



The Sword & The Plow

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The Binding and Loosing of the Great Red Dragon and the Reign of the Martyrs

By

Kurt M. Simmons

The reign of the saints and binding of the Dragon is probably the most challenging passage of scripture in the Bible. The difficulty results from attempting to understand these symbols as if joined in time and event; as if one defined the other. One writer described it this way: "Satan is bound a thousand years and the saints lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. To the degree that the Satan was bound, to the same degree the saints lived and reigned. The measure of the one is the measure of the other."¹ We would suggest, however, that the reign of the saints is neither measured nor defined by the binding of the Dragon, that the two events are completely unconnected in both time and event, and that they *must* be analyzed separately to be correctly understood. Further, we believe that a proper analysis will show that two separate millennia are posited by the text.

The Binding and Loosing of the Dragon

What does the binding and loosing of Revelation's Great Red Dragon refer to? The basic assumption of most commentators is that the binding of the Dragon *follows* the defeat of the Beast and death of the martyrs; that the thousand-year binding of the Dragon is coterminous with the reign of the saints and

points to the present era; that it signifies a period stretching into the indefinite future after which the Dragon will be loosed before being finally destroyed in the battle of Gog and Magog. This error completely confounds an understanding of the text. Upon it rests the belief that long ages were to pass from the defeat of the Beast and False Prophet until the second coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead. Both A- and Post- millennialism make this basic mistake and thus introduce a complete discontinuity into the text. Although generally conceding that the new heavens and earth described in Rev. 21 and 22 are come, and that they are symbolic of the Christian age and the spiritual regeneration of man in Christ², these schools believe that the events portrayed in Rev. 20 remain to be fulfilled:

"The specific point of the binding of the Dragon, therefore, is to prevent him from inciting the eschatological "war to end all wars," the final battle – until God is ready. When God's Kingdom-City is fully matured, then He will once more release Satan and allow him to deceive the nations for the final conflagration...The Dragon is not his own master. He has been seized and bound and shut up in the Abyss, and

² Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Apocalypics*, (1898, Eaton and Mains, NY; Republished 2001, Wipf and Stock Publishers, Eugene OR), p. 460; Foy E. Wallace Jr, *The Book of Revelation*, (1966, Wallace Publications, Nashville TN), pp. 425; David Chilton, *Days of Vengeance*, (1987, Dominion Press, Tyler TX), p. 545; Author Ogden, *Avenging of the Apostles and Prophets*, (1991, Ogden Publications, Dryersburg, TN), pp. 347, 375.

¹ Max R. King, *Spirit of Prophecy* (1971, Warren OH), p. 347.

someday he will be released for a brief time – but all this takes place according to God’s good and holy purposes.”³

According to these schools, therefore, the whole of Revelation is fulfilled with the exception of a few verses in chapter twenty; a case of the tail wagging the dog if ever there was one! Even among Preterists this error sometimes obtains. J. Stuart Russell, author of the *Parousia*, whose exegesis was otherwise usually quite sound, stumbled at the imagery of chapter twenty. He concluded that the binding of the Dragon *followed* the defeat of Nero and the Beast. Hence, Stuart concluded, the imagery of Rev. 20 remained to be fulfilled:

“We must consequently regard this prediction of the loosing of Satan, and the events which follow, as still future, and therefore unfulfilled. We know of nothing recorded in the history which can be adduced as in any way a probable fulfillment of this prophecy...The result of the whole is, that we must consider the passage which treats of the thousand years, from ver. 5 to ver. 10, as an intercalation or parenthesis. The Seer, having begun to relate the judgment of the dragon, passes in ver. 7 out of the apocalyptic limits to conclude what he had to say respecting the final punishment of the ‘old serpent,’ and the fate that awaited him at the close of a lengthened period called ‘a thousand years.’ This we believe to be the sole instance in the whole book of an excursion into distant futurity; and we are disposed to regard the whole parenthesis as relating to matters still future and unfulfilled.”⁴

This sort of “partial Preterism” is nothing if not A- and Post- millennialism by a different name. It is the product of a confused exegesis. The evidence is much to the contrary. The error lies in failing to see the identity of the battles of

³ David Chilton, *Days of Vengeance*, pp. 506, 508. Cf. “These verses [Rev. 20:] 7-10 depict the last great struggle of Satan and his forces to overcome the saints of God, and their overwhelming defeat before the manifested power of heaven. The obvious purpose is to show the final and decisive victory of the seed of the woman over their ancient foe. It is a great symbolic picture, and its one great teaching is clear beyond the possibility of doubt or misunderstanding, namely, that Satan and his forces must all ultimately perish. This is written for the comfort and confidence of the saints. But that final victory is in the far future, at the close of the Messianic age, and it is here simply outlined in apocalyptic symbols.” Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Apocalypics*, p. 455.

