



ETERNAL VALUE REVIEW

MONEY MONITOR & GLOBAL TRENDS REPORT

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"For thinking Christians seeking to understand the times."

FEBRUARY 2009

FEATURE REPORT

Endtime Shoe: Fitting the World for Ten Toes

The New World Order—known also as the One World Order—attracts much speculative comment. It is best to stay clear of the extremism that is attracted to this topic ... for example, refraining from pointless attempts to identify or "tar and feather" the mythical "globalists" or "international bankers" or Jews who are supposedly scheming up diabolical plans for the world. There definitely is a great conspiracy at work. Soon, there will be 10 kings that will give their support to the ultimate conspirator—the Beast, the "in-the-flesh" Antichrist. But a few things have to happen before this can occur. At least one of these things will involve America.

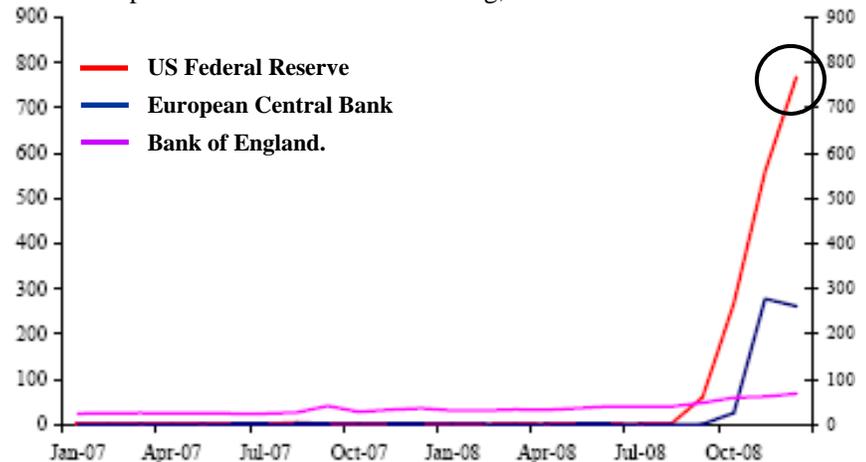
But first, a few comments about conspiracy theories are in order. The Bible clearly equates conspiracy schemes with the antichrist spirit. Said Apostle John, "This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world" (1 John 4:3). Everyone is vulnerable to playing a role, whether small or large. There can be any number of antichrists in this sense, the Bible indicating that there would be many. "Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour" (1 John 2:18). Simply complying with the world's values and its humanist agenda makes one a conspirator ... a mini antichrist. The antichrist spirit really aligns all individuals, groups and nations who betray rebellion against God, whether elites or not.

This should not make any complicit people our enemies nor the target of our condemnation. We are reminded that "[...] we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12). This is not a single spirit, but a hierarchy of demons led by the

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Out of the Economic Pan, Into the Inflationary Fire?

Deposits at Central Banks Booming, Billions of US Dollars



Source: Haver Analytics, Federal Reserve, EUROSTAT, Bank of England

"When you cry out for help, let your collection of idols save you! The wind will carry all of them off, a mere breath will blow them away. But the man who makes me his refuge will inherit the land and possess my holy mountain."

Isaiah 57:13

WORLD MONEY UPDATE

Crushed Under Idols That Topple

All the king's horses and all the king's men couldn't put Humpty Dumpty together again." That's the last line of the well-known nursery rhyme. We doubt that the world's economic/financial systems will ever be put together ... in other words, established upon a stable footing. That can never be the case as long as mankind continues to choose to harness greed and fractional-reserve banking as the foundational theories for progress and prosperity.

It is crucial to realize the huge tsunami-like developments that are sweeping the entire world, not just the seismic upheavals of financial systems. The globe-spanning reverberations have been quick and pervasive. First, a "globalization bubble" unfolded—one popularly thought to never end—then followed by the biggest and most rapid bust of world financial and real estate wealth since the 1930s (in fact, even worse). Next, the most invasive and coordinated intervention of governments ever seen (collectively around the world) has occurred. Most latterly, a flagrant manipulation of

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money has unfolded on a coordinated basis around the world. (*Graph on the front page provides an indication.*) None of this was expected by the world's policymakers nor societies at large. It all happened rapidly ... like a sudden trap. What next? We expect the waves to continue and in surprising ways. These are treacherous times where people are being herded from one disaster to another. Just how can the average household either anticipate or navigate through such see-saw conditions? In our view, it is a early sign of the times ... the global period trouble and anxiety where faith runs cold (Matthew 24:12).

Forecasts these days are not worth much since there are quite a few scenarios to consider. But suffice it to say that the world will again look very different 3 years from now (perhaps sooner). It would not be surprising that massive inflation problems will have emerged by then. It only follows, given the blatant debasing of money being perpetrated as we speak. Again, the majority of people will likely again be caught in the net. In recent times, many have run to what they perceive are safe investments — government treasury bonds and money markets funds, for example. These investments are now massively overpriced, especially so considering that inflation will again heat up in future years. It therefore would not be surprising if long-term bond funds might lose 25% of their value and more by that time. Time will tell.

That said, the king's men have been working very hard lately. Humpty Dumpty will again be propped up ... whether with massive drug stimulants and/or bailer twine and duct tape. When that will be accomplished is difficult to say. But, you can be sure it will prove to be another surprise. Why? Because no one is expecting anything to improve. Pessimism and confidence measures are at their most extreme. Hardly an economist can be found that doesn't believe a long, long economic recession is upon the world. Of course, little did they know that the US recession had already started more than a year ago. Then, very few were willing to contemplate the possibility of disaster such

as actually occurred. For the time being, the world economy still appears to be in free-fall stage (looking in the rearview mirror). But, before falling prey to groupthink, consider the interventions that have occurred around the world to date.

Remember to expect the unexpected ... namely, what the majority do not anticipate. Every major country has been rushing to jump-start business and consumer spending; to coax investors to buy and banks to lend. Interest rates have been slashed to near all-time lows ... virtually zero in some cases. US short-term rates qualify in that latter category. In England, the central bank has reduced rates to the lowest level since 1694. In Japan, short-term interest rates are at 0.15%. Huge government spending programs have been announced virtually around the world from China to Canada to Brazil. Just as we go to press, the Obama US stimulus program tallying \$819 billion is being pushed through senate. A lot of money will be spent by governments over the next few years. And, we have yet to count the cost of financial bail-outs, all of this tabulating to trillions and trillion of dollars.

