

The Biblical Examiner

Seeking first the Kingdom of God and its Advancement

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Sinful Enquiry

Exploring Prophecy

Ezekiel 20:1-4

Our area received a beautiful color flier advertising a meeting “Exploring Prophecy”. So something must be said concerning what I see taking place in the name of Bible Prophecy. We will see that an emphasis on prophecy is service to a false god.

I have neither time nor space to say all the things that need to be said about the prophetic speculators, but I will give it my best shot. Since all the “speculations” have failed over the past 2,000 years, I wrongly assumed the speculations had lost their appeal. But I have assumed wrongly, for the speculators still have strong money-raising appeal and following. The speculators will continue with the same failed speculations as long as they find easily swayed people to follow and support them. And those speakers who are in it for the money would be foolish to change their message if it produces a good income.

However, knowing man’s sinful nature, there are prophecies that seem to be fulfilling, such as the implications of a one world government under the head of an evil man, the Antichrist. The idea of an Antichrist and 666 has fascinated both the saved and the unsaved since Christ.

Antichrist: I would like to deal with prophecy, but there are so many other things more important. However, I will say a short word about “the Antichrist”. John makes it very clear that antichrist is a religious concept, not an individual:

1 John 4:3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

The antichrist concept was prophesied as early as

Daniel. It is any spirit that fails to confess the Biblical truth about Christ.

2 John 1:7 For many deceivers (spirits as well as men) are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

Thus, there are many antichrists, or deceivers in the world who reject the Biblical Christ. Most of them speak in the name of God, yet they are speaking in the spirit of antichrist.

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Accordingly, “the Antichrist” is not the leader of a one world government as was attempted by Nimrod with Babylon. Looking for an evil one world civil ruler keeps our minds from the Biblically identified spirit of antichrist as it occupies the pulpits of the world. How many hours and words have been wasted exploring the identity of a man, “the Antichrist”, while he openly proclaims his evil from “Christian” pulpits?

There continues to be a good profit in proclaiming the same message that has failed since Justin Martyr first proclaimed it in 165 AD. However, the modern version was introduced at the 1826 Albany Park conference for the study of unfilled prophecy. The prophetic speculations presented in 1826 and further developed over the next several conferences has remained basically the same for almost 200 years. Though the speculators from 165 AD on have set many dates, all of which failed to materialize, the speculations continue to draw people and produce a good income for the speculators. (Death of the Church Victorious, p. 125. Sovereign Grace Publishers.)

Moses warns God’s people to avoid those prophets whose prophecies do not come to pass, Deuteronomy 18:20-22, 13:1-6

Note that a “prophet” who speaks in the name of the Lord, and that prophecy does not come to pass, is not from the Lord. From where is he??

I received an e-mail 3/9 with a link to an article, “I saw an American City ATTACKED from the Sky! A Prophetic Dream” by Nathan Leal. http://www.watchmancry.com/article_alert_6.html

The article opens thusly:

“In the beginning of 2013, I sought God about the matters at hand. I had been asking Him to show me the things to come. (Note the language from Daniel’s in order to make himself on the level of Daniel. What can be said about such evil arrogance? And people believe him!!)

On the night of February 19, 2013, the Lord answered my prayer and gave me a glimpse of things to come through a prophetic dream. After praying about it and seeking Him, He has given me the clearance to share it so that I can warn the people.”

To avoid being identified by Deuteronomy 18 as a non-prophet, he inserts, “(Note - The Timing of the Following Dream is Unknown.)”

In his foolishness, he includes a map with his location in the dream (up by Seattle), and the locations of where the events are to take place.

The prophesying gods mentioned by Moses in Deuteronomy 18 are false gods.

Let me remind the reader that PROPHECY IS FROM THE TIME IT IS WRITTEN, NOT FROM THE TIME IT IS READ.

I know that the dating of the Revelation of Jesus Christ is a key point used by the speculators to say that those prophecies are yet to be fulfilled. I have dealt with the date, which was before the destruction of Jerusalem (probably between 66 to 69 A.D.) and purpose of the Revelation elsewhere, so we will not here. (<http://www.biblicalexaminer.org/PDF/RevT%26D.pdf> & <http://www.biblicalexaminer.org/RevT%26d.htm>)

From the first meeting to study unfilled prophecy held in 1826, it has been known that prophetic studies separate one from reality. All the early major figures in the modern dispensational movement understood that prophetic study would draw a big crowd, and fill the offering plates. Spurgeon rightly called these men Profiting Prophets.

Prophecy Study meetings have been popular for almost 200 years, and all their prophetic conclusions have failed many times over. But the failures have not discouraged the simple minded (easily swayed) to

follow and support the Profiting Prophets.

The Profiting Prophets normally are men of good persuasive abilities who, over the years, have found prophecy can fill a room at a moments notice, and enlarge their pockets. Their emphasis on supposed end time events and escape from reality and social responsibility corrupts the gospel message of victory in Christ, and has yielded society to the powers of Darkness. Thus the god they present is a false god, for our God is a God of victory over the world, flesh and the devil in both time and eternity.

Prophecy conferences have robbed Christianity of its world-changing power. They have changed Christianity into a pietistic and mystic experience. That is, what will make me feel more spiritual, and able to float above the turmoil of this world? Biblical Christianity is commanded to go into the turmoil of this world, and preach the victorious gospel of the risen and reigning Christ. We are commanded to teach the laws of the Kingdom, and how to apply those laws into every area of thought and action of society, thereby claiming all society and nations for the King Jesus.

The founding men of the prophecy movement in the middle 1800s set the climate for the next 200 years of “Christianity.” Rather than face the social issues of their day, they used prophecy to escape from responsibility and from the social turmoil around them.

Serious enquiry into American Christianity will find that the victory in Christ upon which this nation was founded became defeat in Christ. On Darby’s first visit to the US, his message was rejected. However, his second visit was in 1865, just after the war, and he found a different attitude in the church, one of hopelessness and defeat. His “escapist” message was then accepted, and the downhill rush to defeat was sent on its way like a “bob sled” run. By systematizing Darby’s chaotic ideas, Scofield speeded up the rush to “the ruin of the church”, and the ruin of Christian nations, fulfilling Darby’s view of the church. We are living in the results of Darby’s 1865 visit to the US. It is worth mentioning that the US pastors generally resisted Darby’s message of defeat and escape before Scofield, but the people loved it. The pastors had to accept the message or lose their people. The same problem exists today for pastors who know the truth.

Society continues to deteriorate as the profiting prophets go from community to community with their false hope and socially destructive message that the Christian will be gone before things get bad, so there is no need to get involved and take a stand against public

degeneration.

Most pastors/teachers who offer their failed 200 year old speculations are simply teaching what they have been taught, as I did for several years. Others probably realize there is good money and mass appeal in speculating about the secret things of God. Then there are others who continue out of pride: "This is the way I was taught by men I respect, and I have always taught it, so I will not change now." Or, "What will my people think if I do not tell them what they want to hear?"

It seems that one of the first things new preachers want to do is study the Revelation, yet they ignore the law and commandments of God. When I became the pastor of the Linden Baptist Church, one of the first things I did was borrow a "Prophetic Time Chart" from a close pastor friend. I was going to teach the well-known system, hoping to increase our attendance. As I studied only the Word of God for the first lesson, I found that Scripture did not support the Politically Correct prophetic system I had been taught and that was presented on the Chart. I very well remember returning the Chart to the pastor, and pointing out a passage in Daniel that just did not work with the PC system, and asking him what he was going to do with the passage.

I do not remember the passage, but I will never forget his answer: "This is the way I was taught by men I respect, this is the way I have taught it, and I am too old to change now". We were both in our 40s.

I taught the truth of the "prophetic" passages, and several church members left because I did not follow the PC, Scofield prophet system.

Though the prophetic speculators have been exposed to the truth, at least from Scripture, they continue in their errors though the speculations continue to fail. Failure means back to the drawing board to rearrange everything to fit the latest world news stories. "Newspaper Exegesis".

Those who take their prophecy conferences from town to town outside of a local church will have difficulty convincing onlookers that they are not there to fleece the flock.

The hidden things of God appeal to the natural man, but he will flee from learning about the law and precepts of God. Over the years, I have found that even the unsaved are interested in Bible prophecy, but not about what God says about sin and the Saviour.

◇ OUR LATEST PROPHET

The Profiting Prophets must consider this part of WV populated by simple people, ready to believe the

unbelievable, and to be fleeced of their money.

On May 13, 2009, the prophets Steward Pepper and his wife came to Moorefield with their "Midnight Cry" prophecy conference. Then recently, (3/1/13 to 3/4/13) we had another prophet come to get his share of the profits: Ron Patterson promised that his "presentations of Biblical predications ... will bring new hope ... New guidelines for living." "Revelation's Mysterious Symbols Give Answers To Our Future."

We received Patterson's very attractive mass mailing (from Seminars Unlimited, PO Box 66, Keene, TX 76057) advertising an Explore Prophecy meeting in Moorefield, March 1-4, after which he moved to a local Adventist church.

His full color and very attractive flier was sent out to "Resident." The front cover had a very colorful picture of various weird beasts, as supposedly found in Daniel and John. The images closely resemble the old B&W images Clarence Larkin drew several years ago for his popular prophecy books, which prophecies never came to pass. Obviously, the pictures drew attention, and motivated one to look inside.

◇ THE COVER SAID:

EXPLORE PROPHECY. Discover How Bible Prophecy Reveals the Future & Brings Hope For Today.

Here are some of the *hooks* he offered to snag the simple, quoting:

- * Why do innocent people suffer?
- * Will there ever be lasting world peace?
- * The Mark of the Beast
- * Revelation's key to death
- * Revelation's 1000 years of peace
- * The truth about Hell
- * The final Church of the Apocalypse
- * The Rapture
- * How to face the future with greater confidence

Here's what you will learn:

How to study the Bible

How to make sense of Bible Prophecy and understand Revelation's mysterious symbols.

Understanding Revelation's message so you and your family can be prepared for end-times and the second coming of Jesus.

Of special help to:

- Parents and Young Married's - Secures Family Life
- High School & College - Offers Brighter Tomorrows
- Pastors & Teachers - Builds your Faith
- Business & Professionals - Removes Future

Uncertainty

Media & Civic Leaders - Explains Current Events

Troubled & Discouraged - Brings Peace and Happiness. (End of quote.)

There were other nice sounding phrases which offered prophecy instead of Christ to solve man's ills. Experience shows that if he had offered Christ, very few if anyone would have shown up.

The ad traced personal and societal ills to not knowing the secret things of God. Prophetic study offers a false hope, hope of peace and happiness without the Christ and His law-word. Such studies only add to the destruction of society as Christians are encouraged to sit back and wait for the "Great Escape", "The Rapture".

Though I did not attend the meetings, no doubt he offered the same "exciting" future non-events that have been added and developed over the years. The vast portion of prophecy was completed in the destruction of Jerusalem. I am sure the speculations flew as they have since the early 1800s. Those early 1800s prophets were confident that the French Revolution, 1789-1799, fulfilled the "end time" prophecies, and the "rapture" was close at hand.