⁴ J. Stuart Russell, *The Parousia* (1887, T. Fisher Unwin, London; Republished 1983, 1999, Baker Books, Grand Rapids), pp. 522, 523.

Armageddon and Gog and Magog and the belief the binding of the Dragon therefore *follows* the defeat of the Beast and False Prophet.

The battle of Armageddon and the battle of Gog and Magog were the same battle. The battle of Armageddon is introduced, saying unclean spirits like frogs (deceitful doctrines and slanders) went forth from the Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet to gather the kings of the earth and of the whole world to battle against Christ and the church. (Rev. 16:13-16) In consequence of this war the Beast and False Prophet are destroyed. (Rev. 19:11-21) The imagery of the battle of Armageddon is specifically borrowed from

Ezekiel's battle of Gog and Magog. (Cf. Rev. 19:17, 18; Ezek. 39:17-20) Use of the imagery from the battle of Gog and Magog to describe Armageddon establishes the identity of these battles; the battles are one and the same, only the names are different. The Dragon also meets his demise in this battle (Rev. 20:7-10), it is merely portrayed separately. Like the Great Whore, the defeat of the Dragon is treated separately for purposes of emphasis. The Dragon’s defeat is treated separately inasmuch as he is the perennial enemy of God and his people, having assumed the form of various persecuting nations over the long centuries, including Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon. (Cf. Ps. 74:14; 104:26; Isa. 14:29; 27:1,13; Jer. 51:44; Ezek. 29:3, 4; 32:2-6, where these nations are variously described as Leviathan, a serpent, or dragon.)

The identity of the battle of Armageddon and Gog and Magog is one of the keys to the binding and loosing of the Dragon. If the battles are the same with merely the names changed, identification of the battle of Armageddon will identify the battle of Gog and Magog and thus establish the time frame for the binding and loosing of the Dragon. How do we identify the historical referent of this battle? One way is to identify one of more of its participants. If the Beast or False Prophet can be identified, we will be a long way toward identifying this conflict. The Beast is widely accepted in Postmillennial and Preterist circles as Nero or the persecuting power animated by that emperor. Many Amillennialists would agree, though some feel a Domitian context is indicated. The identity of the Beast with Domitian is refuted by the pre-A.D. 70 composition of Revelation and the chronological indicators of the book showing

(Cont’d Page four)

8 Compelling Reasons Why: Jesus Is Coming “Very, Very Soon”

By
Don Preston

Recently someone sent me a newspaper article with the above title. The article begins by saying “The evidence for the soon return of Jesus Christ is overwhelming.” I am not sure if the sender was trying to convince me, or if they wanted me to comment on the article. Either way, I will offer a few thoughts.

History is full of such predictions. And every one has been wrong...except the first century when Jesus himself said He was to return before all of His contemporaries died (Matthew 16:27-28; 24:29-34; 26:64). Jesus either kept His word, He lied, or He failed. The choices are limited and inescapable. The failure of Bible students to honor Jesus’ prediction has propagated the continuing history of failed predictions. Now to the evidence offered by the article.

Reason #1-The Rebirth of Israel. The article maintains that “Israel was miraculously reborn” in 1948, and this is the #1 sign of Jesus’ imminent return.

The view that 1948 was a sign of Christ’s coming is based on Matthew 24:32f. Jesus said “Learn the parable of the fig tree, when its branch has already become tender and shoots forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things know that it is near, at the very door.” It is contended that the fig tree is Israel, thus, per this view, Jesus was saying “When you see Israel putting forth its leaves (restored) then know that it (Christ’s coming) is near.” In verse 34 Jesus said “This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.” So the view is that the generation that would witness the restoration of Israel would be the generation to see Christ’s parousia (coming).

