

Newsbytes

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“Let us be alert to the season in which we are living. It is the season of the Blessed Hope, calling for us to cut our ties with the world and build ourselves on this One who will soon appear. He is our hope—a Blessed Hope enabling us to rise above our times and fix our gaze upon Him.” Tozer

Check out this first article from USA Today.

A few people asked me why I did not cover the Wisconsin company that was offering a chip to their employees starting August 1. I consciously decided to wait on this because it's really not that novel. Chip implanting goes back to the 90s. After years of research I'm convinced that the mark of the beast (in a chip form, which everyone defaults to when these stories surface) will likely be something much more cutting edge; this is old technology. That said, of course it does foreshadow and it does condition people so there's certainly that, but we're all jaded toward tracking and payment devices by now, it's called a smart phone. So, I let it go initially because a) it's not going anywhere and will morph soon enough, and b) I wanted to see if it went global and yes, it sure did. When I saw it appear in papers around the world, I decided it had gotten some serious traction, leading up to this worthy headline from last week which IS worth a print, and was worth waiting for:

You will get chipped — eventually

LOS ANGELES — **You will get chipped. It's just a matter of time.**

In the aftermath of a Wisconsin firm embedding microchips in employees last week to ditch company badges and corporate logons, the Internet has entered into full-throated debate.

Religious activists are so appalled, they've been penning nasty 1-star reviews of the company, Three Square Market, on Google, Glassdoor and social media.

On the flip side, seemingly everyone else wants to know: Is this what real life is going to be like soon at work? Will I be chipped?

“It will happen to everybody,” says Noelle Chesley, 49, associate professor of sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. “But not this year, and not in 2018. Maybe not my generation, but certainly that of my kids.”

Gene Munster, an investor and analyst at Loup Ventures, is an advocate for augmented reality, virtual reality and other new technologies. He thinks embedded chips in human bodies is 50 years away. “In 10 years, Facebook, Google, Apple and Tesla will not have their employees chipped,” he says. “You'll see some extreme forward-looking tech people adopting it, but not large companies.”

The idea of being chipped has too “much negative connotation” today, but by 2067 “we will have been desensitized by the social stigma,” Munster says.

For now, Three Square Market, or 32M, hasn't offered concrete benefits for getting chipped beyond badge and log-on stats. Munster says it was a “PR stunt” for the company to get attention to its product and it certainly succeeded, getting the small start-up air play on CBS, NBC and ABC, and generating headlines worldwide. The company, which sells corporate cafeteria kiosks designed to replace vending machines, would like the kiosks to handle cashless transactions.

This would go beyond paying with your smartphone. Instead, chipped customers would simply wave their hands in lieu of Apple Pay and other mobile-payment systems.

The benefits don't stop there. In the future, consumers could zip through airport scanners sans passport or drivers license; open doors; start cars; and operate home automation systems. All of it, if the technology pans out, with the simple wave of a hand.

Not a GPS tracker

The embedded chip is not a GPS tracker, which is what many critics initially feared. However, analysts believe future chips will track our every move.

For example, pets for years have been embedded with chips to store their name and owner contact. Indeed, 32M isn't the first company to embed chips in employees. In 2001, Applied Digital Solutions installed the “VeriChip” to access medical records but the company eventually changed hands and stopped selling the chip in 2010.

In Sweden, BioHax says nearly 3,000 customers have had its chip embedded to do many things, including ride the national rail system without having to show the conductor a ticket.

In the U.S., Dangerous Things, a Seattle-based firm, says it has sold “tens of thousands” of chips to consumers via its website. The chip and installation cost about \$200.

After years of being a subculture, “the time is now” for chips to be more commonly used, says Amal Graafstra, founder of Dangerous Things. “We're going to start to see chip implants get the same realm of acceptance as piercings and tattoos do now.”

In other words, they'll be more visible, but not mainstream yet.

