from indwelling any one person in this dispensation. Aside from the [serpent](#) at the Garden of Eden, possibly Antiochus Epiphanes, and Judas Iscariot, all of which occurred prior to Christ's victory on the Cross, no one else is listed as having been personally indwelt by Satan until the Antichrist comes. Judas Iscariot and the Antichrist are the only two who share the same title as a ([son of perdition](#)). This is not to say that lesser demon can't possess today, but Satan is a singular being, and he can't be possessing people on earth if he is busy '[accusing us day and night](#)' before the throne of God.
2. God restrains Himself largely through the ceasing's of 'signs and wonders' that were ever present in the Old Testament times. As the apostles were martyred and died, so too did their supernatural (ex: [raising the dead](#)) testimonies. What we have now is the completed word of truth in the scriptures, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit through the believers in the Church.

The Little Horn

"I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, *were* eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words."
(Daniel 7:8) NKJV

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy." (Revelation 13:1)

We have seen through our history past, that out of the Roman Empire's demise, subsequent nations rise up ([Dan 7:21-24](#)) in various forms both in the eastern and western legs.

As the west fizzled out, the Holy Roman Empire took form. In the east, the [Byzantine](#) ruled until conquered by the Turkish Ottoman Empire took for the next 500 years. In the west, Germania, England, Portugal, Spain, and France each had their day in the sun.

Out of Europe would come the United States, the latest and most powerful nation the world had ever seen. Although I disagree with his conclusion, I think the late Dr. Hank Lindstrom was on to something when he posited that the US could be the Little Horn Daniel 7:

1. A little horn (as opposed to fully developed horns) denotes newness or youngness.
2. If the fourth beast represented the Roman Empire ([legs of iron](#)), than the ten toes would represent a continuation of that same empire only more fractured and mixed with miry clay. This of course would be the European Union which [began](#) in 1948, also the same year that Israel was rebirthed as a nation. Than that little horn would have to be the youngest of those nations, but stronger than all the others.
3. While the US was birthed from England hundreds of years prior, we didn't become a world power until the end of World War II. Rome existed hundreds of years before it became a world power. What other nation has the terrible power and authority that the US has?

The More You Know...

NSA leaker Eric Snowden revealed to the world at large, to just what depths the US would go to maintain its technological edge by collecting data not just on Americans, but on everyone. The [NSA Data Utah](#) center will hold yottabytes of information. A yottabyte, is the equivalent of a trillion terabytes. Why does the NSA need a data center so large when all the digital information in the world is not even to a yottabyte yet?

"Earlier this year the Kingston Company announced a new one terabyte USB thumb drive. In other words, on a flash storage unit smaller than your thumb, they can now fit a terabyte of data. We hear these words so much that they lose their meaning, so let's try to picture it. Plain text data typed on a page can be stored at a rate of 256,000 pages per megabyte. That means a megabyte of text fills a stack of paper 85 feet tall, but a terabyte is a million times larger than a megabyte, that means you could store on one thumb drive the equivalent of a stack of paper more than 16,000 miles high. This is astronomical. The International Space Station orbits about 240 miles above the earth. Our stack of paper would be 67 times higher, all of it stored on a space smaller than your thumb. If modern technology allows us to put that kind of data on such a small space, what can they do with hundreds of thousands of square feet?" -The [Hal Lindsey Report](#) (21JUN13)

Now we have an information collection [system](#) that dwarfs anything the world has ever seen. Even if we only did track 'metadata', there is still an awful [dark side](#) to that. A government could effectively everyone. The government now is using various crises to implement control systems that would become so [encompassing](#), that no one would ever be able to 'go off the grid' again.

The US also has the greatest military this planet has ever seen. Although we've seen her power diminishing under recent administrations, the US is still the envy of all the world in its ability to project its military strength abroad on a moment's notice. Whoever has her arsenal at their disposal, truly could dominate the planet like no other.

Assessment

Although the EU consists of almost thirty nations currently, they are already finding out how economically unmanageable all the nations in various stages of economic turmoil. [Dr. Rob Congdon](#), an expert on Europe, predicts that the EU could be broken down into ten economic regions. I tend to think that along with the EU, the Mediterranean Union will be reformed post-Psalm 83/Isaiah 19/Ezekiel 38-39 scenarios to fit into a truly revamped Roman Empire.

What marks the US as distinctly different from Europe or anywhere else in the world, is that Christians permeate all levels of government and civilian sector professions here. If the Rapture were to occur tomorrow, every facet of our society would suffer tremendously. What is troubling though, is that globally, everything is tied to the US in one way or another. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the United Nations, OPEC, and the Dollar as a reserve currency all are tied directly to the United States.

The greatest export we have is not our computers or our military equipment, it is the US Dollar. Every other currency in the world is tied to its stability. If the dollar were to collapse, it would trigger a global financial collapse unlike anything the world has ever seen. What is mind boggling, is that financially speaking, we KNOW what not to do (massive printing of dollars), but we are doing it anyway ([QE4](#)). Why? I no longer believe that our government is simply incompetent or ignorant of its disastrous economic decisions, but are intentionally doing this to wreck the system, so they can remake it based on a new world order.

Although tempting to point to the US as the “Little Horn”, we simply do not fit into picture that either Daniel or John paint for us in their writings. That is not to say we can't be the single point supply source for the weapons and technology that the Antichrist will one day exploit during the right crisis. While the world and its leaders may scoff at the idea of a [Biblical Rapture](#), Satan does not. Satan knows it's real, and he is furiously moving his players into place for that sudden and unexpected eventuality. This in turn explains why leaders feel the need today to build vast facilities capable of storing more data than exists in the world. This explains why our economic system is in such a mess.

In order for there to be a one-world economic system, the current system and its various currencies would need to be replaced by one. [Revelation 13](#) speaks of that man, THE Antichrist, who will control the entire world by utilizing this system. But Satan's man doesn't create it, he just capitalizes on what is already built, using the perfect crisis as justification to hit the reset button to start over in a system that can be centrally controlled. We know that the 'perfect crisis' will be one that effectively hits the US the hardest, since all the other systems are tied into ours. What could be that event that turns the world on its head?

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet

the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thess 4:16-18)

A Kingdom Without End, Amen

Prophecy - Signs

Wednesday, July 31, 2013

Pete Garcia

"Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us." (Psalm 2:1-3)

It has not been lost on me, that the United States is/was the greatest nation on the face of the planet and in the history of the world. Not even at the height of Rome's imperial power could she match the dedication to keeping a republic governed by laws, guarantor of personal liberties and to the standard of living we have achieved.

As a nation of immigrants, we attracted the best and brightest this world had to offer, and in so doing, we became the unparalleled leader in education, technology, innovation, and the arts.

So, are we to believe that a nation who split the atom and broke the sound barrier, sent a man to the moon and created the internet, can't somehow solve the issues that seemingly are unfixable today?

Solving illegal immigration is a bridge too far? Balancing the budget now is the equivalent to putting a man on Jupiter? We know how to fix the problems, those who have the ability to fix it aren't brave enough to say it. We KNOW what to do to fix the problems, we just refuse to do it. As I said, these problems aren't by chance, but were designed to put us in an unwinnable situation.

Is it a small world after all?

"Whoever controls the volume of money in any country is absolute master of all industry and commerce."

– **James A. Garfield President of the United States**

Imagine that you think that all empires are intrinsically bad, and the only way to fix starvation, pestilence, wars, and other global problems facing our planet, is to first rid the world of competing interests, which all nations and empires have.

Every nation wants to be on top, and that is the problem. Now, theoretically, if you had just one system, then you would remove nationalism, and by default, remove wars and other afflictions that competing empires have. That is the rub with globalists; they really believe that what they are doing, is for the betterment of all mankind.

That is to say, I don't think they are sitting behind closed doors, smoking cigars, twiddling their fingers while devilishly laughing trying to figure out how they can

dominate the huddled masses...well, perhaps the George Soros-types are. But for the rest of them, I think they have good intentions. Well, we all know what lines the path to hell.

Our national enemies know that they can't go toe to toe with us militarily, so they have had to look for soft spots in our national armor. Going back as far as the middle of the 18th century, they (globalists) have sought out ways to make us more European (err...i.e. mean, socialist. One way to do that, is with a Central bank.

One after the other, attempts were made by these globalists to make these United States dependent upon a European-styled Central bank. Presidents' Andrew Jackson through William McKinley were able to keep the globalist hounds at bay. However, when Woodrow Wilson (democrat) was elected president in 1912, they knew they had their man. The *1913 Federal Reserve Act*, which was subversively passed in Congress on Christmas Eve, had just enough members present to make a quorum to pass it and which President Wilson quickly signed it. In fact, it happened so quickly that most of Congress didn't know what happened until well after the fact. Thus, begun the long, sordid history of our nation's economic demise. To date, the Federal Reserve has **never** been audited.

European globalists have been seeking our demise ever since we became a nation in 1776. They hate our Constitution because first and foremost, we recognized that our rights didn't come from men, but from God. They hate our Constitution because it brilliantly defeated their attempts at bringing us back under the thumb of the European powers from whence our founders had come from. Many of our founders knew firsthand, what tyranny was. They knew because they had grown up under it. Their parents and grandparents grew up under it. They knew history, and they knew that one tyranny after another had reared its ugly head in Europe, which is why they were able to specifically pinpoint and articulate the powers our government could and could not have.

This is why a frontal assault would never prevail against us. European globalists, and later American globalists, had to feverishly work to redefine and reshape men's understandings not just about political liberty, but religious and economic liberty as well. Their 'ace in the hole' if you will, was **progressive liberalism**.

They knew that the US Constitution was too powerful an argument to overcome by force, so they sought a backdoor to make inroads into the hearts and minds of Americans. Their liberalistic ideations came over the Atlantic to our universities and seminaries and began spreading like an ideological black plague in our most prestigious educational institutions. (Harvard, Yale, Columbia) Since the founders were largely Christians, the Constitution is based both on the concept of Western (Greek-Roman) styled government, with Judeo-Christian values. This is what the globalists had to destroy first by relentlessly pursuing these three key agendas:

1. Attack the validity of the Bible. Promote ecumenicalism through existentialism, neo-orthodoxy, and the social gospel.

2. Replace Judeo-Christian philosophy with secular humanism, Biblical Creation with Darwinian Evolution, and Capitalism with Marxist-Socialism.
3. Control the message through media, academia, pulpits, and politics. Intimidate by political correctness, judicial legislation, ridicule, and violence.

Liberal leaders that would later come made economic entanglements that would prove disastrous to our national defense. (Ex., OPEC vs. Israel).

We are at such a compromised state today, in so many ways and on so many levels, there no longer remains a viable option for us as a nation to ever lead effectively. Which is why as of late, Presidents insist on 'coalitions' and 'leading from behind' to cast off any sort of political responsibility that might be laid at their feet. To be blunt, we have too many competing interests to be able to see clearly anymore. If there is a cause out there, believe me, there are lobbyists for them. The removal of absolute truth, common morality, and a clear American agenda meant this nation was ripe for the introduction of *political correctness*, which is choking the life out of our sanity.

Welcome to 1984

If we actually followed the laws that are already in place, we wouldn't have half the problems we currently have. In today's America, you would need a militarized police force in order to combat the increasingly violent and disturbing crimes that are occurring with more and more frequency across the nation. But the increasing violence due to drug cartels, gang activities, and organized crime serves a crucial role in the diminishing of freedoms we currently enjoy by those politicians who disable the existing laws that would have curtailed such illegal activities in the first place. So the need for militarization of police and federal agencies become a 'necessary evil'.

That is why we have become an ever-expanding surveillance state, because we have been sold on the notion that it is for our own good. Besides, we are trying to combat global terrorism, financial sabotage, and political subterfuge...at least, that is how it is being packaged for the average "low-information voter", who ends up feeling good about trading their freedom for security.

That is why our borders will never be secured. That is why our 'war on drugs' (depending on the state) will be just enough to warrant funding, but never enough to actually stomp out the problem. That is why government spending will remain unchecked and our debt will continue to skyrocket. They need our economy and our currency to crash, so they can introduce their own new, digital currency, which will forever wipe away the average person's anonymity.

The first groups of people who always get threatened first, when pay cuts are put on the table are: Police/firemen, teachers, and the military. Never is wasteful government programs like [these](#) brought up. Never are politicians themselves willing to take pay cuts, or retirement/pension reductions. Prisons remain overcrowded with an increasingly violent population that can never be allowed back into a population...until the budget is on the line.

You see, these things are created to invoke fear into the public's mind, for the sole purpose of using that fear against the public at a later point.

Do you remember the anger at France at the beginning of the Iraq War for not supporting our efforts? I mean, we threatened to rename *French* fries with *Freedom* fries!

Just think back for a moment, on how the government effectively (through the media) directs our national anger over the last 30 years. In the late 70's-early 80's it was the Ayatollah Khomeini. In the 1980's it was Libya's Moammar Qaddafi. In the 90's it was Saddam Hussein and Kim Jong Il. After 9/11, it was Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. We definitely love to hate someone out there. Granted, these are all evil and wicked despots and deserve our anger, however, as long as we got an enemy number one, the government has someone they can redirect our national anger towards.

It is by treachery that the US has ultimately fallen into permanent intentional disarray. Satan is after all, the architect behind men's scheming for millennia. He needs the US to decrease, so that the EU can increase. He cannot have his global one world order if the US remains on top, and still married to her Constitution. So, if he can't destroy the US outright, he will corrupt it from within. And having witnessed all the mighty empires who have come before us, either toppled militarily or crumble from within, Satan's plan for total global domination will answer both. He will have all the nations under one system. Furthermore, he have his man, the Antichrist, will remove any disloyalty or infidelity to the Beast by instituting a permanent "[mark](#)." This mark dooms someone in this life for refusing it but damns them in the next for taking it. Whatever the 'mark of the beast' ends up being, it will be the ultimate mark of loyalty that can never be undone.

Denouement

Despite what it appears, the Revived Roman Empire is on the rise. Economic turmoil has produced an incredibly high unemployment rate in Europe, particularly amongst the youth. We have seen historically that when nations are at this point, they get desperate. In their desperation they will turn to a man who usually ends up having ulterior motives. There is a wandering generation alive today, who are now ripe pickings for either drafts into compulsory military service, or who through the promise of a steady paycheck, will fill the ranks of this man's future beast's army.

The structure and leadership is in place already courtesy of 60 plus years in NATO, and more recently, the [EUROGENDFOR](#). What's lacking now is the proper motivation. Europeans largely feel unthreatened at the moment, and know that the US would never allow Islamic, Russian or Chinese forces to attack or invade without coming to the EU's aid.

But what if the US could not come? What if something happened to the US that removed us overnight from being the global protectorate of law and order on the planet? How quickly would the EU move to bolster its military ranks in order to fill the vacuum that was suddenly presented at our departure from the world stage?

A day is coming when both through the removal of His Bride, the Church, and His passing of the [tribulum](#) over Israel and the earth, that He will institute His own kingdom here on planet earth. Of this kingdom, Jesus Christ will reign (along with His bride) with an [iron scepter](#). Justice will reign perfectly perfect, and nature will be restored to what it once was at the Garden of Eden. Those who make it into the Millennial Kingdom will enjoy long lives under the rule of a perfect King in a perfect environment. ([Isaiah 65:17-25](#)).

Man has long sought to create their own godless utopia here on earth, but it has failed time and time again. When God removes His Bride, mankind's first real chance to do as they please will get immediately hijacked by Satan and will turn those last seven years into a hell on earth. It will become so terrible, that if Christ did not personally intervene and cut it short, no flesh would survive (Matt. 24:22).

"And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." (Daniel 2:44)

The Saints

Part II

In Defense of the Faith

Wednesday, August 07, 2013

Pete Garcia

The whole Bible is written for us, but it's not all written to us. For the body of believers in this day and age, the Old Testament (Covenant) serves as a foundation for what we hold as true in the New Testament.

The Old does not take precedence over the New, but served to point those Old Testament saints toward the better covenant to come. Likewise, the New confirms the Old, and replaces its salvational contract with mankind based on rules and laws, with a perfect covenant wrought by the sacrifice of God's only Son. ([Heb 12:23-24](#))

So it's not that God's law changes, but because of our position in Jesus Christ, our relationship changes toward the law. So knowing this, we are commanded by Paul, who was given direct revelation from Christ Himself ([Gal 1:1](#)), to 'rightly-divide' the word of truth ([2 Tim 2:15](#)) to properly understand our role, our purpose, and our future as given in the Word of God.

What is a Saint?

'Saint' is used 36 times in the Old Testament, and 61 times in the New, according to the Authorized Version, the KJV. Saint can mean: [AV](#) — [holy](#) 65, [Holy One](#) 39, [saint](#) 12 ([Blueletterbible.org](#)) and simply means 'holy one'. Having numerous spellings, as it is captured in Aramaic, Hebrew, and Greek. For all intents and purposes, we are talking about a person given over to God. So are all saints the same? Essentially, yes.

In every age, God has had His chosen minority separated out from the rejecting majority. But just because someone is a saint, does not mean they are part of the Bride of Christ, any more than someone today could be part of the Old Testament Saints.

Seeing as both Saints, Holy Ones, and Elect are used interchangeably throughout the Old and New Testaments, we can reasonably assume that these are they which are chosen by God. But just like Adam, Noah, and Abraham were chosen by God, there were differences in how they would demonstrate their faithfulness to God.

The Gospels

John the Baptist was the man who had been prophesied by Isaiah as the "voice of one crying in the wilderness". ([Isaiah 40:3](#)) After 400 years of prophetic silence in Israel, God raised up John from birth to be the forerunner of Christ, 'making straight' the path for the Messiah who would come.

It was about John, in whom Jesus said ‘among those born of women, there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he.’ ([Matt 11:11](#)). But even John didn’t not consider himself to be part of the bride, but only a friend of the bridegroom. John the Baptist said of himself;

"The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom’s voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. He must become greater, I must become less." (John 3:29-30 NIV)

Now, the Apostle John wrote the Gospel of John around 85 AD, and although he may not have fully understood then what was said, after having been exposed to the Apostle Paul’s writings on the matter, understood the significance of what John the Baptist had said when he penned the words of his gospel.

John’s gospel is different from Matthew, Mark, and Luke’s (as they are known as the Synoptic Gospels) largely because John had been exposed to Paul’s writings, and had a much better understanding of the overarching plan than did Matthew, Mark, and Luke when they wrote theirs.

With that said, John’s gospel has much more application to the church than the other three gospels simply because the intended audiences were different, and the understanding of the writers were different. All were moved by the Holy Spirit, but God allowed these differences for the very reason to capture the four different facets to Christ’s life, ministry, and personhood.

With that said, John’s gospel does not include the Olivet Discourse. I have come to believe that as John read Paul’s writings, and understood the Rapture of the Church, he knew that it had no application to us, therefore, he expounded on the Upper Room Discourse ([John 14-16](#)), which does. This is just another part of ‘rightly-dividing’ the word of truth.

Christ's question and response stemmed from His foreknowledge that He would be rejected by Israel and would hang on a cross to pay for the sins of all mankind to redeem them. God had revealed His future plans to the disciples for the first time in [Matthew 16:13-20](#).