However, one of our men who had some time on his hands did attend some of the meetings. The "prophet" was a Seventh Day Adventist, and did not use one salvation verse from the book of John. The emphasis is on the 4th Commandment. (I have a small 35 pg booklet on the Fourth Commandment, if you are interested. No charge.)

It is useless to reinvent the wheel here, for the documentation and answers to all the above empty offers of Patterson's conference are in Death of the Church... However, I do want to address what Scripture says about the profiting prophets who fleece the flock. (Remember, sincerity does not equal truth.)

Let's consider **EXPLORING PROPHECY** by **EXPLORING SCRIPTURE**.

◇ EZEKIEL TWENTY IS AN INTERESTING CHAPTER.

Ezekiel 20:1 And it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth month, the tenth day of the month, that certain of the elders of Israel came to enquire of the LORD, and sat before me. 2 Then came the word of the LORD unto me, saying, 3 Son of man, speak unto the elders of Israel, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Are ye come to enquire of me? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will not be enquired of by you. 4 Wilt thou judge them, son of man, wilt thou judge them? cause them to know the abominations of their fathers:

Matthew Poole (1624-1679) gives a quick overview of this chapter:

"God refuseth to be consulted by the elders of Israel, Eze 20:1-3. He rehearseth the rebellions of their ancestors in Egypt, Eze 20:4-9; in the wilderness, Eze 20:10-26; and in the Promised Land, Eze 20:27-29. He reproacheth the present generation with the like corrupt manners, Eze 20:30-32. He threateneth to rule over them with rigour, but with promise to gather them, to purge out the rebels, and accept the services of the faithful in his church, Eze 20:33-44. The destruction of Jerusalem prophesied under the name of a forest, Eze 20:45-49."

These men were elders in Israel, not Priests nor Levites.

The point here is that these men wanted to hear from God while continuing in their rebellion against God. People today hope to hear from God through Prophecy Conference without dealing with their rebellion against the law of the Lord.

Ezekiel told them the truth, the cause and cure for their present distress, which they certainly did not want to hear. Man the sinner, many times even redeemed sinners, will flee from hearing the truth.

◇ OBSERVE:

First, vv. 1-4, certain of the elders of Israel came to Ezekiel to enquire of the Lord, and sat before Ezekiel, desiring to know the future.

... to seek Jehovah, i.e., to ask a revelation from Him. The Lord's answer in v. 3 is similar to that in Eze 14:3. Instead of giving a revelation concerning the future, especially with regard to the speedy termination of the penal sufferings, which the elders had, no doubt, come to solicit, the prophet is to judge them, i.e. as the following clause explains, not only in the passage before us, but also in ch. xxii. 3 and xxiii. 36, to hold up before them the sins and abominations of Israel. It is in anticipation of the following picture of the apostasy of the nation from the time immemorial that the sins of the fathers are mentioned here. 'No reply is given to the sinners, but chiding for their sins; and He adds the oath, 'as I live,' that the sentence of refusal may be all the stronger' (Jerome). (Keil-Delitzsch.)

The people wanted to see the future without dealing with the present. They wanted to know how much longer the "penal sufferings" or judgments they were experiencing would last. No doubt they were hoping for an answer of peace. However, the Lord told them their suffering was due to hardness in sin, and He soundly and clearly rebuked them. The only thing the future held for them was trouble, sorrow and misery because of the sins of the fathers, from which the children stoutly refused to turn. Patric Fairbairn points out that though we are not

told precisely what these men enquired about,

There can be little doubt, however, that it had respect in some shape to the then depressed and suffering condition of the covenant-people, and implied, at least, if it did not openly express, a desire to ascertain something more definite about God's purpose respecting them. But here, again, a preliminary objection arose from the moral state of the persons inquiring, which was such as precluded them from any right to expect a friendly response from God to their desire for any further information. Regarding, as they did, iniquity in their heart, the Lord could not hear them. (Ps 66:18, ed.) He therefore, at the outset, denounced the presumption of such persons in coming to inquire at his servant, and called upon the prophet to do toward them the part of a judge, by charging upon them the rebellious spirit of their fathers, and showing how little either they or their fathers had received in chastisement from God compared with what they deserved. (Patrick Fairbairn, Ezekiel, pp. 209, 210.)

Apparently, the elders wanted a revelation from God of peace and prosperity. The "fathers" failed to "contend for the faith", and they failed to pass the "faith" to the children. Their present generation had no desire to recover the "faith", yet wanted to hear of an uplifting future from the Lord. Rather than giving hope for the future, the Lord pronounces judgment upon them for their rebellion against the law of the Lord.

Psalms 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:

Ezekiel pointed out that the chastisement they were receiving from God was far less than what they deserved.

The problem clearly spelled out by the Lord to these "inquirers" was that their fathers had set in motion sinful practices which had passed down to the children, for which judgment was upon them, and would only increase. For them to enquire of the Lord and seek His aid without dealing with those sinful practices was presumption. Their problem was sin, and there could be no future blessing without turning from their sin. The children were a rebellious generation, whose spirit was not steadfast with God.

People love prophetic speculation, trying to know what the future holds, because it involves no personal responsibility and no personal examination for sin. They want answers without repentance and righteous living according to the law of the Lord. (See Ps 19.) In

addition, the children who came to Ezekiel had plenty of religious leaders who, in the name of the Lord God, supported them in their stubbornness and rebellion.

And now the children wanted to hear from God without facing up to and correcting their sinful practices that had been established by their fathers and passed down to them. So instead of enquiring into the future, they should have been enquiring into the past and present, and how they could correct the sins that had brought on God's judgment. The enquiring should have been how they could again have God's blessings.

◇ EXPLORE CHRISTLIKENESS

As individuals and churches, we must enquire, or explore where we are short of the mind of Christ, for we are to have the mind of Christ. (Philip 3:15, 1 Cor 2:16.)

EXPLORE PROPHECY appeals to sinners much more than exploring the mind of Christ, the inroads of sin and how to deal with those sins.

Explore Prophecy is as contrary to God's word as anything can be.

Exploring Prophecy and not exploring God's word of righteousness will only increase His judgment, because such exploration ignores sin.

This modern god of prophecy is not the Lord God of Scripture:

Deuteronomy 29:29 The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

Note that the Christian God gave man His word so that we may do all the words of this law. He did not give man His word so he might know the secret things which belong to the Lord.

The blessings of God were upon our nation at one time with the law of the Lord being the common law of the land. No one can deny that things have changed, as the wicked now rule over us. However, there are a few who are exploring how and why this nation has departed from the Christian God, and are calling us to repentance. Leviticus 26:40-42.

God's call is for exploring where our fathers have departed from and dishonored the Christian God, and how it has been passed down to us. God's call is to explore our own lives, and find where we otherwise minded from the mind of Christ, and what we must do about that departure, 1 Peter 1:17 - 21.

WHEN THY JUDGMENTS ARE IN THE EARTH,
THE INHABITANTS OF THE WORLD WILL
LEARN RIGHTEOUSNESS. ISA. 26:9

“There is power in the blood” of Christ to set us free from the sins of the fathers, and from the binding power of sin in our lives. There is grace that will equip us to confess and return to the Lord our God, and to confront the pagan areas, and subdue them to the our King.

Repentance involves not only confession, but turning from sin as defined by God’s law. (Pro 28:13, 14, 1 John 3:4.)

Exploring Prophecy makes one feel spiritual while ignoring sin.

The Christian Sabbath has been set aside for His people to gather together and explore the Word of God to find what is expected of them. How should we then live?

Philippians 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Though it should be a continual exploration, the Christian Sabbath is particularly set aside to explore how to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling—What is required of those converted by the power of God, and how do they put those requirements into action in the following week?

But enquiry into the secret things that belong to the Lord our God is much more exciting, though that kind of enquiry results in a depressed, hopeless and defeated Christianity.

There is no Christian call to Explore Prophecy. Nor is there a Christian call to explore conspiracies. One of the churches where I served full time on the staff specialized in exploring conspiracies, and the studies drew in people. Another group of pastors I fellowshiped with when I was a pastor also specialized in studying conspiracies, as though ye shall know the truth about conspiracies, and the truth will set you free from the oppressive bondage to the state.

The Christians call is to study the clearly revealed things of the Lord, so he can show himself a workman that needeth not be ashamed and able to rightly divide the word of truth, so he can do that truth. (2 Tim 2:15.)

Advertise and hold a conference to explore the things that are clearly revealed in the law, prophets, psalms and the epistles, so we can do the words of his law, and see what kind of a turnout will come. As someone said, one pot of coffee would be more than enough for those who would assemble. In fact, study the things clearly revealed in the law, and see what will happen to the congregation.

But people love to explore hidden things, whether they be prophetic secrets or secret evil conspiracies. I am not at all saying we should stick our head in sand and ignore the various secret workings of the powers of darkness, but that must not be our emphasis.

There is an interesting vision in Ezekiel 39:14 *And they shall sever out men of continual employment, passing through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search.*

In chapter, 38, gospel preaching produced a great spiritual awakening, and the Gospel Church became a mighty army for God and righteousness. We then have chapter 39, the gospel conquering the enemies of the church, represented by Gog and Magog. Thus we have chapters 37 (valley of dry bones), 38 (battle with Gog and Magog) & 39 (cleaning up the mess after the battle), which makes an interesting and exciting study, but not at this time. The consensus of those much smarter than I, is that these passages refer to the Messianic times of peace. (K-D) Without the boring details, let me give one quote from chapter 39:

V. 14 And they shall sever out men of continual employment, passing through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search.

V. 14: “Men of continual employment literally, as margin, i.e., men regularly appointed to this business. As the land of Israel represents figuratively the Church of Christ, the purification of that land is a proper part of the figure to indicate such a sanctification and cleansing of His Church, as Paul describes. {Eph 5:26,27}” (E.B. Pusey, 1800-1882. Barnes’ Notes.)

Ephesians 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

◇ WHAT AM I SAYING HERE?

The church’s call is not to enquire into the hidden things of prophecy nor of evil conspiracies. Rather, the church’s call is to purify the land by first purifying the church of its rebellion against the clearly revealed law of the Lord — that we may do all the words of this law.

In other words, those who have been redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb must explore areas, starting in their own lives, that must be reclaimed for the Kingdom of Christ. They are to explore ways to conquer those areas for His Kingdom.

The list of areas that need examination to be brought

under the authority of King Jesus is endless, e.g., education, entertainment, medicine, &c.

The vast majority of professed Christians absolutely refuse to confront the government school situation, and the result is that a great many Christian young people cannot even read their diplomas, let alone read God's Word:

“Nearly 80 percent of New York City high school graduates need to relearn basic skills before they can enter the City University's community college system.” That includes reading, writing and math. “Officials told CBS 2's Kramer that nearly 80 percent of those who graduate from city high schools arrived at City University's community college system without having mastered the skills to do college-level work.”

<http://newyork.cbslocal.com/2013/03/07/officials-most-nyc-high-school-grads-need-remedial-help-before-entering-cuny-community-colleges/>

He apparently said that simply being able to read, write and calculate is now considered college-level work! How many of those graduates came from “Christian” homes?

The popularity of some of the new versions - perversions - of God's Word is because people cannot read and understand the KJV, and do not want to be brought up to the level of the KJV English.

