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Ten Endtime Signs for Heathens

Part II

By Wilfred Hahn

People who identify themselves as a Christian today seem to make up the majority of those who scoff at the Bible's prophecies and the doctrine of Jesus Christ's imminent return. Among many Scriptures, they overlook that at His ascension, two men dressed in white (angels) said, "This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).



That time point becomes ever more unlikely to be delayed. The earth indeed has begun to display "birth pains" (Matthew 24:8) with respect to an unbelieving endtime world as well as the Jewish people. Just as advancing age forcefully signifies our mortality and a coming end to our corrupt physical bodies, so do the created order under mankind's misappropriated dominion.

Therefore, the simple question we pose is this: If Christians, who supposedly possess the Bible and therefore are without excuse to hear what God says

and means, would at least non-Christians have a legitimate excuse for their blindness? The Bible answers this question clearly in the negative: Unbelieving humanity will have no excuse.

While Christians also "have the word of the prophets made more certain" (2 Peter 1:19) the rest of the world remains without excuse. This indictment is even more valid today. Why? The first verified appearance of the prophesied Christ has already occurred. If He "[...] had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. Now, however, they have no excuse for their sin" (John 15:22). Moreover, God "has given proof of this to

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all men by raising him from the dead” (Acts 17:31).

The world today shows numerous trends and developments, that should they continue, assuredly point to an end or at least severe dislocation and troubles. Even secular, non-Bible-believing observers must conclude dire times are ahead, if the present course of the world is not soon changed. We continue our two-part series, reviewing the final five developments proving that one does not have to be a Christian today to sense that the earth indeed has begun its last-days “groaning.”

6. World Energy Supplies

In recent times, energy prices have been soaring. What could this have to do with the endtimes? It certainly speaks of an eventual end at least of one type — the end of the Oil Age. Our secular observer of this development — whether an energy expert or geopolitical strategist — would agree that oil assuredly will run out some day based upon present-day trends. Moreover, they will also surmise that this will have a destabilizing effect upon the world. But, from the evidence, could they also conclude something more apocalyptic even without reading the Bible?

Consider these facts: Roughly three-quarters of world oil reserves are found in countries that are either predominantly Islamic or members of the 57-country member Organization of the Islamic Conference. Muslim nations have 3.4 times as much oil per person than the world average and almost 7.7 times as much as major Christian nations — what I call the Top-10-X countries.¹

Of the ten countries with the largest amount of oil (accounting for 65% of total world reserves), eight are Islamic. Of the 15 countries with the largest natural gas reserves (accounting for 50% of total

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world reserves) 11 are predominantly Islamic.

Moreover, it is interesting to note that with so much energy resources, these very same nations should use so little of it themselves. The average Muslim in the world uses only 15% as much energy as do citizens of the Top-10-X nations.

These facts and many improbable others relating to the world’s hydrocarbon situation today, beg incredulity and statistical probabilities. Observing all of these improbable facts (For a full list of more than 20, please see the article series in *Midnight Call*, “Final Combustion: Oil, Islam and the Christian West” — April to July 2006), a geopolitical analyst today would be alerted to a cosmic time plan that is indeed headed for a flash point.

Christians will note additional curiosities. According to experts on world religions, there are perhaps as many as 20 major separate or sets of religions in the world today. Only one of them specifically mandates in its writings that Jews should be killed — Islam. Today, it is even believed among Muslims that the “Last Day” of the world cannot come before Israel is first annihilated.²

The world’s other major resources seem to be distributed among nations and religious groups with much less potential for spiritually-inspired agendas against Israel.



Indeed some nations are rich in certain resources — such as Chile with one-third of world copper reserves or Russia and South Africa in palladium. But none of these commodities uniquely fit an endtime role as only oil can. Considering all these perspectives, are we to believe that a random twist of fate has positioned the world supply of oil against Israel's future national interests?

7. Populations and Pensions

Without a doubt, a population-related crisis is underway in the world today, the likes of which has never before occurred in the history of mankind. Though potential problems have been anticipated by some experts, most people are unaware of its implications and are blindly heading toward difficult times. In some respects, its impending manifestations are already evident, impacting financial and income trends around the globe.

What kind of crisis is expected? Not a population explosion as has been feared in recent decades, but rather an implosion. Where it once was feared that the world would soon be overburdened by too many people, world population growth has since slowed dramatically from the peak rates of the 1960s. Demographic experts are already predicting that the world's population may actually decline 25 to 50 years from now. Crucially, world population trends have moved from one extreme to another in less than one century — a relatively short span on the human timeline.

At the turn of the last century, world population growth began to double every 25 years or so, an unprecedented development in history. Yet, by the start of the millennium only 100 years later, population growth rates around the world had declined sharply. Never before in history has such a slowdown occurred voluntarily across the broad populace. Usually, sharp

population declines in the past were the result of war, famine, or plague. As such, two unprecedented developments have happened back to back. First the fastest increase on record; then quickly followed by a sharp deceleration.

