

The Second Witness 8/27/2015

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The Prophecy Newsletter of Scott Lively Ministries

8/27/2015
Volume 1, Issue 5



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Beginning this issue we will be offering occasional articles by my wife Anne.

Note: Please remember to tag this newsletter so that it goes to your "Inbox" and not Spam or "Promotions."

It is our plan to publish two to four times per month. An archive of past issues is available [here](#).

America and Antichrist

This is an updated version of an article originally published in October 2013.

"Now when the seventh month came, and the sons of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered together as one man to Jerusalem...and built the altar of the God of Israel to offer burnt offerings on it, as it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God. So they set up the altar on its foundation, for they were terrified because of the peoples of the lands; and they offered burnt offerings on it to the LORD, burnt offerings morning and evening. They celebrated the Feast of Booths, as it is written, and offered the fixed number of burnt offerings daily, according to the ordinance, as each day required; and afterward there was a continual burnt offering, also for the new moons and for all the fixed festivals of the LORD that were consecrated, and from everyone who offered a freewill offering to the LORD. From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, but the

day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, but the foundation of the temple of the LORD had not been laid" (Ezra 3:1-6).

Ask the average American Christian what the worst sin is and you'll get any number of answers, but chances are they will fall in the category of the Second Great Commandment, sins against our fellow man: murder, rape, child abuse, genocide, and so on. But to God the greatest sin of all is to violate the first commandment: "*You shall have no other gods before me.*" We human beings are required above all else to "*love the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength*" (Matt 22:37).

America's troubles as a nation really began when we dethroned God in the 1947 Supreme Court case of *Everson v Board of Education*, which elevated secularism above belief in God. Rebellion against the first commandment became the official policy of the United States of America that day. *Torcaso v Watkins* in 1961 affirmed and hardened that rebellion, the first fruits being the criminalization of prayer in the public schools in 1963. The infrastructure of Christian civilization has been eroding at an ever increasing pace ever since as God's blessing has been replaced with His curse (Deuteronomy 28).

What we now call "religious pluralism" and "benevolent neutrality toward religion" — ideas that have come to represent for secularists the highest values of enlightened democracies — are nothing less than the sin of Antichrist, the worst of all possible sins.

To assume for oneself the power to arbitrate and equalize the claims of competing deities is, literally, "to exalt oneself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that one sets oneself up in God's temple [as it were], proclaiming oneself to be God." This is the very language of the Bible which describes the Antichrist (II Thessalonians 2:3-4). (Our Founders had no such delusion, but set our nation firmly on a Biblical foundation —with reasonable tolerance for other faiths — where it rested securely until Justice Hugo Black, writing for the majority, knocked it off in *Everson*).

The 2 Thessalonians 2 passage continues with the following warning: "*The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with how Satan works. He will use all sorts of displays of power through signs and wonders that serve the lie, and employ all the ways that wickedness deceives those who are perishing*" (v.9-10). The "*ways that wickedness deceives those who are perishing*" will not be introduced at some future time. They are the very forms of deceit that people are already falling for: evolution, communism, "gay theology," and, yes, "religious pluralism."

When you stop to think about it, the Antichrist's "Abomination of Desolation" could be something as seemingly innocuous as a "Proclamation of the Equality of All Religions," posted like a "cease and desist" order in the place where God was being worshipped until the Antichrist's intervention (Daniel 11:31-32, Matthew 24:15).

Indeed, the Daniel 11 model of the Antichrist, the Greek King Antiochus IV Epiphanies, was motivated by this very goal when he attempted to subjugate the Jewish people in the time of the Maccabees. His efforts to outlaw Judaism was intended to stop Jews from violating the pluralistic religious ideal he had imposed upon all the countries in his empire.