It is indeed very possible that economic troubles can yet worsen before things get better. Yet, at the same time, financial conditions are now beginning to free up, offering huge speculative opportunities. As we often point out, the flipside to large and growing debt levels is that someone must be lending and have assets to lend to begin with. Commercial systems are binary as they must have a buyer for every seller; a lender for every borrower. The loss of one person may a gain to another. While it is true that capital is being destroyed during this recent financial crisis, in large part, wealth is really only being transferred to different hands and converted into different forms. Wealth has been accumulating into fewer, richer hands. Therefore, there is much idle money at waiting to take advantage of the low prices and emerging opportunities.

Looking ahead, what would be unexpected? At some point, all of the heightened stimulus spending by governments is bound to bring the comatose patient back to sputtering life, if only for a while. That would indeed come as a surprise to most people. However, we do not make any such predictions without at least two qualifiers. Firstly, short-term predictions are hazardous. While trends may indeed unfold as one might expect, the timing can be very different ... considerably faster or slower than thought. There are too many complicating factors to consider. While professional investors must try to anticipate such interim developments, they will carefully consider the risks.

For North America and other nations it will likely prove to be a false dawn. Longer-term, a different outlook is in view. America and other high-income countries will again sink under the weight of much higher burdens (debt, unfunded pensions taxes, interest rates ... etc.) than exist now. Consider that America entered into the current crisis in a weaker condition than in the 1930s. Says, George Soros, the intrepid mega-investor, "[...] the problems facing the administration of President Barack Obama are even greater than those that confronted Franklin D. Roosevelt.



ETERNAL VALUE REVIEW
MONEY MONITOR & GLOBAL TRENDS REPORT



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Total credit outstanding was 160 percent of gross domestic product in 1929 and rose to 260 percent in 1932; we entered the crash of 2008 at 365 percent and the ratio is bound to rise to 500 percent” (Financial Times, January 29, 2009). Other parts of the world will emerge more strongly following present economic dislocations. It’s part of the endtime transition to “multipolarism,” a concept described in this issue’s Feature Article, *Endtime Shoe*.

Just how do recent trends fit on the cosmic time line? Bible prophecy does not provide the required detail on short-term developments. We are forced to speculate which we do not want to do. But here are some guideposts to consider: As already mentioned, the world eventually will end up in a state of multipolarism where globalism and humanism are resplendent under 10 kings. At some point, world conditions will again appear prosperous, global policymakers likely exulting over their success of having successfully engineered a recovery. This prosperity is sufficient to enrich the kings and sea captains of the world as foretold in Revelation 18. This later commercial edifice will likely stand on legs even more wobbly than the last global boom. The final economic collapse of this dispensation—complete and eternal—occurs in the latter half of the future Tribulation period. As fearsome as the current economic crisis may seem, it will compare as a small tempest to that future time of destruction.

One lesson of the last few years is a modern-day rendition of an Old Testament teaching: Man’s idols all must topple. It is a characteristic of all idols. In the end they come up empty. Surely, many of mankind’s idols have toppled recently. The very largest of companies thought to be indestructible engines of profit and stability have required bail-outs. The largest US bank failure occurred—Washington Mutual Inc. with \$307 billion in assets. The largest insurance company needed to be rescued—American International Group. The world’s one-time largest car company, General Motors, was technically bankrupt, requiring bail-out financing from governments. One of the largest and most trusted investment funds ended up utterly worthless due to the Ponzi-scheme swindle of Bernie Madoff. \$50 billion disappeared into thin air.

God laughs at mankind’s attempts to build and set-up their own idols. He chuckles that these idols have to be propped up. “A man too poor to present such an offering selects wood that will not rot. He looks for a skilled craftsman to set up an idol that will not topple” (Isaiah 40:20). “The craftsman encourages the goldsmith, and he who smooths with the hammer spurs on him who strikes the anvil. He says of the welding, ‘It is good.’ He nails down the idol so it will not topple” (Isaiah 41:7).

In the same way it is today revealed that the world’s venerated global systems of commerce—invested with the hope of humanism and future peace—are held up by the prop of man’s confidence. This Babylonian idol must be nailed down by human hands so that it will not topple. Try as its worshippers might, the propped-up idols will ultimately again fall. It is a lesson to take to heart. **EVR**

Endtime Shoe: Fitting the World for Ten Toes

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“kosmokrator,” the chief angel, Satan. It is against this conspiracy that we wrestle—not deceived, mortal human beings.

Our time is therefore better spent praying for conspirators and antichrists, whoever they are, and pursuing a Biblical faith life. Elitists, globalists or whatever other “one-world-order” villains there might be, are no different or worse than the vast humanity that has been either misled or blinded by this world’s “prince of the air.” All other conspiracy theories, such as mentioned, are really unnecessary distractions to Christians.

Lately, however, at the behest of many antichrists and the Antichrist spirit himself, the great cosmic conspiracy is being advanced rapidly. And, as has often been the case throughout history, great financial crises have proven to be very effective catalysts for the advance of humanism on earth.

World Order Delayed or a Diversion?

A new world order? Lately, it would hardly seem that way. The globe has appeared rather disorderly. Panic and desperate actions better define the times, not order rank and file. It even seems as if that prophesied day has arrived where people will throw their silver into the streets (Isaiah 2:20, Ezekiel 7:19). Recently, even gold and silver prices have plunged. However, that prophesied time is also not yet. Ezekiel and Isaiah’s prophecies refer to conditions that will occur in the later stages of the Tribulation ... likely nearer the time of the 6th seal.

Yet, many observers—Bible-readers or not—do think that the world is now rapidly caught in something like the Great Tribulation. In fact, it is surprising how many observers use apocalyptic language in describing the recent economic and financial meltdowns. Apparently, a “financial Armageddon” is more fearsome than the real Armageddon. Indeed, a very steep global economic recession, perhaps even a depression, is in the works for some countries.

That America and the world’s financial systems were vulnerable to shattering meltdowns had long been obvious. Yet, now that calamitous events have occurred and difficult times are obvious to everyone, most of the world still remains asleep as to what really is underfoot behind the scenes. What yet lies in the future?

We need not speculate. We know where this global rebellion against God is headed, because the Bible tells us the future in advance. Yes, we cannot know the exact timing and the minute details of future events. All the same, reading the Bible we do know what the general world order will look like nearer the time that the Tribulation period begins. Doing so, we can discern that developments today are fulfilling a rapid progression towards that prophesied time.

Unlike the Rapture, which is signless, the Tribulation is not. Therefore, we can today know that the Tribulation period has not yet begun and is yet future. This conclusion can be deduced a number of ways. One of the most persuasive reasons for knowing that time is not yet is that the “endtime shoe” does not yet fit the time of the 10 kings.

The 10 kings must exist before the Antichrist is revealed.

Daniel makes this clear. “The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings” (Daniel 7:24). Here we see only “after” the 10 kings are on the scene, that “another king”—the Antichrist—will arise.

Because of this, we can know that the world is yet to experience some great geopolitical and economic power shifts. This must occur before the final endtime events described in the Bible can occur.