The name ‘Christ’ (Christos) is a title, and it means ‘anointed’. It is a Greek rendering of the Hebrew word for ‘the Messiah’. The Messiah would have His own church that He would build.

This was a mystery, as none of the OT prophets had ever mentioned this, neither is it found in any of the Old Testament text, save a brief mention of it in [Amos 9:12](#) (see [Acts 15:16-17](#)). We must remember that when Jesus began His earthly ministry, He came preaching “repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand” ([Matthew 4:17](#)), and would preach that message until His announcement of His church that He would build and what it would take to build it. ([Matthew 16:21](#)).

This Church whom Christ would build through His own death, burial, and resurrection, would prevail against the gates of hell until a time and place of Christ's choosing. ([Rom 11:25](#))

The apostles didn't fully understand it at the beginning ([Acts 1:6, 10:44-48](#)), and through Pentecost and the first years of the early church, there was a lot of debate as to the role and process of those becoming Christians. ([Acts 15:1-11, 19:1-5](#))

It wouldn't be until the Apostle Paul came along and laid down the doctrines of the Church and of our Salvation by grace through faith that the Church would begin to understand its role in the grand scheme of things. Christ is our foundation, but Paul was given the structure of how the Church would function by Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion

Let me make a bold statement and say, that EVERYONE who proclaims to be a Christian today is a Dispensationalist...to one degree or another. Christians today do not sacrifice lambs at a temple, because we recognize that that doesn't apply to us today. That is because Christ was OUR sacrifice, and He need only die once. ([Heb 10:10-14](#)) We also don't have forbidden fruit trees in our backyards that we are prohibited from eating. Why not? Well, because that doesn't apply to us anymore. Neither do we have Arks to build, nor are we asked to sacrifice our only begotten children at the top of the nearest mountain as a test of faith.

As Jack was fond of saying, 'things that are different are not the same'.

We know that when Adam and Eve sinned, they realized they were naked. We know that Noah was instructed to build an ark, because a great flood was coming. What good would it have done Adam and Eve to build an Ark? Or what good would it do Noah to have the skins of an animal? Neither would provide the type of protection and salvation that the other provided. Different circumstances, different solutions, but they all come from the same Provider.

In the classification of men, God divided mankind a total of three times.

1. From Adam up until Abraham, there is recorded only one race of man. The [Noahic](#) and [Adamic](#) covenants are universal and applied to mankind as a whole. The focus is on mankind as a whole.

2. Abraham was the first person identified as a Hebrew ([Genesis 14:13](#)), and through him would come all the tribes of Israel, as well as the [conditional](#) and [eternal](#) and [unbreakable](#) covenants. The focus narrows from mankind to one particular national and ethnic group.

3. When one becomes a Christian, they are no longer a Jew or a Gentile, but become a '[new creation](#)'. All who would be believers in Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, would by the Holy Spirit be sealed until the day of redemption, and would make up the

'body of Christ'. The Apostle Paul would [write](#) about these classifications of the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church. God's focus is on this third group known as the bride of Christ. At some unknown point, our time reaches its fulfillment ([Romans 11:25-27](#)) in which God turns His attention back to the 'apple of His eye' to finish out the last seven years that had been allotted to Israel. ([Daniel 9:24](#))

Next week, we will finish up by looking at the Holy Spirit, Heaven and Hell, and those who come to salvation after the Rapture.

Maranatha!

The Saints

Part III

In Defense of the Faith

Wednesday, August 14, 2013

Pete Garcia

Many cults and heretical groups today, want like nothing more than to steal the promises and covenants given to Israel in the Old Testament. Many orthodox Christians today want to put their own spin on their eschatological views on the prophetic text (pre-wrath, post-tribulation, partial rapture, etc) so as to distinguish themselves as having a more 'exclusive' truth than others.

The truth is, if you just look at the basics of our faith, you will realize that the groups mentioned within the pages of Holy Scripture are different, not because man translated or interpreted the text in some corrupt way, but because God divided man up. So as someone once said, "what God put asunder, let no man put together".

The Holy Spirit

To really understand the differences in the differing groups that are mentioned in the Bible, we must understand the Holy Spirit's role in all of it. The Old Testament Saints were NOT sealed by the Holy Spirit as we are today. This is a huge, huge difference in who we are, versus who they were and how we are not the same.

The fact that the Holy Spirit came upon men, was a sovereign act of God, not any decision that men made. The Holy Spirit could also leave said person, if they strayed from the plan God had for them.

For example, the Holy Spirit came upon and departed both Samson ([Judges 13:25, 16:20](#)) and Saul ([1 Sam 10:10, 16:14](#)) as well as many others. The Holy Spirit's residency if you will, was always temporary. Those who knew He could depart sooner, feared that day as David once did. ([Psalm 51:11](#))

The Holy Spirit was not in the ministry for all the saints then, as it is now. The Holy Spirit primary roles are: regeneration, indwelling (filling), restraint, and empowerment for service ([Source](#)).

We see the Holy Spirit's power of regeneration in the creation process of [Genesis 1](#), in overshadowing Mary upon her impregnation for the virgin birth of Christ, and in the rebirth of men and women who become Christians which is why they are said to be, 'born again'. ([John 3:1-7](#)) We know that those at Pentecost, saw the promised Comforter, the Holy Spirit descend as 'cloven tongues of fire' and land upon those who believed and given them the ability to speak and understand new languages. ([Acts 2:1-2](#))

From then, until now, when a person becomes a believer in Jesus Christ, placing their faith in His death, burial, and resurrection...which substitutes their sinfulness for Christ's righteousness. Not only that, but Christ's guarantor of that salvation-transaction, is the Holy Spirit, who then seals the believer as earnest, until that promised day of redemption. ([Eph 1:11-14, 4:5](#); [2 Corinthians 1:21-22, 5:5](#)). This is why the believer in this age of grace, cannot lose their salvation once they have been given new life.

They no longer belong to themselves, but have been 'bought with a price' by God, and that price being the death of His only begotten Son on the cross of Calvary. The Old Testament Saints did not have that assurance...and neither will those who come after the Church is gone.

The Holy Spirit's role as 'Restrainer' is as much the same today as it was during Noah's day. ([Gen 6:3](#); [2 Thess 2:7](#)). A lot of those who reject the Pre-Tribulation Rapture, will deny that the Holy Spirit is in fact, the 'Restrainer'.

The Holy Spirit does not restrain evil in general, as we have had evil present with mankind since the Garden of Eden. Rather, the Holy Spirit restricts the power and scheming of Satan until it suits God's purpose to do so. Furthermore, it would seem that Satan is restricted now from indwelling any person, until AFTER the Rapture of the Church which is why Paul states:

"For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. **And then the lawless one will be revealed...**" ([2 Thess 2:7-8 NKJV](#))

During the Age of the Law, (during Christ's day) the Holy Spirit's resided in the Holy of Holies of the Jewish Temple (when it was standing) residing above the Ark of the Covenant's Mercy Seat.

One of the accusations against Christ, was that He claimed to be able to tear the temple down and rebuild it in three days. At the moment of Christ's death, the temple veil (which separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the temple) was torn in two. We know now that Jesus wasn't speaking to the actual building, but to His own body.

Likewise today, we Christians do not have a temple that we can go to, because we are the temple with the Holy Spirit residing inside of us. ([1 Corinthians 3:16](#), [6:19](#))

Heaven and Hell

When Jesus cried out in [John 19:28](#) that ALL was fulfilled, He was referring to the Law. So having lived and died in perfect keeping of God's will, never once straying (which none of us could ever do), He became that perfect and final sacrifice that would provide a bridge between God and Man. So those who had come before Christ, although righteous, still had not yet had Christ's death applied to them, as they were already dead. Since they did not have that 'righteousness of God' applied to them, they could not enter heaven. But they had to go somewhere right?

Christ told the repentant thief hanging next to Him on the cross that 'today shalt thou be with Me in paradise' ([Luke 23:43](#)). Previously, Jesus had spoken of the true story (not a parable) of the rich man and Lazarus who both died, and went to the same location, but separated by a great gulf. The rich man upon his death, immediately lifted up his eyes in torments. He could see across the gulf and noticed Lazarus there in 'Abraham's bosom', where it was vastly different, peaceful and serene. Jesus goes on to show the great difference the afterlife held for them depending on how they lived their lives here. ([Luke 16:22-26](#))

But where was this 'paradise' that Jesus makes mention of? Did Jesus really mean heaven?

Seeing that Christ was the 'first fruits' of the resurrection, it also would lead one to believe that no-human prior to Christ's death and resurrection could yet have entered heaven. Further proof of this is in the heavenly visions of the different prophets.

Both [Isaiah](#) and [Ezekiel](#) saw heaven, but saw no men. [Daniel](#) saw a future of the heavenly throne room, and saw thrones, but no one was sitting on them. But when [John](#) was 'caught up' in [Revelation 4:1-2](#), he not only saw thrones, but saw the 'elders' sitting on the thrones. He also saw the lampstands, which Jesus had been walking amongst in [Revelation 1:20](#) (the Churches), were now in heaven before the throne of God ([Revelation 4:5](#)). After this, John even [spoke](#) with an Elder.

So those who died before Christ (Old Testament Saints) went to a place known as Paradise, or Abraham's bosom. Both Paradise and Torments were physically co-located in a place called Hades...but they were separated by that great gulf. During His burial, Christ preached to those who had been waiting in Hades, both the righteous and unrighteous. ([1 Peter 3:18-20](#)) And then He led those righteous who had accepted God's grace and were in Paradise, out of Paradise and into Heaven. ([Ephesians 4:7-9](#))

So the believer today, who passes from this earthly life into the next, does not go down to Paradise to await for the Lord to take them to heaven. Paul states that when we die, we immediately go to heaven to be in the presence of the Lord.

"Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." ([2 Corinthians 5:5-8](#))

Things That Are Different

We see that the book of Revelation, the last written book of the Bible (95AD), is given its own outline in how to break the different sections of itself down. ([Revelation 1:19](#)).

We see the vision in chapter 1, the letters to the seven churches in 2-3, and from chapters 4-22, we see what is to come 'after these things'.

So after the letters to the seven churches, John writes; "after these things, I saw a door open in heaven..." and he is subsequently and immediately 'caught up' to heaven. This is a picture of the Rapture. Another change we see, is that for the rest of the book, the imagery and allusions go strongly back to Old Testament language.

The book of Revelation is meant to speak to the people who would be remaining after the Rapture of the Church, but would come to read it and understand it, that primarily being the Jewish people. I believe the Jews remaining will be looking for answers once the age of 'signs and wonders' in the 'Day of the Lord' commences again.

[Revelation 4-21](#) does not reference the Church (ecclesia) again as being on the earth or partaking in any part of its goings on, save returning with Christ ([Revelation 19:7-8, 14](#)) at Armageddon. Verse 7-8 tells you who is returning with Christ, which also makes sense of [Zechariah 14:5](#) and [Jude 1:14](#)'s understanding of saints returning with Christ. This is the Church, who Christ promised would reign as "kings and priests" with Him. (1 Peter 2:9; [Revelation 1:6, 5:6](#))

Conclusion

So summarizing events thus far, we should see that according to the Bible, there are three major categories of humans that God recognizes; Gentiles, Jews, and the Church.

We should have a clearer picture that those who died before Christ, went either to Paradise or to Torments. Those who came after Christ's resurrection, went immediately to be with the Lord when they died.

This brings us to those who will come after the Church age ends...and it will one day end. The Church was birthed at Pentecost with the giving of the Holy Spirit, and the Church will end with the removal of the Holy Spirit at the Rapture. Now, in either giving or departing, the Holy Spirit has always been, as He is co-eternal just as the Father and the Son are in the Godhead.

What is removed, is the Holy Spirit's ministry of 'restraint' upon the earth. And if believers are sealed until the day of redemption (that being the Rapture of the Church), then those in whom the Holy Spirit indwells, must be removed too, since God will not break His promise to redeem those who are His. ([Rom 8:29-30](#))

God has always had His remnant in every age, but they don't need to be all in the same category for them to all be saved by the same Savior. If God had wanted everyone to be in just one group, he would have given His entire plan to Adam and Eve.

Instead, He give a little here, and a little there, just enough information to keep His plan moving in the right direction. He chose some men that were learned, and some that weren't. He chose men from different dispensations, back grounds, and circumstances to put together a one-of-a-kind book that could never be duplicated.

He divided man up at the Tower of Babel ([Gen 11:1-9](#)), with Abraham and Lot, with Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, and with the 12 Tribes. He divided up those who would make up the body of Christ from those Jews and Gentiles who would reject Christ.

Man didn't do this, God did.

He instructed Paul to pen the words to 'rightly-divide' the word so that when we read our Bibles, it wouldn't be a jumbled, confusing, contradictory mess. Being a Saint does not make one a member of the Body of Christ, but it is another term we can call each other as believers with equal conviction.

The Saints:
[PART I](#), [PART II](#)

The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse

Prophecy - Signs

Wednesday, August 21, 2013

Pete Garcia

As ominous as they are mysterious, the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse stand at our horizon as a foreboding reminder that man's time here on planet earth has a shelf-life. To the skeptic, these riders are nothing more than symbolic sound bites.

To your average unstudied Christian, these four riders represent a mysterious symbolism that can't be known. The Preterist and Amillennialist see them as either historic or figurative leaders who have long since come and gone. But to those who hold to a Pre-Tribulation Rapture view, we recognize these riders as those who will be unleashed after the Church has been [caught up](#) to heaven during the 70th Week of Daniel.

Some believe these to be the same colored horses as those who appear in Zechariah's vision. I believe Jack Kelley in [GracethruFaith](#) gives an excellent response to the one posed to him concerning this, so I won't rehash it. I will say that if one places the Four Horsemen as outside the 70th week of Daniel, then this chapter becomes extremely subjective to the audience who is reading it. The Revelation was given to John in signs and symbols, largely pulling from the Old Testament. There is a reason for this, particularly from chapters four onward.

The Seal Judgments make up the first series of judgments that God unleashes upon the earth during the seven year period known as Daniel's 70th Week, or the time of Jacob's Troubles. The Seal Judgments are not, man's wrath as the Pre-Wrathers would have you believe. Let us let scripture be the judge:

"And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it." (Revelation 5:1-3)

Seemingly, no one is able to initiate these judgments from even commencing. This means that man can in no way, initiate these judgments from beginning.

"So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals." (Revelation 5:4-5)

Jesus Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and the Root of David who is God come to earth in the flesh, prevailed (the triumph at the cross) to become eligible to open the

seals, initiating the final seven years of man's time on the planet. Jesus was worthy because He was both man, and God. He was able to keep the righteousness of God, as a man and in so doing, qualified as our Kinsman Redeemer. ([Lev 25:47-50](#); [Ruth 4:1-20](#))

Rider on the White horse (*leukos-white*)

"Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see." And I looked, and behold, a white horse. [He who sat on it](#) had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer." (Revelation 6:1-2)

Although we don't know his name, we know that he will come from somewhere out of the revived Roman Empire...otherwise known today as the European Union. We know that at first he goes out to conquer, and does so with a bow that has no arrows. The rider on the white horse is often confused with that of Christ who also returns on a white horse...but Christ has a sword that proceeds out of His mouth ([Rev 19:11-16/Heb 4:12-13](#)), not a bow.

Christ also wears many crowns (diadema), as the Rider on the white horse wears the 'stephanos' crown. If the sword is representative of Christ merely speaking and reigning down destruction on His enemies, then what is the bow representative of? [Daniel 7:8](#) and [11:36-39](#) speaks of this same man who 'speaks pompous and blasphemous words'. [Daniel 8:25](#) states;

"Through his cunning He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; and he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without human means."

Some try to align the rider on the white horse with 'false religious leaders', but we've always had those who since the 1st century, have come pretending to be 'the Christ'. There were false prophets and false messiah's even before John received the Revelation in 95AD, so to claim this as 'false religious leaders' makes the timing of the Seal judgments both vague and unknowable.

The Rider on the Red Horse (*pyrros-red*)

When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come and see." Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to [take peace](#) from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword. (Revelation 6:3-4)

The 20th century has been the bloodiest on record, swallowing up more human life than the previous twenty centuries combined. As of today, there are 41 active conflicts currently ongoing. After the Church is removed, and the Holy Spirit's ministry of restraint is also removed, ([2 Thess 2:7](#)) the world will explode in a period of violence and chaos as nations deal with millions of people who have disappeared. Rioting, looting, and civil unrest will spark the need for governments to clamp down authoritatively.

The 'great sword' could speak of Islam sweeping through the Middle East, Africa, and Southeast Asia, but will have limited impacts in Europe and America where resistance would be the greatest. In the West, the chaos generated by the Rapture will result in an 'every man for himself' type of attitude, prompting people to kill to protect what is theirs in a grand scale.

Again, war has been ever present with man before and after Christ first coming to earth. What is referenced here is the specific period that great violence would come upon the earth. And if the 20th century (which has been the bloodiest to date) did not initiate it, then no other past period of time did either.

The Rider on the Black Horse (*melas-black*)

"He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come and see." So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine." (Revelation 6:5-6)

"...And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these *are the beginning of sorrows.*" (Matthew 24:7-8)

The economies of the world are shuttering due to mismanagement and corruption from the previous century. Marxist-Socialist ideations in many parts of the world resulted in tens of millions of people dying due to starvation. Capitalist governments turned to fiat currencies and ran up huge debts by borrowing money they can't pay back, loaning money they don't have, and printing money out of thin air.

The first tremble we felt was back in September 2001, but the attacks of 9/11 masked the true cause of our economic woes. Since then, 2008 was the death rattle that scared investors, bankers, and everyone else alike as we began to realize how fragile our economy really is.

The financial ramifications of the Rapture of the Church on the world left behind will be disastrous. The Rapture will impact some countries more than others but will affect every other nation financially since most are dependent on the US dollar in some form or fashion. This will cause the world to clamor for a solution to the economic crisis the world finds itself in. The [Antichrist](#) will use this as a way to cement total control over the entire planet.

The Rider on the Pale Horse (*chloros- green*)

When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come and see." So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth. (Revelation 6:7-8)

Pandemics have risen, along with the population of the planet, in this past century. Many diseases once thought extinct, are coming back with a vengeance. New ones like the variations of the Pig and Bird flus are morphing from spreading by touch, to airborne transmission. The Corona virus (MERS) is one the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) are particularly worried about. Not to mention the golden oldies of AIDS, Hemorrhagic Fever, Bubonic Plague, West Nile, and SARS.

And thanks in part to a half century of using antibiotics, disinfectants, etc., we have managed to create super-strains of previously less serious viruses. And as the world is becoming more urban, population centers are becoming more densely populated, increasing the likelihood of future pandemics that will make the 1918 Spanish Flu seem like a measles outbreak.

Assessment

The [Parliament](#) of the [EU](#) currently seats 766 Members of European Parliament (MEP) from each of the 28 nations who either have member status or observer status. I think at a certain point, Turkey could be allowed into the EU, whether as just on observer status, or as a full member. It was only just recently that Israel and Turkey parted ways diplomatically and militarily due to Tayyip Erdogan's radicalized ideas of moving the country from a secular Muslim government to something more akin to the Muslim Brotherhood. Remember, Turkey was part of the eastern leg of the Roman Empire (Byzantine) for almost a thousand years.

