Destiny Newsletter

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How shall we understand these days?

This question presses upon all who are involved in our society. In a political year, the candidates will be giving us answers. In a time of business confusion, the financial world will be suggesting comprehensions about the future. In a time of global unrest, the international leaders and military commanders will be looking at their charts, once again, seeking for understanding. Comprehension of the tide of our times is a commodity which is greatly needed but in short supply in these days.

What of the future? How shall we be equal to the great, but unknown, occasions which are now upon us? What shall we be thinking in convoluted times such as these? These questions and others are a part of the swirling concerns confronting our world.

Our Lord Jesus Christ anticipated this question and spoke most forcefully for our enlightenment. As we approach the end of the age, Christ reminded us that the good seed would have been sown in the great field, which is the world. Then He said, "But, while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way" (Matt. 13:25).

THE SAGA OF OUR TIME

Speaking then about the wheat and the tares, Christ said, "Let both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn" (Matt. 13:30).

So, Christ reminded us of a condition that would obtain as history approaches its consummation. That condition is represented by His statement that the wheat and the tares would grow together until the harvest.

How then shall we understand our world? It is a world of good and evil. It is a world of regeneration and degeneration. It is a world of the conflict between light and darkness. In that world, the wheat and the tares will grow up together.

What then can we expect in our time? We can expect great good and great evil. We can anticipate that Satan, who knows his time is short, will go forth with great wrath in his attempt to kill, to destroy, to subvert and ruin. We can also expect that there will be the increasing blessing of God upon the truth of His Word and ministries that properly represent that truth. Indeed, to the church at Philadelphia, Christ said, "behold, I have set before you an open door and no man can shut it" (Rev. 3:8).

What then should this call for in our personal lives? It surely means that the Christian should be ambitious for Christ, but careful of spiritual subversion at the same time. The believer should aspire to be a greater testimony for the Lord Jesus than ever, but in the process, should pray and labor to avert the moral disasters that will come upon individuals and institutions in these days. While we live in a world of opportunity, we also live in a world of danger. Because the kingdom is not yet, we cannot expect perfection from ourselves or others. We can, however, look forward to bright occasions of spiritual opportunity in which unusual, spectacular results can be accomplished for Christ.

This combination, the conflict between good and evil which is growing in our time, certainly spells challenge, adventure for the Christian. For us, life will not be simple, but it will be thrilling. For us, the problems can be expected to be more complicated, but the opportunities spacious indeed.

Let us, therefore, pray that, with the help of God, we will be enabled to rise to the great occasions which are before us. In this time of political argument, let us extend the argument for the Gospel! In this year of wars and rumors of wars, let us be good soldiers for Christ! In this period of naked ambition, let us be ambitious for Christ, making it our aim to touch this generation with the Gospel.

What will it take to operate with spiritual success in a world like this? Certainly, it will take...

1. Wisdom from the Word of God. Take the time to study the Bible daily.

2. Faith by which to attempt great things for God. Faith saves us and it also is the enabling quality of our Christian lives.

3. Divine wisdom from the Holy PAIGE

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Spirit. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

4. A Christian world view. We need to see the world as Christ sees it, needing the Gospel.

5. A sense of urgency. We do not have forever to work. Time may be running out for the world and certainly the clock is ticking for each of us as individuals.

Let us then ask together, "What can I do **today**, this hour for Christ?" That question asked sincerely, will bring a beautiful answer from heaven.

From the writings of Dave Breese

The Attacks of Replacement Theology

Replacement Theology has been around for a long time. Throughout church history, leaders and theologians have argued that because of Israel's sin and disobedience, the Nation of Israel has been rejected by God and replaced by the Church. But, some of the rhetoric regarding this belief is becoming very hostile and verbally abusive.

On the subject of Israel, Christians (by name) are divided into two groups: some who are pro-Israel and often called "Christian Zionists" and those who believe the Church has replaced Israel or that the modern State of Israel is not a part of Bible prophecy. The latter group of Christians is in the majority by far and is usually characterized by one or more of the following positions:

1. Covenant theology (as opposed to dispensational belief).

2. Amillennialism – there will be no future, literal 1000 years of the Messiah's kingdom on earth.

3. Preterism – the belief that the past judgment of God upon Israel and Jerusalem in 70 AD removed God's

blessing and brought God's rejection of Israel and its replacement by the Church.

4. The book of Revelation was written before 70 AD.

5. Old Testament references of blessing for the children of Israel refer to the "people of God," not the State or Nation of Israel.

6. Terms like "the Great Tribulation" and "Armageddon" and "Rapture of the Church" are not treated as literal events of future prophetic fulfillment. (The "Rapture" issue is a big one since most believers equate it with the Second Coming at the end of the Tribulation.)

7. Interpretation of prophecy passages in the Bible is usually allegorical or symbolical rather than literal and historical.

