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False Teachings of the End Time

in [Commentary](#).^[1]

“For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.”
Matthew 24:24

A. Truth

There is no doubt that one of the great signs of the end time is the re-emergence of the state of Israel on the stage of world history. This is a sign without precedent, as it constitutes the first time in over two thousand years that the Jews have sovereignty over Jerusalem again. Jesus placed this reality in the basket of His signs pointing to His second coming (Luke 21:24). He also stated that in the days in which this miracle occurs there would be world-wide upheaval, wars and rumors of wars and the arrival of a perilous time, such as the world has never seen before, called the Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:21). Israel on the very brink of annihilation at the hands of a global attack will be saved out of this tribulation physically and spiritually (Zechariah 12:1-10). This spiritual salvation will be the “trigger mechanism” for the return of Christ to the Mt of Olives. That is, Israel’s recognition of Jesus’ messianic credentials will bring about what Paul called “resurrection from the dead”. This means that the Church of all ages will come out of their graves and, together with living believers, will rise to meet Christ as He comes again in great power and glory to place His feet on the Mt. of Olives (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

This picture that I have painted above is the one that scripture gives us and it is the one that was embraced by the early Church. The blessed hope of the Church is not a renovated world system because of some great end time revival but it is indeed, and only, the second coming of Jesus (Titus 2:11-13). The present world is actually passing away (1 John 2:17) because it is an “evil age” (Galatians 1:3-4) and God is determined to bring it down and He will. Every city and nation will be brought down as God visits the planet with what scripture calls the Day of the Lord (Revelation 16:19)(Joel 3:9-17). Our hope is not in the man made systems of this world but in the living God who by His glorious Gospel has saved us and given us a longing for a new heavens and a new earth wherein righteousness will dwell (2 Peter 3:13). You need to be assured of this: That we are approaching a global upheaval the likes of which the world has never seen before and, as the prophet Daniel stated, wars and desolations are determined until the end! This is not an eschatology of pessimism but one of hope because it is anchored in the truth of God’s word and in the promised coming of Christ.

The documents of the Early Church, that is the very Church founded by the Apostles themselves, testify to this understanding of scripture. Here below is a sample of these writings all of which were written before the fourth century.

The Epistle of Barnabas

“The final stumbling-block approaches. We take earnest heed in these last days; for the whole time of your faith will profit you nothing, unless now in this wicked time we also withstand coming sources of danger; as becometh sons of God. That the Black One (Antichrist) may find no means of entrance, let us flee from every vanity, let us utterly hate the works of the way of wickedness.”

Justin Martyr

“The man of apostasy shall venture to do unlawful deeds on the earth against us Christians....”

The Shepherd of Hermes

“Happy ye who endure the great tribulation that is coming on.”

The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles

“For the whole time of your faith will not profit you if you are not made perfect in the last time. Then shall appear the world-deceiver as Son of God, and shall do signs and wonders. Then shall the creation of men come into the fire of trial, and many shall be made to stumble and perish; but they that endure in their faith shall be saved from under the curse itself.”

Irenaeus

“...and they shall give their kingdom to the Beast and put the Church to flight.”

“But he (John) indicates the number of the name now, that when the man comes we may avoid him, being aware who he is.”

Hippolytus

“Now concerning the tribulation of the persecution which is to fall upon the Church from the adversary (The Antichrist). That refers to the one thousand and three score days during which the tyrant is to reign and persecute the Church.”

Tertullian

“Now the privilege of the favor awaits those who shall at the coming of the Lord be found in the flesh, and who shall, owing to the oppressions of the time of Antichrist, deserve an instantaneous death which is accomplished by a sudden change to become qualified to join the raisings saints..”

The Constitutions of the Holy Apostles

“...for through the abounding of iniquity the love of many shall wax cold. For men shall hate, and persecute, and betray one another. And then shall appear the Deceiver of the world, the enemy of the truth, the prince of lies, whom the Lord Jesus shall destroy with the spirit of His mouth, who takes away the wicked with His lips; and many shall be offended at Him. But they that endure to the end, the same shall be saved..”

B. False Truth

In recent years a new message is being preached by Evangelicals, Pentecostals and neo-Pentecostals and this message is false but it is being accepted and embraced everywhere and essentially it states that much of Matthew 24 and the other great eschatological passages of the

Bible have been fulfilled and now we await a great end time revival that will actually transform nations, rehabilitate all spheres of human endeavor and usher in peace and then, and only then, Jesus will come again. This is actually Kingdom Now or Dominion Theology or Postmillennialism built on the foundation of Preterism (The belief that all of Matthew 24 etc. has been fulfilled by past historical events)(1). Indeed many of the propagators of this error are telling us that a soon coming spiritual revival in Israel will bring resurrection blessing and power to the nations thus sweeping multiple millions into the Kingdom of God. All of this sounds very triumphant and wonderful but in reality it is a false teaching and in fact a very dangerous one at that because it is based on a totally false exegesis of Romans 11:15 and thus does not prepare Christians for the great trials that are about to come:

“For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?”