With the other Middle East heavy weights bogged down with their own issues; Egypt and Iraq on the cusp of a civil war, Syria in tatters awaiting impending destruction, and Iran awaiting its rendezvous with Israel, Turkey could be the bridge that the EU uses to mend the [Mediterranean Union](#).

The Prophetic wars of [Psalm 83](#), [Isaiah 17 & 19](#), [Ezekiel 38-39](#), and [Revelation 19](#) still remain on the horizon. With the exception of Armageddon, it is unclear when the rest of these events take place. Something we may often overlook as a lesson in the obvious is that all these wars are in the Middle East. The Revived Roman Empire encompasses not just Europe, but the Mediterranean, which borders the Middle East. Rome, Babylon, Jerusalem, and the cities mentioned are either in the Mediterranean or the Middle East. Where is the world's perspective almost increasingly being focused on these days thanks to the war on terror, oil, Israel/Palestinian conflict, Iran, and Al Qaeda?

This may have absolutely nothing to do with the context of the Seal Judgments, but considering the Mediterranean Union, the Middle East, and the central focus on that part of the world, and considering the colors of the horses that these riders sweep across the planet with, do you notice anything [familiar](#)?

Love, Lust, and Abraham Lincoln

In Defense of the Faith

Tuesday, August 27, 2013

Pete Garcia

I realize that this will be a 180-degree departure from what I normally write, but I've felt it stirring in me for a long time. After researching everything I did for 'Manifesto' and the roots of political correctness, I knew I had to put my thoughts to paper about this aspect of warfare...and it is warfare.

I kept wondering why the Progressive Left was pressing so hard to promote sex education to kids, making abortion and morning after pill, etc. to children who can't even conceive yet. It's kind of like selling ice to Eskimos...they don't need it. Since I have a daughter entering second grade this year, I am terrified at what she will be exposed too in the subsequent years in the public education system. But I began asking myself why the current administration's focus is so singularly fixated on the innocence at that age, and then the 'BINGO-Light', just clicked on over my head.

Caveat emptor-I'm not a: psychologist, psychiatrist, or clinically trained head-shrink. So, I'm not an expert in the clinical sense, but I was an American boy growing up in the 70's and 80's right before society completely lost all its marbles, and in that light, have expertise on this particular subject.

I grew up riding bikes without helmets, climbing trees without nets, getting into fist fights and wrestling matches. Dirty, scraped and bruised, and I can say that I've had my fair share...as it should be. I could remember pummeling someone, or them pummeling me, and at the end of the day, becoming fast friends with them. I think for boys at least, fighting clears the air between two people. Soldiers understand this, because once you've spilt blood together, the battle becomes personal. It's no longer about politics or governments, you fight for the guy to your left, and to your right. It is a very bonding thing indeed.

I think in the growing process, a boy grows up and shuns the opposite sex as 'cootie-carriers' until their early teen years. At that age, you don't know what love really means other than it is something that you say to those who you really care about. Even then, you don't like saying out loud for fear of being heard.

I grew up having best friends between the three moves that eventually landed me in the city I would finally call my hometown, and in each instance, we did what boys do. What you have with your best bud, is not love or anything you recognize at that level. What you have is that connectedness with another living human soul.

But at certain age, you realize that even your buddies can't provide for what's missing in your ever changing emotions you have within you. Girls are genetically programmed to come to grips with this at a much younger age, which is why they mature faster than

boys. But what a best friend can't provide, one comes to realize is, a girl can, and *voilà*, girls become interesting.

But suppose you remove those boundaries away at an age before you come to this conclusion, now boys can take what they thought was friendship and try to make the proverbial square peg fit into the round whole. You stump the tree before its first molting so to speak.

Study after study will show, that children who are sexually abused, often struggle with sexual identity and/or sexual security well into their adulthood. If the lines were blurred between what it is to be a boy, and a girl, by the time a kid gets into his older years, he/she may have multiple same sex relationships under their belt confounding the already confusing process of growing up into an adult.

Just this last week, California's governor Jerry "Moonbeam" Brown signed into law, what I call the [Free Gender Bender Rules](#), to children before the age that they even know what gender identification is. Its unstated goal is, to create sexual confusion. Boys and girls who had naturally established boundaries, no longer have them there. What is happening now is the government and the god of this age want to open 'Pandora's box and blur those lines so that what was forbidden territory, is now ok to freely trespass. God help us.

I believe this isn't just for boys, but girls as well. As a father of three girls, it is becoming harder and harder to shield them from the onslaught of a sexualized society. Growing up, I was inadvertently exposed to pornography at a young age. First was at a gas station, and then again through a neighbor. It lit a fire in me that I didn't know I had or needed. The very first time that I can remember, someone had placed an adult magazine in the comic book section. I didn't know what I was looking at, but at that moment, I remember thinking that I should hide. Or hide what I was doing. I think I felt very much like what Adam and Eve must have in that [moment](#) they took a bite of that forbidden fruit and had their eyes opened.

I don't understand our government these days, but I am beginning to. On one hand, they promote sex education to kindergarteners long before they know or even need to know what it is. They offer birth control to children without a parents consent long before they could ever need birth control. Despite the ability to clamp down on vast pools of pornography readily accessible to the young and old on the internet (which the government has its tentacles all over), it tolerates it. Highly sexualized ads, songs, books, movies, and television shows blast the American public 24/7...exposure is unavoidable.

But on the other hand, the government has come heavy handed against child molestation, child pornography, and rightfully so. So on one hand, it is either promoting the sexualization of children through education or complicitly by the toleration of it as entertainment. The government uses the iron fist treatment on those who perpetrate the acts...perpetually tolerating what it is keeping forbidden. It is a steel

trap who ensnares all either by tacit acceptance, or by actively participating. It is as old as Satan himself, the old 'bait and switch'.

Just think about how much the government monitors the internet. Think about all that information that is being recorded and stored in vast [data vaults](#) in San Antonio, Texas, Bluffdale, Utah, and Ft. Mead, Maryland. The potential for blackmail will be unprecedented.

Assessment

Ultimately, Satan's one goal is to thwart the spreading of the Gospel. He uses guilt and sin to silence those who would spread it and uses it to destroy those who would hear it. I've struggled with pornography growing up. I didn't know how damaged I was until I got married and had to really struggle (my wife and I both) to make our marriage work. Marriage is hard. It's more than just feelings and emotions, but a commitment to God, ourselves, and to our children to make it a fight worth fighting for.

When I was a boy, fighting often strengthened a relationship with a former foe. That's always what's puzzled girls and women on how two men can pound each other's lights out, and then go drink a beer together afterwards. I can only explain that it is what it is...clearing the air. It's the same with marriage though. After a fight (not a fist fight), my wife and I will come back stronger than we were before because we've spilt emotional blood, sweat, and tears over whatever it was we got to arguing about in the first place. But first we go to the Lord in prayer. Lots of prayer.

Granted, this doesn't work for everyone. I think first and foremost, a marriage has to be sanctified in the eyes of God for it to have a snowballs chance in heck of making it...especially in today's world. Adam and Eve had it easy...they just had one tree to contend with. We have it on every corner. I think God knew that ahead of time, which is why our age has been deemed the 'age of grace through faith' rather than a continuation of rules and regulations. But because our salvation is so simple, and eternal, those who reject it in this age will be judged the harshest.

Jesus told His disciples that the men of [Sodom](#) would rise up in condemnation of their generation, if they rejected the Messiah to His face. The [Queen of Sheba](#) would mock those in Jesus day because one greater than Solomon had come, but they would resist him. Yet today, we have the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and the complete Word of God at our disposal. We have history. We now have the technology to be able to know with relative certain knowledge how we got to where we are. Although our temptation is greater than ever before, so too is our ability to learn and know.

God is not the author of [confusion](#), Satan is. He wants to get as many people as sexually confused, compromised, and enslaved as possible to prevent the Gospel from going out. I'd say he was doing a darn good job too by the looks of it.

So how do you fight what seems overwhelmingly impossible odds.

Gettysburg

In Abraham Lincoln's [Gettysburg Address](#), a line popped out at me and resonated on a level I had never fully appreciated before. As Christians, we are to die daily to ourselves on the battlefields of our life. We are to give that '*last full measure of devotion*' daily, by crucifying the flesh in order to become that good, acceptable, [perfect](#) will of God. Jesus didn't say pick up your sword and become a gladiator. He didn't tell us that we would achieve spiritual perfection once we learned the art of spiritual warfare. Rather...He said,

"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. **Luke 9:23**

We can't fight for the soul of a nation, if we can't fight the Civil War that rages within each of us...that being the flesh versus the spirit. I understand more clearly the words which Paul wrote in that 'in our weakness, He is made [strong](#).' It is to die daily to self, and by doing so, we tear down the [strongholds](#) of sin in our own life. Truly, it's not the flesh we wrestle against as much as the principalities and dark forces which stand in opposition against the believer every day. It is hand to hand combat, sweaty and grimy guerrilla warfare fought over the victorious life we so often seek, but rarely find. Our enemy knows he can't defeat us, because we've already won, but he can take the fight out of us by using the arsenal of tools he has at his disposal; pride, guilt, sorrow, anger, lust, hate, and apathy.

As that day draws closer, the [god of this age](#) is increasing his intensity because he knows time is running short. He has been given more control over the governments of our day, so it should not perplex the Christian. This is not all accidental. Satan needs the US removed from power in order to bring about his Anti-Christ's world government. He had to go after the 'heart and soul' of a one-time Christian nation. Rather, we should pray for our leaders. Pray for those who seek to take innocence away from the innocent, and pray that they soon see the errors of their way. With over 50 million abortions, millions more damaged by sexual abuse and predatory legislation, our nation is quickly storing up wrath on a scale that could only be inspired by Satan.

Remember what Jesus said...

"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. **Matthew 18:6**

How much longer will He hold his hand of judgment back? All I can say is, Maranatha...come quickly Lord.

Manifesto

Globalism - Ecumenism

Wednesday, September 04, 2013

Pete Garcia

"Political correctness is tyranny with manners." -Charlton Heston

Remember back in the 1970's when the consensus amongst the "experts" was that the world was definitely headed for another ice-age? Or in the 1980's when ozone holes and fluorocarbons were all the rage? Then there was global Al Gore and the global warming alarmists in the 1990's-2000s? So now that things have cooled down, the "experts" are not sure whether it's warming or cooling, so they're going with the catchall phrase of "climate change". All this sound painfully familiar? It seems as if it's been an endless onslaught of sloganeering to save ourselves from ourselves.

The Birth of PC

Karl Heinrich Marx was a German Ashkenazi Jew, whose father had converted from Judaism to Lutheranism prior to Karl's birth. Karl grew up in the Protestant system, but later converted to atheism. He, along with Friedrich Engels, would later develop a socio-economic philosophy that pitted the working class against the ruling elite known as Marxist socialism. Marx modeled this from the French Revolution as the worldview for class struggle.

In subsequent years, Marxism would be tried in different national revolutions as the model (Russia, China, and Germany) with disastrous results. In the end, hundreds of millions of people perished either through war, famine, or governmental incompetence as each tried to create a perfect socialist utopia.

In 1923, a group of Marxist devotee's founded the Institute of Social Research in Frankfurt, Germany in an attempt to apply Marxism to the culture at large. It was modeled after the original based in Moscow to promote socialism on a wider scale. In a twist of irony, those Marxist-Socialists liked the idea of Marxism more than the reality of it, and fled Germany in 1933 to escape a rising Hitler and his National Socialists Party (Nazi's).

After immigrating to the US, they founded and renamed their institute as the [Frankfurt School](#) and subsequently began poisoning American public schools and universities with sloganeering, sensitivity sessions, affirmative action, and the social gospel. The phrase 'make love, not war' comes direct from Herbert Marcuse, a Socialist revolutionary from the Frankfurt School.

The Frankfurt School taught the teachers, and then sent them out into the major universities (Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Columbia, and Berkley) who then brainwashed a generation would-be school teachers. These then went on to large and small towns across the nation to schools to teach children. Their children grew up and had their own

children with varying degrees of instilled socialism, and so on and so forth. Instead of calling it what it really is, 'cultural Marxism' was renamed 'Political Correctness' to make it easier to swallow and to hide its true roots. The cultural slide towards a docile, emasculated, and pliant nation was already in the making 60 years ago. From the [American Thinker](#);

"Marx's key concept was "class struggle." That's where PC comes in. PC seeks to impose a uniformity of thought and behavior, just like Marxism, on all Americans and is, therefore, quite totalitarian in nature. PC is, in concept, similar to Marxism, but its focus is upon culture, rather than economics, as the class struggle environment. PC, just like Marxism, forces people to live a lie by denying reality. PC takes a political philosophy and says that on the basis of the chosen philosophy, certain things must be true, and reality that contradicts its "truth" must be forbidden --"

This is in large part the contributing factor to the lunacy we see going on in America today. Normal folk watching the news scratch their heads at how blindly ignorant politicians, actors, and media types are for completely ignoring reality, and going with the flow of the mantra being fed to the public via the nightly news. In true Marxist fashion, if you question or oppose the going political lunacy, you're quickly labeled either a: bigot, hater, ____a-phobic, low-brow knuckle dragger, racists, etc. This isn't so much emotion, as it is a technique used by Marxists to silence anyone who disagrees.

The PC crowd is clever. They know there are no useful legal tests about hurt feelings and inciting hate. They enact nice-sounding laws, build bureaucracies and wait for them to blossom and bludgeon free speech. They have effectively co-opted Islamic-style oppression to prohibit debate; be it about Islam or anything else they wish to fence off from free speech.

The other trick is to quietly exclude certain people from the national discourse. It is best summed up by a German word: *totschweigtaktik*. To be *totsched* is to be subjected to death by silence: books, ideas, people that challenge the status quo are simply ignored. ([Source](#))

The Rub

"Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people." - Karl Marx

Karl Marx was an atheist and modeled his philosophical and economical world view as an atheist. It would follow that anyone who considers themselves a devotee of Marxism would by default embrace atheism. One need only look at the modern Democratic Party today to see this.

Their party platform holds to these (just to name a few): the removal of Biblical Christianity from the public sphere, abortion and eugenics, homosexual marriage (or the redefinition of traditional marriage), class and racial warfare, redistribution of wealth, welfare dependence, and socialized medicine. They've successfully been able to

rewrite history to show that they were somehow responsible for the Civil Rights movement, when in fact; they had stood in direct [opposition](#) to it.

We've had one series of campaign slogans after another bombarding the American public either from environmental alarmists who seek control of all natural resources, or destructive cultural issues which seeks to destroy the family unit (which is a key goal of Marxism).

To date, there has never been a communist regime that embraced true biblical Christianity. Either they promote worship of the state, or to the leader of the state.

They might tolerate a state-sanctioned religion, but you can guarantee that it was heavily censored to the point of ineffectiveness. One cannot embrace Christianity and Socialism/Atheism at the same time.

Marxism is a cultural and economic philosophy birthed from a Secular Humanist worldview, and it has no use for Jesus Christ or the Gospel of Salvation. To embrace that as a "Christian" would mean that one is either woefully ignorant of scripture, or one is intentionally abusing the text to cling to an agenda such as the social gospel.

After more than 70 years of Political Correctness being propagandized in our public schools and universities, it makes perfect sense to see our modern-day federal bureaucracy turning its back on the foundational worldview (Judeo-Christian) that gave it that freedom in the first place.

Satan hates the truth, because he knows it will set you free. The truth is only found in Jesus Christ, and when you understand your need for Him and salvation, it will truly set you free. The solitary goal of Satan is to keep you from the truth, and he will use whatever he has too to do that, whether that is atheism, socialism, evolution, eugenics, Islam, religion, work, pride, tradition, or whatever. Jesus had this to say to the religious leaders of His day:

"You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it." **John 8:44 NKJV**

Philosophical worldviews are not just empty rhetoric. Ideas carry weight, and that weight has been attempting to crush the Christian for millennia. The Pharisee's could not tolerate it, and put Jesus, Stephen, and all of the disciples save John, to death because of it.

The pagan Roman Empire ruthlessly persecuted the early church. Islam has either killed or forced conversions upon millions. The Roman Catholic Church killed millions through their Inquisitions. Atheism in the wrapped guise of state-worship of fascism, socialism, or communism has killed hundreds of millions. [Margaret Sanger](#), whose views on eugenics influenced the Nazis, founded Planned Parenthood and to date has

taken the lives of over 50 million babies and an untold number of mothers. Abortion is a byproduct of eugenics, which came about as a mix between Darwinian evolution and Marxist socialism. Bottom line is, ideas have consequences and bad ideas have disastrous consequences.

Because political correctness is a lie, operating in the imaginary, lathered in insanity, it cannot contend against the truth in the marketplace of ideas. The truth is that the American system was founded largely by Christian men, upon Christian principles and ideals. Freedom, capitalism, and liberty has flourished here because Christianity is the truth and welcomes all to challenge its validity in the arena of ideas. Atheism, Marxism, and Islam has to muzzle opposing worldviews in order to survive. They do not tolerate dissenting opinions or investigation into their claims, because if they did, they would be crushed. Satan is increasingly **blinding** the minds of those who reject the Gospel. Political correctness is just one more, in a long line of proofs that we are in the last days, and that our redemption draws near.

“If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” **John 8:31-32**

Generation Z

In Defense of the Faith

Tuesday, September 10, 2013

Pete Garcia

"Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer *is* near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors! Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place." (Matthew 24:32-34)

So here we are, at the end of all things, wondering what is taking the Lord so long to return. Israel has been a nation now for **sixty--five years**. We've seen and are seeing the revival of the Roman Empire through the European and the Mediterranean Unions. We've lived in the most brutal century known to man. This century is turning out no better than the last.

Crime, apostasy, murder and violence continually stain the ground red with the blood of the innocent. For the Christian watcher, watching has become more tasking than we ever anticipated it to be.

We were led by some to believe that Christ would return in the 1980's, because after all, a generation is only forty years (*or so we thought*). The 1980's came and went, and then the 90's, and 2000's. Both years' 2011 and 2012 panned out to be dud years prophetically speaking, and still, we remain.

We see the moral and societal decay setting in, reminiscent of both Noah and Lot's day. We see [Sodom](#) multiplied thousands of times over in the landscape of our fallen world. So many signs, so many things seemingly pointing toward a soon return and the days, weeks, months wear on.

Today I'm feeling particularly melancholy, I think because the 'Groundhog Day-itis' of a deployment has set in. Maybe it's because this place has a particularly dark and bloody history with a strong satanic influence over it.

I got to thinking about my generation, and all the things that we've seen. Having been born in the 1970's, the only constant that I could ever cling too was 'change'. Even change is changing, as it is speeding up. Babies being born now, as mine will be next spring (Lord willing), are known as "Generation Z". The equivalent to "Z" in the Greek alphabet is Omega (Ω)...which of course, is not equivalent phonetically, but by chronological order.

