

NEWS BYTES

April 14, 2021

No. 1013

Since 2001

A ministry of Calvary Chapel of Appleton

"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

Godless America: Anticipating The Antichrist

JAN MARKELL APRIL 8

Oh, how America is preparing for the Antichrist with a godless mindset.

A recent article in the Los Angeles Times and Yahoo News is headlined, "Why America's Record Godlessness is Good News for the Nation."

In part it reads, "The secularization of U.S. society--the waning of religious faith, practice and affiliation--is continuing at a dramatic and historically unprecedented pace. While many may consider such a development as a cause for concern, such a worry is not warranted. This increasing godlessness in America is actually a good thing, to be welcomed and embraced."

Are you serious?

As recently as 1976, nearly 40% of Americans said they believed that the Bible was the actual word of God--to be taken literally. Today, only about a quarter of Americans believe that. More believe the Bible is a collection of fables, history and tales written by men.

Rep. Jerry Nadler (D-NY) recently proclaimed that God's will was of no concern to this Congress. First the liberals kicked God out of the Pledge of Allegiance and then out of their Democrat National Convention in 2012. Until recently, they did not make an effort to force the rest of the nation to also abandon God.

The Consequences

Secularization has consequences. Check out nations that have experimented with it: Japan, Scandinavia, Australia, the U.K. and parts of Eastern Europe. How is society functioning in Godless China and Russia? Once God is gone, repression almost always follows.

The article heralding America's new Godlessness said that now society can embrace abortion, socialized medicine, euthanasia, and gun control.

It reads, "The organic secularization we are experiencing in the United States is a progressive force for good, one that is associated with improved human rights, more protections for planet Earth, and an increased socio-cultural propensity to make this life as fair and just as we can--in the here and now--rather than in a heavenly reward that fewer and fewer of us believe in."

Does this not foreshadow the words of Luke 18:8: When Christ returns, will He find any of faith?

Government Becomes God

For one hundred years, there has been an effort to make government god. Starting in 2020, an element was added that furthered that agenda--fear. Fear of a pandemic. It became the perfect storm.

Author and blogger Jonathan Brentner writes, "The combination of fear and the great deception of our time, have made vast numbers of people willing to submit to the government, which they now regard as the protector of their health.

As a result, they have willingly given up many of their rights and freedoms for the sake of remaining healthy, a trend sure to continue.

"The New World Order (AKA the beast) cannot exercise its dominion over people apart from their willingness to submit to dictates of a government they trust for their well-being and health. People wear masks without questioning their effectiveness.

"And, very few pastors stand up against the restriction regarding the freedom of religion imposed on them by socialist governors.

"In order for the elite to achieve their ultimate goal of a one-world government, they must convince people of the need for more government control of their lives. This explains their devotion to the contrived climate emergency and why they will not let go of the increased control over our lives that they have achieved through the China virus."

Given Over

Four of the most terrifying words in the Bible are "God gave them over." (Romans 1:24-28) Because man rejected God, He gave them over to foolish idolatry. We find the same principle in 2 Thessalonians 2, but this time in terms of delusional beliefs: Those who reject God's truth will end up following the Antichrist. They will run pell-mell into his arms.

The stage is being set.

Just 50-100 years ago, our churches were filled on Sundays. Even though the Mainline Protestants were in decline, still faithful Presbyterians, Lutherans and Methodists joyfully sang hymns. The evangelical church was exploding in reaction to the liberalism that had invaded the church.

The thought of a prominent U.S. Congressman stating that our government was not concerned with God's will was unthinkable!

But 50-100 years ago we were not so late in the game! Few were even thinking about the Antichrist, much less knowingly or unknowingly heralding his coming. Now he is on the horizon. So are the Four Horsemen.

Evil is on its way. So is the return of the Lord in what is known as the Rapture of the Church. That's the good news in the midst of this sad story. He's coming soon whether the church today talks about this event or not. Nothing can stop it. It is imminent. Any minute.

Perhaps today.

While most people no longer believe that Jesus is coming back, researchers in the Middle East have discovered new evidence that proves the prophesied Rapture is not only real, but why it must soon come to pass.

The Russian “Anschluss”

Matt Ward

On March 12th, 1938, German troops marched into Austria, annexing the German-speaking Austrian nation into the Third Reich.

This annexation was not an instinctive act from Adolf Hitler. It was something that he had envisaged and planned for quite a considerable amount of time beforehand. In 1938, Austrian Nazis conspiring with Germany attempted to seize the Austrian government by force and unite the nation with Germany.

Austrian Chancellor Kurt Von Schuschnigg, learning of the conspiracy, met with German Chancellor Adolf Hitler to try to resolve the crisis peacefully and avert a disaster for Austria.

But Adolf Hitler was not for turning. Hitler had already decided that he was going to use the pretext of protecting the “German-speaking” people of Austria to justify his invasion.

