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CAN WE TRUST MAJOR MEDIA?

We are commanded to watch world events. Can we be negatively influenced by our news media?

By Gregory Dullum

When Jesus Christ was asked what signs would signal his return, He told his disciples that certain things would happen on the world scene: religious deception, wars and rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, persecution (including martyrdom), a period of great tribulation and heavenly signs (Mat. 24:3-30).

Jesus concluded by telling his followers to do something: “Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour the Lord is coming” (v. 42). Watch what?

Watch World Events

We are to watch THE NEWS for the fulfillment of these signs which Jesus had just given. He said, “Now learn this parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it [his return] is near, at the very doors” (Mat. 24:32-33).

Jesus said his return would come UNEXPECTEDLY (vv. 36-39). He told us, “Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect” (Luke 12:40).

After giving the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, Jesus concluded, “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming” (Mat. 25:13). By watching world events, we can tell we are getting close!

Watch Our Behavior

In Luke’s Gospel, we are told, “Watch therefore, and pray always, that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36).

In English, we read the word “watch” in both the Gospels of Mat-



Photo by Gregory Dullum

The New York Times has an influence upon most of the other major news outlets. What’s reported in the Times gets reported elsewhere.

thew and of Luke, but the writers used two different Greek words. Matthew used *gregoreno*, which means to be vigilant or watchful. Luke uses the word *agrupneo*, which means to stay awake and watch; be circumspect, attentive and ready.

In other words, Matthew tells us we need to watch world events to see them unfold and know how close we are to Christ’s return, and Luke says we should watch our behavior so we don’t become like the world around us and become blinded to the times.

Christ further explained it this way: “But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come upon you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth” (Luke 21:34-35).

Beware of Biases in the News

To watch world events unfold, we must rely upon some form of media to get the news to us. As we watch for end-time events, we must be careful that we are not

influenced by the biases that are in the major media.

There is a liberal bias in the major media. It affects what *is* and what *is not* being reported (the subject matter), and how things are being reported (the “slant”).

We will not find straight, objective reporting in the MAJOR MEDIA. (By “major media” I mean the network newscasts on radio and TV [including cable], daily newspapers and weekly newsmagazines). The major media have a liberal slant. Reporters act as cheerleaders for ungodly actions. They promote wicked behavior (such as gay marriage) and ridicule good behavior (such as teen abstinence from sex).

Many in the major media are doing what God condemns: “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!” (Isa. 5:20).

“Over the past few decades, conservatives have been rightly angered by a media that has mocked and marginalized their values and principles. For a long time, liberals in the media tried to deny that there was any kind of bias problem. But eventually that became laughable. Study after study showed what we all knew instinctively to be true: in the Major Leagues of Media, liberals played all the positions” (*Cowards: What Politicians, Radicals and the Media Refuse to Say* by Glenn Beck, 2012, p. 174).

Why a Liberal Bias?

Why is there a liberal bias in the major media? One reason is because members of the major media are overwhelmingly liberal Democrats, and that colors their reporting.

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Trust the Media?

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Scott Baker once worked at CBS News on a fellowship program right out of college. He had a strange encounter with a young man in a hallway a few weeks after he started working in Manhattan. The man told Baker, "I heard about you—you're a Republican!"

Baker replied, "Well, I think Mr. [Dan] Rather would rather see us defined as, er, objective brokers of information." He added that he had worked in Republican politics for years, but, after deciding to pursue a journalism career, he'd registered as an independent.

"No, it's okay," the young man said, lowering his voice to a whisper. "I'm one too." He explained that he worked in a research office down the hall.

Baker was sympathetic. "So you're the only Republican in the research office—that must be tough."

"No, you don't get it," the man quickly replied. "I'm the only Republican *in the building*" (Beck, p. 178).

When Bill Clinton was running for president, it was learned that many reporters covering his campaign supported him. They were "just part of a liberal brat pack that thinks alike and reports the news with the same spin. During the New Hampshire primary, Hendrik Hertzberg of the *New Republic* reported that of forty-seven reporters he talked to, every single one supported Bill Clinton. Even he, a liberal, thought this was unhealthy" (*The Way Things Ought to Be* by Rush Limbaugh, 1992, p. 271).

Supporting Liberal Causes

Instead of sticking to reporting the facts, many of today's journalists have become cheerleaders for liberal causes, many of which are ungodly in nature.

"Just as much as the Hollywood left, elements of the Media have jumped on the bandwagon of leftist causes. The cynical journalist of the past has been replaced in many cases by an enthusiastic cheerleader for causes. ...

"If you go to a journalism school today and ask the students why they are studying journalism, you'll get a standard answer: They want to make the world a better place. I would ask them, What, then, are you doing studying journalism? The job a journalist is to chronicle events, not to stand up and cheer for one side or the other" (Limbaugh, p. 270).