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the Beginning and the End*," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." (Revelation 1:8)

Jesus refers to Himself as the first and last. In the Old Testament, God (Jehovah) referred to Himself as the 'first and last'. ([Isaiah 44:6](#)) The Hebrew equivalent to the Greek 'Alpha and Omega' is the 'Aleph and Tau'. It seems the precedent there by is established that God works in conjunction with order, or in an orderly process. Things flow from beginning to end, not like in the Hindu religion where things are continually reincarnated into an endless cyclical process of birth-death-birth-death-birth, etc. There was a beginning. Whether God created the world only six to ten thousand years ago (with age built in), or if there was an undefined gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 is unknown. It could be argued either way, and ultimately, the Scriptures do not go into great detail to delineate either side. So we have to go with what we know, and what historically has pointed us to the conclusion that we are that generation alive today. (X, Y, Z)

Here are the facts:

1. We know God created the heavens and the earth, and that there was a starting point to the universe.
2. We know that from Creation to Abraham, was roughly 2,000 years. (According to the calendar rendering known as, [Anno Mundi](#)). (Times of the **Gentiles**: the focus of Genesis 1-11)
3. We know that from Abraham to Jesus, was 2,000 years. (4BC-29AD) <--- much debate about the exact year. (Times of the Jews: the focus Genesis 12-Malachi)

4. We know that it has been 2,005 years from Jesus until today. (Times of the Church)
5. So man has a [written history](#) that can only be traced back as far as 6,000 years. Anything beyond that is speculation. Anything beyond that as given by a secular institution, is desperate to prove (by biased and faulty methods) an age older than 6,000 years for **recorded history**.
6. So we are now in the six-thousandth year from Creation (roughly), and we know that numbers in the Bible have [significance](#). Six is the number of man, (created on the sixth day, 666, etc).
7. God is not bound by time Himself but created time for man. ([Genesis 1:14-19](#); [2 Peter 3:8](#))

Safe Assumption: If the previous two ages only lasted 2,000 years a piece, and we are at the very end of our 2,000-year history of the Church age, we should expect a soon change to the order of things, that man is currently under.

Come, and let us return to the Lord;
 For He has torn, but He will heal us;
 He has stricken, but He will bind us up.
 After two days He will revive us;
 On the third day He will raise us up...(Hosea 6:1-2)

The Fig Tree Generation

The funny thing about Fig trees is that they bloom in the spring producing the fruit before the flower. A bud appears, and the flower is actually growing inside the bud, in which is encased in the fruit itself. They have [two harvests](#), the first producing poor quality fruit inedible for human consumption, and the latter producing edible good fruit.

When Christ first came, He [cursed](#) the fig tree because it had no fruit, symbolizing that the Jews rejection of His message of salvation, thereby postponing the Kingdom that had been promised to them throughout the Old Testament. ([Matthew 23:37-39](#)) Might this represent the first harvest, in which produces poor quality fruit unfit for human consumption? This wasn't a surprise to God though, because He already knew they would reject Him. ([Isaiah 53](#); [Psalm 22](#)) Might the second harvest be found during the Tribulation ([Daniel 9:26-27](#)) when the Jews (through much pain and refining), would finally recognize who Christ is at the end? ([Zech 12:10](#)) The purpose?

That we may live in His sight.
 Let us know, Let us pursue the knowledge of the Lord.
 His going forth is established as the morning;
 He will come to us like the rain,
 Like the latter *and* former rain to the earth. (Hosea 6:2-3)

Assessment

So here we are at the end of all things longing for the Lord to return to set things right. We don't know when it will be, and I'm reluctant to attribute His return with a Jewish Feast date like Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur, because we've seen so many come and go. Could it happen on a Feast date? Sure. But God usually has an ingenious way to both accomplish His plan and keep us surprised. Just look at His first coming. He both came before the scepter departed from Judah and was born to a virgin at the right time and place it was prophesied that He would be born...accomplishing multiple prophecies at once. He came as Isaiah [prophesied](#), both as the Suffering Servant and the Righteous Judge.

Will it be that He also accomplishes multiple things at this Coming? He both catches up His bride to meet Him in the air, as well as initiating the time of Jacob's Trouble. Paul alludes to this order in 1 Thessalonians 4; where He explains the mystery of what the Rapture is, and then continues on to say...

"But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when **they** say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon **them**, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And **they** shall not escape." (1 Thessalonians 5:1-3)

As Paul states, we know that the Lord could return at any moment. We also know by simply observing the seasons that time is ripening very quickly for Generation Z. We don't need to be told this is the last generation, because we can feel it. We feel it like we feel static electricity floating around the air before a thunderstorm is about to arrive. We can see it all around us and recognize that the current order is rearranging and prepping itself ahead of God's shift in strategy. Animal die-offs, earthquakes, tsunamis, massive sinkholes, volcanoes, solar storms, weird weather, strange sounds, etc. are rattling the nerves of even [non-believers](#).

The delay in our Lord's return has many asking...will He still come back for us? Jesus wondered about the opposite in true parable fashion...

"And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:7-8)

MARANATHA!

From Here to Eternity

In Defense of the Faith

Wednesday, September 18, 2013

Pete Garcia

The Christian world is currently divided into two groups. There are those who suffer under the boot of physical persecution, and those who do not. Those currently experiencing persecution include Christians from the Middle and Far East, Africa, various Latin American countries, and those who live in western nations, but predominantly non-Christian communities.

Then there are those countries who tolerate Christianity in varying forms, and in these communities, the persecution has not so much been physical, but ideological. It is a battle in the marketplace of ideas. Whereas Christians in persecution-prone areas are persecuted for nothing more than identifying themselves as Christians, and perhaps attending churches. Those of us, who are not currently being persecuted, are trying to make the Gospel message relevant in societies who are increasingly embracing more vitriolic forms of decadence.

[By West I mean; Europe, Israel, N. America, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, and Australia.]

In these countries, many ministries are going about attempting to bridge the gap between the cultures they are in, with the message they want to convey. Some ministries focus on the economic necessities to make inroads into certain communities. Some focus purely on evangelism, while others focus on the differing denominational approaches to sharing the Good News. Primarily, the study of Prophecy as it pertains to the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, has gained great traction through the medium of the internet, which it uses to relay articles and message, podcasts, and YouTube videos to show differing points of views as to where we are in relation to the return of Christ.

The Omega Letter is one such medium. Started by Jack Kinsella over ten years ago, it surveyed the Scriptures from a distinctly Pre-Millennial, Dispensational stand point. Jack has passed on to glory last March, and still our OL community stands because as Jack would frequently say, it's not about me, it's about the Message. Well, it is not about me either, or Wendy, JL, Alf, or Jim. It is all about what Christ did and who He is. And because Christ came, died, and rose again on the third day, we are compelled to continue to share this Good News with a world who by and large, is dying both physically and spiritually.

More specifically, it is about a hermeneutical understanding of that Message, and making sure that what we teach is in line with and in context with what the rest of Scriptures state. Many people are out there today promoting their interpretation of the

Scriptures, or how things will go down in the future. But does what they teach line up with the rest of Scriptures? If it does, great! Support those ministries. If it does not, then steer clear of them. Let me put this in a practical context.

As a pilot, we very often have to do course corrections when we get away from the heading we are trying to keep. If I'm flying and I need to hold a heading of 35 degrees (northeast), and the wind keeps pushing me over to 33 degrees, it's not a big deal... at first...because we are only talking inches and feet. But if I continued to hold 33 degrees for an extended period of time, then those feet turn into miles, and pretty soon, I'm way off course.

Does prophecy matter? I've been told numerous times that it doesn't but is a secondary issue, having no bearing on salvation. In the end they say, all things will just 'pan out' so why bother? I think there are numerous fallacies in the above statement. Let's put this back into the context of flying.

If I were flying a plane using Visual Flight Rules (VFR), that means that I'm just flying and using my eyes to 'see and avoid' other aircraft, towers, mountains, etc. Holding a heading in VFR is important, but not as critical as long as you know where your intended point of destination is and how to get there. If I'm flying Instrument Flight Rules (IFR), then I'm not trying to 'see and avoid', but using my instruments to follow a specific heading, altitude, and airspeed to hit specific points, because the pathway has already been proven safe. It doesn't matter if I can see outside the aircraft or not, because I know I won't run in to anything. That's why when you fly commercially, planes have no issue ascending or descending into a huge mess of clouds when taking off or landing. Being IFR means you trust your instruments to safely navigate you from one place to another.

I would equate Christians who don't study or care about prophecy much like flying VFR. They know which general direction they need to go, and as long as the sun is shining and the weather is good, they aren't worried too much about what lies ahead. But as the news and historical records show, many a plane have crashed thinking they would have good enough weather to get to where they were going. If you know how to fly IFR, flying VFR is easy. If you only know how to fly VFR, then you will be in a world of hurt if you get in a situation when you can no longer trust your eyes to get you where you need to go.

"And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." **2 Peter 1:19-21**

A Pre-millennial, Pre-Tribulation, Dispensational view of Eschatology (the study of last things), places one on a precise, intended destination in the course of Scriptures and is akin to flying IFR. It is precise because if you begin to deviate from the structure that is

laid out in Scriptures, you will be way off course by the time you get to the end. Some key points here will help you navigate through the Scriptures:

1. God never changes, but He has revealed His plan to man progressively from Adam until John which is what our scriptures largely comprise. One need only look at the major changes to mankind that were wrought through specific events: the fall, the flood, call of Abram, call of Moses, Christ's death, burial, resurrection, [Acts 2](#), and the Pauline epistles. We are in the process of watching it unfold today.
2. The Church is the Body and Bride of Christ. We are the body of Christ ([1 COR 12](#)) in the sense of our unity and purpose. We are the Bride in our relationship to Christ. ([2 Cor. 11:2](#))
3. The Church is NOT Israel. Israel gave birth to the Messiah (Jesus Christ), and out of Christ came the Church. ([Matt. 16:17-21](#)).
4. Israel was called to be a 'kingdom of priests', the Church is called to be 'kings and priests'. Big difference. ([Ex 19:6](#), [Rev. 1:6](#), [5:10](#))
5. God made eternal and binding covenants with the Jews and the nation of Israel long before any even knew who the Messiah would be. ([Gen. 15](#), [2 Sam. 7:1-17](#)) This is key because many Christians today are promoting that we are Israel, and this wrings about all sorts of confusion.
6. Our salvation as individuals was planned before the beginning of the world. We are not saved by what we do, but rather, by our being drawn to Christ through the Holy Spirit, and then having the righteousness of Christ applied to our lives...whether we think we deserve it or not. ([2 Cor. 5:21](#))
7. When we are saved, we are sealed by the Holy Spirit ([Eph. 1:13-14](#), [2 Cor. 1:21-22](#)) until the day of Redemption. That day, being the Rapture (or catching up) of the Church of God into heaven. ([Titus 2:13](#), [Heb. 9:28](#))
8. The Rapture has to happen before the Tribulation can begin, because we are not subject to God's wrath, nor do serve any purpose during the Tribulation. ([Jer. 30:11](#), [Dan. 9:24](#), [2 Pet 2:9](#)). The 144,000 and the Two Witnesses will be commissioned to spread the Gospel and call down Judgment on the earth.

So does having the wrong Eschatology make a difference in today's world? I say it plays a major role in how you interpret why our world is falling apart. Having the wrong Eschatology determines whether you stand with, or against Israel. It matters in how you spend your time. It matters in understanding that the Scriptures never state that things will get better in the last days, but they will grow increasingly dark and wicked. It matters if you want to give specific reasons for the hope inside you. These specific reasons are tangible ones you can point to and prove that the Bible is true, that our salvation is real, and that time is running out.

Countless hundreds of thousands have come to Christ because they were initially interested in understanding prophecy. It is a part of human nature to inquire about what the future holds. Apart from salvation by grace through faith, and the Triune nature of our God, Biblical prophecy is unique because our God is not bound by time. He is the only One that knew the end from the beginning ([Isaiah 46:9-10](#)), and shares that with those who are His so we too could know, and believe.

Bible prophecy is a faithful guide when the times grow dark, and when our path becomes obscured by the obstacles in our life. It helps us to realize that this life is but a vapor, but eternity will be our real home. It is an encouragement to those who are under persecution, and for those who are not, keeps the knowledge of our redemption from becoming stale and bitter.

"Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth."

Revelation 3:10

One last point I would like to make on this and that it has cemented in my soul the truth and inerrancy of the Scriptures. Studying prophecy [purifies](#) us because it keeps our focus on Christ and His soon return instead of the trials and tribulations of this life. It purifies us, because we don't know when that shout and trump of God could be calling us to our home in eternity.

"For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words." **1 Thessalonians 4:15-18**

The Dark Tower

Prophecy - Signs

Wednesday, October 23, 2013

Pete Garcia

Over the last 2,000 years, we've seen some pretty awful stuff happen. We've had, the Holocaust, the Killing Fields, Jonestown, abortion, bath-salt cannibal attacks, parents killing their children, children killing their parents, Islamic terrorism, and so on.

There has been cataclysmic events of nature in earthquakes, tsunamis, fires, floods and tornadoes increasing in both intensity and frequency. We've had manmade and natural pestilences, famines and plagues. We've had wars and rumors of wars, with enough bloodshed that our last century alone was bloodier than the previous twenty centuries combined. We've seen the rise and proliferation of cults and false religions throughout the world.

Yet to date, God has not intervened...well, not directly anyway.

But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. And the Lord said, "Indeed the people *are* one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them. Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." (Genesis 11:5-7 NKJV)

So what happened at the Tower of Babel that required God's direct intervention? We know that according to Scriptures, God's direct intervention in the Old Testament was limited to certain mile markers in man's history, such as; creation, the creation and goings-on with Israel, and the coming of the Messiah Jesus Christ, who is God, come in flesh.

The only times God intervened with Gentiles as it were, was when they had either become exceedingly wicked (the Flood, Sodom and Gomorrah), or where the Gentile nations came against Israel (Gog/Magog War, Armageddon).

But in all those instances, the Bible is clear on the why of the intervention. But the Scriptures remain relatively elusive as to the why He intervened personally at Babel. All we know is that they gathered at the plain of Shinar and built a tower whose height was towards the heavens, and that they would use this place to make a name for themselves. Considering all the stuff we had in our last century, it doesn't seem so bad does it? So to answer that, we must back up a chapter.

Cush begot **Nimrod**; he **began to be a mighty one** on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord." And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. From that land he went to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir,

Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (that is the principal city). (Genesis 10:8-12)

From the time leading up to Babel, the descendants of Ham, Shem, and Japheth were flourishing, but had stopped spreading out over the face of the earth as they had been **commanded** too. Nimrod was the son of Cush, the grandson of Ham, and the great-grandson of Noah who also lived around the time of Abraham's birth through his early adulthood. As **tradition** tells us his father Terah, was a servant to Nimrod. The stories vary as to whether Nimrod was a wicked ruler, or whether he actually acquired the skins God gave Adam and Eve after the fall and with these skins obtained supernatural strength. What we are clear on is that he was a busy man, and began to rebel against God in the form of establishing a kingdom in opposition to God. The tower was his 'Magnus Opus', and it represented a man shaking his fist at God.

The tower's width, build, and height were designed to withstand another flood, (in case God ever changed His mind). The **pitch** was used here to seal the bricks together, or make them water proof, as was the case when Noah used pitch for building the ark. His government, like all governments, began to replace the role of God, with themselves.

As the name Pluto has the very same meaning as Saturn, "The hidden one," so, whatever other aspect this name had, as applied to the father of the gods, it is to Satan, the Hidden Lord of hell, ultimately that all came at last to be traced back; for the different myths about Saturn, when carefully examined, show that he was at once the Devil, the father of all sin and idolatry, who *hid* himself under the disguise of the serpent,--and Adam, who *hid* himself among the trees of the garden,--and Noah, who lay *hid* for a whole year in the ark,--and Nimrod, who was *hid* in the secrecy of the Babylonian Mysteries. It was to glorify Nimrod that the whole Chaldean system of iniquity was formed. (The Two Babylon's)

There is conflicting stories on how exactly Nimrod died, but his wife capitalized on his death. With Nimrod's death, we have the formation of the world's first 'mother-son' worship as Alexander Hislop lays out in his book, *The Two Babylon's*. This cultic, or some would consider occult worship, was Satan's attempt through Nimrod's wife Semiramis, to warp and reshape the first prophecy of the Bible found in **Genesis 3:15**.

"And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

Satan realizes that through the race of man, God will bring forth his (Satan's) destroyer. So he first attempts to corrupt the line of man through angel-human copulation as mentioned in **Genesis 6**. Since those angels were cast into the **abyss**, and their offspring (the Nephilim) were destroyed in the flood, God then put a limitation on what Satan could do as we see in Satan's **dealing** with Job who also existed around that same time. So it would appear that Satan was limited to influencing and shaping what men believed, with the likes of Nimrod and Semiramis.

"Now it was Nimrod who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God. He was the grandson of Ham, the son of Noah, a bold man, and of great strength of hand. He persuaded them not to ascribe it to God, as if it were through his means they were happy, but to believe that it was their own courage which procured that happiness. He also gradually changed the government into tyranny, seeing no other way of turning men from the fear of God, but to bring them into a constant dependence on his power. He also said he would be revenged on God, if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to reach. And that he would avenge himself on God for destroying their forefathers.

Now the multitude were very ready to follow the determination of Nimrod, and to esteem it a piece of cowardice to submit to God; and they built a tower, neither sparing any pains, nor being in any degree negligent about the work: and, by reason of the multitude of hands employed in it, it grew very high, sooner than anyone could expect; but the thickness of it was so great, and it was so strongly built, that thereby its great height seemed, upon the view, to be less than it really was. It was built of burnt brick, cemented together with mortar, made of bitumen, that it might not be liable to admit water. When God saw that they acted so madly, he did not resolve to destroy them utterly, since they were not grown wiser by the destruction of the former sinners; but he caused a tumult among them, by producing in them diverse languages, and causing that, through the multitude of those languages, they should not be able to understand one another. The place wherein they built the tower is now called Babylon, because of the confusion of that language which they readily understood before; for the Hebrews mean by the word Babel, confusion..." (Josephus: **Antiquity of the Jews**, Chapter 4)

As was the case before the flood, mankind's first and biggest problem was that they were united as one race. The old saying goes that "individuals aren't stupid, but crowds are".

Groups like to be led, whether that leader is military, religious, or political. People want to cling to something tangible, like the Israelites **begging** God for a king. God knew that putting the power into one man's hand was too much, so He divided mankind up. We know that such another man like Nimrod has been **foretold** to be coming one day. Like Nimrod who built up many kingdoms, and tried to build his massive tower to thwart God's judgment, the *man of lawlessness* will come and...

"...He shall regard neither the God of his father's nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above *them* all. But in their place, he shall honor a god of **fortresses**; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things. Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, *and* advance *its* glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain. **Daniel 11:37-38**

Assessment

It is to the division of mankind that Satan is like the **Hindu god Kali**, who possesses four arms and causes wanton death and destruction. Satan is constantly juggling and manipulating multiple options that all ultimately serve his own ends. By using division

as a tool, he has used this to drive us towards uniting the world back under one leader again. But how do you unite a divisive people God separated?