First, it must be realized that Israel was not restored in 1948. Modern “Israel” is not the Israel that existed before the fall of Jerusalem in A.D.70. The Israel of the Bible has disappeared forever. Even the *Encyclopedia Judaica Jerusalem* (1971, Vol. 3, p. 50) acknowledges

that there is no longer such a thing as the Jewish race. The events of 1948 have nothing whatsoever to do with Biblical prophecy and the coming of Jesus.

Second, if the fig tree represents the restoration of Israel then “all the trees” (see Luke 21:29) must mean that in 1948 “all the nations” were restored as well! Interestingly, those who insist that the fig tree in Matthew 24 must be Israel, completely ignore the reference to “all the trees” in the parallel text in Luke 21:29. This is inconsistent. If the fig tree represents Israel in 1948 then consistency demands that “all the trees” represents the restoration of all other nations.

Third, if the restoration of “Israel” in 1948 was the sign of Christ’s coming, then the clock has already run out. Hal Lindsey (correctly) calculated that a generation in scripture is approximately 40 years. (see Matthew 1; Hebrews 3:7-19). Of course, when he wrote that he was predicting the coming of Christ for 1988!! When that failed he went back to the calculator and invented a new definition for generation, 100-125 years! That is completely false, yet he managed to convince a lot of sincere people nonetheless.

The point is that 1988 has come and gone. The forty year period that should have, according to modern theory, produced the Great Tribulation, the Great Apostasy, the Man of Sin, the Antichrist, the Mark of the Beast, and all of the other horrific events of the last days, did not, in fact, produce a single one of the signs necessary for the coming of Christ. The reason is simple, all of the signs that were predicted to occur prior to Christ’s coming appeared in the first century, just like Jesus said.



Say No! to the New World Order

(Cont'd from page two)

that the sixth emperor was still reigning and that the mark of the Beast answers to the numeric value of the emperor's name, Nero Caesar.⁵

The identity of the Beast with the persecution under Nero establishes the time frame for the battle of Armageddon/Gog and Magog. In fact, we would suggest that they are one and the same thing and that the Neronean persecution *was* the battle of Armageddon/Gog and Magog. Armageddon was to be the last and final battle before the great consummation. It was to precede the end and was the final crisis God's people had to face before the second coming. Christ warned his people that he would come as a thief in the events connected with that battle: "Behold, I come as a thief, Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." (Rev. 16:15) With the battle comes a voice from the throne in heaven, saying "It is done." (v. 17) Following this crisis, Babylon the Great (Jerusalem) comes into remembrance before God. (v.19) The fact that the Beast is one of the actors in this great battle means that Nero was a participant. The fact that the battle precedes the destruction of the Great Whore means that it preceded the fall of Jerusalem. Since there is no other historical event of which Nero was part and which preceded the fall of Jerusalem, the Neronean persecution becomes the best and only solution for the identity of the battle of Armageddon.

Having identified the Beast and the battle of Armageddon with the persecution under Nero, identification of the binding and loosing of the Dragon becomes rather simple. The Dragon acts through the Beast; the Beast is the alter ego of the Dragon; the Dragon gives the Beast its seat and great authority (Rev. 13:2); those who worship and obey the Beast worship and obey the Dragon (v. 4). The Beast acts at the behest of the Dragon. While the Dragon is bound, the Beast is bound. When the Dragon is loosed, the Beast is loosed. The Beast ascends from the Bottomless Pit (Rev. 11:7; 17:8); the Dragon

ascends from the Bottomless Pit. (Rev. 20:7) Since the battles are the same event under different names and symbols, the ascent of the Beast and Dragon from the Bottomless Pit are the same event under different names and symbols. The ascension of the Beast from the Bottomless Pit marks the beginning of the persecution under Nero; it also marks the loosing of the Dragon. The Beast rises from the Bottomless Pit and gathers the kings of the earth together to battle against the Christ and the church in the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 11:7; 16:13, 14; 17:8); the Dragon rises from the Bottomless Pit to gather Gog and Magog to battle against Christ and the church. (Rev. 20:7-9) The battle of Gog and Magog was to occur in Israel's "latter days" (Ezek. 38:8); it is depicted as a great invasion against God's people, a storm to cover the land (v. 9); it follows the appearance of "David the Prince" (Ezek. 37:25), but precedes the restored kingdom-temple (church) in which "David" the Prince would reign as king and priest. (Ezek. 40-48; cf. Zech. 6:13) Ezekiel's description shows that the battle of Gog and Magog occurs after the earthly ministry of Jesus, but before the great consummation in A.D. 70 and the coming of the kingdom in fullness of power. All this is equally true of Armageddon.