Ultimate Doom and Gloom Deferred

Prospects now look so grim to some analysts that they predict the world will soon return to the “Dark Ages.” They reason that during difficult times, individual sovereign countries will resort to protecting their own narrow interests. They will therefore no longer comply with global organizations and institutions, abandoning multilateral relationships and retreating to the principle of “every man for himself.” As such, globalism will be abandoned.

Also, global merchandise trade will now experience a steep setback. The Baltic Dry Shipping Index (a statistical barometer that economists use to track world transportation rates for ocean-going ships) has shockingly collapsed 90% in less than a year. When this index soared, as it did in recent years when the Asian manufacturing hub anchored by China flooded the world with exports galore, it indicated rising demand for ships. Its unprecedented collapse now signifies to some that global commerce is doomed. They therefore conclude that globalization must therefore be dead.

Yet, though the globe may be facing unprecedented and calamitous times, a total collapse is not imminent. No doubt, difficult economic conditions are upon the world ... certainly for a time. However, predictions of terminal doom occurring now are wrong. In fact, the Bible expressly indicates otherwise. For one, we know that the world will have many sea captains at that future time when Babylon is yet to be judged (Revelation 18:17). How otherwise would it be possible for “all who had ships on the sea [to become] rich through her [the great city Babylon’s] wealth” (Revelation 18:19)? As such, shipping captains must yet experience a time of prosperity in the future.

Also, we know that ocean going traffic will still exist in the early Millennial period, as this must be the case in order to fulfill prophecies promised to Israel. For example: “Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come” (Isaiah 60:5). Ships will be bringing cargo and people to Israel at that future time. “Surely the islands look to me; in the lead are the ships of Tarshish, bringing your sons from afar, with their silver and gold [...]” (Isaiah 60:9).

As mentioned, views that the world will face a reversal with respect to globalism are also wrong. It is much too late for this to occur in any case, as the world is already too interconnected upon global trade with other nations. The fortunes of every country are too mutually dependent, so that very few, if any, can risk being recklessly independent. In this sense, the road back from globalism is more horrible to

policy-makers than the one forward.

Said differently, ever more sovereignty will be bartered for the sake of grain, just as was foreshadowed by the Bible’s account of Joseph’s policies in that time of crisis in Egypt thousands of years ago. “And all the countries came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe in all the world” (Genesis 41:57). The world is resolute upon achieving prosperity and its popular comforts its own way, without first seeking the Kingdom of God and salvation through the Son, Jesus Christ.

Road to Armageddon Uninterrupted

For these reasons and others, we can know that the steep downturn in global trade at present is only a stage of the world’s endtime “birth pains,” not yet the end. We must sadly conclude that the world’s progression towards the prophesied global conditions of the last days will continue. As for what happens after the Rapture ... that may be of little interest to Christians who are focused upon the Lord, looking only to His return. Yet, this realization does quicken our gaze upward, as His appearing seems ever more imminent.

Just what are some of these prophesied conditions? Among many are these: apostasy, false christs, wealth extremes, hoarding, dissipation, indulgence, globalism and globalization. All of these are far advanced. But there is one that does not yet exist—global multipolarism. What is meant by multipolarism? It is a condition of inter-relationships where the world’s key nations are relatively balanced in terms of power and influence. Let’s examine this condition more closely, as it is very significant and also connects to the question of America’s fate.

Peer Steinbrück (the German finance minister) recently said that the world’s financial crisis prefigures the end of Wall Street’s (and, by extension, America’s) hegemony and the emergence of a multi-polar world. He now sees a world where power is distributed a little more evenly.

If he is right that this will happen soon, it meets an endtime condition that the Bible prophesies.

Purpose of the Latest Crisis: A Shoe Horn

Scripture clearly indicates that a 10-king power coalition will take form near the start of the Tribulation period. At least five separate visions depict these 10 kings. (Daniel 2:41-42 [in the form of ten toes]; 7:20, 24; Revelation 12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 12, 16).

Many characteristics are revealed about this group of 10 world leaders. 10 kings. Please see the *Midnight Call* 3-part article series, “The Emerging Global Power Coalition”—October to December 2006—which details 13 sets of factors that apply to this future grouping of kings.

In fact, this 10-nation coalition is one of the most important and early signs of the times. While the world will not know the exact configuration of these 10 kings until the Antichrist achieves an accord with Israel (this being widely agreed to be the signal event of the start of the Tribulation period) this general trend toward world governance will be evident well before. That is what is playing out before our eyes today.

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Signs of the Times



One World, One Crisis

The economic and financial developments of recent years show that the world has come to the point where man-made events can impact the sentiment of the entire world almost instantaneously. It would be one thing if the mood of the entirety of mankind were to change suddenly in response to a nuclear winter or the blotting out of the sun. However, a global response to an economically-related impulse is of a different order in several ways. For one, it is generated by the non-physical actions of humanity itself (an emotional event). Secondly, it reveals a common set of affections ... a universal reliance upon the prosperity of mankind's global commercial systems.

In Isaiah's Apocalypse (Isaiah 24-27) we read of the "globality" of God's final judgments and punishments. Though much of these chapters refer directly to Israel and the Jews, many judgments that are mentioned apply to the entire world. For example, "The earth will be completely laid waste and totally plundered" (Isaiah 24:3). Also, "The earth reels like a drunkard, it sways like a hut in the wind; so heavy upon it is the guilt of its rebellion that it falls—never to rise again" (verse 20). In fact, in chapter 24 alone, the word "earth" is mentioned 17 times.

Of course, it only follows that a global judgment will apply to a "globalized" mankind, one that is characterized by a unified rebellion against God. If that were not so, why would the entire world be judged; and no nations spared if there did not exist such a unanimity in mankind's condition? Prophetically, mankind is seen moving to an ever more global, monolithic culture.

In that vein, we must note the current longing expressed by many leaders and policymakers to build and pursue global organization and solutions. It is a natural extension of "[...] the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does" (1 John 2:16). One doesn't need to spin great conspiracy theories involving cabals of demon-possessed people to bring about this result. We see this innate human impulse to pursue greatness and power at work everywhere. In the corporate world, firms conglomerate into ever larger entities and establish ever greater global footprint in their respective industries (*executives aspiring to be big fish in an ever smaller global pond*).

The same hegemonic impulse is shared by politicians, churchmen and global policymakers. There is a natural, fleshly appeal to greater celebrity; to ruling over ever larger domains; even the entire world. Interestingly, all of these corporate captains, policymakers and Christian reconstructionists see times of world crisis as signaling great global opportunity. To them, it is an opportune moment to satisfy the "lust of the eyes." Documenting this yearning are several excerpts from recent comments by

selected global policymakers.