Greg Gutfeld, star of Fox News' "Red Eye" and "The Five," compares the media's reporting on health care protesters who developed into the Tea Party to

the leftists who participated in "Occupy Wall Street" protests. He wrote:

"It seems speaking truth to power is tolerated only if it's for the right causes, the right ideology. Sorry, by 'right' I mean causes of the left. Yelling about the war—good. Yelling about unborn babies—bad.

"Now you'd expect this sort of natural expression of outrage [citizens questioning lawmakers about their passing Obamacare without reading the bill] to be championed in the media. ...

"The media saw the whole thing as comical. ...

"It became clear that tolerance for speaking truth to power only exists if it's the power the media dislikes. Sure, you can laugh when an Iraqi throws a shoe at President Bush, but you'd better not call a Democratic congressman on the carpet. And worse, you'd better not question the imperatives of President Obama—the media's Jesus, whose religion, of course, is big government. ...

"Which is why, on some networks, you'd find a mocking smirk on the faces of those reporting on the events. When these protests grew into Tea Party events, so did the media's disdain for them. ...

"If the uprising had been a liberal one, it would have garnered complete, slavish coverage, complete with tears, embedded reporters, and over-the-top documentaries. There would have been analogies to the sixties, profiles of the participants, celebrity visits, and journalistic defectors.

"And it did. That uprising did take place a few years later, in the form of Occupy Wall Street. The media took to it like basmati on rice. Hilariously, the media identified with the protests, and were more than willing to pay them the respect they refused to afford the health care protesters or the folks at the Tea Party events. ...

"Amazingly, the media chose to mock those who for the first time in their lives left their living rooms to carry a sign. Meanwhile they backed the clichéd establishment protester, the career sign-carrier, the one who protests for anything or everything as long as its motto somehow denigrates America" (*The Joy of Hate: How to Triumph Over Whiners in the Age of Phony Outrage* by Greg Gutfeld, 2012, pp. 32-36).

Bernard Goldberg, a CBS News correspondent for 28 years, wrote, "It is important to know, too, that there isn't a well-orchestrated, vast left-wing conspiracy in America's newsrooms.' What I and many others do believe, and what I think is fairly obvious, is that the majority of journalists in big newsrooms slant leftward in their personal politics, especially on issues like abortion, affirmative action, gay rights, and gun control; and so in their professional

role they tend to assume those positions are reasonable and morally correct. ...

"[T]here now exists a 'huge body of literature—including at least 100 books and research monographs—documenting a widespread left-wing bias in the news,' according to Ted Smith III of Virginia Commonwealth University, who has done extensive research into the subject. And much of the evidence comes *not* from conservatives with axes to grind but straight from the journalists themselves, who in survey after survey have identified themselves as liberal on all the big, important social issues of our time.

"Despite the overwhelming evidence ... the elites remain in denial. Why? Well for starters ... they honestly believe that their views on all sorts of divisive issues are not really controversial—or even liberal. After all, their liberal friends in Manhattan and Georgetown share those same views, which practically by definition make them moderate and mainstream. So, the thinking goes, it is all those Middle Americans who take the opposing view on, say, guns and gay marriage who are out of the mainstream, the ones who are 'fringe.' ...

"By and large, these are people who see themselves as incredibly decent, even noble. They're the good guys trying to make the world a better place. That's why many of them went into journalism in the first place—to make the world a better place" (*Arrogance: Rescuing America from the Media Elite* by Bernard Goldberg, 2003, pp. 4-5).

Media Elite Think They're Right

Liberals in the media surround themselves with other liberals so they hear no

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The SABBATH SCOOP

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A Close Look at Rev. 3:11

Emphasizing the various words of this well-known verse can breathe new life into it!

By Gregory Dullum

Have you ever taken a sentence and repeated it, emphasizing a different word each time? Have you noticed how the meaning changes depending on which word is emphasized?

Let's try this exercise with Rev. 3:11, a verse we have read and heard many times. In the *New King James* it reads: "Behold I come quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown."

Now let's emphasize the first word:

Behold

"**BEHOLD** I come quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown."

Why did Christ say "Behold?" Why not just begin, "I come quickly?"

"Behold" is the Greek word *idou*. It is in the *imperative* mood. That means this sentence demands an explanation point. The *New King James* puts one at the end of this sentence.

Idou can be translated "to see." *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words* says it means "calling attention to what may be seen or heard or mentally apprehended in any way."

By beginning with "Behold," Christ is saying, "See here! Listen up! Pay attention! I'm about to tell you something **IMPORTANT**."

I

"Behold **I** come quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown."

Who is this "I" who is speaking? Who is coming? A red letter Bible tells us it's Christ. Rev. 19:16 says his name is **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS**. How else is He described?

"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:6-7).