I don't presume to know for certain how the end time scenario leading to the Lord's return will unfold, but it is likely to begin with a global economic collapse (which may

even have begun this past week) or regional war in the Middle East, which seems both inevitable and imminent and could be triggered by any number factors including but not limited to an escalation of the Syrian conflict or an Israel's strike on Iran. And once that begins the world economy's house of cards will almost certainly fall, bringing unprecedented levels of hardship and turmoil across the globe.

It could also be triggered by a change in the status of the Temple Mount, especially if such a change included a declaration that the Jews would begin construction on the Third Temple. Nearly every element is in place for the temple, including the altar, all the temple implements, and fully-trained Aaronic priests reportedly conducting rehearsals for the animal sacrifices.

However, I do not share the belief that the "holy place" of Matthew 24:15 must necessarily be the completed Third Temple. Based on the precedent of Ezra 3:1-6 (cited above) the "holy place" may simply be an altar of sacrifice, and indeed that would seem to be more likely in the time-frame of this scenario.

I happen to believe the conspiracy theory that a global elite is preparing a new one-world government and economic system to replace the current one. It would seem rather natural (and a great relief to the world) if, after weeks or months of great trouble and tribulation in the world -- famines, pestilence and social chaos on a massive scale - - for a world leader to step forward with a grand solution: perhaps a world-wide Jubilee to declare all debts cancelled, and to introduce a new economic system to give every person on earth a brand new start.

As many are now aware, the next Biblical Jubilee year starts on Yom Kippur, September 23, 2015 at the end of a series of six lunar and solar eclipses precisely on the Biblical feast days, in a display of celestial signs unique in human history See <http://www.redmoonrapture.com/>).

This new world economy would be a simple system, but require universal participation. Everyone would need to receive membership identification in a form that could not be used or appropriated by others (perhaps a mark or chip in the hand or forehead). Only members could buy or sell and have access to the emergency supplies and welfare services to which every member is entitled for life. (It is the ultimate socialist regime.)

But there is a condition. You must sign the pledge to reject sectarianism, and embrace religious pluralism and non-discrimination.

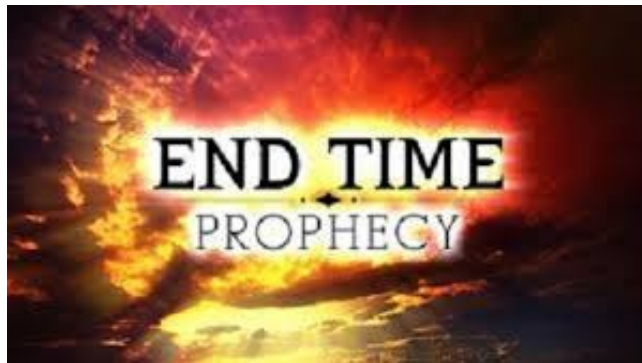
Americans have been conditioned to accept these values for decades, but there is added incentive to adopt such policies in that the social chaos of the preceding months will have been marked by appalling ethnic and sectarian massacres around the world. People will be ready to trade their former freedoms for greater security. (Another a way of thinking to which we have been conditioned.) It would explain why average people would be so willing to accept the Mark of the Beast.

In all of this, Bible-believing Christians and Jews would have a problem. We could not renounce the Sovereign God by joining up and taking the Mark. There would be serious consequences though, because people who refuse to join would be considered black-marketers and blamed for messing up the program for everyone else. There would arise an increasing hostility toward those who resist, leading to severe persecution.

Meanwhile, back at the “holy place” (be it the Temple or an Altar), the beloved world leader steps in to end the new (or continuing) war against Israel and impose peace on the region by his overpowering military force. He stops the animal sacrifices in the name of religious pluralism and non-sectarianism (making a great show of self-glorification as the one man capable of solving the seemingly unsolvable problems of the world).

And on the altar he places his “Proclamation of Religious Equality” or some other symbol of his power. And (here’s the kicker) no one in the world but the strongest of Christian and Jewish believers would see anything sinister or wrong in his actions. The level of delusion in the minds of average people about who he really is so high that, “if it were possible, even the elect would be deceived” (Matt 24:24).