Godly enquiry meetings are needed that will develop how to apply the word of God, so whether we eat, drink, or whatever we do, it will be to the glory of God. The result will be that as individual Christians do all for the glory of God, families, local communities and nations will be subdued to Christ.

◇ **EXPLORE PROPHECY**

Our command is to study and develop those things which are revealed, for those are the things that belong to us, that we may do all the words of this law.

So if our “Great Commission” has nothing to do with Exploring Prophecy, then what about those who do seek to explore those things that do not belong to us? What about those who do not teach the word of God with the goal that we may do all the words of this law?

The following is harsh, but if someone can show me a command from God to go into all the world and explore, or preach prophecy and the secret things of God, I will admit to any unjust charge against the modern prophets, and openly repent in sackcloth and ashes here in front of my computer with Skype loaded in.

We cannot avoid the fact that people, even the unsaved, want to hear exciting things from the Lord rather than hear about the Law of the Lord, and how to please him. Ezekiel, as well as other prophets, tells us

that God will supply prophets who will prophecy to the desires of those who do not want to know and do the all the words of this law as found in the law, prophets, psalms, gospels and epistles.

◇ **QUESTION:**

Ezekiel 20:1, certain of the elders of Israel came to enquire of the Lord and sat before Ezekiel. They came presumptuously because they were in open and known rebellion against the word of the Lord.

If people enquire of the Lord while in known rebellion (i.e., witchcraft) and they receive a pleasant answer, who spoke to them?

We certainly know that the Christian God did not commanded men to “go into all the world and explore or preach Prophecy”, so who gives the command to go preach prophecy? Yes, we have Paul's example of teaching all the counsel of God, Acts 20:26. However, Paul's words must be taken in the context of Lord's words in Matthew 28:28, 29, to go preach the gospel. He did not tell Paul, nor anyone else, to go preach prophecy. Cf., Acts 24:14ff.

When speakers follow that command to go preach prophecy, and people flock after that speaker, what spirit is at work?

The Christian God delivers from the power of darkness into the kingdom of light, into the Kingdom of His Dear Son. (Col 1:13.) The Spirit of God is not the author of depression, darkness and fear, but of power, love and a sound mind. (2 Tim 1:7.) In other words, when the prophets prophesy darkness, doom and gloom from the “mysteries of God”, they are clearly not speaking for the Christian God.

Jeremiah gives us a very distressing description of the profiting prophets over the years, who have spoken and are speaking things not commanded to speak:

Jeremiah 5:25 ¶ Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you. 26 For among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men. 27 As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. 28 They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge. 29 Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? 30 A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; 31 The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

◇ **OBSERVE:**

First, v. 25, the problem is your iniquities, sin.

Second, v. 26, wicked men, pastors-prophets, do not deal with iniquities, though they speak in the name of the Lord.

Third, v. 26, their words are snares and traps, meant to catch men to follow, believe and support them.

Fourth, v. 27, the prophets speak the deceitful words that will best enrich themselves.

Fifth, v. 28, they wax fat on the wealth they can extract from their followers, even from the fatherless and widows—those who have no godly authority to protect them from smooth, enticing speech.

Sixth, v. 28, they judge not righteous judgment. They do not identify sin, nor do they call for repentance of sin, yet they prosper at the expense of those they lead astray.

Seventh, v. 29, the Lord will be avenged against the false prophets and those who support them.

Eighth, v. 31, the profiting prophets prosper and wax fat because my people love the pleasing message without confrontation over sin.

◇ **LET ME MENTION WHILE I AM THIS CLOSE:**

World magazine pointed out that during a time when many congregations are struggling, the “Mega Churches” (over 2,000 in weekly attendance) are prospering. These churches are not only increasing salaries, but are hiring staff member. There were only about 50 mega churches in 1970, and today there are about 1,600. (3/23/13, p. 76.)

The 3 “Mega-Churches” I was familiar with in the late ‘60s had sound doctrine from the pulpit, but on the personal level they were anything but holy. I well remember going to Sunday morning breakfast with one of the pastors and a couple of his staff members in the late ‘60s. The immoral innuendoes they made to the waitress embarrassed me. I doubt that the sinful nature has changed much over the years. We often read of a “Mega-Church” pastor getting in moral and/or financial troubles as they live and rule like kings. In those “Mega-Churches”, people were able to believe according to the dictates of their own hearts, and still be respected members and even leaders in those church.

Jeremiah 5:25-31 clearly describes the Mega Church where the prophets prophesy for profit, and the people love it.

◇ **EXPLORE PROPHECY. CONSIDER**

2 Corinthians 2:11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices. (2 Cor 11:3, 4,

Gal 1:8, 9.)

Prophecy teachers present themselves as God’s anointed men to open the future for our understanding, a calling that has no Scriptural basis. With no Scriptural basis, then they must be the enemy coming in like a flood, corrupting people from the simplicity that is in Christ. They offer themselves as angels of light, preachers of the hidden mysteries of God. These Profiting Prophets are offering another Jesus, another spirit and another gospel. Did not Paul warn about another Jesus, offered under the guise of the Christian Jesus? (2 Cor 11:4.) If the Christian Jesus did not command His people, preachers especially, to go into all the world and Explore Prophecy, who did? Which Jesus are those who explore prophecy following? Who are the followers of the prophets following?

The True Jesus of Scripture gave us His word for doctrine, reproof, correction and for instruction in right living, with the command to go into all the world and preach the gospel. (2 Tim. 3:16.) His Word was not given so that men might know the future.

The true spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus; that is, preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Seeking to know the secret things of God is not the gospel.

Revelation 19:10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Presenting the wrong Jesus is a snare of the devil. (2 Tim 2:25, 26.)

◇ **OUR COMMAND IS CLEAR:**

We are to avoid those who try to pry into the secret things of God with strange speculations, for if they are not workers of light, then they are workers of darkness. In-depth exploring into the mysteries of God without the motive of exposing and correcting sin will result in the wrong spirit answering the enquiry, and his answers lead to death.

Ephesians 5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. 12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

There so many things we could say and others have said about the foolish, even wicked desire to know the future. That is, future events other than what has been clearly given to know how to please the Lord.

The spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Christ, His work while He was here, and the promised results of

obedience to His word.

Joseph Parker:

“Men like to penetrate into the hidden. They flatter it, they exalt it, they say it is given for good, and pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise; and having wrought themselves up into this delusive appreciation of its value, they put forth the thievish hand, and the fancied blessing turns to a scorpion’s sting....”

The sense in which things revealed belong unto us is distinctly specified in the text- “that we may do all the words of the law.” ... We are not called upon to consider the words of a speculation, or a theory, or a new suggestion regarding the constitution and destiny of things. God puts himself before us distinctly as Lawgiver....” (Joseph Parker, 1830-1902, *Preaching Through the Bible*, vol. IV, pp. 325-332. Baker Book House, 1960 reprint.)

Sadly, fallen man is much more interested in the things of God that are above and beyond his understanding (things he is to have nothing to do with) than the things that are his. The purpose of Godly wisdom is not so we can know the secret things of God; rather, the purpose is that we might know and do the things that are freely given to us to please Him:

1 Corinthians 2:12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

◇ **OBSERVE:**

First, (Jos 22:5; 1 Sam 18:22; Ps 119:97, 113, 163, 165; Ro 13:10; Ga 5:14; Ja 2:8.) words of love for God and His law are hypocrisy if they are not backed up with studying and doing His law as revealed through Moses. The inseparable connection between action and professed love for God’s Law-Word cannot be ignored nor denied.

Second, (Rom 6:16; 8:13, 37; 2 Pe 2:12, &c.) the call to obedience is also a call to hope for the future. Obedience leads to “some conquest” for King Jesus. Despite the conviction of many that the Old Testament promises are now strictly spiritual in the “age of grace,” passages such as Deuteronomy 28:1ff. and 15ff., are very evidently still in effect: Just look around!

Third, Hebrews 3:18-4:3 how many times have we heard, “When I understand, then I will do...,” or “When I understand, I will believe?” However, God’s way is doing what we know to do, and then He gives us more understanding. We act because we are required by God’s Word, and then the Spirit gives further understanding.

The details of the future are part of the secret mysteries of God, as are the details of how Divine Providence, Sovereignty, Election, Predestination, Free

Will, and many other doctrines work.

Our problem is not that we do not understand the details of the great mysteries of God. Our problem is that we do not do what is clearly revealed to us. I have found that the Lord has given more than enough clearly understood things to keep me busy for many lifetimes. (Job 28:28.)

The secret of the Lord is with them who depart from evil! (Ps 25:14.) If we want God to reveal secret things to us, depart from the evils in our lives. (I saw a little statement on the bottom of a scratch pad, with which many of us can identify: “God put me on this earth to do many things. Right now, I’m so far behind I’ll never die.”)

When men come so far short of what they know of God’s will, why are they so determined to EXPLORE PROPHECY, the hidden mysteries of God?

In Acts 1:6-8, the Lord Jesus rebuked the disciples for their attempted enquiry into the future, saying that their concern was to be the proclamation of the total of God’s Word unto the uttermost part of the earth.

His instruction to them is clearly for us today. The believer’s responsibility is to preach the gospel of Christ in all nations, and teach them obedience to the faith. (Rom 16:26, John 20:31.)

We need “enquiry meetings” into God’s law and precepts. We need His spirit of enquiry concerning sin and how to correct our sin as well as the sins passed down to us from the “fathers”. We should dread to even think that God’s words spoken through Ezekiel to the elders might apply to us and our generation: As I live, saith the Lord God, I will not be enquired of by you because you refuse to confront and deal with the sins of the past generations to which you have fallen heir.

In conclusion, let me finish with a few high points from Ezekiel 20:

First, which we have already discussed, vv. 1-4, certain of the elders of Israel came to Ezekiel to enquire of the Lord, and sat before Ezekiel. And second, Ezekiel 20:5, *and say to them...* Rather than answering their enquiry, they got a review of the past, and it was not nice.

1) V. 9. They were no sooner free from Egyptian bondage when they built the calf. Then they complained against God all the way to Canaan, even demanding to return to Egypt. The only thing that kept the Lord from destroying them was His name’s sake. Moses told them they had been a rebellious people from the day he knew them. (Deut 31:27.)

2) Vv. 11-16, 24. They and their fathers not only rebelled against His statutes and judgments, but they despised them as their hearts went after their idols.

3) V. 17. The nation He redeemed unto Himself behaved like pagans in the desert. Only God's mercy spared the old nation of Israel. However, God's mercy expired in 70 AD.

4) Vv. 12-14. Their polluted sabbaths is best described by Isaiah 58:13, 14. It was not simply a day of rest, but it represents doing the will of God from the heart.

5) Vv. 18-24. They ignored the Lord's many warnings of what the results of rebellion would be.

6) V. 18. Israel became idol worshipers in Egypt, serving the same gods as did the Egyptians. See Joshua 24:2, 3, 14, 15. Several times, the Lord determined to destroy the nation, but Moses interceded.

7) V. 22. Judgment against sin in God's people is required in order to prevent His name from being polluted among the heathen by His own called out people.