So Adolf Hitler, Chancellor of Germany, mercilessly bullied Schuschnigg when they met in 1938, not giving a single inch, and overtly threatened him. The end result of the meeting was that several top Austrian Nazis were forced the next day into the Austrian cabinet, very much against the government's will.

On March 11th Schuschnigg resigned. The very next day, on March 12th, Germany invaded Austria, an event known in history as the “Anschluss,” the uniting of Germany with Austria.

German troops, met by enthusiastic crowds, marched into Austria, and a once independent nation became merely an additional state province of greater Germany, a situation that lasted until the very end of the Second World War.

At the end of the war, the Allies declared the Anschluss null and void, restoring Austria to full, independent nation statehood, and releasing Schuschnigg from the prison cell in which he had been confined for almost seven years.

Today, in 2021, Russia is attempting to do the very same thing with Ukraine. At the point of writing, 25,000 Russian troops have amassed on the Ukraine border. This is something that cannot be ignored. Yet like so many other things today, it is being ignored and is almost completely unreported by mainstream media outlets.

To all impartial observers, it looks exactly like it potentially is, a prelude to an invasion.

US Central Command has escalated its military posture to its highest level, “potential imminent crisis,” with the United States Air Force now flying constant observation missions over and along the Russian border, tracking Russian troop movements.

US President Joe Biden called Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky to express his support and his solidarity. It seems to have offered little succour.

Dominic Raab, U.K. Defence Secretary, has issued a similar statement of support for Ukraine and its territorial integrity, stating, “We are gravely concerned about Russian military activity which threatens Ukraine.”

On Thursday, NATO ambassadors held a nonscheduled crisis meeting to discuss this fast-developing situation, tweeting as a group of the “grave concerns” they share over Russian actions.

Russia’s response is a belligerent one. Putin’s press secretary, Dmitry Peskov, rebuffed all concerns, essentially openly threatening NATO should they attempt any future aid of Ukraine.

Peskov continued,

“There is no doubt such a scenario would lead to a further increase in tensions close to Russian borders. Of course, this would lead to additional measures from the Russian side to ensure its security.”

This all sounds ominously familiar. Not just because there is historical precedent between Germany and Austria, but because Vladimir Putin has used these old German tactics before, extremely successfully.

It was these same tactics that Putin used to invade Georgia in August 2008. At that time, Russia accused Georgia of aggression against South Ossetia and launched a large-scale land, air and sea invasion of Georgia on August 8 with the pretext of a “peace enforcement “operation.

Currently, 20% of Georgia’s internationally recognized territory is under Russian military occupation. Additionally, Russia does not even allow EU monitors to enter South Ossetia and Abkhazia at all now, in direct violation of the Six Point Ceasefire Agreement signed by all participants.

Russia has annexed this territory into greater Russia, and just like the original German Anschluss in 1938, the world stood by and did nothing.

Russia’s actions today regarding Ukraine are merely a rehashing of an old Putin tactic to justify military action by claiming Russian interests are at risk. It worked for him before, just as it worked for Adolf Hitler in 1938.

To further cement this claim, the Kremlin has been handing out thousands and thousands of Russian passports to Ukrainian residents in the east of the Ukraine.

By making hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians essentially new Russian citizens, Putin is turning them into his direct responsibility.

If he can then engineer a situation where “Russian” people are threatened, he can then justify an invasion to protect them. At this point, that is seeming increasingly likely.

The million-dollar question is what will the United States do in response? What will NATO do in response?

In the event of an invasion, Ukraine has only a few very limited options: cede a big chunk of its territory over to Russia, hit back politically by cozying up to and asking for help from the West, or it could fight.

However, despite Ukraine being stronger in military terms than one would think, they are simply no match for Russia.

NATO, for its part, could retaliate militarily. This, though, is unlikely. Just the thought of a hot war between Russia and NATO is enough to turn your blood cold. Such a confrontation would bring with it the highest risk of nuclear war in human history.

NATO might immediately admit Ukraine into its membership. But again, if NATO does this, it would be duty-bound to defend Ukraine from Russian aggression, bringing the nuclear superpowers once again back into direct confrontation.

More likely is that NATO would immediately admit Ukraine to the last stage before full membership, without becoming a full member, thus warning Russia, "this far, no further."

The United States might employ sanctions against Russia or even reinvigorate the missile shield program, which Russia truly hates, in places like Poland in Eastern Europe. This would be a direct threat to Russia's own deterrence capability.

But in such an eventuality, should Russia actually invade Ukraine as it did Georgia in 2008, there are simply no good options. The world will be on tenterhooks; and diplomats, military leaders and politicians will be managing the finest of all balancing acts, trying desperately to avoid all out escalation.