This is not a prophecy, but only my best guess at how the end days could plausibly unfold given the actual factors at play today. I’m probably wrong on numerous points since this is all purely speculative. But I’m not wrong on the central thesis of this article: America’s rulers have set themselves above God and prepared the way for the Antichrist in the hearts and minds of its people. And to the extent we follow their lead in embracing “religious pluralism” instead of honoring Almighty God, we are equally responsible for the judgment unfolding all around us.



Fundamentals of End-Time Prophecy

Eschatology 101A

A Certificate Program of Redemption Gate Bible College

In the Spring of 2015, I developed a 5-week class on prophecy for Redemption Gate Bible College. This newsletter will feature the material from that class over the next year as I work to refine and strengthen it for use as a correspondence course. To that end I solicit your input.

The original course featured 35 questions (seven in each class session) which were asked and answered during an interactive discussion period.

We will address one or more of those (and likely additional) questions each week in this segment of the newsletter.

Session 1: The Context for Understanding Prophecy

3. What is the Significance of Seven in Prophecy?

"Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come" Isaiah 46:9-10

God has arranged his time-keeping system in cycles of seven. Creation occurred according to this divine pattern of six 24-hour days of work and one of Sabbath rest. And the early Christians believed and taught that the totality of time allotted by God for physical creation to exist is seven thousand years: six thousand years of work and struggle by mankind followed by a thousand year Sabbath rest called the Millennial Kingdom. This in turn is followed by the destruction of all matter and our entrance into Heaven. 2 Peter 3.

This is the same pattern of sevens found in the schedule of the Biblical Feasts in Leviticus 23, and the Jubilee Calendar in Leviticus 25.

There are seven Biblical Feasts, which God instructs are His appointed times of fellowship with man: Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles. The Feast of Tabernacles or “booths” is the “Sabbath” of the seven, representing God dwelling with man as He did during the Hebrew sojourn in the wilderness where they lived in tents (booths), following the Exodus from Egypt. In the prophetic sense, the Feast of Tabernacles represents the future Millennial Kingdom when Christ will literally dwell on earth with men, ruling as King of Kings on the literal throne of David. Tabernacles is an eight day festival, the eighth day representing the new beginning (prophetically, Heaven).

The Jubilee Calendar is a calendar of seven year cycles, with the seventh year being the Sabbath year, when the land must lie fallow (no planting of crops) and certain contracts between men must be considered fulfilled. Seven cycles of seven years round out the Jubilee and that final Sabbath year (the 49th year in the cycle) is called the High Sabbatical, ushering in the 50th, or Jubilee Year, the year of liberation: the land of the Hebrews must return to its original owners and captives are set free.

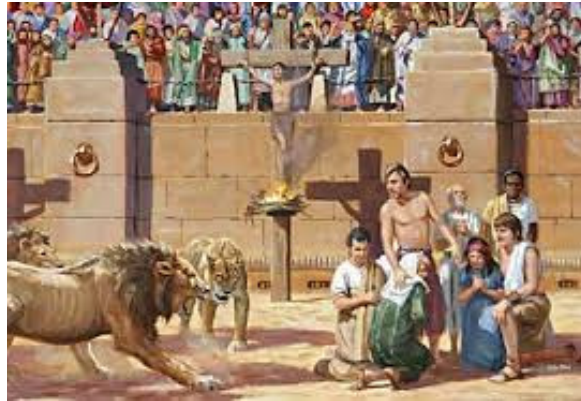
The importance of this pattern of sevens was burned into the minds of the Hebrews as they wandered in the desert, being fed daily by God’s provision of manna. God provided manna for six days only and instructed men that they must gather a double portion on the sixth day because none would be provided on the seventh day, the Sabbath (Exodus 16:25). Importantly, the manna collected on the sixth day would last for two days, and not spoil in one day as it would normally. This teaching was so essential that a jar of manna was one of only three sacred items kept in/with the Ark of the Covenant, along with the stone tablets containing God’s law, and Moses’ rod (Exodus 16:33, Hebrews 9:4).