8)

20:23 I lifted up mine hand unto them also in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them through the countries; 24 Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers idols. 25 Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live; 26 And I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they caused to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb, that I might make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I am the LORD.

◇ **OBSERVE:**

First, v. 21, the Lord has given His statutes and judgments that His people may live by doing them. (Deut 30:16.) The Lord continually pleaded and warned them to repent and obey, and He would bless them and their nation. Yet they ignored His pleadings, and the promised destruction followed. Three times in chapter 20 alone, the Lord promises life in doing His statutes and judgments, vv. 11,13, 21.

Ezekiel 20 is easily traced into the New Testament, e.g., Romans 2:6-9, James 1:22. See also the wise man, Matt. 7:24ff.) Moreover, our nation's history is easily seen in Ezekiel 20.

Second, v. 25, their rebellion resulted in Him giving them statutes that were not good, and judgments that would kill them. That is, because they rejected His statutes and judgments – His law – He gave them man's deadly laws. He did not force them to accept those

destructive laws, but they were gladly accepted because of their love for death:

Proverbs 8:36 But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.

2 Peter 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. (1 Cor 11:19, & c.)

God raises up false prophets, profiting prophets of all descriptions, but He tempts no one to follow the false prophets. Because of man's rebellion against God, he is the one who chooses to follow the false prophets to his own destruction. (See James chapter 1, Exo 16:4, Deut 8:2, &c.)

Third, v. 26, God's people caused to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb, a clear reference to Molech worship. In our day, Molech worship is sacrificing children to the state through statist education.

Sodomite education in the schools allowed the sodomites to gain great power, even sodomite marriages. The big thing now is anti-gun education, with the intent of removing all guns from law-abiding citizens. The exaltation of sodomy is a direct result of Christians letting the devil educate their children.

Fourth, the reason the Lord made available to them deadly laws that appealed to the natural man was *that I might make them desolate*. Their rebellion against the truth caused them to desire and believe a lie, and that lie lead to self-destruction. (See 2 Thess 2:11.) Rebellion against God results in a desire to have, submit to and believe false prophets. Rebellion against God causes His people to submit their children to the enemy for training in the enemy's ways of the world.

Jeremiah 5:31 The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

Fifth, v. 26, God abandons the rebellious to the false prophets for a purpose. To the end that they might know that *I am the Lord*.

The Lord provided the false prophets for them to believe, to their own desolation, or ruin.

Matthew Henry:

Note, God sometimes makes sin to be its own punishment, and yet is not the author of sin; and there needs no more to make men miserable than to give them up to their own vile appetites and passions. Let them be put into the hand of their own counsels, and they will ruin themselves and make themselves desolate. And thus God makes them know that he is the Lord, and that he is a

righteous God, which they themselves will be compelled to own when they see how much their wilful transgressions contribute to their own desolations. Note, Those who will not acknowledge God as the Lord their ruler shall be made to acknowledge him as the Lord their judge when it is too late.

Ezekiel 20:21ff., God's people rebelled against their God: *they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments to do them.* In fact, *they despised my statutes*, v. 13. It is clearly spelled out in this chapter that the unchanging and everlasting standard for God's people is His judgments and His statutes - they are always responsible to God's law-word. Because God's people would not accept God's statutes that were for their good, He sent to them laws and statutes that were for their destruction.

When people rebel against and despise (hate) His law and judgments, (vv. 13, 21) they will gladly accept laws and judgments that have death built into them. It is distressing that those who will not submit their children to live in the Lord, will willingly submitted them to the death in the state.

V. 32. Man will obey some source of law, either God' law of man's. How many churches and Christian colleges now serve the pagan man-made gods. (Bettie had cataract surgery 3/15. On the road, we listened to Limbaugh. He was very firm on the point that one will either serve "religion" or the government. Of course, he did not define religion.)

There is certainly nothing wrong with studying such things as the problems of pollution, but ignoring the pollution of sin means service to the god of self.

We must explore the pollution of sin, and how to deal with the corrupt mixture of error & truth. Anything less leads down the path to death.

20:33-44

"That power which should have been exerted for their protection shall be exerted for their destruction. Note, There is no shaking off God's dominion. He will rule, either with the golden scepter or with the iron rod; and those who refuse to yield to the power of his grace shall be made to sink under the power of his wrath." (Matthew Henry.)

Either God's people will allow Him to reign over them as their King, or He will rule over them through pagan, oppressive "kings". (Cf. 1 Sam 8.) One way or another, God will rule over all men.

V. 33 is straight-forward, leading up to the promise of v. 34. God's fury is poured out against rebellious Israel in the final destruction of Jerusalem. The chapter ends

with a message of victory, and He calls out a people for His name, and sanctifies them for His service.

Let me end with part of Poole's statement that we opened with:

He threateneth to rule over them with rigour, but with promise to gather them, to purge out the rebels, and accept the services of the faithful in his church, Eze 20:33-44.

Though the storm clouds gather and produce great storms, God always closes His threats of Judgment on the high note of purging sin, preservation of the elect, and the victory of Christ over all the forces of evil and powers of darkness. We have revealed to us a Victorious Christ, so why should we be discouraged?

Psalms 42:11 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

Antichrist identified

(Daniel 2:40-43) ... The messianic character of this fourth or Roman Empire was no less prominent than that of its predecessors, as Stauffer's Christ and the Caesars makes clear. Its imperial power was more syncretistic [attempt to merge different religions, cultures, or schools of thought] than that of its predecessors in that less of the native force served as the point of amalgamation. Its concept of unity was less organic and more legal, and hence, while weaker, it was a more enduring concept and was more readily transmitted to other cultures. The pax Romana or Roman peace was based on Roman law. This Roman law was well summarized in its spirit by Cicero in De Lebigus, in which he echoes the fundamental temper of his heritage, in the statement: "The safety of the people shall be the highest law" Out of this principle came thereafter the "ten horns," i.e., the fulness of imperial and national impulse and power (horn being an ancient symbol of power and dominion). The goal of power became the establishment of unity under law, law not as an abstract and remote concept, but law in a humanistic sense, in terms of human welfare and the rights of man. The revolutions of Western man, and now, increasingly, the revolutions and aspirations of Asia, Africa, and the entire world, are in terms of this anthropocentric concept, "the safety of the people shall be the highest law" The rights of man, human welfare, liberty, fraternity, and equality, all these things and more are the products of this, the ultimate moralism: salvation and the kingdom of man by law. Upon Rome and its worldwide heirs, "the ten horns," has fallen the mantle of the scribes and Pharisees! "Ten" as the number of fulness indicates the totality of man's statist devotion to this dream. (The numbers seven and ten, as terminal

numbers in their respective systems of numerics, and the number four, representing the four directions, are used repeatedly to typify totality and fulness.) Another horn or power arises, uprooting all other powers in every direction (the three horns, or points of the compass), exercising dominion with particularly bold claims and pretensions, "a mouth speaking great things." Even as the others represent empires and dominions, so this last represents a like power, claiming a one-world dominion under the sovereign unity of law; it is no more a person than its predecessors, and, like them, it is the epitome of the moralistic pretension to salvation by law. Since this is political prophecy, the reference is thus not to the ecclesiastical area to which Antichrist belongs, and hence not to Anti-christ. (Rushdoony, "Thy Kingdom Come, p. 51)

◇ **NOTE:**

1) "the safety of the people" is used by the state today to control every aspect of life, from seatbelts and helmets to gun control, as well as the "fool proof" stupid gas cans we are forced to use. Thus, man's salvation from himself is accomplished by all-encompassing laws, many times enforced by prison or even death.

2) the Antichrist "is no more a person than its predecessors". It is the concept of salvation by law, such as we see in the United Nations. The law cannot change the heart. Can law "convert a murderous nation" into a peaceful one?

FYI

Considering the events in Europe, seriously consider the following

Gentlemen:

Just received a call from a highly agitated bank manager who stated that within 60 days, banks will be greatly reducing their hours, days of operation, amount of withdrawals and a requirement to fill out "paperwork" if the amount is questioned by bank officials. Unless the form is completed, money will not be disbursed. What really irritated this manager is that after hearing our statements on the air, and receiving years of assurance that our positions and contacts were so much bravo sierra, now he hears from corporate people that it is apparently true after all. He said, "screw them, grab the money while you can." The parameters given were banks open two days a week for four to five hours with below minimum staffs, increased security and greatly reduced amounts of actual cash in the vault. Amount of withdrawal will be held to \$500-2000 per day per customer account--not customer. So my account could only have either my wife or I withdraw, not both. That level could change at ANY time. There is no plan (at least known) for automatic confiscation from accounts--yet, and he said that the banks hold the "own-

ership" authority and final disposition of any items found in safety deposit boxes. (surprise, surprise!) Withholding mortgage payments could result in expedited (30) day foreclosures and 15 day Sheriff's locks on your front door. The Federal Reserve could and will initiate other more draconian restrictions on all aspects of "private" banking and access to any property held by banks. It could include forfeiture of your primary (paid for) residence if your summer cottage has a mortgage and you fail to pony up to keeping it current or any forthcoming restrictions on your accounts.

Clearly, the only option is to close accounts or only keep funds that can be paid instantly to keep electric, water, or other critical accounts paid. Cash will be drying up---so, unless people hold precious metals, bullets (the new currency) or medicines, etc., you are screwed. Barter will be king. As the Colonel said yesterday, "the universe is contracting into the black hole. There is no way to escape its pull." 20 March 2013

The Lawman (I read it on the internet, so it must be true!! True or not, one should have at least a month's worth of cash on hand.)

<http://www.stevequayle.com/index.php?s=33&d=325>

The Moneychanger market report

On 28 February a gun battle erupted at a "compound" of the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas when Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, & Firearms Agents attacked. Two days before some of those same agents had been shooting together at a firing range with David Koresh, head of the Davidians. A 51 day standoff began, and finally the government had to attack the compound with armored personnel carriers and gasoline -- or was it napalm? -- to "save the children." Well, torch the children, save the children, it's an easy mistake to make if you're a US attorney general. Few Davidians survived. (2/28/13)

How Shall we then Marry

WANT TO KNOW WHY SINGLES ARE LEAVING THE CHURCHES? "Journalist Julia Duin prompts a similar question in her provocative book 'Quitting Church: Why the Faithful are Fleeing and What To Do About It' In a chapter called 'The Loneliest Number. Why Singles Over 35 are Saying Goodbye,' Duin notes that even while churches promote marriage and family in their teaching, preaching, small-group focus, fellowship, etc., often churchgoing singles who express a desire for marriage-minded singles are often given counsel that while true is also flat,

one-dimensional, and without mercy. 'Be content, Don't make marriage an idol,' Jesus is all you need.' Sometimes singles receive counsel from those who, like Job's counselors, mean well, but speak without knowledge regarding what God is doing in a person's life, saying things like, 'If God wants you to have a spouse, He will bring you one,' or 'You're not married because you want it too much.' While people mean well, such 'help' is not helpful, often leaving singles feeling frustrated and ashamed of their desire, and leading some to quit seeking counsel at church or date unbelievers or quit church altogether.