In the Bible, when describing the very last days of the end times, Jesus talks of a time of "wars and rumours of wars." We have long since been in that time frame. As we hurtle increasingly into that time period, the increasing birth pains will become more and more severe and intense. War will become more intense.

In 2021, in every direction one chooses to look, Jesus's words of wars and rumours of war are and have become a present-day reality. From Russia to China, dictators are looking out from their own lands with greedy eyes. From Ukraine to Taiwan, to the south China seas to Hong Kong.

Whether it be in Eastern Europe between Russia and NATO, or more likely in Southeast Asia between the United States of America and China, major superpower confrontation and conflict is almost certainly coming in the next decade.

It is like a slow-motion train crash; everybody can see that it's going to happen, but nobody seems to be able to stop it or even slow it down.

For us who believe in and hold to Jesus, we have a different hope and a different expectation of the decade to come. One of deliverance. That should be our focus today, and every day, until that deliverance becomes our own reality.

"When you see these things begin to come to pass, look up and lift up your head for your redemption draws nigh" (Luke 21:28).

Headlines...

Israel Bracing For Iran To Possibly Strike From Their Own Territory

In response to their recent exchange of naval attacks, which reached its height on Tuesday with a strike on an Iranian spy ship in the Red Sea, Israel is readying for a potential assault on its own assets inside Israel from Iran's territory

Western Australia under rare weather threat of three strong tropical systems

The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) has warned residents living on the coast of Western Australia to brace for intense winds, rain, and possible flooding as Tropical Cyclone "Seroja" is expected to pass between Carnarvon and Jurien Bay late Sunday or early Monday, April 11 or 12. In a rare weather event, two other potentially strong storms are looming west of WA, with the potential to hit the area over the coming days.

Famine, flooding or war are repercussions of Ethiopian Dam filling without deal

After the failure of talks on a mechanism to resume negotiations on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) was announced Tuesday, a number of Egyptian experts and former ministers gave insight on the issue. Former Minister of Irrigation and Water Resources Mohamed Nasr Allam said in a TV interview that filling the dam's reservoir without a legal binding agreement may incur a famine in Egypt and Sudan. That is because the capacity of the dam is 74 billion cubic meters, which is almost equivalent to the annual water shares of Egypt (55.5 billion cubic meters) and Sudan (18 billion cubic meters) combined.

Taal Volcano: Alert Level 2 stays; Four volcanic quakes recorded in 24 hours

Taal Volcano remains under Alert Level 2 as the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) reported Thursday morning that four volcanic earthquakes were recorded in the area in the last 24 hours. According to Phivolcs' 8 a.m. bulletin, three of the recorded earthquakes were low-frequency volcanic earthquakes while one volcano-tectonic event was also recorded.

What is Macron up to? Merkel suspects 'crafty' French plot to snatch UK's top spot in EU

EMMANUEL MACRON's ambition for more strategic autonomy in the EU is raising eyebrows in Berlin, with Angela Merkel suspecting the French leader wants to replace the UK at the top seat of the bloc's table. The French President has longed for more military autonomy for the bloc since his ascent to power in 2017. Mr Macron's vision is for the EU to have a clear defence identity within NATO, pushing for greater European military spending.

Solar storms: Why we need to get better at forecasting the weather in space

The Sun is the most important source of energy for sustaining life on Earth, but it gives us a lot more than just light and heat. It also gives us solar storms. Disturbances on the Sun, such as coronal mass ejections produced by solar flares that emanate from active sunspot regions, can cause solar storms. Solar flares and coronal mass ejections emit vast quantities of radiation and charged particles into space. As our civilisation becomes more advanced, we become more vulnerable to the effects of solar storms. Now, as the Sun's activity is on the increase, we need to get better at predicting solar weather.

A term you will be hearing a lot in the future:

Central bank digital currency (CBDC)



Interest in CBDC has grown in response to changes in payments, finance and technology, as well as the disruption caused by Covid-19. A 2021 BIS survey of central banks found that 86% are actively researching the potential for CBDCs, 60% were experimenting with the technology and 14% were deploying pilot projects.

In simple terms, a central bank digital currency (CBDC) would be a digital banknote. It could be used by individuals to pay businesses, shops or each other (a "retail CBDC"), or between financial institutions to settle trades in financial markets (a "wholesale CBDC").

Central banks are exploring whether CBDC could help them to achieve their public good objectives, such as safeguarding public trust in money, maintaining price stability and ensuring safe and resilient payment systems and infrastructure.

If successful, CBDCs could ensure that, as economies go digital, the general public would retain access to the safest form of money - a claim on a central bank. This could promote diversity in payment options, make cross-border payments faster and cheaper, increase financial inclusion and possibly facilitate fiscal transfers in times of economic crisis (such as a pandemic).

The BISIH intends to contribute to this area through applied technology research, proofs of concept (POCs) and prototypes with central banks around the world.

