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Last-Day Oppressors: Honored Elites & an Indebted World Order – Part II

By Wilfred Hahn

In this issue, we continue from Part I in which we began to review three major conditions that the Bible indicates will typify the world order at the very end of the last days. We were pursuing the question of whether government debt plays a prophetic role. We had been drawn to this question, given the unprecedented rise of government debt around the world over the last few years. To date we have reviewed one of these a priori conditions—a worldwide wealth skew.



2. Indebtedness as a Necessary Device. The idea that economies can be regulated and managed without losses or periodic downturns is born of a world that seeks its salvation in materialism. Such a world is not possible during this dispensation. Governments who support this idea with interventions and hocus-pocus policies will find themselves in deeper debt as never before. This is what we see unfolding, and it is a necessary aspect of a widening wealth skew.

As already pointed out, for someone to become rich, someone else must be coaxed or foolish enough to become

steeply indebted or indentured. Here, as we see, indebted governments play a facilitating role of transferring wealth from the masses to the rich. But, does the Bible support the idea that the “antichrist system” will be an indebted entity? Actually, our understanding on this question first came from reading the prophecies of Habakkuk. Carefully consider these verses:

For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay. See, he is puffed up; his desires are not upright—but the righteous will live by his



Habakkuk's prophecies could not provide a more accurate description of the world's emerging ruling structure of our times, and perhaps yet in the future. It is built upon greed, oppression and extortion, taking the world captive through a financial and economic trap, as well as by other means. But there is one additional insight that Habakkuk provides us. It is the condition of indebtedness.

faith—indeed, wine betrays him; he is arrogant and never at rest. Because he is as greedy as the grave and like death is never satisfied, he gathers to himself all the nations and takes captive all the peoples. Will not all of them taunt him with ridicule and scorn, saying, 'Woe to him who piles up stolen goods and makes himself wealthy by extortion! How long must this go on?' Will not your debtors suddenly arise? Will they not wake up and make you tremble? Then you will become their victim. Because you have plundered many nations, the peoples who are left will plunder you. For you have shed man's blood; you have destroyed lands and cities and everyone in them (Chapter 2:3-8, NIV).

Here, the prophet Habakkuk sheds some light on our questions. Although his prophecies were probably first directed to the Babylon of his day, they clearly also had an endtime application. The Lord answered him, "For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false" (Habakkuk 2:3). We also see the character of the Antichrist of the "end" period described. Greed and economic oppression are the prominent characteristics portrayed.

"The wicked foe pulls all of them up with hooks, he catches them in his net, he gathers them up in his dragnet; and so he rejoices and is glad. Therefore he sacrifices to his net and burns incense to his dragnet, for by his net he lives in luxury and he enjoys the choicest food" (Habakkuk 1:15-16). He (or the world system, the economic Babylon of Revelation 18) is a trapper. Moreover, "[...] he is greedy as the grave and like death is never satisfied, he gathers to himself all the nations and takes captive all the peoples" (Habakkuk 2:5-6). This endtime regime is motivated by greed and is global in span, as it takes "all the nations" and "all the peoples" captive.

"Woe to him who piles up stolen goods and makes himself wealthy by extortion!" (verse 6). "Woe to him who builds his realm by unjust gain, to set his nest on high, to escape the clutches of ruin!" (verse 9). Habakkuk's prophecies could not provide a more accurate description of the world's emerging ruling structure of our times, and perhaps yet in the future. It is built upon greed, oppression and extortion, taking the world captive through a financial and economic trap, as well as by other means. But there is one additional insight that Habakkuk provides us. It is the condition of indebtedness.

The endtime ruling order is an indebted one. "Will not your debtors suddenly arise? Will they not wake up and make you tremble? Then you will become their victim" (Habakkuk 2:7). "Debtors" can be correctly translated as "creditors." The KJV better reflects the condition of the "wicked foe's" indebtedness, saying, "Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his!" (verse 6).

3. Emergence of Rich Elites. Now that we have documented the two conditions of a "wealth skew" and an "indebted world order," we come to the question of the identity of the rich elites. The Prophet Daniel speaks of them in the same verse that also refers to the Antichrist: "And he [the Antichrist] shall deal with the strongest fortresses by the help of a foreign god: whosoever acknowledgeth him he will increase with glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for a price" (Daniel 11:39, ASV).

Who are "them" that will "increase with glory" and "rule over many," and play a role in the dividing of land "for a price"? The answer—those that "acknowledge him," the Antichrist (which can also mean the Antichrist system of





world rule). Virtually all English Bible translations use the word “acknowledge.” It means here that certain key people who recognize him and accept his authority will receive a reward—land. It should be noted that the original Aramaic word used for “land” in this verse can also convey the idea of property or economic domain as well as geographic area. After all, in ancient times, land was the main foundation of wealth and economy.

It only follows that these elites, whoever they are, must be a small group of people who likely will be influential in their own right. Why? They will be made rulers over many. As not everyone can be made a ruler over many, therefore these will be few. Not only is this logical, but the Bible also specifically tell us what the reward will be for everybody else ... in other words, all the rest of the masses that acknowledge and worship the Antichrist. They will not be killed (a negative reward) and will be allowed to “buy or sell.” He causes, “[...] all who refused to worship the image to be killed. He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, so that no one could buy or sell” (Revelation 13:15-16).

The elites, on the other hand, are bought off for their loyalty with further reward ... the additional pay-off of power or economic domain, we reason. It is the same or similar deal that Satan offered Christ when he was being tested in the wilderness, promising “[...] authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. So if you worship me, it will all be yours” (Luke 4:6-7).