"What is needed is a large worldwide fiscal stimulus to counteract falling private demand. [...] the world must also build the institutions for the twenty-first century economy. Any crisis is an opportunity. This crisis has demonstrated that the destinies of countries around the world are linked. Policy coordination and a global strategy that instills confidence and creates hope will bring a quicker and stronger recovery to us all."

One Crisis, One World by Kemal Dervi & Juan Somavia of the United Nations Development Program and the International Labour Union respectively. <http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/include/print.asp?newsIdx=38298>, Accessed Jan 22, 2009.

"What I am saying is that a crisis is an event which can force democratic governments to make difficult decision like those that will be required to create a North American Community. It's not that I want another 9/11 crisis, but having a crisis would force decisions that otherwise might not get made."

Dr. Robert A. Pastor

http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=53378.. 2007.

"2009 will be a year of learning the lessons of the financial crisis; a year where its reach in terms of time and scope becomes more evident; a year that calls for a new financial architecture to be shaped. At the same time, it will be a year that will test the resolve and willingness of world leaders to collaborate and take action to move beyond this crisis. 2008 has proven the extent to which the world is subject to global risks; let 2009 be the year where the world finds a common agenda to begin mitigating their impact."

Klaus Schwab, Foreword to *Global Risks Report 2009*, World Economic Forum.

"[...] the very unsettled nature of the international system generates a unique opportunity for creative diplomacy. The nadir of the existing international financial system coincides with simultaneous political crises around the globe. Never have so many transformations occurred at the same time in so many different parts of the world and been made globally accessible via instantaneous communication. The alternative to a new international order is chaos. An international order can be permanent only if its participants have a share not only in building but also in securing it. In this manner, America and its potential partners have a unique opportunity to transform a moment of crisis into a vision of hope.

Henry Kissinger, The chance for a new world order. Herald Tribune, January 12, 2009, <http://www.iht.com/bin/printfriendly.php?id=19281915>. Accessed January 16, 2009

It is essential to understand the uniqueness of the arrangement, where 10 kings will pool their power together and then agree to put it at the disposal of the Antichrist. There are two reasons.

Firstly, the general pattern throughout history has been that only one nation would dominate the known world or its regions. Even in our modern age this has been the case. It has been a long, long time since the world has not been dominated by one prominent and powerful country. Secondly, it has never occurred before that the entire world has been ruled by a voluntary coalition of countries. That is still not the case today, though there may be a European Union, NATO, the United Nations and many other international agencies. Why? Because there are at least one or more geopolitical nation-states that are too powerful or independent. Therefore, we can know that the prophetic “glass slipper” has not yet found the 10-king Cinderella.

“The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but who for one hour will receive authority as kings along with the beast. They have one purpose and will give their power and authority to the beast” (Revelation 17:12-13). Effectively, this power configuration comes into existence for a very short period of time, and gives rise to the world’s 8th kingdom. In Revelation 17 the beast with seven heads and crowns is again shown. These seven heads portray the past Gentile kingdoms that have suppressed Israel—from Egypt to the second, revived Roman one at the time of Israel’s re-emergence. The Antichrist’s rule at first is borne on the strength of 10 kings, and then becomes the 8th.

Fitting the World for Ten Toes

Critically, there are clear changes now underway that make way for the 10-king coalition ... shortly thereafter, the 8th king. In Daniel 2:41-42, we see that an endtime “power coalition” of 10 kings is portrayed as 10 toes. In this chapter we read the account of Nebuchadnezzar’s famous vision, in which he saw a tall statue made of various materials, from a head of gold down to 10 toes of iron and clay. This vision outlined the future kingdoms and power structures of the Gentiles, right to the time of the return of Jesus Christ, when He establishes his millennial reign upon earth.

As already pointed out, these 10 kings are shown at least four other times in the Bible—Daniel 7, Revelation 12, 13 and 17. This group is referenced as 10 horns, 10 toes or 10 kings, exactly 10 times. Crucially, this endtime power coalition is a significant prophecy—most certainly for those earth dwellers that will not be raptured away—for at least one other reason. The Bible expressly indicates that these 10 kings must appear before the Antichrist is revealed (Daniel 7:24). These kings would be the equivalent to 10 male leaders of sovereign nations today.

This endtime 10-king power coalition may even be prefigured in Genesis. This would not be surprising. It’s often said that the entire Bible is enfolded in the book of Genesis, and that the whole Bible is Genesis unfolded. As the Bible is divinely written by the same Spirit, the

beginning must surely align with the end.

Just as endtime globalization can be seen foreshadowed in Genesis (*the story of Joseph, for example*), an outline for the 10 kings can be found in Genesis 14. This chapter tells the story about Lot’s household being looted and carried away by a northern coalition of four kings. These “[...] kings seized all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food; then they went away. They also carried off Abram’s nephew Lot and his possessions, since he was living in Sodom” (Genesis 14:11-12).

An unusually large number of kings, kingdoms and alliances are mentioned in this chapter, making for some interesting alignments with other prophecies concerning the last-day power jockeying of 10 kings and the Antichrist. For example, exactly 10 kings are named in this chapter.

Significance of 10 Toes

Let’s return to Nebuchadnezzar’s vision of 10 toes, as it contains a very important clue. Studying this picture, it would be reasonable to conclude that the world is already very near a last world power structure comprised of 10 kings. However, here we discover an ill-fitting fact. Were Nebuchadnezzar’s vision to apply to our day, the feet would be seen to be quite lopsided and deformed. Why? They would only have one big toe. In fact, this toe would have looked grossly oversized relative to both feet.

Every indication that the Bible gives us about the final last day 10-king power coalition is that they are roughly proportionate in size. First, in Daniel 2 these kings are shown as a normal set of 10 toes (verses 41-42), and in Daniel 7, Revelation 12, 13 and 17 they are shown as 10 horns. In the “horn” imagery, the 10 are compared in size only once, and this to an emerging 11th horn, a small one that then uproots three of the existing horns (Daniel 7:8).

As such, we are led to recognize that the final 10 kings will not be small in size (relative to other nations of the world), and that some will assuredly be bigger or more powerful than others, just as the big toe is normally bigger than the smallest of the toes. But in the recent era, there has only been one big toe—a hugely outsized one at that—that does not yet fit into the shoe.

Walter Russell Meade points out in a recent book¹, that the Anglo Saxon countries of Britain and America have been on top of the world for several centuries (*though sometimes fighting each other*). We recognize here that the world has really only had one “big toe” these past three hundred years or so, and a hugely disproportionate toe at that.

For the time being, the US is still the most powerful nation in the world. It represents a very big toe ... so big, in fact, that it still can render any other coalition of 10 kings ineffective. As such, we recognize that a resizing of the relative powers of 10 major nations must yet happen before the prophesied time of the 10 kings will occur.