This “life from the dead”; otherwise translated as “resurrection from the dead”, means exactly what it says in that, according to Paul, Israel’s spiritual recovery will trigger the literal and real resurrection of the dead and usher in the visible second coming of Jesus. “Life from the dead” means then that all the saints of all of history will come forth from their graves to meet Christ in the air as He descends to the Mt. of Olives. It is to be noted that Paul’s teaching in this regard is further clarified in verses 25 and 26 of the same chapter. That is, it is only after the fullness of the Gentiles has been gathered in that Israel gets saved; not before, and consequently the Deliverer (Savior) will “come out of Zion.” Meaning that Zion or a Jewish Jerusalem brings Christ back to the earth. Jesus in fact said that this would be the case (Matthew 23:37-39)(Luke 13:34-35).

The fullness of the Gentiles is completed before Israel’s acceptance of Jesus’ messianic credentials and not afterwards as these false teachers assert! So then there are not two “fullnesses of the Gentiles” in scripture; only one. To teach otherwise is a contradiction of the context and is just nonsense and yet this is exactly what is being taught with the expectation that the nations will get saved in a manner never seen before after Israel comes to faith. This is not true. Israel is not a catalyst for a world-wide revival. If anything she is a catalyst to save the world from utter destruction as her spiritual restoration brings the King of Kings back to the earth at a time when things are so bleak and dark that God has to shorten the time in order to save humanity from total annihilation (Matthew 24:21-22).

Furthermore, those propagating this error frequently support their error by quoting passages from the Bible that refer to the coming Messianic Reign of Christ or what is known as the Millennium. That is, these passages describe global conditions after Jesus has come a second time and not before. Sadly the unsuspecting unable to “rightly divide” scripture buy into this error and so one such passage is Isaiah 2:2-4:

“Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.’ For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.”

Again, this picture of peace and absence of conflict only applies to the age to come or to what the Bible calls the “regeneration” when Christ sits on His glorious throne ruling and judging the nations with a “rod of iron” (Matthew 19:28)(Revelation 12:5). The consummation of our age will be characterized by global conflict, on a scale never seen before, the falling away or apostasy of millions of Christians (2Thessalonians 2:3), great natural disasters and upheavals, the persecution

of the Church, the rise of a new Hitler or Beast, who will be destroyed by the second coming of Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:8), (2) and the Great Day of the Lord. In fact Jesus warned that the situation will deteriorate rapidly, just as an expectant mother experiences a growing intensity in her birth pangs, and that consequently those days will have be shortened lest no flesh survive on the earth (Matthew 24:21)! This is not a picture of some great global revival but in fact just the opposite and, if we do not prepare ourselves for it, we may well fall away or, worse still, give our allegiance to a new global order actually driven by Satan himself and characterized by great signs and wonders (2 Thessalonians 2:9)! Jesus, concerned about the state of the Church in the world in the end time, wondered whether He would find the faith on the earth when He comes again (Luke 18:8).

The picture I have described above is not pessimistic but biblically realistic and anyway our hope is not in a rehabilitated world that is passing away but in the coming of Christ and His visible and regenerated kingdom on earth (Hebrews 9:28)! Beyond the “birth pangs” then is a new age of peace and joy in a world finally free from war. We are also not going to lock ourselves away with our “end time prepper provisions” and hope for the end to come. This too is certainly not biblical. No, we are going to do everything possible to call people out of the world to the cross of Jesus since this glorious Gospel will be preached in all the world as a witness and then the end shall come (Matthew 24:14). We have good news to preach and we had better do so now, more than ever, for indeed the “night cometh when no man will work.” (John 9:4).

Even so Lord Jesus come!

— *by Rev. Malcolm Hedding, ICEJ International Spokesman*

(1) Preterism is an eschatological teaching that was compiled in 1614 by a Jesuit Priest called Luis de Alcazar. He did this specifically in order to counter or resist the Reformation in that Luther, and the other reformers, accused the Pope of being the Antichrist. The strategy was simple: If all the Antichrist passages of scripture were fulfilled in AD 70 then it is not possible to accuse the Pope of being an Antichrist!

(2) The fact that the Antichrist is destroyed by the coming of Jesus a second time is consistent with Daniel’s prophetic oracle and constitutes proof that the events of the end time, as described by Matthew in his 24th chapter, were not entirely fulfilled in AD 70 and beyond. They have more than one fulfillment and are therefore what we call “progressive prophetic fulfillment”.

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