"As an example of the counsel that some singles receive, Duin tells the story of a man who sought and prayed for a wife through his 20s, 30s, into his 40s - this man attended several churches through the years, and at each one asked for prayer, help, and counsel from pastors and other leaders regarding marriage. But every time, the men whose counsel and prayer he sought discouraged his desire. One time he was told to 'stop whining,' that if God wanted him to be married He'd bring someone into his life. Another time he heard a sermon in which the pastor said that if a person hadn't married by his or her 40s, 'this was God's calling of celibacy.' The man recounts, 'I was rebuked by the elders because, according to them, the Bible says it is better to be single to serve God better. They, obviously, were married, and I didn't understand, if they felt so strongly about being single, why they themselves weren't single. When I would ask for prayer, I would get a lecture about being content, and was told I needed to stop focusing on self and serve God better.'" - Betsy Carlson, "How Should We Then Marry," in Baptist Bulletin, via "Sharper Iron" web site.

For complete article, see <http://sharperiron.org/article/how-should-we-then-marry>

Soy report

Colleges are being overrun with sodomites, and Christians still send their sons and daughters to them to be indoctrinated into the ways of the world.

"A great delusion.

When perversity proliferates, our very fundamentals perish.

Universities are tripping over themselves to accommodate. Six years ago, no student health plan covered 'gender reassignment surgery,' and now three dozen do, with 25 others offering related hormone therapy.

World mag. March 23, 2013.

Certainly, sin is taking its toll, but the female hormone, estrogen, is very much present in soy. And it is becoming more and more difficult to find non GMO and soy free food. We have a good friend who is a WV state policeman, and they regularly receive testosterone replacement shots.

"The Pride of Life"

"After a meteoric rise in the evangelical world, The King's College president Dinesh D'Souza now faces his board's likely questions about his relationship to a woman not his wife. (He spoke to about 2,000 people at First Baptist North in Spartanburg, S. C.) (His) speech earned him a standing ovation and a long line at the book signing table. Although D'Souza has been married for 20 years to his wife, Dixie, he was with a young woman and introduced her as his fiancée. (P) Finally event organizer Tony Beam escorted D'Souza and his 'fiancee' to the nearby Comfort Suites. Beam noted that they checked in together and were apparently sharing a room for the night. (P) D'Souza now receives in excess of \$10,000 from Christians groups. Christian News

(HITE'S HOME MISSION OUTREACH James M. Hite 816 E. Birch St., Palmyra, Pa. 17078-2704)

Not a Prophet Nor the Son of a Prophet

By Thomas Williamson

Some readers of this paper may wonder why I do not provide the latest updates on prophecy. Inquiring minds want to know when and where the Battle of Armageddon will be fought, when the Rapture will take place, when the Antichrist will show up, etc.

The reason that I do not venture to provide such information is that I do not know the future, and those who do claim to have such future knowledge have been consistently wrong in their predictions. If I were to crank out a prophecy sheet full of speculations, my pronouncements on the subject would be of no more value than those which follow, which were all wrong.

In 165 AD Justin Martyr warned of the imminent coming of Antichrist, saying, "He whom Daniel foretells would have dominion for a time, and times, and a half, is even already at the door, about to speak blasphemies and daring things against the Most High."

In 365 AD, Hilary of Poitiers declared that the world would end that year. He said, "Let us look for Christ's coming, for Antichrist is already in power." His

sidekick **St. Martin of Tours** stated that the end of the world would be no later than 400 AD and that “There is no doubt that the Antichrist has already been born.”

Sulpicius Severus, commenting on St. Martin’s prophecy, said, “He told us, too, that there was no doubt but that Antichrist, having been conceived by an evil spirit, was already born, and had, by this time, reached the years of boyhood, while he would assume power as soon as he reached the proper age. Now, this is the 8th year since we heard these words from his lips: you may conjecture, then, how nearly about to happen are those things which are feared in the future.”

In early church ages, the emperors Caligula, Nero, Domitian, Valerian, Constantius II and Justinian, also Pope Sylvester and Vandal kings Genseric and Huneric, were all thought to be the Antichrist.

In 409 AD, Jerome wrote that “Antichrist is near whom the Lord Jesus Christ shall consume with the spirit of His mouth.”

Pope Gregory the Great in 597 AD described the Antichrist as “near at hand.” Four hundred years later, Wulfstan said that Antichrist’s time was “near at hand.”

In 1095 Benzo, Bishop of Alba, foretold that Henry N would march to Jerusalem and meet and defeat the Antichrist there.

About the year 1120, Norbert of Xanten “declared himself quite certain that it would be during this present generation that he [the Antichrist] would be revealed.”

John of Toledo predicted the end of the world in 1186. **Joachim of Fiore** taught that the Antichrist was already in the world and would be defeated by English King Richard III (who died in 1199) and that there would be a great rebirth of the world in 1205. **Matthew Paris** in 1242 said the Antichrist would come in 1250.

In 1260 Brother Arnold declared that the Pope would shortly be unmasked as the Antichrist. **In 1266 William of St. Amour** said “It seems probable, therefore, that we are near the End of the world and closer to the perils of the latest times which will be before the coming of Antichrist.”

In 1268, Roger Bacon wrote that “all wise men believe that we are not far removed from the times of Antichrist.” **Bernardo Gui said**, “This Antichrist, they say, has already been born and will run his course, according to some of them in the year of our Lord 1325.”

Jean de Roquetaillade in 1300 stated that the Antichrist would arrive by 1366, while **Miltiz of Kromeriz** pinpointed the Beast’s grand entry to take

place in 1367.

Tommaso Campanella said that the sun and earth would collide in 1603. **Benjamin Keach** and **Pierre Jureau** agreed that the world would end in 1689, while **Emanuel Swedenborg** predicted the end of the world for 1757.

In the 1770’s, Samuel West predicted the downfall of the Antichrist in 1813, while **George Bell in 1796** predicted Antichrist’s downfall either in 1797 or 1813 (he wasn’t sure which). **John Wesley** said Antichrist would be overthrown in 1836, while John Bengel predicted the end of the world for that year.

During the Middle Ages, many popes, too numerous to mention, were identified as the Antichrist, as well as Mohammed, Frederick Barbarossa, Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II, King Alphonso of Castile, King Lewis of Bavaria, Saladin and Genghis Khan.

During the 17th Century, the following personages were identified as the Antichrist: Archbishop William Laud, King Charles I, Oliver Cromwell, Russian Czar Alexis and Russian Orthodox Patriarch Nikon.

In the 18th Century, Peter the Great, King Louis XIV, King Louis XV, King George III, Lord Bute, Pope Clement XIV and Napoleon Bonaparte were all hailed as the Antichrist. In the 19th Century, prophecy gurus were convinced that Napoleon III would be the Antichrist.

When the Pope declared himself to be infallible in 1870 **A.J. Gordon** identified this as the culminating act of Antichrist in fulfillment of the prophecy of the “Man of Sin” of 2 Thessalonians 2

Mother Shipton in the 16th Century allegedly said “The world to an end shall come in 1881.” This quote was probably made up several centuries after her time by her admiring publicist Charles Hindley.

Another 16th Century prophet, Nostradamus, said “In the year 1999 and 7 months/ The Great King of Terror will come from the sky/ He will bring back Genghis Khan/ Before and after War rules happily.” I don’t recall anything like this happening in 1999. Some wags thought that the prophecy would be fulfilled if Stephen King, a noted author of terror novels, were to go skydiving.

Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormons, said “I prophesy in the name of the Lord God, and let it be written - the Son of Man will not come in the clouds of heaven till I am 85 years old.” [The year 1890]

In 1970 Hal Lindsey published “The Late Great Planet Earth” which predicted that by 1988 Christ

would return, the United States would no longer be a powerful nation and Europe would be ruled by the Antichrist.

About the same time **Arnold Murray** predicted that the Antichrist would appear before 1981 and that the **Battle of Armageddon** would begin by June, 1985.

Identification of current events with the intricate and obscure prophecies in the Book of Revelation should be approached with caution, since such interpretations may be no more reliable than the constant false alarms about the coming of Antichrist..

One particularly absurd example of this type of interpretation was that of Charles Manson, cult leader and mass murderer, who believed that the Beatles were the “four angels “ of Revelation 9:15. After all, they had hair like women (Revelation 9:8); their guitars were the “breastplates” of Revelation 9:9, and the cords from their electric guitars were the “tails like scorpions” of Revelation 9:10.

Manson’s ravings are an extreme example of this genre of imaginative interpretations of the ancient prophecies of Revelation. Let us avoid making ourselves look foolish with such speculative and sensationalist interpretations, which stray far from the original text.

From The SHTFplan.com

“Like All Sleight-of-Hand Games It Cannot Continue Forever”

Spring is in the air, stock markets are driving higher than ever before, and happy days are here again.

Or are they?

Shtf quotes from “Market Ticker”

The facts are that last night Japanese machinery orders fell 13% in January, despite the Japanese government pledging to “beat deflation” with new monetary operations (read: printing money) that has driven the Yen weaker by some 20% in the last couple of months. That move started in December and as such should have been reflected in January’s order figures – if anyone believed it in Japanese business.

They clearly don’t.

Then there’s China. They have a major property bubble problem, which is what always comes when you start printing cheap “money” (really credit) and allowing it to go into the real estate market. In China’s case it’s built to the point of literal cities with nobody living in them. That will eventually burst, and when it does you’ve got trouble. China has the “luxury” of

having an effective command economy since they’re a communist nation, but even that won’t change the laws of mathematics.

Finally we have Europe. It’s a basket case. Europe has failed to deal with its banks, it has failed to deal with its budget deficits and it is still trying to find a way to “pull forward demand” to fill fiscal holes. It’s not working because it can’t — the leverage was never taken out. Not there and not here.

We’re “printing” \$85 billion a month and yet can only muster a 0.1% GDP print? Let’s assume we manage to “rebound” and get a 2% GDP number. We’re diluting purchasing power by –8% annually! Where is that going? Right into the middle class and below’s pocketbook; like a thief in the night it comes and steals their buying power and that ultimately has to reflect in what they purchase — and thus what people sell.

There are those who argue that the housing market has “turned.” Really? Look at Las Vegas, where there are tens of thousands of homes sitting with people in them who haven’t made a mortgage payment in three years!

... The key question: Is this a stable environment or is it another bubble that will bust when cap rates fall? And if the latter, and you erroneously bet on a “housing recovery”, are you going to get reamed twice in a decade?

... In short what we have here is a market that is levitating upward not due to an improving macro environment but rather due to Fed monetary games. This can and has worked for a while, but like all sleight-of-hand games it cannot continue forever, and won’t. The structural imbalances that have been built over the last four years set the table for a snapback move worse than 2008.

This morning CNBS is playing a card that we “should” put forward fiscal policy mirroring The Fed’s views. These clowns actually believe that the laws of mathematics have been repealed?

Give me a break. The guy who decides he doesn’t need more than 2 hours of sleep a night and starts shoving coke up his nose to achieve that outcome may indeed produce more work with less sleep and appear to be more productive.

For a while.

But eventually he has a heart attack, and the question becomes this: What are you going to do when you collapse due to the abuse you have heaped on your body and now are able to produce nothing?

Our economy is experiencing chest pains and rapidly-escalating amounts of coke are going up the nose on a daily basis.