The pattern of sevens (and of Jubilee) is also found in the way the feasts were kept. For example, the Biblical Feast of Pentecost falls on the 50th day after the Feast of First Fruits (when Jesus rose from the dead, the first fruits of humanity, 1 Corinthians 15:20) following seven weeks of watching and preparation called the “Counting of the Omer.”

There are many far too many examples of God's use of seven in scripture to recount in this section, but we have cited enough of them for our purposes. Seven days, seven years, seven weeks, seven cycles of day, weeks and years, seven millennia, seven seals, trumpets and bowls, and on and on.

What then is Significance of Seven in Prophecy? Our preferred answer is:

It is the key to understanding God's time-keeping system for end-time events.



Feeding the Lions

"If I fought with wild beasts in Ephesus with no more than human hopes, what have I gained?" 1 Corinthians 15:32a

Damnatio ad bestias. Condemnation to the wild animals. The worst death the Romans could devise for their arenas, and one reserved exclusively for heinous criminals, slaves and Christians. The condemned were bound or tied to stakes to render them helpless, or sometimes given a weapon to defend themselves, thus increasing the sport for the onlookers. The beasts - lions, tigers, bears, bulls, leopards - were goaded or whipped into a rage by gladiators during the spectacle, and any surviving humans were dispatched with the sword, or returned to the arena for a fresh round.

Notwithstanding the Apostle Paul's metaphoric statement above, he was apparently never one of those who suffered this fate, and was eventually, according to tradition, beheaded in Rome for his outspoken faith.

There was one worse punishment, also reserved for the extreme transgressors and the lowliest castes: crucifixion. It had the advantage of being a long-drawn-out ordeal which combined torture and execution. But most attractive of all to the control-driven Roman magistrates, the spectacle was not confined to willing spectators at the arena.

Crucifixions could be held anywhere, especially in places people could not avoid: well-traveled Roman roads, public squares, hills that could be seen for miles around.

What better way to instill fear in the subject population, to deter criminal or treasonous behavior, and hopefully, to eradicate that intolerant, obnoxious, deviant cult, Christianity? Thus the peace of Rome, oiled by its syncretistic religion that accommodated every god, would be preserved, and the diverse and unruly peoples of Rome conformed to its unifying civic values.

It was this most shameful, most agonizing, most public death that the Lord Jesus endured for our sake.

Skip a few millennia to the “civilized” world of the 21st century. Some different horrors; many the same. Human beings beheaded, burned alive in cages and drowned in cages, crucifixions, children killed in front of their parents, torture, rape and slavery – many of these acts graphically displayed on the Internet for the world to see. Once more, the motive is to control local populations and strike fear into distant ones, and to promote a universal religion, worldwide Islam. And ironically, the perpetrators find that flaunting themselves as “wild beasts” of ungovernable destructive character is a winning recruitment strategy for attracting thousands of angry and disaffected people who want to act out in the same way. There are slight variations in the choice of victims – this time rival sects within Islam and people who resist the takeover of their lives by the controlling group as well as ordinary lawbreakers – but one group, Christians, remains the same.

And now move to the truly civilized and enlightened portions of the globe which we call western civilization. No one is being slaughtered in the street or imprisoned for their religious beliefs. We live in a wonderful culture of tolerance and diversity where all beliefs are respected and given expression.

But wait. It's those pesky Christians again; they won't play by the rules, now that society has moved beyond their myopic belief in their outdated holy book. We can't have a peaceful progressive society with a bunch of people acting all moral about, of all things, other people's sexual choices. Something needs to be done about the ones who just won't shut up about it. An example has to be made, something painful and very public. Their ringleaders must be identified as evil men, their organizations as hate groups; their views must be hilariously mocked by comedians and pointed out as ignorant and antisocial by educators; businesses and business leaders must be punished for supporting any position supporting God's view of sex and marriage; lawsuits must be brought against business owners who refuse to provide services to homosexual “marriage” ceremonies; employees must be disciplined if they are too vocal in their Christian beliefs.