“It becomes part of you the way a cellphone does,” Graafstra says. “You can never forget it, and you can't lose it. And you have the capability to communicate with machines in a way you couldn't before.”

But after what we saw in Wisconsin last week, what's next for the U.S. workforce? A nation of workers chipping into their pods at Federal Express, General Electric, IBM, Microsoft and other top corporations?

Experts contend consumers will latch onto chips before companies do.

Chesley says corporations are slower to respond to massive change and that there will be an age issue. Younger employees will be more open to it, while older workers will balk. “Most employers who have inter-generational workforces might phase it in slowly,” she says. “I can't imagine people my age and older being enthusiastic about having devices put into their bodies.”

Adds Alec Levenson, a researcher at University of Southern California's Center for Effective Organizations, "The vast majority of people will not put up with this."

Three Square Market said the chips are voluntary, but Chesley says that if a company announces a plan to be chipped, the expectation is that you will get chipped — or risk losing out on advancement, raises and being a team player.

"That's what we're worried about," says Bryan Allen, chief of staff for state Rep. Tina Davis (D), who is introducing a bill in Pennsylvania to outlaw mandatory chip embedding. "If the tech is out there, what's to stop an employer from saying either you do this, or you can't work here anymore."

Several states have passed similar laws, while one state recently saw a similar bill die in committee. "I see this as a worker's rights issue," says Nevada state Sen. Becky Harris (R), who isn't giving up. "This is the wrong place to be moving," she says.

Should future corporations dive in to chipping their employees, they will have huge issues of "trust" to contend with, says Kent Grayson, a professor of marketing at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

"You've got to have a lot of trust to put one of those in your body," Grayson says. Workers will need assurances the chip is healthy, can't be hacked, and its information is private, he says.

Meanwhile, religious advocates have taken to social media to express their displeasure about chipping, flooding 32M's Facebook page with comments like "boycott," "completely unnecessary" and "deplorable." On 32M's Google page, Amy Cosari a minister in Hager City, Wisc., urges employees to remove the chip.

"When Jesus was raised, he was raised body and soul, and it was him, not zombie, not a ghost and we are raised up in the same way," Cosari wrote. "Employees of 32Market, you are not a walking debit card."

Get used to it, counsels Chesley.

Ten years ago, employees didn't look at corporate e-mail over the weekend. Now they we do, "whether we like it or not," he says.

Be it wearable technology or an embedded chip, the always on-always connected chip is going to be part of our lives, she says.

The Coming Cashless Society

August 17, 2017 Britt Gillette

The Bible says a time will come when a global dictator will require everyone on earth to receive a mark on the right hand or the forehead (Revelation 13:16). Those without the mark won't be able to buy or sell anything (Revelation 13:17). For centuries, Christians have wondered how this will even be possible. But in recent years, the rise of advanced technology has given us a glimpse as to how it might occur.

New technologies have driven endless speculation about what the mark will be. Some think it will be an implantable microchip. Others think it will be a visible tattoo. Still others think it will involve bar codes or RFID chips. And on and on. The fact is, we don't know. And it won't be known until the mark actually appears.

However, we can know this – the technology is here to make such a mark possible. To control every buy and sell transaction in the world, the Antichrist will need to set up a system capable of tracking every transaction. And thanks to modern technology, we can easily envision such a system. Much of the foundation for one is in place. Electronic payments are already a way of life, and they foreshadow the coming of a cashless society. In fact, not only is a cashless society possible – it's inevitable.

The Future of Cash

For years, people have speculated as to how the Antichrist will exercise the immense power of Revelation 13:17. How will he control every buy and sell transaction? Many transactions, such as the buying and selling of illicit drugs, are already illegal. Yet despite this, black markets for these products thrive. People regularly buy and sell drugs and other illegal products “under the radar,” where the government rarely sees, much less has the power to control, what's bought and sold.