We said above that the loosing of the Beast and Dragon from the Bottomless Pit point to the beginning of the persecution under Nero. If loosing these powers points to their ability to persecute, what can their binding and internment in the Bottomless Pit point to but restraint from persecution? Clearly, this is so. The Beast ascends from the Bottomless Pit to make war upon the saints. (Rev. 11:7; 17:8) While it is in the Pit it is prevented to persecute. Only when it is released is it able to raise again the persecution of the church. Hence, the Bottomless Pit points to the cessation of persecution; it points to the wounding of the Beast's head (Rev. 13:3), to the defeat of the persecuting power and its consignment to oblivion in a symbolic *tartarus*. Rising from the Pit points to the healing of the Beast's wound (Rev. 13:3); its recovery from defeat and ability to raise again the persecution of the church. If the persecution under Nero marks the loosing of the Dragon (and Beast) its binding must point to a referent earlier in time and event.

5

נ = 50 ר = 200 ו = 6 ג = 50 ק = 100 ס = 60 ז = 200

thus:

גרוג קסר = 666

Armageddon	Gog & Magog
Kings gathered by deceitful spirits (Rev. 16:13, 14)	Nations deceived and gathered (Rev. 20:9, 10)
Makes war against Christ and Saints (Rev. 11:7; 19:13-19)	Enemies surround Camp of Saints (church) (Rev. 20:9, 10)
Battle takes place in "land of Israel" (Rev. 16:16)	Battle take place in "land of Israel" (Ezek. 38:8, 9, 14)
Battle precedes destruction of Great City (Rev. 16:19)	Battle in Israel's Latter Days (Ezek. 38:8, 16)
Battle decided by coming of Christ (Rev. 16:15)	Battle decided by coming of Christ (Rev. 20:9)
Followed by Resurrection (Rev. 11:18)	Followed by Resurrection (Rev. 20:12)
Temple Opened (Rev. 11:19)	Temple Opened (Ezek. 44:9, 16)
New Jerusalem (Rev. 21, 22)	New Jerusalem (Ezek. 48:35)

The two persecutions in Revelation occur in chapters twelve and thirteen. Luke records a persecution early in the history of the church that arose over Stephen. (Acts 7:59-9:31) History tells of a second persecution under Nero. The binding of the Dragon (and Beast) therefore came between these two persecutions. The persecution that arose over Stephen collapsed by A.D. 38 when Paul converted to the faith. Pilate and Caiaphas were removed from power shortly before this. (A.D. 36-37) From A.D. 42 to A.D. 54, Claudius was upon the throne of the empire and acted to restrain Jewish persecution of the church. However, with the rise of Nero, the Jews found imperial favor through Poppaea, Nero's wife, a Jewish proselyte. By A.D. 64, Nero was persecuting the church in Rome and the Jews were driving the persecution in Asia Minor.

The Reign of the Saints and Martyrs

The reign of the martyrs is described by John as consisting of those beheaded for the word of God, who did not worship the beast, nor his image, nor received his mark in their right hand or forehead. These souls lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years; they are immune to the second death. (Rev. 20:4-6) There are two factors in this text that help identify its historical referent. The first consists in reference to the Beast. The Beast is a symbolic reference to the persecution under Nero. This is seen by the chronological statements stating that the Beast exists at the time the sixth

emperor was reigning and by the number of the Beast's that equates with the emperor's name, Nero Caesar. (Rev. 13:18; 17:10) The Beast is driven by the Great Whore, Jerusalem and Jewry. Nero was the animating power of the Beast in Rome; the Jews were the driving force behind the Beast in Asia Minor. These facts all point to a pre- A.D. 70 date for the death of these martyrs. The second is the reference to beheading. Jews executed religious offenders by stoning. (Acts 8:2) Beheading was a *Roman* form of execution. Paul is traditionally described as being beheaded. This sets the death of these martyrs under Rome; it also points to their death in land under Roman control outside Palestine.