Ultimately, and this is coming in several countries, pastors and priests must be monitored and punished for “hate speech,” that is, scriptural teachings which offend people by calling their behavior sinful. In the U.S., we are close to the point at which churches will no longer have a tax exemption if they do not embrace homosexual behavior and “marriage.”

There is a still a more wide-range device for the shaming and rejecting of Christians who will not relinquish their faith in the Bible. An unrelenting campaign to attack any personal expressions of such faith is conducted throughout the social media.

Christians find that they are soon scolded or suddenly un-friended if they express a Bible-based position on same-sex “marriage,” transgenderism and other issues which would have been unthinkable a mere handful of years ago, but which are now meat and drink to the sanctimonious social justice warriors of the left. Worldly relatives are emboldened to scorn and cut off their Christian family members, since it is easier to do so from the sightless and voiceless impersonality of the Internet.

The woes of American Christians in dealing with the challenges of holding up the Christian faith in a more-and-more hostile society are hardly in the same league as being torn apart by wild beasts, or crucified or beheaded. But remember that Paul, in that statement from I Corinthians, didn't mean animals when he said “wild beasts”, he meant rioting Ephesians – a hostile population. And he probably didn't mean

confronting them with bare knuckles either. Paul's approach was to stand up in the public square and let them have it with the truth of Jesus Christ. Because, although Paul did not mince words about his perils and hardships (2 Corinthians 11:24-26, 1 Corinthians 15:30-32, Ephesians 6:20, Philippians 1:10, Colossians 4:3, 2 Timothy 2:9, etc.), he did it mostly to point out God's more-than-sufficient grace to deliver, to comfort, to sustain him in a fantastic array of troubles. And his troubles were mostly brought on by his bold claims about Jesus and people's desperate need to accept His salvation offer because of the bitter hopelessness and deception of their sinful state. Furthermore, the apostle did not enter into his life of hard knocks unaware.

Remember Jesus' information about him, imparted to Ananias in a vision, which Ananias surely did not neglect to pass on to the newly converted former-terror-to-the-believers Saul.

"Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name." Acts 9:15-16

Part of his job description. And, oh no!, part of our job description...

"Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" 2 Timothy 3:12

Can we construe this differently than it reads? Is there a way to "live godly" - and openly - and avoid the ever-increasing demands of an aggressive secular culture that is no longer willing to put up with expressions of our faith, let alone with our assertions of the truth of biblical moral principles. No more than it is possible for our Christian brothers and sisters in the Middle East to "live godly" - and openly - and avoid the spiraling hatred and violence which now threatens to kill or drive them out of the region entirely.

There is no time left for silence or compromise, simply because God will not allow it. He is using persecution of the church just as He uses pain in our personal lives, not as a punishment but as a steering mechanism. For most of us who have strayed down the wrong path, it was pain and crisis that brought us up short and turned us to God. So too with the church, when it has become apathetic and distracted and self-absorbed; persecution is the shock treatment that turns it back to the Bridegroom and burns away the dross so that He is clearly seen. While the world turns ugly, His face becomes more beautiful, and we realize just what it is we have: our matchless Savior and the love that binds us together through Him.

As this age advances, the images have formed in your mind more than once. Yourself hearing the bad news from the boss because you failed to donate to the corporate-sponsored LGBT Youth Outreach Project, your secular relatives no longer available for family get-togethers, your children removed by the child-welfare agency because you homeschooled them from a curriculum that included the Bible.

Or perhaps you have imagined a faraway desert land - yourself on your knees, bowed forward under the knife, yourself watching the pistol raised to your child's head.