Cash is critical to these black markets. Almost everyone accepts cash as a form of payment, and it's hard to track where cash goes and what it's used for. But the ability to use cash to hide your activities, or simply remain anonymous, is coming to an end. Why? Because cash (currency and coins) will soon disappear. Don't doubt it. It's going to happen. And it has nothing to do with a government desire to get rid of cash. It's a foregone conclusion because cash will soon be worthless.

That's right. If you hold on to your cash long enough, it will be worthless. Why do I say this? Because soon, the government will be unable to control the supply of cash. In the near future, counterfeiting will become impossible to prevent. Advanced technology ensures it.

In a world of new technologies where every molecule can be perfectly positioned, it won't be possible to stop counterfeiters. They'll be able to create exact replicas of every national currency. And when that happens, the world will be flooded with fake money – worthless fake money. And since no one will be able to tell the difference between the fake cash and the real cash, both will be worthless. In such a world, the only way to prevent counterfeiting will be some form of electronic tracking of cash. An electronic means to verify the authenticity of a cash note. But if you're using electronic tracking devices within cash, why bother to make physical currency at all? Why not just make all transactions electronic?

The Current Situation

Essentially, that's what we're seeing now. The majority of buy and sell transactions are electronic. Think about your daily routine. Whether it's the coffee shop, the grocery store or Walmart, how do the people around you pay for what they're buying? If you take the time to look, I bet you'll see a lot of credit and debit cards – maybe even a mobile phone payment.

According to a 2016 Gallup survey, only 24% of Americans make all or most of their payments with cash. And the younger you are, the less likely you are to use any cash. In the United States, cash is becoming obsolete. Nevertheless, according to MasterCard Advisors, 85% of global payments are still made with cash. How will the Antichrist be able to control those transactions? He'll be able to control them, because the situation will quickly change.

Take India for example. In late 2016, the Indian government announced a crackdown on tax evasion,

black market goods, and counterfeiting. All existing 500 and 1,000 rupee notes would soon become worthless. Citizens needed to exchange them within a short timeframe for new 500 and 2,000 rupee notes. The result? No one wanted to accept the old notes as payment, so electronic transactions skyrocketed. According to the Wall Street Journal, mobile wallet payments jumped 104% in India between October 2016 and February 2017.

But while electronic payments are more efficient and convenient, they also create a problem. You can't hide them from the government. While this is good in some ways (catching criminals), it's terrible in others (government invasion of privacy). Without proper safeguards, governments will have the unprecedented power to monitor every buy and sell transaction you make. This is nothing new. For those of us who already use electronic payments for nearly everything, this is already the case. But in the future cashless society, you won't have a choice.

Conclusion

So why does any of this matter? Because at some point in the near future, the Antichrist will seize power. When he does, a global electronic payment system will already exist. While it remains to be seen how he will control every buy and sell transaction, the stage is being set. Convenience has already led to most transactions going electronic. And soon, new technologies will make all paper currency obsolete.

This will eventually create a situation where a global government could monitor and control every economic transaction on earth. Such a system has never existed in the nearly 2,000 years since the book of Revelation said the Antichrist would control all buy and sell transactions (Revelation 13:17). In fact, such a system was impossible for all of those nearly 2,000 years. But today? Today it is different. We see the groundwork for such a system coming into place. It's yet another sign of the soon return of Jesus Christ.

Two shipments from North Korea to Syria's chemical weapons agency were intercepted in the past six months

beholdisrael.org

Two shipments from N. Korea to Syria's chemical arms agency intercepted in past six months. Reports surface Tuesday of two shipments intercepted over past six months; Report submitted to UNSC cites investigation of cooperation between Syria and N. Korea on Syria's missile program

Reports of the shipments were released to the public early Tuesday, the information coming from a classified United Nations report that was submitted to the Security Council in the past month.

In the 37-page report, information was released that the UN Security Council was investigating the shipments through a United Nations "independent team of experts". The report claimed that "The panel is investigating reported prohibited chemical, ballistic missile and conventional arms cooperation between Syria and the DPRK [the Democratic People's Republic of Korea... Two member states interdicted shipments destined for Syria. Another Member state informed the panel that it had reasons to believe that the goods were part of a KOMID [Korea Mining Development Trading Corporation] contract with Syria."