You create strife and misery. You rack the world with famine and pestilence. You move men and nations to kill each other. You corrupt and corrode anything that is good. After enough time, men will come to the decision (*as if they came up with this on their own*) that if they worked together, they could end all these horrible tragedies by uniting as one.

Man's attempt at globalization includes: the Vatican, the Illuminati, Free-Masonry, the League of Nations, the United Nations, the Tri-Lateral Commission, Bilderberg's, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Council of Foreign Relations, etc. Like Nimrod at Babel, Satan wants mankind united under one man, his man. If Nimrod's action was as such that it warranted God's attention, imagine a "Nimrod" who is personally indwelt by Satan himself.

"The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders." (2 Thessalonians 2:9)

Closure

God did not separate mankind to keep them forever in division against each other. He did so until the time was right to reunite them under the right man, that man being Jesus Christ. Whereas God brought judgment to Babel through confusing the tongues, God united believers into one body, through the giving of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The Holy Spirit who descended upon those believers that day as '*tongues of fire*' is uniting the Church into a unified body of Christ regardless of creed, ethnicity, or denomination.

It may not appear that way to us, because we see Christianity divided over doctrine, dogma, denomination and creed more today, than we probably ever have. But that is because we are looking at it from our perspective. God only sees one church, and that is the Church He is building. Even at man's greatest with Satan's help, they could only build a dark tower covered with slime and mud. But God, through Jesus Christ, is building an eternal Kingdom, that will never end...

He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on *this* rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." (Matthew 16:15-20)

Maranatha!

Prophecy in Review

Prophecy - Signs

Wednesday, October 30, 2013

Pete Garcia

There are basically two aspects when studying the Prophetic texts of Scripture. First, there is the text itself, and what they convey about an event. The second aspect has to deal with the timing of said events.

Most Pre-Tribulation believers have no issue with the first part, but the second part usually tends to stump even the best of us. Even the most gifted among us will be the first to admit, there is still a lot about the end times that we don't know.

Let me expound on some thoughts from "[The Rapture Window](#)".

- 1.** There is a plan and an appointed time for the Rapture to happen. It might be imminent to us, because we are not God, but the event itself is no surprise to God.
 - a. In the military, if you keep your plans to yourself, you keep that information, 'close-hold' and that is what our God, the master [strategist](#), is doing. He hides His plans in plain sight, but it takes the Holy Spirit to 'reveal' the plan in the Word, which is why Satan can never figure it out.
- 2.** God causes the *strong delusion* to happen to those who have rejected God's free gift of Salvation. He does not cause the strong delusion to happen to those who are ignorant of this Salvation.
 - a. Similar to the '[blindness](#)' that Satan uses on in the people of this age, God will presumably, allow that blindness to become a permanent sealing, in the Tribulation.
- 3.** The scoffers only come out after something is brought to light, not before. The return of Christ was veiled to man for around 14 centuries so the subject was almost a non-issue. Once it came back to the forefront of discussion, also came those who would mock it, including those within Christendom.
- 4.** The last two letters written to the final two churches in [Revelation 2-3](#), are Philadelphia (remnant believers) and Laodicea (lukewarm and apostate) church. We can see that happening today as the increasing pressure on believers is to depart from the faith. From Chuck Missler, via Don Koenig. [Source](#)

Paul wrote 13 epistles, of which, three have duplicates (Timothy, Thessalonians, and Corinthians), which means there were 10 epistles to 10 different audiences. Of that 10, three were personal, (Timothy, Philemon, and Titus), which leaves seven letters to seven churches.

a. Jesus had seven parables in [Matthew 13](#), of which, can be overlaid over **His** seven letters in [Revelation 2-3](#). Along with Paul's, they portray the progression of the Church in its various stages.

b. To Philadelphia, we can link the [Pearl of Great Price](#), and Thessalonians, where the Doctrine of the Rapture is first unveiled.

c. To Laodicea, we can link the parable of the [Dragnet](#), and Paul's letter to the Colossians. Notice the 'casting' out, is similar to the vomiting out.

Here is what we don't see

- We don't see a great Western power that resembles in any way, the United States in the last days. Which begs the question, what happens to us and when?
- We don't see events lined up chronologically, except for in Revelation. But that doesn't tell us when a [Psalm 83](#), [Isaiah 17](#), or [Ezekiel 38-39](#) war will occur.
- We don't see the Church beyond [Revelation 3:22](#) until the very end in [Revelation 19](#), when she returns with Christ in the air.
- We don't know how much time transpires between the Rapture and the start of the tribulation*

Here is what we know

I think part of the reason that Jack Kinsella was such a great writer and teacher of the Prophetic word, was because of the time he spent in law enforcement. Biblical eschatology, like the scene of a crime, is prone to leaving clues around...and this world is one gigantic crime-scene. A good detective or investigator arrives to the scene of the crime, and then takes it in as a whole and first looks for things that seem out of place.

1. We know that of that day and hour (speaking of the Rapture), no man knows. But Paul did say we were sons of the light, and of the day, and in that light, we would recognize the season so as not to be caught 'unawares'. ([1 Thessalonians 5:1-11](#))

2. Although there were those who were anticipating the arrival of the Messiah, the only people who knew the **when** of the arrival of the 'One born King of the Jews', were the Wise men from the east (Magi). They presumably learned this from their predecessors who got it from the Prophet [Daniel](#). So the Gentiles believed and followed the sign to Joseph and Mary's house (not a manger anymore), and the religious leaders of the day, who should have known the season, never even bothered to investigate it. ([Matthew 2:1-12](#))

3. We know that the Rapture is an appointed time. Nothing is happenstance to God. ([Isaiah 46:9-10](#)) The time of the Rapture is not based on an event or blood-moon, but based on a set number of Gentiles that will be brought into the Church to make up the Bride of Christ. ([Rom 11:25](#))

4. We know that the Rapture and the Second Coming are **NOT** the same event.

5. We know that according to [Daniel](#), that after the Rapture, there is at least seven years (360 day years) remaining on God's prophetic calendar.*

6. This time has come to be known as 'The Tribulation' because it will be a time when God pours out at least 21 Judgments on the earth and those who are left to inhabit it. But it also called the '[time of Jacob's trouble](#)' and 'the Day of the Lord' in the Old Testament, and serves two primary purposes: discipline Israel, and utterly destroy the gentile kingdoms of the world. It mentions the last half of those 7 years or the last 3 1/2 years as: times, time, and half a time, 42 months, or 1260 days.

7. We know at some future point, there is at least one war (prior to Armageddon) which is where the Gog and Magog coalition come against Israel. ([Ezekiel 38-39](#)). This war could be preceded by or in conjunction with a [Psalm 83](#) and [Isaiah 17](#) event(s).

8. We know at the end of that time, Christ will return at the 2nd Coming to defeat the Antichrist, the False Prophet, and Satan (as well as the armies of the world) at Armageddon ushering in the 'sheep and goat' judgment and Christ's millennial reign. ([Matthew 25](#), [Revelation 20](#))

History's Not Finished

Just because God has seven years remaining for Israel, doesn't mean that there is only seven years left in total. Let me [quantify](#) that for a second. [2 Chronicles 36:20-21](#)

From [Gracethrufaith](#):

The Bible contains four such periods in Israel's history. Each one was actually longer than 490 years, but some scholars believe that for various reasons God didn't count some of the time in each of the periods. I won't go into all the details here, but the four periods are, 1) Abraham to the Exodus, 2) the Exodus to the First Temple, 3) the First Temple to the edict of Artaxerxes and 4) the edict of Artaxerxes to the 2nd Coming.

The 490 year period during which the Israelites failed to keep the Sabbath for the Land and incurred a 70 year penalty in Babylon was the third one. It ended when Persian King Artaxerxes Longimanus gave Nehemiah permission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem in 445 BC ([Nehemiah 2:1-9](#)). The King's edict also began the count on the fourth period (known as Daniel's 70 weeks) which is the one we're in now ([Daniel 9:24-27](#)).

So Israel was brought up to that final 483rd year (of the 490 year windows) with their Messiah hanging on the cross. He was [cut off](#) and Israel's prophetic clock stopped. None of the events in Daniel 9:27 (or that final week) were completed within the following 40 years after the cross and till the destruction of Jerusalem.

The Jew's 1,878 year Diaspora began when the Roman's sacked Jerusalem and their temple in 70AD. It wasn't General Titus's intent to destroy the Temple, but because Caesar Vespasian (former General and Titus's father) left three legions behind (full of Arabs and Syrians) who hated the Jews; you can see why the Temple was destroyed. ([Tacitus, Book 5, 1.](#)) In 130-135AD, the Jews revolted against Emperor Hadrian in the [Bar Kokhba Revolt](#), but ultimately lost everything and were scattered to the four winds. From the 8th century until today, the Al Aqsa Mosque (Dome of the Rock) has sat atop the Temple Mount and has acted as a stalwart reason why they couldn't rebuild there.

The first two periods of 490 years, pre-dated and led up to the creation of King Solomon's Temple. The second two periods of 490 years include the Jewish Temple, and this is why Jesus, after pointing out that the Temple would be destroyed ([Matt. 23:37-24:2](#)), then points to a future temple in which an "Abomination of Desolation" would occur. ([Matt 24:15](#)) The "Abomination of Desolation" then acts as a prophetic fulcrum, balancing the first 3 1/2 years of the 70th week of Daniel, with the last 3 1/2 years. The Apostle Paul reiterates this idea in [2 Thessalonians 2:4](#) in that this man of lawlessness will set himself up in a future temple proclaiming himself to be God.

At no point in Israel's history from the time of Abraham till today has there ever been unaccounted time. But the only time that seems to matter, or count towards the prophetic clock, is when they are in a covenant relationship with God...which today they are not, nor where they [after](#) Christ's crucifixion. From 1948 until today seems to be in keeping with the 75 year period between the birth of Abraham and the promise that was given to him by God.

Seeing that we are at 65 years since the rebirth of Israel, it would seem that the fullness of the Gentiles occurs during the 75 year window from 1948. This is supported by:

- Abraham was 75 years old when he received the promise from God. ([Genesis 12:4](#))
- Jesus said that 'that generation would not pass away' until all these things are complete. ([Matthew 24:32-34](#))
- The length of a generation varies, but Moses said that men would typically live between 70-80 years ([Psalm 90:10](#)), then we are cut off (die) and 'fly away'.
- There are seven billion [people](#) alive today, seven being the [number](#) of completeness—or fullness.

After the Rapture

We can know that the Rapture is near, because we are already seeing the things necessary for the Tribulation to occur, such as: technological advancements in computers, communications, weapons of mass destruction, and the national alignments such as the European Union, Mediterranean Union (Revived Roman Empire), Magog

alliance (Russia/Iran/Turkey), and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (Kings of the East). Furthermore, it would seem that all the “Tribulation” events are triggered by the Rapture. We know that:

- The Rapture has to occur before the Antichrist (man of lawlessness) can be revealed. ([2 Thessalonians 2:7](#)) This confirms the order of events from [Revelation 3:22-4:2](#).
- The Antichrist is revealed in the first Judgment ([Seal 1](#), rider on the white horse)
- The Antichrist can't rise to power until he is revealed, or he is revealed in the process of rising to power.
- The Antichrist declares himself to be God in the Temple of God (Abomination of Desolation). ([2 Thessalonians 2:4](#))
- The “Abomination of Desolation” can't occur, until there is a Temple rebuilt that has a ‘Holy of Holies’.

So if all these things have to be completed before a generation passes away (70-80 years), then the Rapture would have to happen at least two-three years before the Tribulation would begin in earnest, which will be addressed in next week's article. Until then...

Maranatha!

A View of Life after the Rapture

Prophecy - Signs

Wednesday, November 06, 2013

Pete Garcia

If we were to look back over the past 100 years, we could certainly point out some very painful and tragic moments in our nation's history. Hurricane Katrina, 9/11, Columbine, and Pearl Harbor all certainly had an impact on our national psyche, and we as a nation grieved with those affected. But unless you were directly impacted, you went back to work or school. You moved on because life moved on.

While I can only speak to the global effects of the Rapture in general terms, I intend to put the spotlight solely on the United States and what will be the coming reality for many people. It is for this reason that I believe the Rapture happens prior to the Tribulation. It is for this reason that I believe that it happens in an instant, and that once it happens, life will forever be changed.

I believe that one of the divinely intended consequences of the Rapture will be that, it will not just be a regional or isolated geographic event, but will impact everyone, everywhere...directly and indirectly.

"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words...For when **they** say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon **them**, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And **they** shall not escape." (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, 5:3 NKJV)

D-Day

The Rapture event will break into human history in three specific ways; immediate, unnerving, and creeping. The event itself will not be *immediate*, in that it will not take days, weeks, and months to happen, but will happen in an instant. It will be *unnerving*, in much the same way it was unnerving for those travelling with the [Pharisee Saul](#) on the road to Damascus, or to [Daniel](#) when he was down near the river. The noise and sound of something transpiring will be both known (ie...something just happened) yet, unknown (what just happened). It will be *creeping* in the sense that the reality of it will set in, and people will know that life will never be the same.

The very first, most immediate effects of the Rapture would most likely be traffic accidents. Some planes may crash, but the primary mode of travel in the United States is by car, and you can bet that in an instant, thousands of cars will crash all at the same time. The very next thing people will start to notice is that their family, friends, and co-workers are nowhere to be found. Between those two events, car crashes and missing person reports, whatever is left of law enforcement will be overwhelmed to the point

that the system will crash. There will also be a noticeably marked increase in ‘target of opportunity’ theft because of unattended shops, cars left open, dropped purses and wallets, houses left open, etc. Most people will be trying to figure out what just happened.

D+1

The media will begin to report of widespread disappearances, and the massive traffic problems as vehicles were seemingly left abandoned, even while being driven. At some point within the first day or two, a reporter will ask curiously ‘could this be the Rapture?’ Once that idea has been given traction, you will then start to see the general breakdown of society as chaos and looting become widespread. Public officials will call for calm as people begin a run on the banks and stores for cash, food and necessities.

D+2-7

Before the end of the first week the President will have to declare that Martial Law is in effect. The Congress and the Courts will be recessed. Having already relocated to a secure site such as Camp David, the Executive branch will attempt to conduct damage control. The states will enact a ban on travel outside the home as cities begin to systematically shutdown. What the US will lack in manpower, they will try and compensate for in advanced intelligence and surveillance technologies.

Cities like Atlanta, New York, Houston, Chicago, and Los Angeles will lose whole sections to the criminal elements. The **gangs** who are prepared now, will take advantage of the chaos and solidify their own territorial holdings. Outside of the larger cities, the **biker gangs** (motorcycle clubs) will attempt to dominate the open roads and smaller towns. Expect jails, prisons, and federal penitentiaries to be the first targets for these groups as they try to retrieve incarcerated compatriots to boost the numbers of their rank and file.

Average citizens caught up in the mix of the chaos, will flee the cities looking for places of refuge. This is where the “impromptu” resettlement camps will come into play, as authorities will look to secure those people in areas they can control. This is an attempt to separate the populace from the criminal elements. Both military and law enforcement groups, largely borrowing the tactics and techniques acquired in places like Fallujah and Sadr City (Iraq) will begin quarantining vast swaths of areas that they can’t control. Biometrics will be 100% enforced, and those with critical job skills will be identified for later use in their specialties.

By the end of the 7th-8th week, all basic goods such as fuel, food, hygiene, and medical products will have been stripped from stores and hoarded. The US Dollar will no longer be sufficient for payment, as nations around the world abandon the Dollar wholesale, and people will have to resort to either bartering or taking things by force. The Dollar’s collapse will have a destabilizing effect on all nations, but those nations in particular who relied heavily on the US Dollar, will be hit the hardest.

Global Reaction

As nations around the world start to get a handle on their own internal crises, expect to see the European Union take the lead in calling for a global summit. Currently, the EU and the US constitute the two **largest** economies in the world, followed closely by China. They will have to rise because it will default to them. The EU will call for the world to be broken up into regional currencies and political alignments under the United Nations. The UN will have long since abandoned their New York City address, for a more stable and centrally located location. They of course will look to move to an area minimally impacted by the Rapture, which of course would be the Middle East.

Daniel 7 states that this final version of the Roman Empire will dominate the whole world. This requires time. It would mean that the EU gets an advantage on everyone else, in order for them to solidify that kind of control. But in order for the EU to gain the edge on the other regional blocs, they would have to acquire military expertise and technology, which is most likely transferred to the EU through NATO. Similar to the criminal elements inside the US, rogue regimes will also seek to take advantage of the chaos, especially in light of America's inability to flex her muscle anywhere else in the world.

Financial Armageddon

The US currently has roughly 315 million citizens right now. Now imagine that 10% of Christian Americans (or 31.5 million people) were to suddenly disappear...

If that many people were no longer participating in activities such as buying or selling, paying bills and being paid, providing various industrial and technical skill sets, etc., how quickly would the American experiment come to a halt? If 31.5 million people were no longer making house payments, or going to work, there aren't enough taxes that could save our nation from defaulting to our foreign creditors, let alone our own citizens. It wouldn't just be buying or selling, the Rapture would shutter the entire educational system from daycare to High School, with tens of thousands of teachers left without a job. Furthermore, would the people left behind feel compelled to keep paying their bills if something like the Rapture happened?

If we were to include teens, children, babies, and mentally disabled...that number of 31.5 million citizens would be significantly higher. The true number for just the United States alone could be around 157 million Americans. But even if only 10% were to go up in the Rapture, the impact would be catastrophic.

Assessment

At the very least, there will have to be at least six months that transpires between the Rapture (and the collapse of the US), to the rise of a revived Roman Empire through the European Union. This does not take into account, natural or supernatural disasters that could also occur during this time as well, prolonging these groups from getting their act together. *These groups would have to have their act together in order to seemingly*

have some kind of ground to stand on to be in a position to offer any kind of covenant with Israel. It would seem that these events take place in the in-between time of the Rapture and the **official** start of the tribulation. How long it would take is subject to debate, but 2-3 years seems reasonable.

1. **Psalm 83** Event (weeks to months)-removes immediate threat to Israel
2. Israel rises to prominence and lives in peace.
3. **Ezekiel 38-39** event (weeks to months)-Israel must feel secure and be prosperous.
4. Jewish Temple Rebuilt (around a year-if allowed unimpeded)-currently doesn't have the political will to do this just yet.
5. The world would need to align into ten regional areas.
6. One world currency becomes the main currency of the world-at least a year.
7. One world religion emplaced (at least 2 years)-this seems to be the result of the failed Psalm 83 and Ezekiel 38-39 wars, finally taking the steam out of militant Islam. This opens the door for a hybrid "Christian/Islam/Hindu" mix. This will be accompanied by the 'lying signs and wonders'.

Many possible scenarios could play out as to how the nations align and how they come under the influence of the Antichrist. Since Satan is in the habit of imitating God, he could bring back another group of ancient people in their own version of a nationalist rebirth, most likely after the wars of Psalm 83 and Ez. 38-39. The two plausible choices are the Kurds, and the Assyrians. Both have managed to maintain their ethnic autonomy and include nations such as: Syria, Iraq, Turkey, Iran, and Azerbaijan.