In the desert scenario, what did you do? Were you faithful despite the horrible consequence? I'm willing to bet you were, although you might not be so sure about what would happen in the actual event. These fantasies are a kind of practice for believers. They still seem unreal to most Christians in the U.S., but if you look at them

in the light of our timeless and universal bond with other believers, they are extremely real. We are indeed one in the Spirit, and just as the Bible helps us to embrace the experience of Paul and Peter, the Holy Spirit helps us to feel deeply the experience of the Syrian Christians and the American bakers, pizzeria owners and ruined CEOs. Our feelings for our brethren help us, as I have said, to practice, but to practice for what?

The Supreme Court's decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges* put most of the watchful Christians in the U.S. on notice that the honeymoon is over for our religion in this nation. Some will be more vulnerable than others to the long arm of the secular-atheist government as it begins to reach into the individual churches and lives of the followers of Christ. During the past decades of creeping apostasy, we have watched some church leaders, churches, and whole denominations reject the Bible in whole or in part and embrace divorce, adultery, abortion, homosexuality, euthanasia, anti-Israel activism and religious pluralism.

Now we will see what happens to the rest of us when the pressure is brought to bear. We are still a mixed flock in the Shepherd's eyes, and His hand is ready to sort. Sheep on the right. Goats on the left. The sorting hand will touch us all. The violent winds will blow away the chaff and leave the good grain. And when the sorting is done, and the last sheep is in the fold, the last sheaf is in the barn, He will be ready to bring an end.

What will you do when you face the lions? You are facing them now. They are raging around the world with a demonic fury, and that fury will increase until no Christian, nor faithful Jew, can stand peacefully on the earth. Your lions will be uniquely your own, as will the strength and deliverance that the Lord provides when you face them. What is it that you fear most? Now is the time to give the Lord permission to loose that lion into your life if that is part of His wise plan for you. Now is the time to trust Him utterly, as Paul did. For some of us, I believe, will be among those tribulation saints who

"...overcame [Satan] because of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death."
Revelation 12:11

Your trust in Him will be well-founded. He knows how to shut the lions' mouths (ask Daniel); God keeps his promise, and He will not allow you to be tested beyond your power to remain firm (1 Corinthians 10:13). But when you stand in the arena, you will have an audience. Your own brothers and sisters in Christ, who need strengthening, will be watching. The unsaved ones, who want to see if Christians might really have some source of strength beyond their own, will be watching. They will see. Your Lion, the Lion of Judah, is bigger than any lion they can bring.

Anne Lively

A Few Housekeeping Items

I am pretty-much a one-man show and run two highly active ministry organizations. Because I maximize my time to achieve the greatest impact possible for the Kingdom of God, I value straight-to-the-point resources and communications. If you desire to communicate with me on any matter including this newsletter please be as concise as possible and please use email. not the

telephone, even if you have my phone number (except in emergencies).

You may reach me at scottlivelyministries@gmail.com

Donations

I have always followed a policy of providing my writings and other self-created resources without charge whenever possible. However, my support, and that of both of the ministry organizations I run, rely upon donations to operate. For all matters related to my prophecy studies and writings donations should be sent to Redemption Gate Mission Society, PO Box 2373, Springfield, MA 01101 or online [here](#). If you want your donation to be designated for any specific purpose, just send me a note or an email to say so, otherwise it will be used where most needed.

Today's Hot Links:

Apparently our links haven't been working, so henceforth we will simply cut and past the url below. It won't connect just type it into your own browser:

The Seven Feasts of the Lord:
<http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Holidays/Introduction/introduction.html>

Fate of Iran Deal falls on Jewish Days of Judgment
<http://www.breakingisraelnews.com/45436/fate-iran-deal-decided-jewish-world-days-judgement/#07Hu7c4hxxAzE9t2.97>

[Final Point: "Gay Marriage" as a Sign of the End Times](#)
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