Source: Karl Denninger's Market Ticker, <http://market-ticker.org/akcs-www?post=218592>

Posted, 3/11/13

◇ **SHTF CONTINUES:**

Fundamentally, nothing has changed since 2007. The only thing keeping the stock market rising and the economy seemingly stable is the literal Trillions of dollars of funny-money being slammed into the system on a regular basis. They did it in the U.S., in Europe and in China.

As Karl Denninger points out, this is akin to a cocaine addict continuously snorting to maintain their high. It always ends badly for the addict, as it will for us.

There is a strong chance that we see a stock market crash, or at the very least a massive correction, in coming weeks or months.

But, there is also the possibility that it keeps going higher, an effect of the Fed's monetary easing and cheap money being given to banks who then leverage that money in stocks and other financial instruments. In this scenario, as we've seen since 2008, prices for essential goods continue to rise. What won't rise is wages commensurate with the price inflation, which means that things like food, gas, and electricity become so expensive that disposable income shrinks to near zero (or goes negative) for the majority of Americans.

There is no way out.

All roads lead to a detonation of the financial, monetary and economic systems as we have come to know them.

(http://www.shtfplan.com/headline-news/like-all-sleight-of-hand-games-it-cannot-continue-forever_03112013)

◇ **SO LONG, YANKEES! CHINA AND BRAZIL DITCH US DOLLAR IN TRADE DEAL BEFORE BRICS SUMMIT.**

<http://www.ibtimes.com/so-long-yankees-china-brazil-ditch-us-dollar-trade-deal-brics-summit-1153415>

Education in evil

University Takes Action to Punish Student

Mar 25, 2013, by Todd Starnes

A Florida Atlantic University student who filed a complaint against his professor after he was ordered to stomp on the name of Jesus has been brought up on academic charges by the school and may no longer

attend class, according to documents obtained by Fox News....

<http://radio.foxnews.com/toddstarnes/top-stories/university-files-charges-against-student-who-refused-to-stomp-on-jesus.html>

Christians who have sacrificed their children to the wicked one in stasis education are the ones who have yealed this nation to the devil.

Personal

It has been a busy month, to put it mildly.

We went to Ohio for a week, leaving after my appointment at the eye clinic at the Martainsburg WV VA hosptial. We stopped for a day and night at Bettie's youngest daughter (9 children, 15 years old and down) in Hocking Hills, where they have a cabin rental business. Bettie had an abundance of fabric for them, and the girls love to sew.

We then went on to my eldest daughter's in Goshen OH, were we spend a couple days. There the two, Bettie and Jessica, upholstered a chair. We came back, bringing Jessica with us, and another hassock to upholster. They made several trips to the "Rio Mall", where Jessica found a huge amount of new clothing and shoes for their two children for something like 5 cents per piece, including shoes.

After several days, we took Jessica home, meeting her husband half way where she went back home.

We got back, and then two young ladies came out from the DC area with a chair to upholster. The three did a several day upholstering job in 2 long days.

So from Feb 11th to March 5th, it was non-stop, but we loved every minute of the time with children and grandchildren.

We go across the mountains on US 50, a 2 lane, very steep and very crooked highway from Mt Storm WV to Clarksburt WV, where 50 turns into a 4 lane. From Mt Storm, where we pick up 50 to Clarksburg is only 75 miles, but it is a 2 hour trip, if we do not get behind a truck. When we came back, we noticed that a terrific ice storm had come through, leaving phone lines dangling, and even laying on the ground, as well as many trees broken. The electric and phone as well as the road crews have their work cut out for them in those WV mountains.

The last few months have been cold and windy, more so than usual, teens to high 20s with 20-30 mph winds. Our house being in the open on a montain ridge, it made the house hard to heat. We have used at least twice as much wood as normal so far this year in the winter that

will not stop. Blowing cold and snow is common for winter, but this is spring!! (However, a few days into April saw the winter “break” enough to plant fruit trees and restore our wood supply. We brought a young man down from PA to help us for a week. Though Bettie and I could do the work, he can do it much faster. Keep up with us: [facebook.com/ovid.need](https://www.facebook.com/ovid.need) & [facebook.com/bettie.need](https://www.facebook.com/bettie.need))

March 6, we got some snow, about 14 inches, but we did not need to go anywhere. It has warmed up some, so it was gone in a few days. The only thing it cost us was a mail box, which fell victim to a snow plow. Spring came at its appointed time, and like so many others caught in the grip of the latest storm, winter would not let go. Then March 24, 25, we got another 8.5 inches of snow. The high temperatures of 30-34 have left a good bit of snow on the ground., and “spring” kept coming down for next several days. This summer is going to require serious wood splitting.

We had enough snow on the ground to have a “White Easter” up here on the mountain. However, I remember several “White Easters” in Indiana.

Recently, a pastor friend found that I had not gone to college, so he asked me how I studied. He said he had a man in his church who was very discouraged because he had not attended Bible College, and would like for me to meet him. He is several hours away from our home in WV, so I sent him this link to pass on to the man to encourage him to get in the Holy Book.

<http://www.biblicalexaminer.org/Study%20list.html>

The Great Cholesterol Myth

Why Lowering Your Cholesterol Won't Prevent Heart Disease — and the Statin-free Plan That Will

By Jonny Bowden, Ph.D., C.N.S., and Stephen Sinatra, M.D., F.A.C.C., Beverly, Massachusetts: Fair Winds Press, 2012, 239 pages, softcover.

◇ **“CHOLESTEROL IS HARMLESS!”**

That brief declaration, the title of the third chapter of *The Great Cholesterol Myth: Why Lowering Your Cholesterol Won't Prevent Heart Disease — and the Statin-free Plan That Will*, sums up the book's unconventional but convincing message. Cholesterol, co-authors Jonny Bowden and Stephen Sinatra argue, not only is nearly irrelevant to heart disease but actually has benefits for the body. And, they say, while patients waste their time and money on diets and drugs to reduce their cholesterol levels, often harming themselves in the process, the real causes of heart disease go untreated.

Bowden, a nutritionist and author of best-sellers

including *The 150 Healthiest Foods on Earth*, and Sinatra, a cardiologist and author of *The Sinatra Solution: Metabolic Cardiology*, also a best-seller, state that they decided to pen *The Great Cholesterol Myth* “because we believe that you have been completely misled, misinformed, and in some cases, directly lied to about cholesterol.” The notion that cholesterol causes heart disease, they claim, is “one of the most indestructible and damaging myths in medical history.”

How did this myth come about? It all began six decades ago when biologist Ancel Keys invented what is known as the lipid hypothesis: the postulate that too much saturated fat in the diet leads to heart disease. After his theory was rejected by a World Health Organization conference in 1954, Keys assembled the “Seven Countries Study,” which “proved” his theory: In every one of the countries in the study, there was a direct relationship among saturated fat consumption, cholesterol levels, and heart disease.

There's just one problem: Keys had access to data from 22 countries but cherry-picked only the seven that fit his hypothesis. Other researchers have shown that by selecting other combinations of countries, one could reach just about any conclusion he desired, including the polar opposite of Keys'.

Keys nevertheless persisted in promoting the lipid hypothesis and, as a member of the American Heart Association's nutrition advisory committee, got his theory incorporated into the organization's dietary recommendations, where it has remained ever since.

But it was George McGovern's Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs that was “directly responsible for transforming the idea that dietary fat causes heart disease from a not-so-solid hypothesis into solidified dogma,” according to Bowden and Sinatra. In 1976, the committee issued a report that recommended cutting fat intake to bring down cholesterol levels. The report was then picked up by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which turned its recommendations into official policy. That policy remains in place, with only minor adjustments, to this day.

Not a single study, however, has ever demonstrated that consuming saturated fat causes cholesterol and, more importantly, that cholesterol causes heart disease. Indeed, the most famous such study, which compared heart disease rates and diet in Framingham, Massachusetts, found that the people who ate the most calories, saturated fat, and cholesterol were actually

among the healthiest and had the lowest cholesterol levels. It also found that there was little difference between the cholesterol levels of those who developed heart disease and those who didn't.

Bowden and Sinatra do not argue that cholesterol is entirely meaningless. They note the progress that has been made in identifying high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol, which is generally regarded as beneficial, and low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, which is considered harmful. They explain that it is now known that within these types are subtypes that can be neutral (LPL-A), beneficial (HDL-2), or harmful (LDL-B). Knowing the quantity of each subtype floating around in one's bloodstream can help predict heart disease, they aver, but knowing the aggregate level of HDL, LDL, or overall cholesterol is fairly useless.

Moreover, they say, cutting one's cholesterol level can actually be harmful to one's health. "Contrary to cholesterol's negative reputation, your body simply can't live without it." The body — primarily the liver — manufactures cholesterol, and cholesterol is used to make brain cells. If cholesterol levels drop too low, memory loss can occur. Cholesterol also helps fight infection — yet another reason it's good to have around.

As to the notion that consuming saturated fat leads to heart disease, numerous studies have found no correlation between the two. Yes, eating saturated fat raises overall cholesterol levels, but it also raises HDL and LDL-A more than LDL-B. Worse still, the conventional advice to replace saturated fats with carbohydrates and vegetable oils may actually result in a greater risk of heart disease.

If saturated fat does not cause cholesterol and cholesterol does not cause heart disease, what, then, does cause it?

According to Bowden and Sinatra, "The primary cause of heart disease is inflammation." Specifically, when the artery walls become inflamed, the immune system leaps into action to counteract the inflammation. If this inflammation occurs on a regular basis, however, the immune system goes into overdrive, damaging the artery, creating plaque, and clotting blood. If the clots end up blocking blood vessels leading to the heart, a heart attack occurs.

◇ AND WHAT CAUSES INFLAMMATION?

First, LDL-B can become oxidized — damaged by an attack from an oxygen free radical, an electron that has escaped from an oxygen atom. Since LDL-B is a very tiny particle, it can penetrate the artery wall;

and because it has been oxidized, the immune system perceives it as dangerous and launches into the process described above.

The second major cause of inflammation, according to the authors, is sugar, a substance that Westerners consume in vast quantities. Eating sugar causes insulin to be released into the bloodstream; insulin raises blood pressure and increases cholesterol. Chronically high levels of insulin lead to a condition called insulin resistance, which — besides contributing to obesity and diabetes — transforms insulin from an anti-inflammatory compound into a highly inflammatory one.

Sugar also attaches itself to proteins, making them unable to pass through small blood vessels. Since cholesterol is carried through the bloodstream by proteins, sugar can damage cholesterol particles; and if those particles are of the LDL-B subtype, inflammation can result. No wonder Bowden and Sinatra maintain that "the number one dietary contributor to heart disease is sugar"!

Stress, too, contributes to heart disease. Chronic stress increases cholesterol and blood pressure, hardens the blood vessels, and can cause internal blood clots.

Modern medicine, however, tends to ignore these factors and focus most of its attention on cholesterol. A patient found to have a high cholesterol level will be told to go on a low-fat, low-cholesterol diet. If this fails to bring down his cholesterol, he will probably be prescribed a statin drug such as Lipitor. That drug will indeed reduce his cholesterol. This, of course, will do little to reduce his risk of heart disease (aside from some mild anti-inflammatory effects), but it can unleash a host of negative side effects on his body. Memory loss, muscle pain and weakness (including difficulty walking), and numbness are just a few of the serious problems statins can cause.