The reign of the martyrs is "other worldly." This is shown by the fact that they are described as "souls;" it is also shown by the fact that their reign is described enigmatically as lasting a "thousand years." In other words, their reign is no part of earthly existence; it describes the blessed state of the martyrs in paradise awaiting the second resurrection. Paradise is not heaven. Paradise is the intermediate place where the dead waited the final consummation when they received their eternal reward. Jesus and the thief both rested in paradise. (Lk. 24:43) All the righteous dead "dwelt" there pending the resurrection. Jesus promised the churches of Asia that they would reign with him if they remained faithful during the coming

persecution; he promised the second death would have no over them. (Rev. 2:10, 11; 3:21; cf. II Tim. 2:12) Paul said "if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be glorified together." (Rom. 8:17) The reign of the saints in paradise is followed by their inheritance in heaven at the resurrection. (Rev. 20:11 *et seq.*) The unrighteous dead, those not washed in the blood of the Lamb, were consigned to *tartarus*, called in Revelation the "Bottomless Pit." This is the place where the Dragon is symbolically shut up or interred.

The reign of the righteous in paradise did not depend upon the punishment of the wicked in *tartarus*. If a single soul was never shut up in *tartarus*, the righteous would still have reigned in paradise. There simply is no correlation between the blessed estate of the one and the punishment of the other. This is equally true of the Dragon and the martyrs. There is no indication that the reign of the martyrs is somehow defined or dependent upon the binding of the Dragon; not a single word to this effect appears in the text. Amillennialism, which holds that the martyrs' reign in paradise points to the victory over the Dragon of the gospel *upon earth*, has no exegetical basis upon which to stake its claim. The text nowhere indicates there is a connection between the reign of the one and the restraint of the other. The point of the imagery is simply to strengthen the saints against the coming persecution when the Dragon would be loosed, and to comfort their loved ones by showing they had not perished. "But I would not have your to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." (I Thess. 4:13) The souls of the martyrs were not forgotten before God; they lived and reigned with Christ in paradise pending the second resurrection. The churches of Asia could thus face the coming crisis in full confidence of their impending reward.

Conclusion

The battle of Armageddon and Gog and Magog were the *same* battle described by different names and symbols. The identity of the battles ties the fate of the Dragon to that of the Beast and allows us to establish the historical referents symbolized by the Dragon's binding and loosing. Identification of Armageddon with the persecution under Nero means that the Dragon was loosed from the Bottomless Pit at the outbreak of imperial persecution in A.D. 64. The binding of the Dragon therefore points to a period prior to the Neronean persecution when it was

restrained from actively warring against the church. We submit that this period answers to the collapse of the persecution over Stephen and the reign of Claudius upon the imperial throne until the burning of Rome when Nero and the Jews began a three and a half year campaign of persecution and slaughter against the church. Far from following the defeat of the Beast and False Prophet at Armageddon, the binding and loosing of the Dragon *preceded* that event. The defeat of the Dragon depicted in Revelation 20:7-10 was fulfilled in the events culminating in the destruction of Nero and the Great Whore. The martyrs reign in paradise because they were faithful unto death, not because the Dragon was bound; they died under the Beast and Dragon, won the martyr's crown, and therefore lived and reigned with Christ. The reign of the saints in paradise has now yielded to their eternal inheritance in heaven with Christ and God. Two millennia, separate in time and event, but similar in symbolism. Separately they can be understood, together they are only confounded.



The Atheistic Roots of Women's Suffrage

By

Kurt M. Simmons

Possibly the single most far reaching event of the last 100 years, women's suffrage can be credited with role reversal among the sexes, the sexual revolution, the extinction of virginity, exploding illegitimate birth rate, abortion on demand, sky-rocketing divorce rates, and the decline of the American family as mother's leave the home to pursue outside interests. Few realize the anti-Christian roots of women's suffrage. Here are some of the more important facts:

Some of the greatest opponents to woman's suffrage were women themselves.