Will America fit into the shoe or not at all? Recent global financial events and America’s rapid economic fall make this a timely question. Are we now seeing these necessary changes beginning to unfold ... the big toe stubbed?

Resizing Needed to Fit Into the Endtime Shoe

Since Bible prophecy clearly outlines that there will be a 10-nation power coalition, not a foot with one big toe, we can conclude that this big toe must then become comparatively smaller. While the British Empire has been removed from the pinnacle of power for more than half a century, its younger cousin, the US, now undoubtedly also faces a relative decline. By whatever means—the Rapture, self-inflicted, deserved or divinely willed — this has to happen if the Bible is to be proved correct. In fact, viewed against the pace of past human history, it must be said that this shift with respect to America is happening extremely suddenly (even without a Rapture).

Less than five years ago, though the seeds of America's moral and economic decline had long been evident, the US was still seen as an invincible, world-dominating power in every sense. At the time, geopolitical analysts were still actively debating the question of whether the United States should really be considered an empire in the classical sense. Many analysts pooh-poohed any notion that America might be vulnerable, maintaining that the 21st century would belong to the US, as did the 20th. One may be too hasty in predicting America's demise on the world scene, but it cannot be denied that trends of relative deterioration have indeed been very rapid in recent years.

Joseph Stiglitz, former Chief Economist of the World Bank, commented recently that in the space of the two terms of the recent Bush government, the nation's government budget went from a surplus of \$128 billion to a certain legacy of a \$1 trillion deficit for the next president. Says Stiglitz, "The national debt has increased by 65%, by nearly \$10 trillion to which the debts of Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae (the nations' largest mortgage providers) must be added. Meanwhile, we are saddled with the cost of two wars. The price tag for the one in Iraq alone will [...] ultimately exceed \$3 trillion."²

Mr. Stiglitz will likely prove too optimistic. Given the scale of financial and economic crises, total government debt in America may double again in the space of the next 3 to 5 years. In the next year alone, the US current account deficit (money that must be borrowed from the rest of the world) may soar to as much as 13% of the size of the economy, a level that seems unthinkable.

To be sure, economic and financial strength is only one measure of global power, though a most important one in this present Age of Global Capital. On these measures, other nations of the world are now superseding the US. For example, for the first time in perhaps a half-century, another nation—China—accounted for the most global economic growth in 2007. While America is now by far the world's greatest debtor nation, it is Asia that now houses two-thirds of the world's international financial reserves. While no trend is likely to be safely predictable, these are indeed new signs of the times.

Shared Globalism Going Forward

Now that the contagion of financial crisis has rocked the entire world, the calls for greater global coordination are

becoming shrill. For example, said Miguel Angel Ordóñez, Spain's ECB (European Central Bank) Governor, "We've got to get together on both sides of the Atlantic. It is absolutely essential to co-ordinate everything, including monetary policy."³

According to a global financial analyst, "A global conference (along the lines of Bretton Woods) under a respected chairman (Paul Volcker is the obvious choice) must be convened. It would bring together all the major players including the vital creditor nations—China, Japan ... etc.—to develop a framework for the major economic reforms (currency policies, fiscal disciplines and trade barriers) to work towards a resolution of the crisis."⁴

To that end, several world meeting forums have been planned. The heads of state for Britain and France organized support for their global plans at a special EU summit. G20 meetings have been scheduled, the first to take place in Washington, followed by a second one in Paris. Some geopolitical analysts are encouraged by the spirit of "multipolarism" that is apparently galvanizing a new participative spirit for these meetings.

Even China's Premier, Wen Jiabao, is keenly aware of the direct connection his country has to America's recent financial troubles, saying, "If anything goes wrong in the US financial sector, we are anxious about the safety and security of Chinese capital."⁵

If anything, due to the catastrophic financial and currency collapses spanning the world, such nations as Iceland, Australia and others have realized that it is too costly and dangerous to have their own currency. Even Denmark and Sweden, two staunch hold-outs in adopting the euro, may be rethinking their position.

All in all, what appears as global disorder at present—a time of near fatal financial collapse—actually will act as a catalyst in the rapid metamorphosis to a 10-king global power coalition. There is a broad consensus now that a group of nations need to come together to find economic and financial solutions for the world. How many nations? Some argue that 20 is too many, and others that the G7 is not enough. Could a group of 10 emerge?

We can definitely draw several conclusions. First, whatever new global organization emerges, its powers will be shared more equally in the future. Multipolarism must eventually gain ground, according to Bible prophecy. The United States will eventually lose its outsized number of votes and vetoes in such organizations as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and others. The second conclusion we can safely draw is that we live in a time where an alignment of 10 kings could be on our very doorstep. There is yet one more sure conclusion—a future period of apparent prosperity around the globe, even if only fleeting.

One More Last Day Boom?

If the Lord tarries, it is likely that the world will yet see at least one more economic recovery. Viewed from the midst of the present financial wreckage, this seems so implausible ... bordering on the ridiculous. In fact, a global economic boom could yet occur at some point in the future. Not to forget, it

was only as little as 12 months ago, that the notion that the entire world would fall into the grips of a global credit panic was thought to be equally ridiculous. That's not to say that America or other western nations might soon see economic recoveries. Likely not. But, as pointed out, Bible prophecy indicates that a time is yet ahead where the world will feel much more complacent than we see today.

At the time that the final troubles come upon the world, they will occur suddenly like a trap (Luke 21:34). In this verse we see that people will be more preoccupied with indulgence and the cares of this world, than great global crises. Moreover, Jesus told the disciples that the world will be generally unaware in the last days. "As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away" (Matthew 24:37-39). For all of these conditions to occur, a recovery, repair or reform of world financial systems and economies must first unfold.

Thoughts to Ponder

For the last three centuries, there has only been one big toe. But this cannot continue if prophecy is to be fulfilled. This change is very likely already underfoot. The recent economic and financial disasters of the past year (in fact, originating in the US) likely play a significant role in the geopolitical "birth pangs" and "earthquakes" of an emerging global power distribution that the Bible describes as taking form in the very last days. The rise of other nations such as China, India, Brazil, Russia and perhaps oil-exporting nations must be seen as part of this rebalancing process. Actually, the time of the 10 kings could unfold upon the world very suddenly.

It may already be here. Surely, the facts outlined to this point will not be received as being very hopeful. But that would be a wrong perception. It is never too late for a nation to repent. God said to Israel, "[...] if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14). Repentance is an option ... provided that it is not past the point of return, where God refuses to listen. But we must not make the mistake of Jonah. He was upset with God when the citizens of Nineveh chose to heed his message of judgment. As a result, Nineveh's demise was delayed for another 150 years or so.