If the Antichrist were to control the majority of the world's oil, he could make 'his mark' the reserve currency, much the same way that OPEC enforces all its transactions to be in US Dollars (**petrodollars**). This would force everyone to have to use it, since we have yet to find an alternative to fossil fuels.

The truth is, all the things that need to transpire between the Rapture and the beginning of the Tribulation requires more than seven years. If we use Psalm 90:10 as the measuring stick for the length of time before a '**generation passes away**', than at the earliest, we arrive at 2018 for the Tribulation to begin. If we use the long end of that scale as the maximum, it would put us at 2028. If the Tribulation is seven years, that would put the start of it at 2021. If you were to add a minimum of three years between the Rapture and the Tribulation for all the events above to transpire, then you'd be at 2018...just five years from now. That's if we base everything at the latest it could be, but the lull could be longer than three years making the Rapture even sooner.

"The days of our lives are seventy years; And if by reason of strength they are eighty years, Yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; For it is soon cut off, and we fly away."
(Psalm 90:10)

Here There Be Monsters

Prophecy - Signs

Wednesday, November 13, 2013

Pete Garcia

"He who kills a bull *is as if* he slays a man; He who sacrifices a lamb, *as if* he breaks a dog's neck; He who offers a grain offering, *as if he offers* swine's blood; He who burns incense, *as if* he blesses an idol..." (Isaiah 66:3)

In every generation, a group of men have arisen who sought the deeper mysteries of life. Some are true seekers, unsatisfied with the status quo of religion and philosophy. Others are the wealthy and bored who are unsatisfied with their wealth. They seek wisdom in an attempt to acquire its dark power to wield over other men.

These groups stretch back into antiquity to the days of Noah. If you trace these groups back far enough, you will see that they all end up operating under the same premise...'*Ye shall be as gods*'. But in unlocking these mysteries, I fear they will end up unlocking a lot more than they bargained for.

The ancients like the Chaldeans, Phoenicians, and Babylonians are long-gone, but the mysteries they unsealed were simply transferred from generation to generation. They got their information from those Ante-Diluvians who received their knowledge from the fallen angelic 'watchers', or *sons of God*. In the OT, this meant the Angels and Adam...as they were direct creations of God. In the NT, this is also applied to the regenerated believer, who, through the Holy Spirit, becomes a *new creation* in Christ. But this unsealed knowledge in alchemy, weaponry, spells, and magic, began to grow like a cancer in the race of humanity. Like a growing shadow, this dark knowledge has continued to change hands until it eventually blanketed every culture in the world with darkness.

The rebirth of an old hatred

Most associate the rebirth of Israel as where the world turned the corner into the last days, but I think it happened earlier. Now, 1948 is when I think the prophetic clock restarted, but as far as setting the stage for that event to happen, I believe it was the Balfour Declaration in 1917. What was initially promised to the Jews in a land covenant was drastically reduced to its 1948 boundaries due to pressure from the Saudi's and the Egyptians who vehemently opposed the return of a Jewish nation to their backyard. The British, in turn betrayed the Jews by reneging on much of the land that had been initially promised them and created Trans-Jordan, which became a Hashemite kingdom. (From Saudi Arabia)

In 1939, Great Britain reneged on the Balfour Declaration by issuing the White Paper, which stated that creating a Jewish state was no longer a British policy. It was also Great Britain's change in policy toward Palestine, especially the White Paper, that prevented millions of European Jews to escape from Nazi-occupied Europe to Palestine. ([Source](#))

From 1948 on, the Middle East has been a gigantic tinderbox waiting to explode. Yet in Israel's three main wars (1948, 1967, 1973), her foes were unsuccessful in removing her from the land. But Israel in her land caused the rise of the global jihad movement which currently plagues almost every corner of the planet. And from 1973 until today, what war was unable to do, suicidal negotiations "land for peace" has. And now with the United States threatening to intervene to force this 'land for peace' process, it seems that things are finally coming to a head. Bill Koenig has well [chronicled](#) nature's revolt when gentile nations began to mess with the '[apple of God's eye](#)'.

The occult seduction

Around the same time that Israel became a nation; the Roswell Incident happened...and subsequently prompted an explosion into the fascination of the Science Fiction genre.

Science Fiction quickly moved audiences toward the non-traditional forms of a newer genre focusing on men themselves becoming the monsters with such titles as Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* and Hitchcock's *Psycho*. And since that time as a nation, we have been increasingly exposed to more brutal and more graphic forms of entertainment. From movies, music, books and later video games, we have become a society more engrossed in blood and violence than were the Romans and their gladiators fighting in the Coliseum. We have become increasingly desensitized to the amount and types of violence.

Much of modern horror has reached back into antiquity to dig out those deep mysteries and bring them to life on the big screen unleashing in the imaginations of men, deeply demonic mysteries and undertones. They unleash it, and then hide behind the labels of "entertainment" and "fiction", as if that shields them from the consequences of what they expose their audiences too. The occult has also made a comeback in America with [Illuminati clothing](#), musicians parading around as [demigods](#), superhero movies and shows, and [video games](#) that deal heavily in the occult.

What was sensational 30 years ago, rarely rates being newsworthy today. We are continually finding new ways to shock. Not just with entertainment, but that is bleeding over into our news as well. Teens desensitized with violence and killing thanks to video games, hard music, anti-psychotic medication (pharmakia), and coached into a godless education without any moral compass. Then we wonder why they go on killing sprees?

Murder is so common now, that it is no longer shocking. Murder of the unborn (which used to be called "child sacrifice") is now a routine medical procedure. Men and women kill their families, and children kill their parents, and no matter how gruesome a crime is, something else comes along to distract us from what is going on. But even with all this going on, God still intervenes, and the effective, fervent prayers of a righteous man availeth much.

Now, imagine that the Holy Spirit's '[ministry of restraint](#)' is removed from the earth, and you will see a world racked with a level of violence previously unseen. I believe this is in part, the 'mystery of iniquity'.

Noah

As we are getting closer to those fabled 'days of Noah', we should take notice of the warning that Jesus gives in [Luke 17](#) concerning the time for when He will return. Life will have a sense of normalcy to it in 'buying and selling', etc. But Jesus being God knew what life was like back in Noah's day, so let's look at what Genesis 6 has to say about the *days of Noah*...

Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the **sons of God** saw the **daughters of men**, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose...

There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the **sons of God** came in to the **daughters of men** and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.

Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. (Genesis 6:1-12 NKJV)

There is much archeological and Biblical evidence to prove that the Nephilim once roamed the earth. The Bible mentions that giants (*Goliath*) existed both before and after the Flood. These weren't just tall men, but 'monsters of men' in whom I believe that much of Chaldean, Phoenician, Assyrian, Egyptian, Cretian, Greek, and Roman mythology stems from. I believe that God will allow this to happen once again. I don't think it will be through them mating with women, but it could be through science that we **unlock** something that wasn't meant to be done. But see here the four items that marked the days of Noah, and then compare them too today.

1. Demonic activity (fallen angels=sons of God)
2. Giants (hybrid offspring of angelic/human mating)
3. Great wickedness and corruption
4. Great violence

Conclusion

Certainly, we can see at least three of the four key indicators of Noah's day, today...yet, most would say that life today is normal. Granted, we don't have any giants roaming around, at least not any that we know of...yet. But the potential for that and a lot worse is on our horizon, as men seek to play god in science. Although it might seem fantastical today, I believe the Rapture will separate the age of reason from the age of signs and wonders, and that latter period will include a time when magic and monsters become a reality again.

As Christians, we are called to be *salt* and *light* to a dark and dying world. When that day comes and true, born-again Christian's are removed via the Rapture, what will be left is man unrestrained. It will be the most horrific, violent time the earth has ever seen...even worse than in Noah's day. When Jesus gave His overview to His disciples at the Mount of Olives, the Church had not yet been formed. Nor did the disciples even know what the Church would be. In keeping with that thought, He tells them what the Tribulation will be like in a manner that surely would have shocked them, considering they were well versed with Noah and Lot...

For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the *elect's* sake those days will be shortened. (**Matthew 24:21-22**)

I may be speculating a bit on this last piece, but I tend to think that what the imagination of men releases in this age will become a reality in the final year's mankind has left before Christ returns. In all that man has conjured up, whether ancient or modern, he has done so in an attempt to remove God from the equation, whether it be false religions or secret societies. Mankind is corrupt, but our corruption has been on steroids these last few decades and is currently picking up speed. We have entered an age again, where almost nothing is withheld from us; be it language, technology, communications, or travel. Our wickedness has almost succeeded in making what is evil, good, and good, evil. Once God removes His own, I believe, He will allow Satan, Antichrist, and the False Prophet to literally, bring hell on earth.

Just as they have chosen their own ways, And their soul delights in their abominations, So will I choose their delusions, And bring their fears on them; Because, when I called, no one answered, When I spoke they did not hear; But they did evil before My eyes, And chose *that* in which I do not delight.” (**Isaiah 66:1-4**)

The Rise of Babylon

War News

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Pete Garcia

It appears that after all our blustering about 'red-lines' and 'points of no return', the US will concede to the Middle East having their own version of North Korea. Of course we do so at the cost of two strategically important nations, Saudi Arabia and Israel.

My question is in what possible scenario does a nuclear-armed Iran serve US interests? Why do we fear extremists getting control of nuclear weapons in Pakistan, but do nothing to stop the extremists in Iran from getting them?

It is a largely held notion, that Iran already possesses some form of nuclear weapon. Whether they got it directly from North Korea, China, Russia, or they acquired them through the 'black market' we don't know, and those who do know, aren't saying. We at least have to work under the assumption that they do until proven otherwise.

But what is driving the Iranians to race toward a seemingly foolish and destructive end? Supposedly, it is there Mahdi-driven eschatology, but we know who is really behind what is driving them. But like everything else, the seemingly chaotic geo-political posturing of today is divinely shaping the geo-political landscape of tomorrow.

C'est la vie

If the US and EU are willing to live with a nuclear armed Iran (which it appears they are), then Israel will have no choice but to hit Iran, and hit them hard. I think they'll kick off events with an EMP attack which will blind and daze the Iranian Qud forces. This will be followed by multiple devastating attacks on both their nuclear and military weapons facilities should effectively stop Iran in their tracks. But what is viewed as an existential threat to the Israelis, is being viewed by the West as an overreaction. [Neville Chamberlain](#) anyone?

Israel is alone. We have no diplomatic option.

No matter what Israel says, no matter what it does, neither the US nor any other Western power is ever going to be convinced to take the only step that would set back Iran's nuclear program – bombing its nuclear installations. No matter what, neither Obama nor any European leader will ever support an Israeli military strike on Iran's nuclear installations.

Israel's back is to the wall. That is the meaning of the talks in Geneva. If we aren't prepared to live with a nuclear-armed Iran, we have to stop talking and start acting. And we need to prepare for the diplomatic hell that will break loose thereafter. ([Article](#))

Caroline Glick's article emphasizes the seriousness with which they see the events unfolding and how improbable we see it. What serves as major, front-page news in Israel barely gets a blip over here on our 24/7 non-stop news coverage. Most Americans couldn't tell you where either country was on a map if you asked them. So if Netanyahu can't convince the West to ramp up economic sanctions on Iran's almost broken economy, then they will be forced to act alone. Seeing that we are about to do the opposite of ramping up sanctions, should be a glaring green light to Netanyahu.

Hold that thought...

The Enemy of my Enemy...

The Israelis are keenly aware of the fact that the moment they hit Iran, Iran will mobilize Hezbollah, Hamas, and every other terrorist faction with an AK-47 and a grudge against Israel to launch their own close-range attacks. This could possibly tie in a [Psalm 83](#) scenario.

Bashar Assad may jump in this as well, knowing that if he doesn't, his Persian lifeline will be cut off. The Israelis know they're only going to get one shot at this in today's politically hostile climate. So their best bet is to take everyone out in one fell swoop. So better to do it right the first time and ask for forgiveness later...then only do half measures now and still face the same political wrath. They learned that lesson from their previous engagement with Hezbollah in 2006.

The West maybe pushing Israelis to attack Iran, which would completely absolve them from doing any of the heavy lifting of taking out Iran's nuclear ambitions. It would also absolve us with China specifically, who along with the rest of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), have [grand plans](#) for the Middle East.

Even if the Israelis take out Iran's nuclear and military capabilities, as well as radical and uncontrollable terrorist factions around the Middle East, all the better for the US and EU. Even better would be for Israel to face the wrath of China, Russia, and Turkey alone, all the while the US, EU, and Saudi's sit back and act concerned as the Magog coalition comes against tiny Israel. ([Ez. 38:13](#))

I imagine there will be much politicized consternation and feet stomping on CNN and MSNBC by the Western leaders...post-attack. They will use the UN as a bully pulpit to clobber Israel diplomatically, further isolating and pressuring Israel to concede to the 'agreement with hell' as noted in [Isaiah 28](#). This might include Israel coming under the administration of the EU via the Med Union or some other transnational organization. This would have to entail Israel agreeing to exclusive natural gas deals with the EU, freeing the EU from having to rely on Russia for their energy needs.

It also possible that Israel is brought in as a [member](#) of NATO or NATO agrees to provide for their future security. NATO has lost confidence in Turkey, as Turkey is turning east to its [SCO](#) comrades. If Israel successfully neutralizes their immediate and distant threats this time sufficiently, then they might concede to this proposal after the fact.

E Tu Gog?

Russia and Iran, along with the other hodge-podge of Ezekiel 38 [cohorts](#) will act to oppose this economic and political posturing by the West, leading to the justification for their prophetically brazen attack. They're already positioned to do so with Russia and China entering into the Mediterranean. I'm inclined to think that the coalition will be slightly different than what is popularly held too.

I personally don't think Russia proper will fight but will propel the "Stan's" (former Soviet satellite Islamic provinces) and other Islamic nations to fight for them:

Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Georgia, Pakistan, Afghanistan (with US training and equipment), Tajikistan, Chechens, and Dagestan. We know that Turkey, Ethiopia (or more likely Somalia/ Sudan), Libya, and Iran will be active participants. I also believe that both China and Russia will fund and arm the effort from behind the scenes.

Aside from the Russians scientists and engineers that were working in these nuclear facilities when the Israelis strike, justifying their attack on Israel. They will also come for securing the natural gas fields that lie off Israel's coasts, attempting to keep the EU right where they want them...dependent on them for most of their energy needs.

Kings of the East

China is currently the up-and-coming world superpower. They are the single largest foreign debt holder of US bonds and treasuries. Their sudden rise to power is the reason why President Obama was advised by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to do the “Pacific Pivot” because that is who the US Military recognize as its greatest potential threat.

But China recognizes they are being contained along their coastline and are seeking alternatives to counter any potential future blockade. This will be an ongoing project, but it would be at least 10-20 years before China could get to the same level of naval power as the US, and they know it. Recently, they have begun rethinking their strategy in ways to match and offset US naval dominance by turning inward.

Wang Jisi, Dean of International Studies at Peking University, and one of Foreign Policy’s Top 100 Global Thinkers in 2012, argues that China should connect its preliminary actions in Afghanistan to a grander Central Asian strategy.

In an article for the Global Times, Wang argued that China should pivot turn its attention from the Pacific, where it has recently been caught up in conflicts such as a recent disagreement with Japan over who owns the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, to Central Asia, in order to counter America’s pivot from Afghanistan and Iraq to the Pacific. Wang suggests that China should return to its roots as a continental power, rather than a naval power, avoiding head-on conflict while developing a protective western bulwark. ([Source](#))

Assessment

Instead of trying to play catch up to the US Naval forces (which would take a decade or more), the Chinese are looking to expand westward. Not to say it won’t continue to build its fleets but will primarily focus more on the land than the sea. This coincides with what the Scriptures state that at a future point, the ‘kings of the east’ are going to move in masse against Israel and the Middle East.

The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East. (Revelation 16:12 NJKV)

The idea of mastering the inward travel across Eurasia is not new though. The Silk Road was used for thousands of years until just recent times. Even less than a hundred years ago, this same idea was being floated at the turn of the 20th century. The ramifications of such have the potential to make the Middle East a vibrant route of trade and commercial success.

What is needed in that part of the world is a "**Trans-European-Asiatic-Indian Air Line**" that will connect Europe with India, and China. Such a line has been the dream of Emperor William of Germany. It was that desire that made him and Abdul Hamid, of Turkey, the closest of political friends, and he secured from Abdul Hamid a concession to build a railway from the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus, by way of Aleppo, to the Tigris river, and from there to Bagdad, and from Bagdad via **Babylon** (via Babylon, mark that) to Koweit on the Persian Gulf, and most of the road has been built to Bagdad.

"With these facts in mind it can readily be seen that it is the purpose of European capitalists to revive the country of Babylonia and rebuild its cities, and when once the time comes the city of Babylon will be rebuilt almost in a night and on a scale of magnificence such as the world has never seen." (Clarence Larkin *Dispensational Truth* pg. 143)

Remember that thought? Seeing that Iran had once been part of the Babylonian Empire, at some point, Israel's destruction of Iran's ambitions will tie into a reverse arms' race that will serve to stabilize the Middle East. The Rapture will move the source of political power and weight from the U.S. to the Middle East. They may not realize it, but both Russia and China are being driven to reestablish the Babylonian dream of a fertile and prosperous Mesopotamia.

Had the US not gone into Iraq and overthrown the Saddam regime, he may have ruled for another 20-30 years or longer, via one or both of his vicious sons. The breaking of this stranglehold of power over the former region of Babylon, signals to us that God's plan is still in effect and we should see the trend, trend towards rebuilding Babylon.

Even So, Maranatha!

Conspiracy Theory

Prophecy - Signs

Wednesday, November 27, 2013

Pete Garcia

"For we are opposed around the world by a monolithic and ruthless conspiracy that relies primarily on covert means for expanding its sphere of influence -- on infiltration instead of invasion, on subversion instead of elections, on intimidation instead of free choice, on guerrillas by night instead of armies by day. It is a system which has conscripted vast human and material resources into the building of a tightly knit, highly efficient machine that combines military, diplomatic, intelligence, economic, scientific and political operations. Its preparations are concealed, not published. Its mistakes are buried, not headlined. Its dissenters are silenced, not praised. No expenditure is questioned, no rumor is printed, no secret is revealed. It conducts the Cold War; in short, with a wartime discipline no democracy would ever hope or wish to match.

— President John F. Kennedy

I recently read the free trial portion of a book entitled *Behold a Pale Horse* and I must say I was enthralled. After reading the first 40 pages, I researched the author, [Milton William Cooper](#), only to realize that he was killed in a shoot-out with law enforcement at his Arizona home back in November of 2001. Needless to say, I was a little taken back. Given his past dealings with the government agencies, it is no wonder why he was as paranoid as he had become.

He left behind a wife and young daughter. I wonder if he had to do all over again, would he think it was worth it all?

What is a 'conspiracy theory' really? In my own definition, it simply means a conspiracy, which lacks verifiable evidence. This does not make it untrue, just unproven. The problem many people are having today is that they (conspiracies) are increasingly moving from [theory to fact](#)...and that is disconcerting to many people. Many things are coming to the forefront that had either been declassified (Gulf of Tonkin incident), or that are being leaked ([NSA information grabs](#)).