Woman's suffrage movement began in the mid 1800s. It took over 70 years to gain the support necessary to pass. Although proponents of woman's suffrage tried for many years to convince women they needed the vote, most women were not easily persuaded or so inclined. Most women did not feel exploited or oppressed; and the movement for woman's suffrage had a hard time convincing them the vote would improve their lives. Many saw it as actually demeaning to the woman inasmuch as it sought to lower her to man's level. Active in charitable work, hospitals, orphanages, homes for fallen women etc., they felt no for the need for the vote to make a contribution to life. Most women, then as now, were content with the traditional arrangement of society along Christian lines. Many also feared that enfranchisement of women would increase divorce, fornication, and disintegration of the family. Moreover, they did not feel the need to assume male roles for personal validation - another lie the feminist movement continues to teach women today. In fact, the feminist movement is actually anti-female as it seeks to validate women only insofar as they behave like men. Unless they assume male roles and are emancipated from the interdependence of the traditional home and family, the movement claims women are exploited and demeaned; the beauty of motherhood and homemaking are ridiculed; women must compete and become like men if they are to realize their true value and place in the world, or so, at least, the "anti-feminine feminist" movement holds.

Churches were largely opposed to woman's suffrage.

Churches generally tend to avoid political issues and enter the debate only when issues effecting basic Christian values are in the balance. Apparently this was one of them. State's with web-sites providing the history of suffrage in their states often record that churches were among those opposed to the movement. Churches opposed women's suffrage for all the same reasons the majority of women opposed it, but tended to rely more upon Biblical precedents. Sexual immorality and the break down of the family were typical concerns. Adolf Hult, an early 20th century Lutheran pastor claimed that "Suffragism is gripped by feminism." John Williams, an Episcopal priest in Nebraska, stated: "God meant for women to reign over the home, and most good women reject politics because woman's suffrage will destroy society." Churches favoring women's suffrage were typically very liberal, such as Unitarian, Universalist, and Quaker.

The suffrage movement was dominated by avowed atheists, communists, and socialists.

This fact is often kept quietly in the background by liberals. In fact, the radical nature of those pushing for suffrage was one of the greatest impediments to its success as mainstream society - still strongly Christian - refused to have anything to do with atheists and socialists. One tract distributed in Nebraska entitled "Lest Catholic Men be Deceived" stated: "I do not believe that any Catholic men or women would favor "Votes for Women" if they realized certain facts. First, There are a million socialists in this country, and all are unanimous for woman suffrage, because they hope by the women's vote to help themselves politically. All socialists are opposed to anything Christian, but they bitterly hate and attack Catholics. Why should Catholics join themselves with such a body?" "AtheistsforPeace.net" says of the suffrage movement: "The women's movement itself was grounded fairly squarely in opposition to organized religion. As the movement grew it did take in people of all types and beliefs, something that Susan B. Anthony was not only proud of, but fought hard

for. Ms. Anthony believed that once women became educated and had control over their own lives women would shake off the "yoke of religion" in the light of reason."

Susan B. Anthony, an avowed atheist and opponent of Christianity, is probably the leading light of woman's suffrage. She is believed by some to have secretly been a communist. When William Henry Channing, a former atheist, returned to the Christian faith, Anthony exclaimed: "Do you mean to say you have returned to the belief in the immaculate conception of Jesus and in miracles...? Well, I was stunned and left...It is - it must be - simply the waning intellect returning to childish teaching."

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, an atheist and leader in the woman's suffrage movement, published *"The Woman's Bible,"* A bitter and blasphemous book that declaimed against Christianity and the Bible:

"I do not believe that any man ever saw or talked with God, I don't believe that God inspired the Mosaic code, or told that historians what they say he did about woman, for all the religions on the face of the earth degrade her, and so long as woman accepts the position that they assign her, her emancipation is impossible...The Bible teaches that a woman brought sin and death into the world, that she precipitated the fall of the race, that she was arraigned before the judgment seat of Heaven, tried, condemned and sentenced. Marriage for her was to be condition of bondage, maternity a period of suffering and anguish, and in silence and subjection, she was to play the role of a dependent upon man's bounty for all her material wants, and for all the information she might desire on the vital questions of the hour, she was commanded to ask her husband at home. Here is the Bible position of woman briefly summed up."

This, of course, is completely false. The Bible and Christianity have done more to elevate women than any other religion or ideology in the world. While other cultures and religions treated women as mere chattel, the Song of Songs holds woman out as the object deeply intense, romantic love, that contemns even death if only to rejoice in its object. The New Testament holds woman out as the object of "agape" love - a self sacrificing love like Christ's, who went to the cross on behalf of his bride.