Our Lord, for the most part, allows us the freedom to choose to follow His precepts and ways voluntarily. Yes, God foreknows what our choices will be, but that is not the same as predestinating our willful actions.

Yet, according to Bible prophecy, America must decline relative to the 10 kings in one way or another. But that is not to say that it is prophetically necessary for America to rush and accelerate the fulfillment of prophecy by collapsing into a toothless tiger. Prophecy in this case can be fulfilled in a number of ways. 10 other kings could become powerful

enough to supersede the geopolitical position of the US, or at the other extreme, America be disastrously downsized ... either becoming one of the 10 kings or not at all. Which will it be?

The jury is out. It is up to the nations' leaders and citizens. However, to date, the signs are not hopeful. During America's most recent presidential election, Christian candidates were openly ridiculed and topics such as the "end of days" were fodder for public scoffing. Greater shifts to immorality and rebelliousness may now lie ahead.

Most certainly, the world will rush together into new alliances, reforming its economic and financial policies in a coordinated fashion, something that is only possible in a multi-polar world. More than anything, the world and America are looking for financial and economic solutions. Any person who can deliver such policies will be thankfully accepted as a type of savior. Morality and godliness can wait. In this regard, America's materialism can in large part be blamed upon the satanic distortions of so-called religious leaders that have infected the entire nation with prosperity gospel and utilitarianism.

The world is definitely looking for a champion savior right now. Shouts the title of a recent economic report, "China: Savior of the World!"⁶ The cover of Forbes magazine recently blared the title, "Capitalism Will Save Us." Wrote a prominent journalist recently, "We are saved. Amid the rubble of the world's financial markets, we can catch sight of the foundations of a new international order. The big lesson of the crisis has been learnt: we cannot escape our mutual dependence."⁷ These comments betray that the world is looking for an economic savior, not the eternal One.

We look for our Savior elsewhere. Said the Apostle Paul to the Philippians: "But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body" (Philippians 3:20-21).

While the world stampedes into greater global interconnectedness and hyper-states of commercial idolatry in its quest for the security of grain and bread, it completely ignores the real bread. "For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world" (John 6:33). "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever" (John 6:51).

Notes

1. Walter Russell Mead, *God and Gold: Britain, America, and the Making of the Modern World* (Alfred A. Knopf: New York, 2007).
2. Joseph Stiglitz, "Reversal of Fortune," www.vanityfair.com. Accessed October 23, 2008.
3. Source: Telegraph.co.uk, October 9, 2008.
4. Satyajit Das, "Only global action will end this," *Business Spectator*, Oct 7, 2008.
5. *Asia Times*, October 9, 2008.
6. Global Economic Research, *Economic Cycles*, Oct. 31, 2008, Societe Generale.
7. Philip Stephens, "Globalization and the new nationalism collide," *Financial Times*, October 24, 2008.

Facts & Stats ... Ends & Trends



TOPICAL QUOTES

Global institutional pension fund assets in the 11 major markets (*countries where pensions are prominent*) shrank by about 19% during 2008, from US\$25 trillion to around US\$20 trillion, according to *Global Pension Assets Study*. The study also reveals that the global pensions balance sheet (*assets less liabilities*) deteriorated by 29% in 2008, reflecting the combined effects of poor performing assets and lower government bond yields.

Watson Wyatt, January 26, 2009

Over the past three decades the debt of the US financial sector grew six times faster than nominal GDP. The consequent increases in its scale and leverage explain why, at the peak, the financial sector allegedly generated 40 percent of US corporate profits. Something decidedly unhealthy was going on: instead of being a servant, finance had become the economy's master.

Martin Wolf, January 27, 2009

According to a first-ever worldwide poll on the current financial crisis, the Globe and Mail/Worldwide Independent Network of Market Research Survey (made up of an international group of pollsters which have created the WIN Crisis Index to monitor citizens' perceptions in their country) surveyed 14,555 people in 17 countries during the fall of 2008. 49% believed that the economic situation would get worse in the next 3 months. In Canada and the United States 61% and 46%, respectively, felt that it would get worse. Only 8% of citizens in G8 countries thought that things might get better. (*Editors note: One of new aspects of the current economic times is the world-wide unanimity of opinion.*)

Globe and Mail

China's economy overtook Germany's in 2007 to become the world's third largest, underscoring the nation's increasing economic and political clout. China's economy is 70 times bigger than when leader Deng Xiaping ditched hard-line Communist policies in favor of free-market reforms in 1978. China's economy may now be 15% larger than

Germany's. It is still less than 10 per cent as rich as Germany is.

Bloomberg

In 1980, the average Canadian was \$5,470 in the hole, including mortgage debt. By 2007, that number had swelled by more than six times to \$34,523.

It's All About You, Macleans.ca, January 21, 2009

In June 2008, the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life published a controversial survey in which 70 percent of Americans said that they believed other religions than theirs could lead to eternal life. The question was rephrased for a second survey taken in August, this time yielding a result of 65%. Many Christians apparently view their didactic text as flexible. According to Pew's August survey, only 39 percent of Christians believe that the Bible is the literal word of God and 18 percent think that it's just a book written by men and not the word of God at all.

New York Times, December 27, 2008

The separation between ownership and control has now come to pass. In a mere half-century, we have moved from an ownership society (92% percent of all stocks owned by individuals; 8% by institutions) to an agency society (24 percent and 76 percent, respectively), a change [...] described as a "pathological mutation in capitalism." Today turnover of stocks (buying and selling) in the United States, which ran 20 to 40 percent during my first 30 years in the mutual fund field, will come to more than 300 percent in 2008—something like 10 times as large.

John Bogle, December 26, 2008

The International Labor Organization in Geneva said the global recession would lead to a "dramatic increase" in unemployment this year, which would certainly lead to 18 million to 30 million additional unemployed and more than 50 million "if the situation continues to deteriorate."

Financial Times, January 29, 2009

"The security to which most people cling to is mere illusion. God doesn't give us this material security. Instead He offers faith ... which begins, in a sense, where reason ends."

Catherine Doherty

"If money is the answer for everything, what is the question?"

Jean Shaw

"Capitalism gets to stride around our society as objective truth. Everybody from Girl Scouts to collectors for the IRS agrees that money works. Why doesn't God's love enjoy so high a reputation? It makes more sense than money. God's love can be freely exchanged; there are no security problems at ATMs; and God's love brings more possibilities to every day than any other assets we have."

*W.J. Sappenfield
in the Christian Century
(April 23-30, 1997)*

"Money and success don't change people; they merely amplify what is already there."

Will Smith

"Prosperity may be a greater test of character than poverty."

Anonymous

"A man who has riches without understanding is like the beasts that perish."