Glenn Beck and John Stossel are two of the most well-known and successful men who have spent their careers in media, exposing political and economic conspiracies. The plots and subversive activity are by both big business and the government agencies, which seek to undermine our constitutional rights and defraud us of our health and wealth.

There is a cycle to the exposure that goes something like this: said issue is exposed, it gets media coverage first through the conservative media and later (maybe) through the mainstream media, it causes muted outrage...then it goes away. The reason why the mainstream media is reluctant to touch these issues is because they enjoy making the conservative movement seem crazy and conspiratorial, which is itself...a conspiracy about the liberal left.

Sometimes conservatives and Libertarians are successful in temporarily halting a particular insidious agenda...for a season. Glenn Beck was able to get Van Jones removed from President Obama's Team of Czar's. He was able to **connect** the dots between Cloward and Piven with the multiple governmental and non-profit organizations that shape the progressive socialist agenda in the U.S. He **exposed** billionaire and liberal philanthropist George Soros to the point he was almost became a household name. He was able to gather tens of thousands of American patriots to Washington D.C. to protest peacefully...but to what end? Even though more people are awake politically these days, it is far little, too late. You see, just because the people might be successful in removing particular politicians or a party from office, does not mean they are removing the agenda.

The more things change...

Real power is not elected, and they abhor the public limelight. Their wealth is not in paper currency, but in real wealth like, land, titles, precious metals, technology, and most importantly, information. They thrive in the shadows and behind the scenes. I don't know if they are called the Illuminati or the Bilderbergers, the Rothschild's, or the Rockefellers. They are as unaccountable and unknowable to the American public as the Federal Reserve. These groups are the circles of influence that tell the politicians what to say and what to do.

That is why these agendas never really go away; they just get redesigned, relabeled, and recycled. One example is the move to governmentalize health care, not because it is better for everyone, but because it is something everyone needs. Example: Hillary-care circa 1993à becomes Obama-care circa 2013. The Patriot Act, although created for the purpose of protecting the American people, becomes in the wrong hands, terribly oppressive.

Just take any issue (gay marriage, abortion, amnesty, redistribution of wealth, anti-gun legislation, etc.) and watch as the people vote to keep their rights or to stop said agenda. Then wait after the celebrations die down, and then the law is changed silently and incrementally, it is challenged in a court judiciously, or it is decreed via executive fiat. If it cannot be taken from the top down, it is changed from the bottom up. Either way, they are going to get their agenda. You know why? Because politicians are not the real power brokers in this world, Satan is.

Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for *this* has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours." **Luke 4:5-7**

The Original Conspiracy

This is the part of the brief that the skeptics will laugh and point and say how silly I am that I believe in a real Devil. This is the part of the brief that even the John Stossels and

Glenn Becks of the world conveniently leave out. Not saying they do not believe in a real Devil, but they cannot state it publicly for fear of losing what credibility they do have. Since I do not have any credibility, save Jesus Christ, I will just state the obvious.

If you believe the Bible is true, and you accept that there is a real God, real Jesus, real angels, real Biblical events, etc. Then why do so many have a hard time believing the Devil is also real? Not only is he real, but he has been real busy. From the first book of the Bible (chronologically), we have an account that dates to the time around of Abraham—2000 B.C.

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. And the Lord said to Satan, “From where do you come?” So Satan answered the Lord and said, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.” **Job 1:6-7**

All the way to the first century A.D., the Apostle Peter tells us to...

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. **1 Peter 5:8**

These two verses reveal to us some important aspects that we need to bear in mind. First is that Satan is not omnipotent. He cannot be everywhere at once. Secondly, Satan doesn't sleep, doesn't stop, he is always restless, always going about seeking to kill, destroy, and attempt to thwart God's overarching plan. Satan has [known since the Garden of Eden](#) and that God had a plan afoot; a plan of redemption for mankind, and certain destruction for himself. This is why the Bible revealed God's plan progressively to over 40 different men, from different countries, and differing professions, and spread out over 1,600 years, to keep this plan as cryptic, yet specific as possible.

Now as a Christian, reading the Scriptures some 2,000 years later, I had always assumed that Satan really knew who Jesus was. But the more I study it, the more I'm willing to bet that Satan had his eye more on John the Baptist, than on Jesus as the likely candidate for the One who would destroy him. Maybe John was a decoy of sorts. He was meant to be a distraction, not for man, but specifically for Satan. It is why from [before his birth](#), John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit and Jesus was not until His baptism at around the age of 30. It is why John devoted his life to the ministry of God long before Jesus officially began His.

Maybe this is why Jesus asked His disciples who men thought He was...and they gave a myriad of answers [except](#) Peter. Maybe this is why Jesus said of John-

“Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

Matt. 11:11

Maybe this is why the Kingdom was preached publically in parable form, not only fulfilling the **prophets**, but to keep the plan moving forward undetected. The Apostle Paul understood the delicate nature of Christ's ministry.

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. **1 Corinthians 2:7-8**

Assessment

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. **Ephesians 6:12**

The real conspiracy is not at the political level, but the spiritual one. It is fought by influence and coercion, through spiritual fear and blackmail. Satan and his legion have known since Christ's resurrection that they have already lost the war. Satan saw the religious system that God gave the Jews through Moses, which was possibly the most complex, and strictest ever created. The last thing he expected was that God Himself would become a man, and allow Himself to be killed to permanently bridge the gap between God's unapproachable righteousness, and man's incurable depravity.

They would have never killed Christ if they had known what it would mean...permanent liberation for mankind from hell and death. This is why Jesus kept His true identity hidden and only revealed it to certain people at certain times. Remember, Satan is not omnipotent so he couldn't be everywhere at once. Jesus knew when and where He could reveal this, without revealing it to the one who would attempt to spoil the plan of redemption.

The world is full of evil men, bent on evil doing. They are seeking the absolute domination of every man, woman, and child on this planet. They will tolerate a hateful and murderous religion like Islam, but scorn Christianity. They will belittle the Christian for his or her beliefs, but tolerate the Big Bang Theory, Darwinian Evolution, and militant Atheism. They plan and scheme, not knowing that the bidding they do is coming to nothing.

Why do the nations rage,
And the people plot a vain thing?
The kings of the earth set themselves,
And the rulers take counsel together,
Against the Lord and against His Anointed, *saying*,
"Let us break Their bonds in pieces
And cast away Their cords from us."

He who sits in the heavens shall laugh;
The Lord shall hold them in derision.
Then He shall speak to them in His wrath,

And distress them in His deep displeasure:
“Yet I have set My King
On My holy hill of Zion.”

“I will declare the decree:
The Lord has said to Me,
‘You *are* My Son,
Today I have begotten You.
Ask of Me, and I will give *You*
The nations *for* Your inheritance,
And the ends of the earth *for* Your possession.
You shall break them with a rod of iron;
You shall dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel.” ~ **Psalm 2:1-9**

**Listen in as Pete Garcia interviews with Steve Coerper on [Blog Talk Radio](#)
"The Anakpto Forum"**

Dispensational Truth: Part I

In Defense of the Faith

Wednesday, December 04, 2013

Pete Garcia

I often get asked what denomination I belong too once people find out that I like to talk Bible. It is a natural short-cut question, as we are more comfortable putting people into a niches rather than trying to spend an hour guessing what their views on various topics are.

Now, a Christian is a Christian first, and usually when you're talking to one, you can get that vibe fairly easily. But once you've established that they are a Christian (or a good-faker), you then want to either drill down on what someone believes on a particular topic, either out of curiosity or as to know what topics to avoid. That's when I tell them I'm a Church of Christ-Baptist, with a little non-denominational thrown in, but really I'm a Pre-Millennial, Pre-Tribulational Dispensationalist. The most common response I get is a 'dispy what?'

I've studied the different hermeneutical views, as well as other views on pretty much all the major topics, and I keep coming back to Dispensationalism. To me, it is the most common sense, straight-forward, approach to taking your Bible as a whole and being able to decipher it with zero contradictions. You realize that the whole Bible is written for you, but it's not all written to you. The Apostle Paul instructs Timothy, and us be extension too...

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. **1 Timothy 2:15**

Covenant and Reformed theologians hate that we keep trumping this verse out anytime Dispensationalism is mentioned, but it's right there in black and white. If the word of truth didn't need to be divided rightly, it wouldn't be there...but it does, because if you try and take the Bible as a whole, it's a hot mess.

- Whether you are still supposed to sacrifice, or not.
- Whether you are still under the Mosaic Law, or not.
- Whether salvation comes by faith, or by faith plus works.
- Whether as a Christian you are now Israel, or you aren't.
- Etc. etc. ad nauseam.

It is in understanding that God revealed Himself in progressive revelations to man going from Adam (Gen. 3:15) all the way to the Apostle John with the Revelation of Jesus Christ. God did not reveal His plan all at once, but broke it up and spread it out over 1,600 years through the writers of Scripture, and then encoded it in such a way, that it took the indwelling of the Holy Spirit within the Believer to be able to understand it.

Some sections are very simple and straight forward (ie...salvation-John 3:16). Others are more difficult to grasp in their complexity, such as with the Trinity and Prophecy. God gives each person a certain level of understanding that they can reasonably understand, but a deeper understanding is available to all who seek God out.

Literally, there are hundreds of variables you could throw in, and adding to the confusion of it all is the seven Eschatological views that muddy the water.

- Preterism
- Amillennialism
- Post-Millennialism
- Pre-Wrath Rapture
- Mid-Tribulation Rapture
- Pan-Millennialism
- Pre-Tribulation Rapture (βthe correct one in my own opinion)

Eschatology is often toted by those who either disregard it or apply liberal doses of allegory to it, as secondary and thus issue-non-grata. But how you view the ending will largely shape how you view the here and now. So how do you know what to make of all this? I guess the place to start, is at the beginning.

Caveat emptor: I'm largely taking the chronology of this and the key points from Clarence Larkin's book, [The Greatest Book of Dispensational Truth in the World](#) over the next four articles, because he did all the heavy lifting, and I really enjoy how he ties it all together.

Mankind

In the beginning, there was one race of man. From Adam and Eve, up until the time of Abraham, there was only one race of man because, because Abraham was the first to be called-out by God to leave his familial homelands in the Chaldees, and head west to the place God told him to go. Abraham was the first person to be identified as a [Hebrew](#), and so the first delineation of this called-out race is identified.

God promised Abraham a son, an heir, and that through his son, his descendants would be as [numerous](#) as the stars. Abraham's son with Sarah is named Isaac. From Isaac, he and his wife Rebekah had the twins, Esau and Jacob. Esau sells Jacob his birthright, and Jacob tricks Isaac into giving him the blessing. And so from Abraham on, there were two groups of people, Hebrews, and everyone else.

Israel

The first 12 chapters of Genesis (written by Moses) were about mankind in general. From Genesis 12 onward to the end of the Old Testament, the focus is on the Hebrews/Israelites/Jews. Gentiles were only mentioned in how they interacted with Israel.

The Gospels changed the focus of the Bible from Israel, to Jesus Christ, but His ministry was still exclusively to Israel, and not the Gentiles. Throughout the Gospels up [until](#) Christ's death on the Cross, the Mosaic Law was still in effect. There was an interim period of 40 days after Christ's death, burial, and resurrection in which Christ visibly revealed Himself to many witnesses and continued teaching His Disciples. Ten days prior to Pentecost, Christ ascends (or was ['caught up'](#)) into Heaven, and the Disciples remained in Jerusalem as instructed.

The Church

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit [descends](#) down as 'cloven tongues of fire' upon the 120 or so disciples there at a house in Jerusalem. Jerusalem was overflowing with Jews who had come from all corners of the Roman Empire to be accounted there at Pentecost. The disciples began to speak in tongues so that all the different people could understand them in their own languages. Peter gets up to preach, and 3,000 were added to the body of Christ that day. From that day forward, there was a new group of people known as the Church. These became neither Jew, nor Gentile, but were a ['new creation'](#).

If you look at the book of Acts, you can see the transition from Peter and the Jews as the focus, to Paul and the Gentiles towards the end.

So now there are [three](#) groups of people that the Bible spent time focusing on. From Acts 15 through Revelation 3:22, the focus turns to the Church. The book of Hebrews who I believe the Apostle Paul wrote, speaks to Hebrew Christians who were tempted to turn back to Judaism. But the Jews and Gentiles are now only mentioned in how they interact with the Church. The term for the Church is called 'ecclesia' in the Greek, and it means an assembly or congregation of the 'called-out' ones.

Called-out

So the argument normally goes, that Israel was also a called-out assembly, and that is used to allude that both Israel and the Church are one in the same...but that is an inaccurate assessment. The 'ecclesia' was applied in two specific cases that I would like to draw your attention to:

- Israel is called an 'ecclesia' in [Acts 7:38](#) as 'the church of the wilderness'
- The Guild of Ephesian Craftsmen are also called 'ecclesia' Acts 19:32, 39

The Guild of Ephesian Craftsmen spent more than two hours loudly chanting "*Great is Diana of the Ephesians!*" So as you can see, just because someone is called 'ecclesia' in the Scriptures, doesn't mean they are part of the Church. Rather, we should see who and what a group of people are 'called-out' from.

While Israel is a called-out body from mankind, it is a national body composed exclusively of the physical descendants of Abraham. God didn't promise Abraham that he would be the father of many 'spiritual' nations, but of a physical one.

The Church on the other hand, is a called-out body composed of every tribe, tongue, people, and nation. We are a ‘spiritual body’ of believers that have made up the body of Christ for the last two millennia. We share in the salvation that came through Abraham (Jesus Christ) and through faith (which is why Moses was given the Law and not Abraham). Consider these:

- Their election (Israel and the Church) were at different times, and for different purposes.
- The election of Israel was from the foundation of the world ([Matt. 25:34](#))
- The election of the Church was from **before** the foundation of the world ([Eph. 1:4-6](#))

The [purpose](#) for Israel’s election was to be a light and a guide to the rest of the nations around them as a picture of a nation in covenant with God. When they were in fellowship, they were rich, prosperous, and unstoppable. When they were out of fellowship, God allowed their enemies to conquer and enslave them (ex. Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans).

The purpose of our Dispensation and the Church is not to convert every country in the world, because that is impossible. Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 28:19 to go forth and make disciples of all nations ([ethnos](#)), or ethnic groups, not kingdoms ([basileia](#)). And so we see that the Church is comprised of those who are called-out from every nation, who would make up the body of Christ ([Acts 15:13-18](#)).

The Church is the body of Christ, which could not have occurred until His birth, life, death, and resurrection. If Christ is the head of this spiritual, universal body of believers ([1 Cor.11:3](#); [Eph. 1:22, 5:23](#); [Col. 1:18](#)), then the only way we can be incorporated into His body is by the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. **1 Cor. 12:12-13**

Therefore, there could be no Church (called-out believers in Jesus Christ) until the Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost ([Acts 1:4-5, 2:1-4](#)), who baptizes believers into this body ([Eph. 4:4-6](#)). This means that the Church could not be Israel even though both were called-out peoples (or assemblies of called-out ones).

**Next week we’ll discuss what the Church is, is not, the Kingdom, and the Rapture.*

Dispensational Truth: Part II

In Defense of the Faith

Wednesday, December 11, 2013

Pete Garcia

Last week we went over some very general truths that help the believer understand who he or she is in Christ. We are not the 'new Israel'. We are like Israel in that God also sets us aside, but we have very different purposes for our calling. Again, I will be pulling heavily from Clarence Larkin's book, *The Greatest Book of Dispensational Truth in the World*.

What the Church is not

The Church is not an organization, but a living organism. An organization can be rearranged, added too or subtracted from or otherwise. But an organism cannot be, without causing mutilation or permanently destroying the integrity of the body as a whole. This is why no one who is truly born again can become unsaved. Salvation has always come by God's grace through our faith.

The Law never saved anyone but was the standard which everyone would be measured by. Nationally speaking, Israel remained in fellowship with God when they kept the tenants of the law, until Israel/Jews got to the point where the Religion became more important than the Relationship. [See Psalm 51:16-17; Jeremiah 31:31-34; 1 Cor. 12:27; Rom.12:5]

"And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one." John 10:28-30

For those of us in this Dispensation, our eternal salvation is a onetime event. Once you become 'saved', you cannot become 'unsaved', because it is God who does the changing in us, not us changing ourselves. But we, like Israel, can also step out of fellowship with God, and although the relationship suffers, our eternal standing in the family of God does not. In this Dispensation (the Church age) once you are truly born again, you become:

1. *A new creation*-something new means having never existed before and can't become un-new. (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15)
2. *Sealed by the Holy Spirit* until the Day of Redemption...which is the Rapture. (2 Cor. 1:21-22; Eph. 1:13-14, 4:5)
3. Jesus promises that those who are given to Him (a new believer) *He will not lose*, nor can he or she be taken from Him or God the Father. (John 6:39, 10:28-30) So to teach that you can 'lose' your salvation means that you can:

- A) undo what God has created
- B) Unseal the Holy Spirit's permanent sealing
- C) Overpower Christ by removing yourself from Him and His Father's hand.

The Building

As previously discussed, we understand that the Body of Christ is not an organization, but a living organism. But there is symbolism found in the New Testament that alludes to the individual believer as a building. Jesus first compared His body to the Temple (although misunderstood by the Pharisees) in that it could be destroyed (killed) and raised up again in three days. (John 2:19) Paul and Peter later use similar symbolism to the Christian as individuals as both a building and tent in relation to the residency of the Holy Spirit. [See 2 Cor. 5:1; Eph 2:20-22; 2 Peter 1:13-14]

In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit came upon the believing righteous as a sovereign act of God, not because of what the believer did...as was the case with Samson, David, and John the Baptist. But the Holy Spirit could also depart from someone, as it did with King Saul, and later on King David feared this because of his sin with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah.

In the Old Testament, the presence of God the Holy Spirit resided in the Jewish Tabernacle and later in the Temple as the Shekinah Glory dwelling over the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant inside the Holy of Holies. It is here that I believe God stayed until John the Baptist baptized Jesus Christ initiating the beginning of His three-year ministry. [See Judges 13:24-25; 1 Samuel 16:13; 2 Chronicles 5:2,7; Luke 1:15]

I believe that when Christ began His ministry and was baptized by John the Baptist, the Holy Spirit had already departed the Temple and was then manifested 'as a dove' which filled Christ the Man in His three-year ministry.

Upon Christ's death, the veil that separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the Temple was torn in two, signifying that God's covenant with Israel via the Temple was temporarily set aside. Both Jesus and Paul stated that a future temple would exist, and it would be at that later time that the covenant God had with the nation of Israel (Daniel 9:27) would continue on to finish the last seven years. [See Matthew 24:15, 27:51; 2 Thess. 2:4]

Not the 'Kingdom'

The Church is not the Kingdom. Many denominations within Christendom claim that Israel forfeited her inheritance and that it was passed on to Christians. This is incorrect and heretical and is known either as *Supercessionism* or *Replacement Theology*.