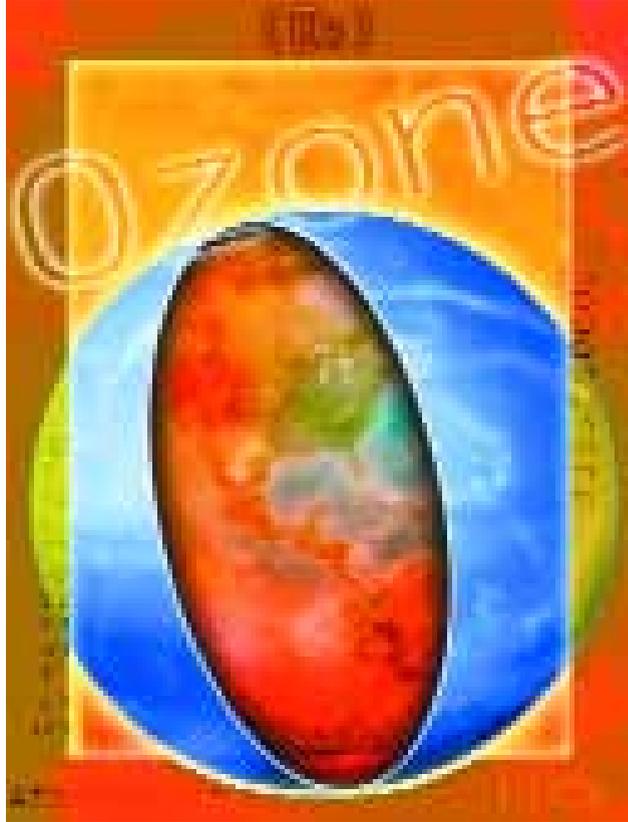
The concern is that there will be too many old people and not enough young workers. This and the feared consequence that pension systems — both governmental and private — will become bankrupt, stand to seriously disrupt economies. As such, the potential fall-out of the dramatic population swings over the past century could very well play an integral role in the world-wide financial and economic crises that will unfold during the Great Tribulation that the Bible clearly prophesies. Secular analysts already see that these trends will wreak havoc upon world economies, some predicting these effects to unfold over the next 20 years.

8. Geopolitics and Human Conflict

Many observers conclude that the world is headed for a geopolitical crisis. For example, the famous Nobel Laureate Buckminster Fuller once wrote: "Humanity is moving ever deeper into crisis — a crisis without precedent."³ An atheist, he therefore errantly believed that this crisis was intended by the universe to transform humanity into a "completely integrated, comprehensively, interconsiderate, harmonious whole." Other analysts theorize that a World War III is inevitable. There are different reasons for this conclusion. To some, it appears certain that it will be "religious fundamentalism" that brings the world to this state. Or, it could simply be the warlike characteristic of man in an age of advanced weaponry and geopolitics that must lead to such an outcome. Recently, comments about a possible World War III have been popularized in relation to Iran's purported nuclear build-up.

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World wars are a modern invention, the first two of which have only occurred in the last 100 years. Whatever the case or the cause for a World War III, the secular analyst must conclude that it could soon hold dire implications for the world.

9. Environmental Concerns

Is the earth wearing out? Despite the fact that there is a contested debate about global warming and various other environmental issues today, the Bible says that the world will run down: “Lift up your eyes to the heavens, look at the earth beneath; the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment and its inhabitants die like flies” (Isaiah 51:6). No matter that globalists might want to use such issues as global warming to further their humanist agenda, it is factual that the world is being indelibly changed in our day. Pollution has had an indis-

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putable impact in many ways. Forests are disappearing at a rate that is not sustainable. Fish stocks in the world's oceans are being gradually depleted. There are a large number of similar developments that are observable in the world, as the wearing out of a garment. Indeed, some effects can be reversed. But all the same, the logical analyst would still be faced with this question: How long can such trends continue before deeper crises impact the world?

10. Technology Signs

Finally, in our abbreviated list of Ten Endtime Signs for Heathens, we touch upon technology. It is of interest for at least two reasons. In some ways, it is the capstone of humanistic hubris. What can mankind not achieve with his present and future technology? Man has been to the moon and back and is contemplating soon setting up habitations elsewhere in the universe. Scientists talk about the day when human life and consciousness will slip the bounds of the human body. Humans might even become nothing more than energy fields in cyberspace. These fanciful dreams pass for informed speculations among scientists. Without a doubt, technology has advanced enormously over the past several centuries, resulting in many conveniences and benefits. But where does it all lead? Some analysts today argue that the pace of change can only slow as the rate of change we are witnessing is simply not sustainable.