Now as then, the individuals behind the feminist movement are any thing but Christian. Many are openly avowed atheists, lesbians, and liberals that would overthrow the foundations of Western civilization and Christendom.

We want to be careful not to seem to say that women or men in favor of women's rights today are somehow necessarily unChristian. On the other hand, it does sometimes happen that the attitudes of

Christians on many vital issues effecting the home, family, and world we live in are molded by the enemy in the liberal media and education, who slant information and omit facts that might make us stop and question where our sentiments should actually lie. For example, the average school text book would never inform students (or their parents) that Susan B. Anthony was an atheist and socialist who sought to free society from "the yoke of religion," for to do so would alert parents and defeat their purpose to propagandize our children and enlist them in the cause of the unbelieving left.

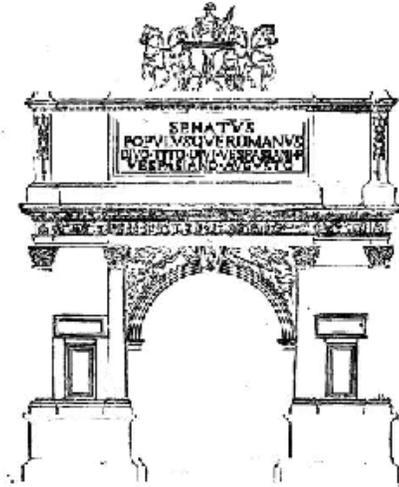
Moral of the story: Christian beware! Only by sound and courageous Biblical teaching and preaching can the church retain its salt and lend this nation savor in the mouth of God.



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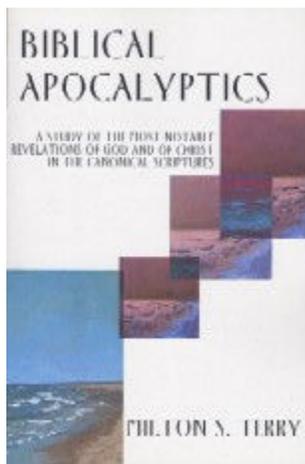
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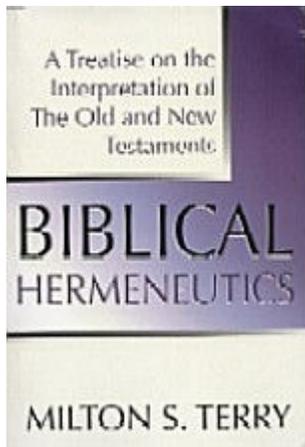


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Terry, Milton S.

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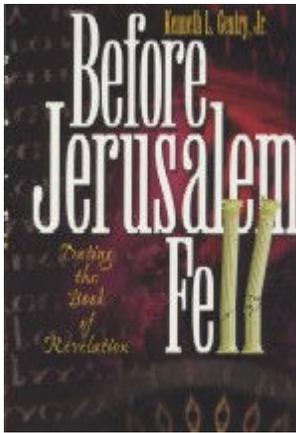


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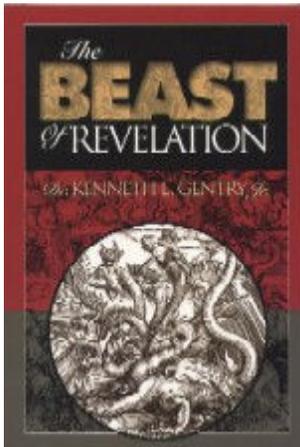


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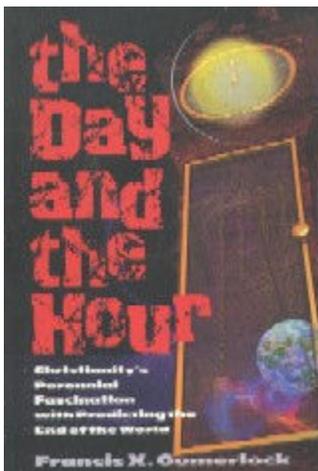