There are many subjects that could be added to this list, but you get the basic idea. On the other side are believers who are committed to the following:

1. Dispensational teaching - though there are many differences of opinion within this belief system, the basic truth is the separation of Israel from the Church.

2. The 1000 years of the kingdom of Messiah is to be taken literally – the teaching of Revelation 20.

3. The book of Revelation was not written until after 70 AD.

4. The events in Revelation from chapter 4 to chapter 22 are future.

5. God has NEVER forsaken Israel – His covenant to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their descendants is everlasting and unconditional.

6. Bible prophecies concerning Israel (and all matters) are to be taken literally unless there is clear symbolical language that would indicate otherwise.
7. There is a literal period of time (most believe it will be seven years in length) coming called "The Great Tribulation."

8. There will be a final battle in the Middle East involving all nations of the world that the Bible calls "Armageddon."

9. The "Rapture of the Church" will occur BEFORE the tribulation and is a separate event from the Second Coming and the end of the tribulation.

We believe that the modern State of Israel is a partial fulfillment of God's endtime prophecies. We believe that God has NEVER rejected Israel and that this subject alone (2566 times in the Bible) is the foundation for Biblical understanding and teaching throughout the Bible.

David Hocking, Prophecy Watch

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But Especially;

"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity" (II Peter 1:5-7).

God promised that you can live a useful and fruitful life in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. He promised that not only will you join Christ in His eternal kingdom, but your entry will be rich and rewarding.

So why aren't all Christians fruitful? And why do so many continue to stumble? How can we live now to insure our rich, rewarding entry into Christ's eternal kingdom?

The answer is found in II Peter 1:3-11. God did not say that *all* Christians would be fruitful no matter what. Neither did He say that they would never stumble once they decided to follow Christ. He *did* make these promises, however, to those who will apply diligence in developing eight vital qualities in their lives. Indeed, these character qualities are imperative to an effective, abundant Christian life:

| • Faith | • Patience |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Virtue | Godliness |
| • Knowledge | Brotherly Kindness |
| Self-control | • Love |

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THE TIDE OF OUR TIMES

"WILL ISRAEL ATTACK IRAN? [...] Iran continues to build its nuclear facilities and its President boasts that no one can stop him or has the right to interfere in Iran's affairs. He has stated [...] that he will not hesitate to use nuclear weapons against Israel as well as the United States.

Israel and the United States have been discussing what might be their response if Iran continues to develop weapons of mass destruction and continues to threaten the USA and its ally, Israel.

Israel has made it clear that it will not 'sit back' and let this happen. They have decided that if Iran does not back down from its intentions to use nuclear weapons, Israel will attack and destroy its nuclear facilities. [...]

Since Iran (ancient Persia) is mentioned as the first of the countries that will attack Israel (Ezekiel 38), Bible prophecy students have been asking serious questions about the events that are currently taking place between Iran and Israel. Is this the prelude to the invasion of Ezekiel 38-39?"

David Hocking, Prophecy Watch

"IDOLS OF A 'JEALOUS GOD': Book challenges scientific certainty-Pamela R. Winnick was labeled a fanatic and a member of the 'religious right' five years ago when she published an article about a scientist skeptical of Darwin's theory of evolution. [...] The outcry against her article in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette caused her to question the claims made on behalf of science.

'The scientific community cannot bear being challenged, even when they are patently wrong. They have come to see themselves as gods, and they don't like anyone challenging them,' she said [...] discussing her new book, 'A Jealous God: Science's Crusade Against Religion.'

'There was so much hysteria about it [...]. I realized that there are a number of fanatics out there on the science side.' For her book, Ms. Winnick researched several issues in which science and religion clash [...]. She found that professors in favor of intelligent design were denied tenure, supporters of adult stem-cell research were not invited to conferences [...] and that anyone, whether a journalist or scientist, who challenged the ethnicality of embryonic stem-cell research was labeled a religious fanatic.

'My objections to the scientific community have [...] to do with the status that scientists are accorded in our society.' Ms. Winnick said. 'In many ways, they deserve a lot of status. [...] It doesn't mean they deserve unquestioned status.''' Shelley Widhalm,

The Washington Times

"UN CEREMONY WIPES ISRAEL OFF THE

MAP--The United Nations' 'Day of Solidarity With the Palestinian People'held in November literally wiped Israel off the map. Hanging prominently between UN and Palestine Liberation Organization flags during the festivities at UN headquarters in New York City was a map labeled 'map of Palestine.' Israel was gone completely. Israel has been a UN

member for 56 years. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan addressed the meeting with the map displayed behind him. [...] The ceremony honored the worst of Palestinian terrorists. [Eye on the UN organization] has asked the United States to withhold UN funds."

Israel My

Glory

See our Spring Collegiate Letter at www.christiandestiny.org/ publications/collegiate

THE PARADIGM

Splash the brook and laugh, my son Chase the striped ripples now, Slide with happy feet, the moss Climb the bended river's brow. Run through swaying daffodils Fright the robin from his glade, Breathe the blue sky deep within Watch the purple sunset fade.