But there is a paradox in all this. Consider that 2,000 years ago the Apostle Paul could write: “For since the creation

of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse" (Romans 1:20).

If Paul at that time — pre-technology and pre-modern science — could deduce that God must exist based upon knowledge about the physical universe known then, why not more so today? That should be the logical conclusion. Yet, modern man has taken the opposite posture. He chooses to worship mankind itself rather than the original Creator of all this know-how in the first place.

Endtime Technological Alignments

We will now leave our secular experts and next appeal to believers. In this two-part series, we have touched upon ten trends and observations that point to an end ... or at least an end of sustainability. We have shown that it would be reasonable for a non-Christian analyst to be concerned about the future and to believe, as did Buckminster Fuller, in an ultimate crisis. The world needs the return of the Messiah.

Christians have even less of an excuse. There are 2,500-year old Bible prophecies that can only take place in an advanced technological age such as today. For example, the statement about the two witnesses that "for three and a half days men from every people, tribe, language and nation will gaze on their bodies and refuse them burial" (Revelation 11:9) has obvious implications. This could only occur as



of this last half-century — the era of communications satellites. What nation, language or kindred people's today would not have access to the internet or television over a 3 1/2 day period?

Here is another such technological time stamp of future prophetic fulfillment:

Isaiah says that one of the modes of the return of the Jews to Israel would be flying: "Who are these that fly along like clouds, like doves to their nests? Surely the islands look to me; in the lead are the ships of Tarshish, bringing your sons from afar" (Isaiah 60:8).

Here we are given at least two significant indications. First, that the final return of the Jews to Israel would not occur until manned-flight is possible. We can be reasonably sure of this as the Hebrew word for "flying" in the Bible is generally only used in relation to the flight of birds or insects. All of its allegorical applications relate only to concepts (such as age flying away) but never people actually flying. The quoted verse clearly refers to people flying like doves and clouds. Also, consider that the symbolism of a cloud extends beyond flight, as clouds are also thought of as containers ... i.e. emptying themselves of their contents such as rain (Ecclesiastes 11:3).

The second deduction we can make from this prophecy is that mankind will not be traveling in UFO-type saucers or by teleporter in the future, but in planes ... machines that look like doves. That places this prophecy in our era of international air travel, neither the past nor far into the future. Interestingly, the new Boe-

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“When evening comes, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,’ and in the morning, ‘Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.’ You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times” (Matthew 16:2).



ing 787 Dreamliner has been widely admired for its remarkable “bird like” appearance.

Points to Ponder

One doesn't have to be familiar with Bible prophecy to sense the season and the times. Mercifully, God has allowed even non-believers and nations — at least, unbiased analysts who can see the obvious, and nations that do not rage against Him (Psalm 2:1) — to see that the current course of the world is not sustainable. An honest, analytical mind alone can sense the many challenging conditions that the world is and will be facing. Whether in the fields of religion, economics, geopolitics, or any other, we see developments, that based upon assumptions drawn from present patterns must either come to a crisis point or at least a turning-point if not an end.

Even more urgent is the observation that almost all of the developments we have reviewed could be headed for crisis-points no later than within a 10 to 20 year window. We can also say this: Never before have all these conditions — all of which stand to have global impact — intersected at the same time in history.

Of course, the forecasting of any trend is subject to much imprecision and error. After all, only God knows the future pre-

cisely. As it was, the objective of our review of Ten Endtime Trends for Heathens was not prediction, but rather to show that even non-Christians should be able to identify the signs of the times. Yet, people who imply they do know the Bible since they identify themselves as Christians, completely deny its plain meaning with respect to things of the future (eschatology) and Israel.

What did Christ say to the first unbelieving generation to which He appeared? “When evening comes, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,’ and in the morning, ‘Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.’ You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times” (Matthew 16:2). Today, as then, a wicked generation chooses to ignore the prophesied signs.

We have a more sure word of hope. Jesus Christ will restore all things, and we who are in Christ will be taken up to be with Him. (MC)

ENDNOTES

- 1 The group of the ten richest Christian nations, accounting for 10.7% of the world population and 60% of world annual income, are comprised of Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, United Kingdom and the United States.
- 2 References to the killing of Jews are found in a number of Hadiths. For example, one such saying, which is attributed to an account by Sahih Al-Bukhari, follows: “Allah's Apostle said, “The Hour will not be established until you fight with the Jews, and the stone behind which a Jew will be hiding will say, “O Muslim! There is a Jew hiding behind me, so kill him.” Volume 4, Book 52, Number 177: Narrated Abu Huraira: (Translated versions sourced from USC-MSA Compendium of Muslim Texts.)
- 3 Buckminster Fuller, *Twilight of the World's Power Structures*, St. Martin's Press, 1981.