Some of this is the result of the drugs doing exactly what they were prescribed to do: lower cholesterol. The rest, the authors write, can largely be attributed to the fact that "statin drugs significantly deplete your body's stores of coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10)." CoQ10 is used throughout the body for producing energy and preventing oxidation, but its greatest concentration is found in the heart. "How ironic that a drug given to prevent heart disease ... substantially weakens the very organ it's meant to protect!"

Statins are not all bad, as far as Bowden and Sinatra are concerned. They have benefits for middle-aged men

who have already developed cardiovascular disease, and Sinatra says he still prescribes them on occasion for such patients. But, the authors argue, “overuse” of statins “for long-term use in otherwise healthy people is simply not justifiable.”

Having demolished the conventional approach to preventing heart disease, the authors go on to suggest diet and lifestyle changes that they believe really will do the trick. Among them: Eat berries, grass-fed beef, vegetables, garlic, and even dark chocolate; cut back on sugar, processed carbohydrates, and trans fats. Get a massage. Take up a hobby. And build and maintain “strong emotional connections with other people,” which they say is “the closest thing we have to a panacea” besides exercise. They also recommend certain medical tests to help the reader learn if he is at risk for heart disease.

The Great Cholesterol Myth is a relatively easy and very informative read. Bowden and Sinatra are engaging writers who know how to make complex physiological phenomena understandable to the average person without oversimplifying. The book intersperses interesting anecdotes with hard data. It offers a compelling critique of the mainstream approach to cardiovascular disease along with practical advice that, while not as effortless as taking a prescription pill, is likely far more effective at countering the real causes of heart disease. If you have heart disease or are at all concerned about ending up with it, you just might want to pick up a copy for yourself — and for your doctor. •

(THE NEW AMERICAN • MARCH 18, 2013) The People's Pharmacy (NPR every Saturday morning, 7:00 AM) interviewed Bowden and Sinatra in March. You can find the interview at <http://www.peoplespharmacy.com/2013/03/09/895-the-great-cholesterol-myth/>

Larry Lilly

New Beginnings

(A page from yesteryear). 2007

Have you ever thought, “If only I could go back and do this differently, my life would be so much better?” I sure have. To think this thought is not in itself defeating. To set and pine your life away because of poor decisions is the life quenching mistake too many of us make and make and make again.

You cannot go back and redo the decisions of yesterday, let alone ones from years ago. So what are we to do?

First, forget about going back to any point in your life and redoing some part of it. I wish it could be done.

Carl Bard put a statement out that is of great help to me and perhaps it will help you as you wrestle with living a more fulfilling life in 2007. (Or now 2013).

“Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from NOW and make a brand new ending.”

Now is really the only time we have to do anything. And when we learn to start now, we do cause a different ending than if we just mope through now. A wasted now can become a wasted life.

Years ago I made horrendous boondoggle, one from which I thought at the time was going to do me in for good. It almost did. I heard a man give a speech and in his speech he said; “Start now, where you are with what you have and stay at it. Yesterday with all of its failure will in time take care of itself.” I was in such a pickle that I do not recall the speaker’s name, but I testify that his statement helped me to get on track with Jesus. As a result of the above statement I began a ministry to help fallen Christian workers get up and go on for God. Over the course of several years some three thousand men and women were touched by this effort. A skeptic asked, “How can you with a good conscience help disqualified people to get back in the Lord’s work?” I simply answered, “As near as I can tell, the blood of Jesus Christ is so powerful as to re-qualify even the disqualified.”

Probable presidential candidate Newt Gingrich has recently admitted to an affair, during of all times, the investigation of President Bill Clinton. I have been impressed with the openness and contrition of Newt. Please understand I am Apolitical, but I am encouraged when any person owns up and asks for forgiveness. Mr. Gingrich stated, “I’ve gotten on my knees and sought God’s forgiveness.” I am thankful that the blood of Christ is sufficient for Mr. Gingrich. And for you and ME!!!

You by the grace of Jesus can and should make the hours and days count for God’s glory, regardless of your failures in the past.

As I often point out, you may sit down to a plate of consequence, but the Lord will permit that plate to run its course and you will have the inward assurance that since you have applied His solution to your failure, your sin, He is working on the NOW of your life and since NOW is the only usable time in any life, go ahead and start using this sacred time and start doing it NOW.

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Was Sandy Hook preplanned ... the adults and

children pre-selected ... watch this and you decide.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrHI7kmqn2Y

Prophets of profit

Speaking on 1 Cor 11:25, 26, Spurgeon said,

“Till he come.” I must not say anything about that, except that he will come, and I think that ought to be enough for Christians. To my great sorrow, I had sent to me, this last week, two or three copies of a tract purporting, according to the title-page, to have been written by myself, prophesying the coming of the Lord in the year 1866. Now, you may expect to hear of me being in Bedlam, whenever, by my tongue or my pen, I give countenance to such rubbish. The Lord may come in 1866, and I shall be glad to see him; but I do not believe he will; and one reason why I don't believe he will, I have told to you before: it is because all these false twopenny-halfpenny prophets say that he will. If they said he would not, I should begin to think he would; but inasmuch as they are all crying as one man that he will come in 1866, or 1867, I am inclined to think he will not come at any such time. It seems to me that there are a very great many prophecies which must be fulfilled before the coming of Christ, which will not be fulfilled in the next twelve months; and I prefer, beloved, to stand in the position of a man who knows neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of man cometh; always looking for his appearing, but never interfering with those dates and figures, which seem to me to be proper amusement for young ladies who have nothing to do, and who take to them instead of reading novels, and for certain divines who have exhausted their stock of knowledge about sound doctrine, and therefore make up, and gain a little ephemeral popularity by shuffling texts of Scripture as the Norwood gipsies shuffled cards in days gone by. Leave the prophets to divide the profits which they get from simpletons; and as for you, watch for Christ's coming, whether it shall be to-day, or to-morrow, and set no limits, and no dates, and no times. Only work while it is called to-day; work so that, when he cometh, he may find you, as faithful servants, ready to come in to the wedding with him. “Till he come,” then, the Lord's supper is to be a showing forth of this death.

(CHS, Sermon, The Lord's Supper, Simple but Sublime. Lord's day evening, 1866. Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, Pilgrim Publishers, V. 55, p 318.)

In other words, men like to speak on “prophecy” because of the money in it. Few seem to care whether or not what they say is according to the truth.

1 Samuel 4

Samuel is now recognized in all Israel as a prophet

from God. How old he is here is not known, but he is probably quite young. In Old testament times, a man did not enter into his life's work until the age of 30, but I doubt Samuel is that old. God is now going to fulfill his twice delivered words of judgment against Eli and his household — Eli's sin was that he honoured his children over the Lord by not doing what he could to restrain them, 2:34 & 3:11-14. Remember, at least one of the boys has a family, for his wife later dies in childbirth.

Vv. 1-3. Israel went to battle at Samuel's word, but Israel was smitten anyway – 4,000 were killed.

Note that though the Lord sent Israel into battle against HIS enemies, Israel was soundly defeated, and many lives lost. The question immediately arose, “Where is the Lord? If he is in this, then why were we defeated?”

There are times when the Lord sends his people to their own destruction. He does it so that the results of their sins may catch up with them. And here the whole nation will start paying the price for Eli's sin of not doing what he could to restrain his grown sons.

Question: How much responsibility did the nation of Israel have for Eli's actions concerning his sons? How much of society's destruction today is because God's people refuse to instruct their children properly in the ways of the Lord? How long before the Lord sends America, a supposed Christian nation, into a battle designed for its destruction? Maybe the War of Northern Aggression was such a war.

At the very least, as previously mentioned, parents must do what they can to restrain their children.

The book of Judges closes with *In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.* (Jud. 21:25.) 1 Samuel 4:3 takes place about 235 years latter. V. 3 shows us that Israel's supposedly Godly religion had degenerated to idolatry.

It was known throughout Israel that the word of the Lord came through Samuel, but they did not check with him, v. 1. Rather, they acted according to their feelings about the matter, and took the Ark to battle.

Here we see why God allowed the entire nation to pay the price for Eli's sin — the nation had reverted to idolatry – it looked to the ark of God to save them rather than to the God of the ark to save them. Though the idolatry was under the guise of worshiping God, it was still idolatry.

A probable reason the Ark is missing today is because people would worship it as the source of power instead

of the Lord God.

Vv. 3-11

Vv. 1-3 presupposes that the people were confident enough they had the Lord on their side that they boldly went to war against a far superior force. And when they were defeated, they still had confidence the Lord was with them. The people knew why they were smitten before their enemy – that is, the Lord was not with them. But notice the question: Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us this day?

Though they asked the question, they made no effort to find the answer. The question was an empty question, for they wanted no answer. It was simply a statement, for they did not enquire of the Lord through a man of God: Samuel or a priest. Rather, they tried a new thing, the ark – it may save us out of the hand of our enemies.

How many people have I met that when things go against them, rather than stopping long enough to see if there is sin in their lives, they simply try a new religious procedure? They switch churches or even switch religions until they find one that suits their fancy.

People will ask, Why Lord? But the question is an empty question, for they make no effort to find an honest answer from the Lord. They simply ask the question to be asking it; they do not really want an answer.

◇ **ILLUSTRATION:**

I have been asked that question by people, yet when I try to answer it the way I might see things, it is obvious they do not want an answer. They only want to ask the question; then they want some religious experience to go through to ease their minds.

V. 3, there was no feeling of remorse nor spirit of repentance – in fact, remorse nor repentance never entered into their minds after the death of so many people.

Their answer was to take the ark of the covenant of the Lord with them to battle, believing the presence of the Lord was bound up in the ark. **IN OTHER WORDS**, the outward show of more religion will solve one's problem, rather than a change of heart toward the Lord and toward sin.

He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them. (Ps. 145:19 [69:35].) For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; he will save us. (Isa. 33:22, &c.)

Note that the people identified the ark as the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts. But they recognized the Lord in title only, for they had clearly departed from

the covenant law of the Lord, or they would not have been smitten before their enemies.

It may save us... The Roman religion is built around convincing people that “holy” relics will save them, and the Church controls the relics.

Rome is not the only one with this problem. Even good sincere Bible believing people are caught in the same trap, e.g., our religious activity will save us (church attendance, giving, &c.); our jobs will save us; our education will save us; our retirement plan will save us; our government will save us, &c.

Hope in human activity replaces the power of God, who acts according to his word.

V. 4, So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth between the cherubims: and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God

Note: The ark was recognized as the place where the Lord dwelt between the cherubims. Yet the two wicked sons of Eli were the guardians of the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts. The people knew what kind of men Hophni and Phinehas were, yet they permitted them to guard the ark.

IN OTHER WORDS, the people saw no problem with these wicked men being in this very close service of the Lord. They were no better than Eli, who made no effort to separate the wicked men from the close service of the Lord.

Many today see no problem with wicked people “serving the Lord,” as long as the ‘motives’ are good. Sodomites and pedophiles are permitted to be “pastors” and “priests of Rome.” Adulterers, Whoremongers and thieves are allowed to remain in places of church leadership. Far too many times there is no connection between men's evil deeds and the Lord's service. **WHAT KIND OF WRATH IS BEING STORED UP FOR SUCH** ungodly associations?