Psalms 49:20



Letters to the Editor

(Editor's Note: In this section we share and respond to some of the letters and emails we receive. We appreciate them. Here we focus on the practical issues of stewardship in this age, interesting questions, as well as general feedback and insights. Please note that questions may be edited.)

READER: I chuckle whenever prognosticators like yourself speak in terms of years. I think you have a surprise waiting for you that in very short order will prove your outlook to have been overly optimistic. Your eyes are too focused on the West, when you should be looking at the East — or middle of it to be precise. If you think that the world has the luxury of years and years to get things righted, or to experience the decline necessary for the 10 member nation to fall into place, you have another thing coming. — **TC-USA**

EVR: You take issue with a comment in one of our articles, though you do not document any specific statement or publication with which you disagree. I have never made any specific forecasts with respect to the timing of any prophetic event. Things may occur incredibly quickly; they may not. I would of course be interested to benefit from any insights that you may have on such matters, not to mention the short-term detail on the unfolding of geopolitical affairs. Your email provides little indication of your points of view, let alone their validation, other than to imply a superior insight. With respect to the timing of prophetic events (even in respect to future economic trends from a secular perspective) it is best to keep ones options open. Indeed, events can unfold quickly, slowly or very surprisingly. But, let's not forget that there is a big difference between interpreting Scripture and prophesying ourselves. The biggest reason why Bible prophecy is so discredited in the world today is because people take it upon themselves to add their own prophecy in its interpretation. Please write me with your specific views.

READER: I quote from an article you wrote that I read on www.Raptureready.com. *“Just how deeply could America fall? As we have already suggested, there are sufficient reasons to worry, especially with respect to a deeply imbedded condition of idolatry. However, even secular economic analysts see ominous long-term problems. The next few years are critical. Will America earn a reprieve? The jury is out.”* I'm sorry to say but there should NEVER be sufficient reasons to worry if you place your trust and hope in the Lord Jesus Christ!!! — **LV-USA**

EVR: You take issue with a comment in the articles series, *What Chance a Global Financial Apocalypse Now*, a section of which you have quoted. While I most certainly agree that those who place their trust in Lord Jesus Christ should not have reason to worry — a point this ministry makes very often — it doesn't validate the perspective you seem to want to support with this statement. While I am

glad you do not have any reason to worry, the fact is that others do have reason. In any case, you would agree that Christians should be watching, warning as well as disseminating the reasons for our hope. Why? Because there indeed are many people and nations that have plenty to worry about ... some of these even wayward Christians. While eternal salvation is not at risk, we are not absolved of the consequences of our mistakes and sins in this earthly realm. While we may declare that we are putting our trust in Jesus Christ, how often do our actions and thoughts not necessarily always align. In this world, we will reap what we sow. So do nations. Therefore, there has been plenty cause lately to worry about the earthly consequences of what has been sown.

READER: Your dismissal of evil conspiracies in the world and the awareness of such matters is concerning. Ephesians 5:11-16 states: “Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: ‘Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.’ Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.” These conspiracies should be exposed by those who love the Truth. Jesus said “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.” Becoming aware of the dark conspiracies of Satan using men as his conduits is a tool to point non-believers to Jesus as well a tool to strengthen the faith of believers. Once people realize that this world is consumed by corruption and is completely fallen, they look for what is incorruptible and unbroken ... the Kingdom of God. We are aliens and strangers in this world and should not forget it. You wrote me back in October. As we've seen events unfold since then, I doubt your stance has changed but I believe it should have. God Bless. —**NM-USA**

EVR: I appreciate your concern and reasoned response. No doubt you have a more balanced perspective on the “one world order” theories than most. Nonetheless, you may misinterpret the reasons why I choose to deemphasize the conspiracy mills. The points of differentiation may be subtle. But first, allow me to clearly state that I do not deny that there are conspiracies. There are many of them—past, present and future—whether small or grand world-sweeping attempts for whatever venal purpose. But what are we to do about them? This is where the most important issue of dispute lies. Are we to take it upon ourselves to slavishly hunt down sinners and prosecute them? Is it our commission to heap condemnation upon fallen mankind ... to segment out different kinds of sinners? Should the Church launch a new inquisition—a witch hunt—for globalists? No. Fighting crime and corruption is the role of civil government, not the commission of the Church. We await the return of Jesus Christ who will “restore all things” (Acts 3:21). Besides, sin is found in all of us, whether saved or not. What really drives the major endtime conspiracies of globalization and globalism? These are fueled by the lusts of mankind, though surely inflamed and

coordinated by the master conspirator himself, Satan. Globalization is not a conspiracy of certain malevolent, demon-possessed persons. It is individual people, who have the opportunity, acting in their own self interests that are at the forefront. We are not surprised that the world is sinful... that we live in a fallen world. We are reminded that “[...] everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world” (1 John 2:16). That applies to everyone, whether globalists, elites, rich or poor. The next verse puts it perspective: “The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever” (Verse 17). Let’s focus then on doing the will of God. I often make the point that, given the opportunity, many people would behave no differently than the alleged conspirators profiled in much of the conspiracy hype. I surely do not mean to discredit those Christian writers who are warning others about the dangers of globalization/globalism ... etc. and the evil times in which we live. However, it remains that there is an immense amount of conspiracy “clap trap” published in various forums that is inane extreme and unrealistic. It does not line up with how things really work in world power circles. The reason why I advise to steer clear of materials that claim that evil cabals are scheming to take over the world is because these do nothing productive and practical for our faith. May I mention that the verse you quote from Ephesians does not support the fixation we today see with conspiracy theories. Indeed, we are not to be in partnership with “darkness.” But that proves my point. We are to expose darkness as defined by another verse in Ephesians namely 6:12, “We struggle not against flesh and blood.” The rest of this verse is well known. So, yes, let’s direct our attention to the spiritual entities that are behind these conspiracies so that we will not be caught unaware. But, let’s avoid the condemnation of flesh and blood. That’s not our job ... at least not yet. (Please see our booklet, *Fatal Attraction: One World Order Theories*.)

READER: Several times this week, I used the PDF files from your website explaining prophecy and globalism to clients when they were in my office. I plan to order the DVD’s of your presentation on this topic from *Midnight Call*. I have been steering clients to your site and encouraging folks to read your book. Thanks for your diligence to study the Word of God, and your service to the Body of Christ! You’re ministering to me and I’m ministering to others. I do need however to hear what you said during your presentations so I can be more effective in serving others. Continued blessings ... — **DR-USA**

READER: I haven’t finished the book (*Endtime Money Snare: How to live free*) as I just received it yesterday but I have read the first 200 of 350 pages. I believe this book should be read by every Christian who is seeking wisdom concerning their finances. The book is an easy read and will really open your eyes to what our world has become and how some of us could very easily get sucked into *The Endtime Money Snare*. (Comment taken from www.Amazon.com).—RPD – Michigan, USA

EVR

Prophecy— Man-made & Glad

... cont’d from back page

of course, we must be careful in making predictions, especially in matters that are for God alone to judge. After all, “The Lord is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion” (Numbers 14:18). He is the author of all prophecy (Revelation 19:10) and chooses to prove His existence in foretelling the things that will come.