John the Baptist and Jesus both came preaching, "repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" because the offer was legitimately on the table then. Jesus likewise sent out the 12 and 70 disciples preaching the same message of repentance because the 'kingdom of

heaven' was near. (Matt 10:5-7; Luke 10:1-12) Had the Jews then accepted Jesus as the Messiah, the Kingdom would have come...but they didn't and He knew they wouldn't which is why He wept over Jerusalem on the day of His triumphal entry.

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’ ” **Matthew 23:37-39**

Prior to Christ's ascension, His disciples asked Him a pivotal question that often gets taken out of context. They asked “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”

You see, the Kingdom was that Old Testament offering by God to Israel of a physical, earthly kingdom, in which peace would be the law of the land, the lamb would lie down with the lion; swords would be bent into plowshares and so on. They would be the top nation on the planet, led by their Messiah. But as we know and as history has borne out, the Jews rejected Jesus's offer and they crucified Him, thereby postponing The Kingdom. The disciples were asking about the Kingdom, because it had not yet been revealed to them that God had other plans in place.

While it is true that the Jews rejected this offer of the kingdom and ultimately had their Messiah murdered, the offer itself was one Israel didn't have the authority to forfeit.

Genesis 15 records that Abraham was asked to kill the animals and array them for this blood-oath to happen, but then God puts him in a deep sleep. Then God speaks this Promise and Prophecy over him as he slept. The oath was meant to symbolize that by walking through the slaughtered animals together, whoever broke their end of the oath would end up like those slaughtered animals that were strewn apart. But they couldn't break this covenant, because they didn't enter into that contract; God did, with Himself on their behalf.

"And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces." Gen. 15:17

This was not the case with the Mosaic Covenant (or the Law) in which representatives from all the 12 tribes willingly entered into at Mt. Sinai. (Exodus 24:1-8) So when they failed to live up to their end of the agreement, God allowed their enemies to overcome them. In both instances, the Church was neither bound by, or inheriting either blessings or curses, because the Church did not yet exist, because Christ had not yet come to earth as a Man. Jesus Himself stated...

"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John." Matthew 11:12-13

So the Church could not be the Kingdom, and neither was it ever promised an earthly kingdom. To which city does the Church pray towards? To which land did God promise to give to the Church? The Roman Catholic Church would like you to think its Rome, but it is not, neither is it Jerusalem. Paul states that citizenship is not here, but in Heaven. We are to be like Abraham, who was looking toward that city whose builder and maker was God. [See Phil. 3:20-21; Hebrews 11:10]

What the Church is

A mystery as explained by Jesus (in parable) and then as first revealed to the Apostle Paul. The Apostle Peter would also later come to this understanding. [See Matt. 13; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 3:3-11, 5:32; Col. 1:26; 1 Peter 1:9-12]

The Bride of Christ (2 Cor. 11:2). Adam and Eve were a type of Christ and the Church.

- Eve was taken from out of Adam's side. Genesis 2:21; Ephesians 5:29-33
- The Church was born (symbolically) out of the side of Christ. (John 19:34)
- Eve was created and presented to Adam. (Gen. 2:22)
- Christ presents the Church to Himself. (Eph. 5:27)
- Eve was married to Adam (Gen. 2:24; Matthew 19:4-5; Eph. 5:31)
- Christ will be married to the Church (Rev. 19:7-9)
- The Kingdom of Heaven is the 'mystery form' of the Church. (Luke 17:20-21; Romans 14:17, 1 Corinthians 15:50)

Types:

- Abraham was a type of God the Father
- Sarah was a type of Israel (laughed at the promise of a Son)
- Isaac was a type of Jesus
- Eliezer is a type of the Holy Spirit
- Rebekah is a type of the Church (She was a Gentile bride)
- Keturah is a type of restored Israel

We see this played out in the Old Testament in type. Israel was called the 'wife of God' [See Isaiah 54:5-8; Jeremiah 3:1-18; Ezekiel 16:1-63; Hosea 2:1-23, 3:1-5], whereas the Church is seen as the 'chaste virgin' to be wed to Christ. [See 2 Cor. 11:2; John 3:29; Matt. 22:1-14] The Church cannot be both the 'unfaithful wife' and the 'chaste virgin'.

"See the Gospel Church secure, And founded on a Rock!
All her promises are sure; Her bulwarks who can shock?
Count her every precious shrine; Tell, to after-ages tell,
Fortified by power divine, The Church can never fail."

~CHARLES WESLEY, Scriptural, Psalm XLVIII

Dispensational Truth: Part III

In Defense of the Faith

Wednesday, December 18, 2013

Pete Garcia

Many different groups have come in the past claiming that they were the true Church, and that all others had fallen away, and only they retained the truth.

The Roman Catholic Church claims that it has roots back to the “first pope” Peter. The Mormon founder Joseph Smith claimed that he received ‘revelation’ from the Angel Moroni who gave him golden invisible plates engraved in the 4th century AD, that he was to transcribe from (in KJV apparently) because all the other churches roundabout had apostatized. So let us go back to the very beginning of the Church and see what the Bible has to say about this.

Origin of the Church

In Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked His disciples who men said that He is? They responded...

“Some *say* John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”

Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Jesus answered and said to him,

“Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are **Peter**, and on this **rock** I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” **Matthew 16:13-20**

In here, Jesus does a play on words with Peter’s name and the rock. Peter in the Greek is *petros*, which is masculine and means small stone. The ‘rock’ is Petra, which is feminine, and means large rock. It was not Peter who Jesus would build His Church upon as the Roman Catholic Church would have you believe, but upon his confession...that ‘Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the Living God’. Peter understood this as he refers to this in Acts 4:5-12, 1 Peter 2:3-8, as did Paul in 1 Corinthians 3:11, and Ephesians 2:20-22.

Keys of the Kingdom vs. Keys of the Gates of Hell

Another part of this that has been taking out context is the ‘keys of the kingdom of heaven’, which many churches have thought meant to be a literal kingdom here. As we discussed earlier, the Kingdom of Heaven is the mystery form of The Church, so it can’t

be a real kingdom. So the keys to the Kingdom (of Heaven) would come through this confession, first to the Jew (Acts 2:14-47) and then to the Gentile (Acts 10:34-48). Contrasting with this, is the 'keys to the gates of Hades' is found in Revelation 1:17-18, which Jesus states that He alone holds the keys to death and hell.

The Rapture of the Church

At the conclusion of the age of the Church, as laid out chronologically in Romans 8:28-30 and Revelation 2-3:22; God removes the Church to finish the last week of Daniel's 70 Weeks prophecy with Israel. I believe that just as there was a three-year gap (Christ's ministry on earth) between the Holy Spirit residing in the Temple to the Day of Pentecost, so too will there be a three year gap between the removal of the Church and the rebuilding of the Temple. The Rapture is a picture of God's removal of His own and can be found in several places both in the Old and New Testaments.

"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words."

Both Enoch and Elijah were 'caught up' to God without seeing death. Paul later clarifies this in 1 Corinthians 15, where he distinguishes between the dead with resurrection, and the living who are translated: **1 Corinthians 15:54-55**

So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

"O Death, where is your sting? (Translation of the Living)
O Hades, where is your victory?" (Resurrection of the Dead)

We see a picture of the Rapture at the Mt. of Transfiguration:

Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up on a high mountain apart by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. **Mark 9:2**

But it pictures Christ meeting the Church (His Disciples) in the air (high up on a mountain). The appearance of both Moses and Elijah at the Mount of Transfiguration were a picture of the two types who would be present at the Rapture...Moses would represent the resurrected Saints, and Elijah the translated Saints.

When Lazarus died, and Jesus went to the place he was laid, Martha told him that if He had been there earlier, He could have saved him. Then...

Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

Martha said to Him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

She said to Him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world. **John 11:24-27**”

Jesus stated that He was the “resurrection” and the “life”. If they were both the same thing, then He wouldn’t have needed to state it twice. Jesus is delineating the difference here in subtle terms, clearly, because as Martha demonstrated, she already believed in a general resurrection at the end. Jesus was saying, no, there is also a group of people who will never taste death. How do I know this? Because Jesus reiterates this promise in **John 14:1-3** to the disciples at the Last Supper.

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

Those that deny the Rapture, or even deny that it happens prior to the Tribulation love to point to Matthew 24:31 as evidence of the Rapture happening at the end, but it’s not there. It only states that Jesus sends His angels to gather the elect...which is different than the believers being transformed from mortal to immortal and meeting Christ in the air. Nor is there any mention of a resurrection that happens at any of these. So it can’t clearly be the same thing. There is no translation or resurrection event that coincides with any of the major Second Coming passages [See Revelation 19; Zechariah 14; Jude 1:14; Matthew 24:29-31, 26:64]

The Rapture of the Church is a singular event, designed to unite Jesus with His Bride before He pours out His wrath on a Christ-rejecting world. The Tribulation is designed to be filled with signs and wonders, and correction, to bring Israel back into a covenant relationship with their God through Jesus the Christ. [See Jeremiah 30:7-11; Daniel 9:24; Revelation 6:16-17]

Among all the other reasons why we will see a Pre-Tribulation Rapture, one more stands out as an obvious reason why so many have come to deny it. The Rapture of the Church will prove once and for all, WHO the true Church is. We won’t get raptured by denomination, nor will it only be Protestants. Many who didn’t even attend formal churches will be taken as well. Christ will remove His own and all that remains, will be those who were relying on their religion to save them rather than the Savior Himself.

There are so many events, types, and signs that point to the soon return of Christ, that one is hard-pressed to deny that Scriptures all but scream the soon return of Christ. As His body, we should be ‘pressing the flesh’ in sharing the Gospel so that we may bring

with us those who we care about. You can't take money and things with you to heaven, but you can bring people. Let us redeem what little time we have left and be about our Father's business.

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. **1 John 3:2-3**

Until then...Maranatha!

The Church of Christ in the Last Days

Dec 30, 2013

Chances are if you belong to a Church of Christ (non-instrumental), you probably wouldn't be reading the Omega Letter in the first place. But I have met enough people along the way who were or know people who are that I thought this warranted writing.

I was born and raised Southern Baptist but married into a five generation-strong Church of Christ family. Having attended almost a dozen different Churches of Christ in three different states, I have come to notice similarities and differences amongst all these different churches. But there is one common thread in all of the ones we have attended.

Churches of Christ pride themselves in following the early church model as found in the book of Acts, and not falling underneath any type of hierarchical structure of a higher organization, such as the Southern Baptist do with their SBC Convention or how the Vatican does with the Roman Catholic churches. Each Church of Christ is an independent island of believers rooted together in common faith. But this is also why there have been so many different types of Churches of Christ who have branched out or split apart since the Stone-Campbell movement in the 1800s.

Recently, I attended a Wednesday night bible study at the local Church of Christ and was entreated to a class that could for all intents and purposes be called "the Dangers of Dispensationalism" or "why futurism is a faulty view," as I think that ultimately this was at the heart of his teaching. The preacher teaching the class began to hit some rapid-fire points right off the bat to include a clip from the Left Behind movie that came out in 2000.

- Dispensationalism began in the 1800s with John Nelson Darby—thus can't be trusted.
- Israel uprooted the local population in 1948 and thus has become much of the problem in the Middle East
- American politics and churches are overwhelmingly Dispensational which is why we are so 'pro-Israel' which of course is dangerous
- You cannot take the book of Revelation literally or chronologically as it is "Apocalyptic literature", thus in its "own" special kind of category.

Not knowing what was being taught that night and being a Pre-Millennial Dispensationalist, I of course took exception to much of the discussion. I spoke up politely because much of what was being taught simply wasn't true. This of course didn't sit well with the preacher who probably didn't anticipate being challenged on any of his prescribed views and led to my early self-dismissal from the class. But this experience got me thinking.

Question: If Churches of Christ are supposed to be stand-alone churches (not bound by creeds or indoctrinated by some higher organization), why do they all tend to hold to the same Eschatological view? [See Revelation 19:10]

The How and Why

After this class, I began to research this more in-depth and came across an article released through Pepperdine University (in the January 2000 edition of Leaven magazine) by Dr. Lynn Mitchell entitled Eschatology: Essential, Yet Essentially Ignored. The author belongs to the Church of Christ and was writing essentially to ask the same question I am asking here now 14 years later. He makes some interesting points that seem common across the Churches of Christ. He notes two interesting points in the history of the Church of Christ's eschatological understanding. First, he chronicles how it happened:

“Eschatology died as a living concern among our churches because of at least four related developments:

- (1) The acceptance of the church-kingdom identity fostered by Tolbert Fanning and like-minded sectarians;
- (2) The powerful and brutal assault on millennial modes of thought and millennial thinkers, particularly premillennial, by the Foy E. Wallace Jr. cadre of de-eschatologizers;
- (3) The subsequent ruthlessly enforced triumph of Amillennialism and the dogma of church-kingdom identity; and
- (4) The filling of the vacuum in eschatological thinking with inane, hybridized life-after-death language uninformed by biblical or systematic theology.”

Dr. Mitchell succinctly sums up the end result of such theological witch-hunts within the Churches of Christ in his essay:

“All we have left is ah-millennialism.”

“We are neither passionately radical nor invigoratingly hopeful.”

As to Foy E. Wallace Jr, history records he made it his personal mission to stomp out Pre-Millennialism single-handedly if need be:

In October 1935 Wallace founded the Gospel Guardian as a monthly magazine primarily to combat the views of the premillennialists. The Gospel Guardian ended in June 1936 and merged with the Firm Foundation. In 1937 Wallace was the front-page writer for the Firm Foundation. In 1938 Wallace founded the Bible Banner, initially also dedicated to the defeat of premillennial doctrine.

By the early 1940s, every significant paper and college associated with Churches of Christ took the amillennial position, often, like Wallace, never using the terms amillennial or Amillennialism. By 1949, when Wallace ceased publishing the Bible

Banner, this campaign had been so effective that fewer than a hundred congregations adhered to the premillennial view, and those generally isolated from the mainline, as they remained for decades.

Dr. Mitchell does a decent job of showing why the modern Church of Christ churches and universities promote the Amillennial eschatological view over all the others. I pointed out on that fateful Wednesday night that it was to the credit of Augustine of Hippo (circa-5th century A.D.) that Amillennialism even existed. Augustine wrote and developed much of what the Roman Catholic Church adheres to as doctrine and dogma. This revelation went over like a wet blanket on a cold night.

In all the discussions I've had with Church of Christ elders, deacons, preachers, and church members over the years, there is a general consensus that Eschatology is best left to the experts, and the "experts" all hold to either an Amillennial, Pan-millennial (it will all pan out in the end), or Preterist view of Bible prophecy.

If the conversation continued long enough, the unanimous conclusion drawn from my counterpart is almost always "why does Eschatology even matter for the here and now?"

So why does it matter? I've stated in previous articles that how one views the end will largely shape how one views the here and now. Would it matter if you don't believe in God or an afterlife? Would it matter if you believed that you were THE kingdom come here on earth now? Would it matter if you believed that life will just go on and on until the end of time when God one day just pulls up the curtains and says, "That's All, Folks!" Would it matter if you believed that Christ could return at any moment?

"Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." Luke 12:40

Aside from the historical origins of Amillennialism, accepting this view comes with some significant theological challenges. First of which, is the number of prophetic scriptures one has to either dismiss as "apocalyptic literature" or has to allegorize to such an extent that it could mean anything. That would mean about 30 % of your Bible (both Old and New) were now up for grabs.

The Critics

German Higher Criticism came about around the 18th century promoting and attempting to answer the inerrancy claims of the Scriptures from a philosophical and rationalist perspective. It was birthed in Europe, but soon moved to the American seminaries as many of these clergies departed Europe for the New World. One of the products of their teachings was developing a Lower Criticism and a Higher Criticism. The lower dealt with the actual physical translations and texts (or how they came together over the centuries) and the Higher dealt with the actual content of the messages.

The Maccabean Jews had first coined the term “apocalyptic literature”. But since they (nor Judaism) accepted the New Testament, this term would later be co-opted by the critics who used it in describing the Revelation and other text that fell into this category. It seemingly gave license to teachers and preachers to either dismiss or allegorize the prophetic text. At the very least, “apocalyptic literature” would not receive the same theological weight as say the Gospels or the Epistles.

Question: What happened to the Holy Spirit being the true Author of Scriptures? [See 2 Tim 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12-13]

The term “apocalyptic literature” soon became a catchall phrase for all the passages of scripture that seemingly argued against Amillennialism. The main problem with this is that one cannot hold to a consistent view of Scriptures and simultaneously promote Higher Criticism at the same time because they work against each other.

For example, higher critics would argue that half of Daniel (chapters 7-12) was written in the 2nd century B.C., because it too accurately predicted the rise and fall of nations that came to pass from Daniel’s time (5th-6th century BC) to the time of Christ. They neglect the truth that the true author of Scripture was not Daniel, but God.

There is a danger to this type of ‘higher criticism’ thinking. Almost every Church of Christ elder or preacher that I have spoken too on this topic have no issue with all the prophecies that foretold the first coming of Christ...of which around 108 prophecies were literally fulfilled. Yet, they tend to dismiss the next 300 or so prophecies concerning Christ’s Second Coming as ‘apocalyptic literature.’ The Pharisees of Jesus’s day applied this same type of dismissive reasoning to His first coming. Think about that for a second.

When the wise men (Magi from the East) came to worship Christ, notice how King Herod’s chief priests and scribes all knew about the prophecies concerning the coming Messiah, but none of them really believed it or they would have already been searching Him out. At the very least, they would have traveled the five miles from Jerusalem to Bethlehem with the Wise men to see for themselves. But they didn’t. [See Matthew 2]

One last point that I heard reiterated from time to time in C of C churches is that prophecy is based on the Hebraic Mindset, and that prophecy is pattern, and not to be taken chronologically as laid out in the book of Revelation. That is true to an extent, but that is not the whole truth. Jesus responds to His disciple’s questions about the last days sequentially in the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24, Mark 13, Luke 21) ...of which Revelation 6-19 is merely an expansion on.

Question: Was Jesus using Hebraic reasoning that spoke in patterns as ‘apocalyptic literature’ in the Olivet Discourse, or was He, as God, answering sequentially the question that His disciples asked Him about the last days?

Conclusion

The hour is too late, and the day too far gone to spend your time either not knowing or deliberately ignoring what God has to say about our immediate future. There is nothing wrong with taking a literal understanding of the Bible. Yes, there are different types of speech contained in Scripture: Parables, euphemisms, figures of speech, symbolism, metaphors, etc. But just using a common-sense approach to Scriptures solves a lot of these differences. Having a literal understanding, doesn't have to be "wooden" or rigid as some would say, it's totally based on the understanding that God instructed men what to write, and God is not bound to time like we are. 'He declares the end from the beginning' (Isaiah 46:9-10) and what He says will come to pass.

You don't have to believe what I write but be a Berean and search these things out for yourself. Don't just take what a guy in the pulpit tells you because he went to seminary, and you didn't. As believers, we all belong to the body of Christ, and we all received the same Holy Spirit who will reveal to you these things you seek out. I'll close with a warning by Jesus to a church that no longer concerned themselves about watching for His return. We too should take heed, since Jesus ends this (as He does with all the others) by saying 'He who has an ear, let him hear'...

"Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you." Revelation 3:3