No wonder the people made no connection between their sins and their defeat when Eli refused to remove the evil sons from their place of authority.

TODAY – no wonder that people cannot make the “cause and effect” connection when “religious” leaders refuse to make that connection – wicked men attempting to guard the sacred things of the Lord. God will not permit any kind of victory over the enemy when such things are done.

V. 5, shows us the strong confidence of Israel, but Israel's confidence was in the wrong thing. No matter

how sincere or confident people may be, there is “death in the pot” unless the confidence is in the right thing. Sincerity never saved anyone. People must act according to God’s revealed truth, or they will perish.

Vv. 6, 7, heard the noise,.. said, God is come into the camp. The pagans had more confidence in the Lord than did God’s people; they knew the power was in the Lord, but Israel depended upon a representation of the Lord. However, the pagans can be excused for viewing Israel’s God as being represented by the ark, for their gods were understood to be represented in their idols.

◇ **ILLUSTRATION:**

Some time ago there was a story of a tavern in Florida. The people tried everything they could think of to get rid of the tavern, with no success. Then they decided to pray that God would remove it. Lightning struck the tavern, and it burned to the ground. Insurance refused to cover the tavern, looking upon the lightning as an “act of God.” So the owner sued the church, claiming the cause of the destruction of his business was the prayers of the people. The people then went to court, and said their prayers had nothing to do with the lightning. The tavern believed in the power of God more than did the people. (Obviously, the money involved influenced the belief on each side.)

V. 8, they got their story mixed up (the story at this point is over 300 years old), but they had more faith in the power of God than did Israel.

V. 9, servants unto the Hebrews. The world would rather do anything, even die, than be subject to godly rule. However, there were exceptions, i.e., the inhabitants of Gibeon, Joshua chapter 9. What Gibeon did when he submitted to Israel was wholly by the sovereign grace of God. See my study in that chapter.

I will have to admit that the Hebrews’ rule at the time of Samuel was probably not very godly.

Vv. 10, 11.

1) Israel was smitten rather than the Philistines. Israel’s cause was just, but the sin in the camp caused God’s hand to be against his people, giving the enemy the victory. Thus a good cause does not guarantee success, nor does confidence in one’s abilities and strength.

Israel shouted while the Philistines trembled, but the shout was a hollow show, for the Lord was against them.

2) The ark was with them, but its presence was a false assurance, for the Lord was not because of sin. Religious forms and rituals will not save one in the time

of need; only obedience to the Lord will deliver from the enemy.

3) The ark of God went with Israel to battle, but they trusted in a form of Christianity while denying the power thereof, obedience to Christ and his entire word.

Trust it, the ark, rather than the Lord, and die. (Pro. 16:25.) It seems right to trust the things of v. 3, above. Israel, and Eli’s sons, trusted in the external marks of being God’s people, and they perished. The Lord has not bound himself to external signs and symbols, but to his law-word.

4) As priests, the boys were in charge of the ark of God. They saw the ark of God as a means of livelihood – a means of support for themselves, in a manner they enjoyed. So they defended it with their lives. Such a “fallen” trust is common today as “Christian” workers are in the ministry for the benefit for themselves – it provides a good living for those who will compromise God’s total word.

5) God’s word to Eli begins its fulfillment as his two evil sons are killed. The boys are the ones who took the ark into battle. Thus being close to the Lord in a physical sense, physically involved in the Lord’s work, will not spare one in the time of judgment.

6) The battle was in the open (13:5, 2 Sam. 1:6) where the Philistines could use their chariots. Israel was forbidden to have chariots. Because footmen were powerless against chariots without God, this insured Israel would only go to battle and win if they were right with the Lord. (Ps. 78:60, Josh 11:6, 17:16-18.)

Not only did they lose the battle, but they lost the ark of God. Idolatry renders God’s people powerless in the fact of the enemy. But even if God’s people could have used chariots, they still would have lost the battle, for their enemy was not the Philistines, but God.

7) Not only did the death of 30,000 show that God was against them, but the loss of the ark proved that God had forsaken them.

We should note here that believing in a merely historical Christ will result in death and destruction today, no matter how much one may preach, teach, hear, read, talk, discuss and dispute about him. Without Biblical trust, including turning from sin and obedience to his word, in him, there is no hope. His power to work comes from the inside of his faithful people, not from the outside of an individual.

Vv. 12-18

Bad news travels fast. A runner came from the battle, which was about 42 miles away (Gill), bearing the sad

news of Israel's defeat, and of the many dead.

1) Eli's heart trembled for the ark of God rather than for his sons. He obviously knew of his sons' wickedness, and expected God's movement against them. However, in the prophecies, nothing had been said of the ark of God.

2) Despite his serious fault concerning his children, he loved the Lord and was genuinely concerned about the ark of God.

Note, however, that his concern for the ark of God did not cancel out his hatred for God when it came to his children. Love for the Lord in one area will not influence the Lord to overlook evil in another. We cannot "store" up righteousness in one area, so we can sin in another.

3) The runner brought the news of the defeat to the city, and the people raised a cry of anguish.

Notice the difference between this situation and the situation with Joshua, Joshua 7. Joshua cried out to the Lord, seeking to know why the Lord delivered them to the enemies. That is not what was done here. Joshua cried out over the loss of power with the Lord; the people here cried out over the loss of power over their enemies, and over the loss of the ark, a symbol of their God.

4) Eli enquired about the noise in the city. The runner hurried to Eli, and gave him the sad news of the slaughter of thirty thousand footmen, the death of the sons and the loss of the ark of God. It was the news of the loss of the ark of God that caused Eli to faint, not the news of his sons.

5) The word of God is clear, particularly in the New Testament — Church leadership is based upon godly leadership in the home.

And he died being 98 years old, and having judged Israel 40 years.

Observation: I wonder how Eli became a judge in Israel. We really have no record of God speaking through him. We do know, however, from his attitude with Samuel that he was a godly man, except in the matter of his sons. The sons were grown men who acted like pagans, and he did nothing to hinder them.

Eli stands as a warning to all heads of Christian families (and congregations) — overindulgence by the head leads to the destruction of the family and of society.

Matthew Henry points out that the ark of God never returned to Shilo, and the city dwindled away to nothing:

All the city cried out (#1Sa 4:13), and well they might,

for, besides that this was a calamity to all Israel, it was a particular loss to Shiloh, and the ruin of that place; for, though the ark was soon rescued out of the hands of the Philistines, yet it never returned to Shiloh again; their candlestick was removed out of its place, because they had left their first love, and their city dwindled, and sunk, and came to nothing. Now God forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, they having driven him from them; and the tribe of Ephraim, which had for 340 years been blessed with the presence of the ark in it, lost the honour (#Ps 78:60,67), and, some time after, it was transferred to the tribe of Judah, the Mount Zion which he loved, as it follows there (#Ps 78:68), because the men of Shiloh knew not the day of their visitation. This abandoning of Shiloh Jerusalem is long afterwards reminded of, and told to take warning by. #Jer 7:12,

"Go see what I did to Shiloh. From this day, this fatal day, let the desolations of Shiloh be dated."

They had therefore reason enough to cry out when they heard that the ark was taken. (MH)

Vv. 19-22

A daughter in law, Phinehas' wife, heard the distressing news, and went into hard labor. The child, a son, was delivered, but she died in the process.

1) Her concern was for the ark of God and the glory it represented more than it was for her husband. She, evidently, was a godly woman married to an ungodly man.

And thus the Lord appears to abandon his covenant people, but appearances are deceiving.

◇ CONCLUSION:

This chapter opens with a statement showing that God's people knew the Lord now spoke through Samuel. However, when the "chips were down" and they were pressed to the wall by the enemy, they did not turn to Samuel. (Maybe his young age discouraged them, but they knew.)

Rather than seek God's answer through Samuel for their distress, they willfully moved ahead, taking the ark of God into battle. They evidently recalled Joshua taking the ark of God into the battle of Jericho, and thought they had the same authority to do so. However, Joshua had the command of God to take it, but these people had no such command.

The appearance replaced the presence of God; formality replaced obedience, and it cost them 34,000 men.

Eli knew of his grown sons' evil actions, and evidently expected God to kill them. Such hardness on the part of a parent is not good. Notice there is no mention of God's judgment against their mother.

Everything fell apart in this battle with the enemy, but the people still did not learn their lesson to trust only in the Lord of battles.

Only the sovereign grace of God can open the eyes of his people, and he had not chosen to do so at this time.

The ark of God was the ark of the covenant of the Lord. (Num. 10:33, 14:44, Deut. 10:8, &c.) But there is no power nor protection in the covenant if the covenant of the Lord is broken. However, the broken covenant does not void the covenant; rather, it brings about the curses of the covenant, which Israel experienced in this conflict with the Philistines. (Deut. 29:21, 1 Chron. 16:17.)

Identifying Identity's Gentile Corruption

The Identity Movement, along with Kinism and all other racist philosophies, is as dangerous as Ovid Need says it is in this helpful book. Brother Need has done a great service to the church by exposing and refuting the false teaching of the Identity Movement. His book clearly distinguishes Reformed covenant theology from the Identity Movement's understanding of the covenant; and, in so doing, defends the Reformed faith from any charge of racism. Hopefully, this book will impress adherents to this false teaching that he refutes, that they have no home in the Reformed faith and Reformed churches unless they repent. The book is plainly written and full of vital exposition. I recommend that people who are troubled by the Identity Movement read it and give it to their friends.

Dr. Joe Morecraft III

Contact me for this new printing. Copies sent upon request.

All articles by Bro Need, unless otherwise noted. Use with credit.

Staples

Though the USPS will not fulfill their responsibilities, they insist we do. PO will not allow staples, so please staple these pages together now to prevent their loss.

Warning

When and if you say yes to "problems with depression?", the next step could well be "them" coming after your guns. Everyone seems to ask that question, so be aware, and the answer may well end up in a central data base.

Christian Terrorists

"Army Labels Evangelical Christians, Catholics and Some Jews 'Religious Exorcists'" even above the Muslim Brotherhood (Egypt), Hamas, and Sunni

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<http://radio.foxnews.com/toddstarnes/top-stories/army-labeled-evangelicals-as-religious-extremism.html>

* Out bicycling one day with my eight-year-old granddaughter, Carolyn, I got a little wistful. "In ten years," I said, "you'll want to be with your friends and you won't go walking, biking, and swimming with me like you do now. Carolyn shrugged. "In ten years you'll be too old to do all those things anyway."

* Working as a pediatric nurse, I had the difficult assignment of giving immunization shots to children. One day, I entered the examining room to give four-year-old Lizzie her injection. "No, no, no!" she screamed. "Lizzie," scolded her mother, "that's not polite behavior." With that, the girl yelled even louder, "No, thank you! No, thank you!"

Proverbs 21:31 *The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD. We must prepare unto battle, yet depend upon the Lord for safety.*

Psalms 76:10 *Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.*

He has a "line in the sand", and says to the wicked, "This far and no further. You shall only go as far with your evil as will praise me."