These elites selected for reward must have something to barter in return ... likely their fame or endorsement. We are given at least a few criteria with which



to identify who these elites might be at that future date. In the first instance, they must be humans. Also, they must be capable of being rulers, already likely possessing some measure of power and authority. And, they must be willing worldly complicitors.

Although these events play out during the future Tribulation period (and therefore really do not concern us), is it already possible today to discern the power structures that these elites might command? Of course, we can only speculate as to whom these persons may be that the Prophet Daniel mentions. One possibility is that they could be powerful heads of large multinational corporations (MNC). After all, some of these companies are already today larger than many individual nations in terms of their commercial influence and economic footprint. (Please see the article, “The Rising Price of Obedience” in the March 2005 *Midnight Call* magazine, which provides some documentation of the endtime significance of the MNC phenomena ... a relatively recent development in the cosmic timeline of mankind.)

Multinational firms (MNCs) today, as a group, are probably the most influential economic force in the world. And, as money is power in this age, they may also be the most powerful, viewed as a group. Though these companies may find their roots a few hundred years ago, their global power has only really devel-

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For nations to be heavily indebted, there must also be corresponding lenders and cronies. And, given that the Bible also tells us of a great “heaping of wealth,” we can therefore know that it will be a relatively few number of people—the ultra-rich—who will underpin the indebtedness of the nations with their claims upon wealth.

oped over the past half-century or so. Today, of the top hundred economic entities in the world, roughly half are made up of countries, the other half of MNCs. The heads of these companies, though they are answerable to boards of directors, nevertheless are very influential. These firms can employ hundreds of thousands of employees—more than the population of many countries. Some secular analysts do foresee the day where a small group of such corporate behemoths will indeed dominate the world economy.

Or, these elites could simply be ultra-rich individuals who control much wealth—perhaps entire industries and many MNCs. It is in their self-interest to support the regime of the Antichrist. In their materialist worldview, preservation of their wealth must be the primary objective. They could not have reached their ultra-wealthy status without governments having also facilitated such enormous wealth transfer either through economic policy or increasing indebtedness. These governments are in cahoots with the ultra-wealthy “princes,” much in the same way as is foreshadowed by the corrupt relationships today between the “Washington Beltway” and Wall Street in America, for example.

We cannot conclusively determine the identity of the elites that Daniel mentions. This shouldn’t be disappointing. The only wise and sure conclusion is that we must keep our options open—keeping ourselves oriented to the Scriptures; watching and waiting for our Lord’s return, so as to not be distracted nor caught sleeping. It causes us to keep watching, to not be taken unawares, and to remain open to new information. The world’s power structures do keep shifting. Though “[...] we have the word of the prophets made more certain” (2 Peter 1:19), at the same time, we must also

realize that our Enemy is cunning and a supreme master of deception.

A Calculated Conspiracy Against God

We can deduce from the Bible that there are essentially three main sets of players that the Bible identifies in the “Mammon-controlled saga” of the last day world. There is a world government that at one point takes the form of ten nations, later to be headed by the Antichrist himself (The Beast). These are the “10 horns” mentioned in Revelation 17:12. The preferred interpretation of this author is that these will be key nations, most likely heavily indebted (as many leading countries today already are), that band together to aggregate sufficient power to establish world rule.

These nations have (must have) the complicity of the rich elites. For nations to be heavily indebted, there must also be corresponding lenders and cronies. And, given that the Bible also tells us of a great “heaping of wealth” (Please see Part I for further explanation), we can therefore know that it will be a relatively few number of people—the ultra-rich—who will underpin the indebtedness of the nations with their claims upon wealth. All of these tendencies we see already at work today.

Thoughts to Ponder

There was a time “[...] that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5). God saw no other way but to intervene and end it. Today, the world is fast approaching a similar state. Bible prophecy clearly outlines that God again will intervene in the affairs of mankind in wrath.

In another vein, the times today are similar to Babel. The world’s late state of globalism mirrors the sentiment of those





ancient times when “[...] they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth’” (Genesis 11:4). Globalism is counter to the will of God, as evidenced by His supernatural intervention at Babel, causing people to disperse and confounding their efforts with different languages.



Ah, yes, but we have heard countless endtime admonitions all before. Have not the processes we have identified here already been long underway? Yes, but with some key differences that should immediately quell the scoffer’s spirit. Firstly, we are the generation that would “see all these things,” as Christ said (Matthew 24:33). The fig tree (Israel) has begun to blossom. “When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near (Mark 13:28). This season can be identified, and it is here. And, there will be no false starts of this prophesied event, a process that once begun, will not be aborted. Says the Holy Spirit through Isaiah:

Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God (Chapter 66:7-9, KJV).

The last season of the “last days” has indeed begun. Today, all prophesied

conditions are global in scale rather than applying to just one or a few nations. These conditions can all be shown to be accelerating. Moreover, God had future scoffers exactly in mind when he caused the Apostle Peter to prophesy:

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walk-

ing after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished (2 Peter 3:3-6).

People who have no fear before the words of God, thereby ridiculing the Great Sovereign—who stakes the very proof of his essence in bringing about what He has said in advance—put themselves into the company of those “[...] natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak[ing] evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption [...]” (2 Peter 2:12).

We today can clearly see mankind choosing to continue its journey toward judgment and wrath. (MC)

Correction: In Part 1 of this series, a reference was made to a study by Carmen Reinhart and Kenneth Rogoff stating that government debt levels around the world have risen 75% over the last two years. The study was actually referring to the top-5 crisis countries (the U.S., UK, Ireland, Iceland and Spain) rather than the entire world.

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