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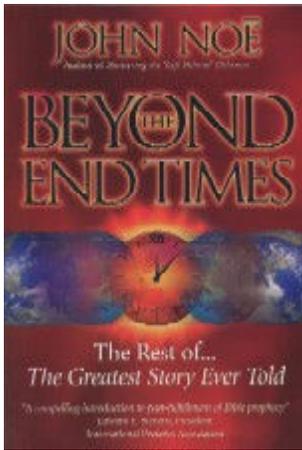


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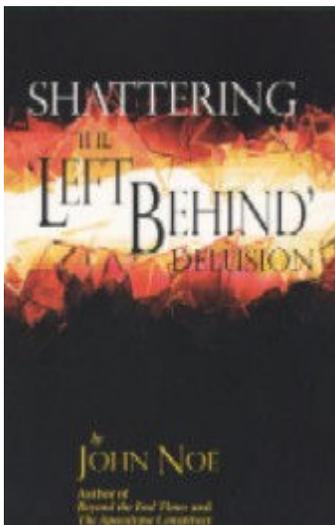


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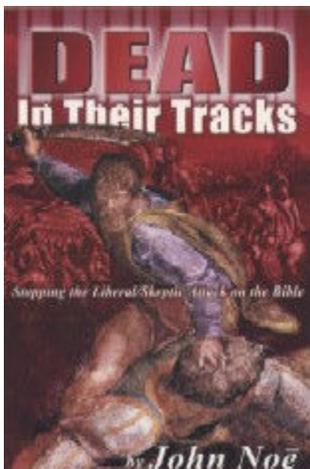


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8 Compelling Reasons Why: Christ Is Coming “Very, Very Soon” #2

by Don Preston

We are commenting on an article sent to me, evidently by one of the readers of this column. The article proposes to give “compelling” evidence to prove that Christ’s parousia (Second Coming) is near.

Reason #2--Plummeting morality. The article suggest that “studies show a shocking breakdown in morality since the middle of the century.” Proof that our generation is the pivotal one is offered by an appeal to 2 Timothy 3:1-4. This point assumes a great deal. Paul told Timothy that “in the last days,” “evil men and seducers will grow worse and worse.” The assumption is that since we do see a breakdown in modern morality, we must be the generation of which Paul spoke. The events Paul foretold were to occur *in the last days*. Yet, Paul and the New Testament writers were living in the last days! On Pentecost, Peter affirmed that the wonderful events of that day were the fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy concerning the last days. Peter affirmed “this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.” There can be no mistake, the last days existed in the first century generation. And if they existed then, it is certain that the last days do not exist now. The very term denotes the closing period of an era...not an indefinite period of thousands of years. Incidentally, the term “the last days” does not refer to the Christian Age. The last days existed before the Christian Age began on Pentecost, because Jesus appeared in the last days, and he appeared before Pentecost (Hebrews 1:1; 9:26; 1 Peter 1:20). That Paul was not anticipating the fulfillment of his prediction, in 2 Timothy 3, in some far off future is evident, because he foretold what would happen “in the last days,” and

then told Timothy “from such men turn away!” (v.5). Paul’s contrast between the evil that was coming, and Timothy personally, shows that Paul was concerned with *contemporary events*. Another assumption in the article is that immorality has never been as bad as it is now. Those who believe this--and we say this kindly--simply do not know anything about the world in which Paul wrote! Read Romans 1, and understand that Paul was describing the world in which he lived. Read the description of immorality in 1 Corinthians 6:9, and realize that not only were the things Paul mentions present, they were actually *a part of the religion* of the ancient world. In other words, sexual immorality, drunkenness, and debauchery were not only done, they were sanctioned, even demanded, by the religion of the ancient world! Words are hardly adequate to describe the depravity, the cruelty, the injustice, of the first century world. If one wanted to identify the cruelest, the meanest, the most immoral, (one has but to read about the Roman emperors to be convinced that even today’s politicians are saints in comparison!), he would have to settle on the generation of Paul and the apostles. It is simply a historical error to claim that the modern breakdown in morals equals, or even compares, to the first century.

When Paul foretold the worsening of morals, he was not anticipating a generation future to him. He was trying to prepare Timothy for events that were already present. It is a mistake to apply Paul’s prediction to a generation 2000 years removed from the one he was speaking to, and about. The breakdown in morality, lamentable as it is, is not a sign that Christ’s coming is near.



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