Feel the gloaming's velvet cool Hear the night bird call, and then Watch the evening stars appear Gleaming o'er the forest glen. See the light on distant hill Mark the passing of the day Choose the homeward path before Darkness overtakes your way.

Then before you pray tonight Sense the blessed paradigm You, this very day, have seen Many signs which point to Him. Life, itself, is like the day Death, the warm light at the gates Wide before your Father's house Where He, who made the world, Awaits.

-- Dave Breese

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Q: The Bible says, "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, [God will give] eternal life" (Rom. 2:7). Doesn't this teach salvation by good works?

A: Indeed it does. In fact, it teaches salvation by *perfect* works. The suggestion is that God will give eternal life to those who invariably, without exception, live righteous lives. Unfortunately, all have failed to do this. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). Therefore, no one has achieved the possibility of salvation by perfection, which is what this verse teaches. Being bankrupt before God, each person must now receive salvation by the only other way possible, that is grace. Therefore, "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8,9).

Q: Are there other gods in the world, the universe?

A: I presume that you mean, "Are there other gods beside the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ?" One would be tempted to believe that there are many real, but lesser, gods when he reads of them being worshipped by other people and especially other nations. But, the Scripture says, "For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens" (Psa. 96:5). So, the so-called "other gods" are idols of wood and stone, carved by man.

The Bible also indicates that by worshipping these "other gods," pagans may be worshipping demons. "And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of

their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk" (Rev. 9:20). Here is an indication that the worship of demons and idols will grow in the time of the Tribulation.

Q: I'm afraid to die. Can you help me?

A: Yes, a thousand times yes! You must become a Christian because when you are saved you will not be afraid to die. The Christian, in fact, does not die. Jesus promises us, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:26). Christ "hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (II Tim. 1:10). Christ by His death came to *"deliver them who through"* fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:15). Far from being worried, the Apostle Paul said that he was "earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven" (II Cor. 5:2).

Q: Considering the terrible things going on in our world, why does God allow war?

A: First of all, remember that God is not the cause of war. "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" (James 4:1-3).

But we wonder why God does not intervene in these bloody conflicts. He does not because this is not the time of divine intervention. Man is given the power of choice, and human volition is greatly respected by God. Choice would be a charade if there were not consequences to that choice. Above all, remember that the universe is not a charade but a very serious thing with God. Therefore, God will allow human volition to run its course, for a man uses that same volition to accept Christ and to commit himself to God. Finally, remember that there is coming a day when God will intervene. Remember then however, that, as C. S. Lewis has said, "When the playwright walks onto the stage, then the play's over."

Q: Will the nations of the world finally turn to God?

A: No, they will not. Rather, the nations will go to war against God (Psalm 2), saying, let us "cast away their cords from us." The human heart is desperately wicked and that final rebellion against God will demonstrate this. Finally, of course, God will impose His will upon the nations of the world and Christ will reign for 1000 years from the city of Jerusalem.

In the meantime, no individual needs join a rebellious nation. Rather, he can believe the Gospel and be saved by the grace of God. Then, in the divine economy, he is no longer seen as a child of this world but rather as a child of God.

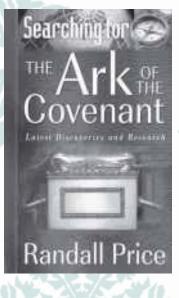
Q: How then can I be saved?

A: The Bible says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved" (Acts 16:31). When you exercise faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross, His death and resurrection, you become a possessor of everlasting life. From that moment on, you are His.

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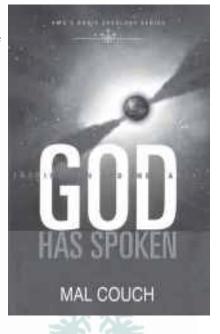
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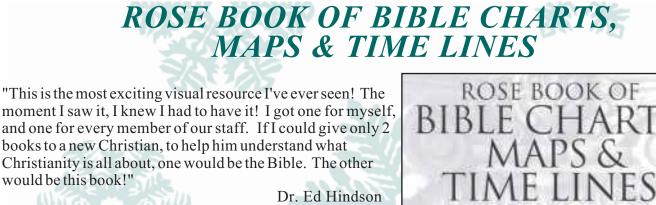
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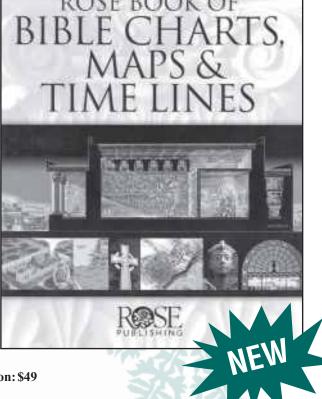
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