KOMID was blacklisted by the United Nations Security Council in 2009, North Korea under UNSC sanctions over its ballistic missile and nuclear programs since 2006.

The report goes on to state that “the consignees were Syrian entities designated by the European Union and the United States as front companies for Syria’s Scientific Studies and Research Centre (SSRC), a Syrian entity identified by the Panel as cooperating with KOMID in previous prohibited item transfers.”

The report also cites investigations of cooperation between Syria and North Korea on Syria’s missile program. The report states that N. Korea has been assisting Syria with its scud missile program as well as repairing Syria’s ground-to-air missile system. The report also includes details of an investigation of the use of the XV nerve agent that was used to assassinate Kim Jong-nam, the brother of Kim Jon-un, in Malaysia in February.

This is the second known, thwarted shipment of materials for chemical weapons North Korea has sent to Syria, the first intercepted by Greece in 2009.

Erdogan Calls for Muslim Solidarity Over Temple Mount Tensions in Jerusalem

8.21.17

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday called on the Muslims of the world to show solidarity in issues related to Jerusalem and the Temple Mount.

MOSCOW (Sputnik) — Erdogan stressed the importance of Jordan being involved in the protection of the city's holy sites.

"I want to note the importance we put on the role of Jordan in the protection of the holy places in Jerusalem... We don't want to experience the same abuse, violation of rights and attacks... So, the Muslim world should be in solidarity on Jerusalem," Erdogan said ahead of his visit to Amman, as quoted by the Anadolu news agency.

The recent tensions in Jerusalem escalated in mid-July, after the strengthening of security measures at the Temple Mount, the third most important holy site in Islam, which is under Jordan's custodianship. The steps led to violent clashes in Jerusalem and the West Bank and have been widely criticized by Muslim countries. In order to reduce tensions, Israel has since eased the security measures. Monday marks the beginning of the visit of the Erdogan-led Turkish delegation to Jordan dedicated to the 70th anniversary of diplomatic ties between the two states.

Record Number of Jews Visit Temple Mount Under Threat of More Violence

08-17-2017 CBN News

A new report reveals more Jewish Israelis visited the Temple Mount last month than any other month since Israel recaptured Jerusalem during the 1967 war.

Approximately 3,200 Jewish visitors went to the holy site. This is largely because thousands of Jews prayed there during the Jewish holy day of Tisha B'av.

According to Yeraeh, an organization that promotes Jewish visitation and calls for the rebuilding of the Temple, the recent spike in visitors sends a strong message about who the Temple Mount really belongs to.

"We're showing that this place doesn't belong to Islam but to the Jews," Elishamah Sandman, a spokesperson for Yeraeh, told the Jerusalem Post. "Wanting to go up to the Temple Mount is part of preparing for building the Temple. We're not embarrassed to say this." He also said that from a national perspective, visiting the site was a strong statement proving that Israel controls the Mount and has sovereignty over it.

This spike in Jewish Temple Mount visitors came despite escalating tensions and violence after three Israeli Arabs killed two Israeli policemen in a terror attack.

Israel had launched extra security measures at the Temple Mount to prevent more terrorism. Those measures were relaxed after violent protests.

Ayman Safadi, Jordan's minister of foreign affairs, condemned the Jews for entering the Temple Mount last month and called them extremists.

"The number of extremists who stormed al-Aqsa today stands at a record number, greater than any other since the beginning of the Israeli occupation in 1967," Safadi told representatives from 57 countries in Istanbul.

He warned, "Many more dangerous crises will erupt as a result of continued Israeli violations if Israel does not uproot the sources of the tension, if the occupation doesn't end, if east Jerusalem is not independent and not the capital of the sovereign Palestinian state along the 1967 lines."