Yet, though we have this prophecy for our benefit, it is the mishandling of prophecy and judgment that brings the most scorn and ridicule upon evangelical, literal Bible-believing Christians. There is a difference between God foreknowing the choices that mankind will make and the idea that a given generation is condemned to fulfill future prophecy without its choosing. We are always invited to repent, to return to the love and worship of the one and only God, to accept His salvation offered through his son, Jesus Christ ... at least until the point of no return where man is given over to his perversions. As such, by extension, no generation is under compulsion to “fulfill prophecy,” so to speak. For example, taking this point further, it is not the job of evangelical Christians to “make prophecy happen” and to help God along in its fulfillment, especially so when it relates to the Jews or the world outside of the Church. We are pro-Zionist. But, should Christian leaders and organizations interfere in the affairs of Israel? With some people so quick to self-righteously call down hell fire and horrible consequences upon various participants in the Middle-Eastern arena, they are understandably painted by the secular media as full of heartless bloodlust. Yes, we know how things will end according to the Scriptures. But does that justify “schadenfreude” in respect of those lost people who will end up the objects of His future wrath?

In late January of this year, the documentary “*Waiting for Armageddon*” received its world premier at the New York Jewish Film Festival. I was interviewed for this documentary 3 years ago and at this point still have no idea whether any of that material made it into the final production. The producers were kind enough to inform me of its launch recently. Its promotional trailer can be viewed here: http://waitingforarmageddon.com/watch_trailer.html).

Watching this clip, I admit concern. The secular producers appear to sensationalize the comments of Christians, including leading prophecy scholars. It augurs trouble. Why? Every time we go beyond what Scripture says, or make supposed doctrines out of speculations, we invited the discredit of a lost humanity.

“Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God” (Psalms 20:7).



And that, as best as I can tell, is the truth.

Wilfred J. Hahn

EVR

Wilfred’s 2009 Itinerary: *The Mulberry Ministry*

- **October 4-6: *Midnight Call Ministries, 2009 Atlantic Prophecy Conference—Myrtle Beach, SC.* Contact www.midnightcall.com or call 1-800-845-2420**



Personal Perspectives

Prophecy—Man-made & Glad

No one doubts that difficult economic and financial times have fallen upon the entire world. More so than ever before in history—even than during the two world wars of the past century—has global opinion been so galvanized and unified to a common view. From Iceland to Vietnam, whether business people or consumers, all are battering down the hatches in response to the global “financial heart attack” that has crippled the world these past 18 months.

This alone is a realization of one of the expected “signs of the times” of the last days. It is today possible to influence the entire world through commercial developments. Certain economic conditions, from food inflations (Revelation 6:6) to systemic collapses (Chapter 18) to commercial controls (13:17), will affect the entire world according to the Bible. There are many other such indications in the Bible. One that is also on clear display at present is the pride and self-determination of mankind. We see this both at the national and global levels. Despite the clear and painful repercussions of past wrongs—from rebellion, to greed, oppression, poor stewardship and rampant immorality—one does not discern even a hint of repentance or contrition before the Creator being reported in the popular media. Actually, quite the opposite. We see a reinvigorated determination to build a global “ark of man.”

The Bible gives us clear evidence as to the outcome of human hubris. Not only are the experiences of Israel and other nations documented for our benefit in the Old Testament, the consequences of the future choices of “global man” are also foretold. A willful rebellion against God is revealed ... a stiff-necked independence and spirit of humanist self-determination. To illustrate, we briefly review a few prophecies from the Old Testament. But first, we should be reminded of the indictments against Israel.

Among a number of sins, we are told: “[...] because you have rejected this message, relied on oppression and depended on deceit, this sin will become for you like a high wall, cracked and bulging, that collapses suddenly, in an instant” (Isaiah 30:12-13). A point often overlooked is that “economic sins” feature prominently in the list of allegations against Israel. There are seemingly countless references to these in the Scriptures. What was Israel’s response? It was similar to what we observe today.

Again, illustrating from the Bible, “[...] Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria—who say with pride and arrogance of heart, ‘The bricks have fallen down, but we will rebuild with dressed stone; the fig trees have been felled, but we will replace them with cedars.’” (Isaiah 9:9-10). Edom also betrayed a similar humanist defiance: “‘Though we have been crushed, we will rebuild the ruins.’ But this is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘They may build, but I will demolish’” (Malachi 1:4). A similar attitude prevails today: “Hah! We will not be reprimanded nor

reproved. We will rebuild bigger and better!”

Says Thomas Friedman, the high-profile columnist of the New York Times (December 24, 2008): “America still has the right stuff to thrive. We still have the most creative, diverse, innovative culture and open society—in a world where the ability to imagine and generate new ideas with speed and to implement them through global collaborations is the most important competitive advantage. [...] the 21st century is still up for grabs.” This is hubris.

Paul Volcker, the chairman of the US Federal Reserve from 1979-1987, in an article entitled “We Have the Tools to Manage the Crisis (Oct 10, 2008, Wall Street Journal) claims that the world has the tools to overcome the financial excesses of the past. He says: “Fortunately, there is also good reason to believe that the means are now available to turn the tide. Financial authorities, in the US and elsewhere, are now in a position to take needed and convincing action to stabilize markets and to restore trust. [...] the needed tools to restore and maintain functioning markets are there. Now is the time to use them.” This is humanist self-determination. It likely will appear to work for a time.

Indeed, mankind is in a position today where global solutions will seem possible. Rather than stop to consider the ways and counsels of the Lord, the “global arm of man” is invoked. “We will rise above God ... we will make our own future,” reflects the sentiment of our times. A similar spirit appeared evident in speeches given by the previous president, George Bush, following 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina. For example, after the flood of New Orleans, he is quoted as saying: “Every time, the people of this land have come back from fire, flood, and storm to build anew—and to build better than what we had before. Americans have never left our destiny to the whims of nature, and we will not start now” (Sept. 15, 2005, <http://www.cnn.com>).

What does God think of such an attitude? To Israel He said: “Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and rely on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD!” (Isaiah 31:1)

Though God has made man in His image and given him the power of creativity, we are still counseled to put our trust in God, not in armies nor the “arm of man.” There is no lack of guidance as to where our real confidence should lie. “Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies” (Psalms 40:4, KJV). “Through thee will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us. For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me” (Psalm 44:5). “Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help” (Psalms 146:3).

What lies ahead...what judgments are at the door? Well,

... continued on page 11