The Jesus who is coming is not a **WEAK** mortal. He is no longer a baby in a manger. He's not a dead Savior. He's not some long-haired freak in a white robe with pale skin and long, thin fingers and a meek following. This is the **ALL POWERFUL, ALMIGHTY KING OF KINGS** who is returning. We can *take comfort* in his strength, for it is by his strength that He will be able to fulfill his promises.

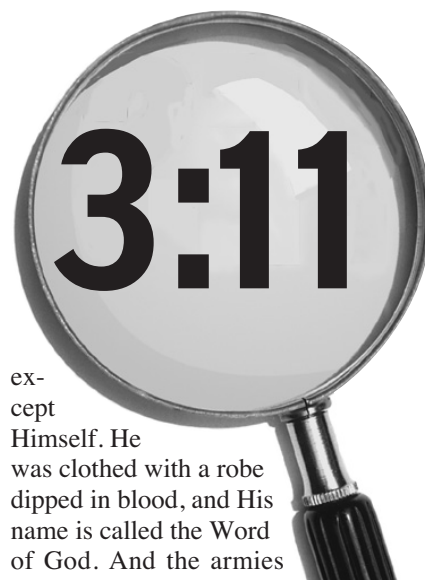
Come

"Behold I **COME** quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown."

Jesus Christ is **COMING**. Some do not believe He is coming. Instead of Him coming to us, some believe we are going to join Him in heaven. That's not what the Bible says!

"Now when He [Jesus] had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven'" (Acts 1:9-11).

His return is described in detail in Rev. 19:11-21: "Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew



except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called the Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS**.

"Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, 'Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great.'

"And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh."

Jesus Christ has not *already* returned, for these events *have not yet taken place!* His kingdom is not "established in our hearts" as some believe. He will establish his kingdom when He comes. And He *is coming!*

Quickly

"Behold I come **QUICKLY!** Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your

REV. 3:11

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Know Your Bible

By Charles Nenninger

1. Who asked God to make the sun stand still?
2. Who was the highest high priest in the Old Testament?
3. Where was Paul headed when he was struck blind by God?
4. Who was the king of Judea when Christ was born?
5. Nebuchadnezzar was king of what country?

(Answers on page 5)

Rev. 3:11

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crown.”

Because we have been waiting so long for Christ’s return, it may seem that our master has delayed his coming, but Christ will not delay it (Mat. 24:46-51).

We must remember that what God calls “quickly” and what we call “quickly” are two different things. Don’t forget that 1,000 years to us is as a day to God (2 Pet. 3:8).

This point is illustrated by a story of a man who walks and talks with God:

Man: “How long is a million years to You?”

God: A million years to Me is as a second.

Man: “How much is a million dollars to You?”

God: A million dollars to Me is as a penny.

Man: Can I have a penny?

God: In a second.

Jesus Christ is coming QUICKLY. He said so, and He *can’t lie* (Tit. 1:2, Heb. 6:18). Today we are one day closer to his return than we were yesterday. We are much closer than when we first believed: “And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed” (Rom. 13:11).

Hold Fast

“Behold I come quickly! **HOLD FAST** what you have, that no one may take your crown.”

“Hold fast” in Greek is *krateo*. It means to use strength, to seize or retain. It means to grab onto something and never let go. To be strong, mighty and to prevail.

We had a dog when I was a youngster. She was part rat terrier, part cocker spaniel and mostly fat. She was shaped like a barrel on little legs. She liked table scraps and turned up her nose at dog food. But she was extremely smart.

She knew what it meant to hold fast. When she played fetch, she would fetch a ball just fine. But she would not give it up! If we grabbed the ball in her mouth to pull it out, we’d lift her stout body up into the air with all four legs off the ground and she still held onto that ball. That is the kind of strong grip we are told to have! One that *never lets go!*

What You Have

“Behold I come quickly! Hold fast **WHAT YOU HAVE**, that no one may take your crown.”

What is it that we are to hold fast? It is

something that we *already have*. It is something we **MUST HAVE** if we want to receive our crown. If we don’t have it, we will lose our crown. What can it be?

Jesus Christ tells us in Rev. 22:12, 14-15: “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give everyone according to his work. . . . Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.”

We are rewarded according to our works. What works? We obey God’s commandments. Rev. 12:17 describes an END-TIME remnant of the Church of God as those who “keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

Revelation 3 also describes what we have. In the verses prior to v. 11 we read: “I know your WORKS. See I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a LITTLE STRENGTH. You have kept MY WORD and HAVE NOT DENIED MY NAME. . . . YOU HAVE KEPT MY COMMAND TO PERSEVERE” (vv. 8, 10, emphasis added).

Mat. 24:11-13 says false prophets will deceive many at the end time. They will teach *lawlessness*. But he who endures to the end will be saved.

We have been given the TRUTH about who God is and what is his plan of salvation. We have been given the truth about God’s laws. NEVER LET GO of any of this TRUTH. GUARD the truth. *Hold fast* to it!

That No One

“Behold I come quickly! Hold fast what you have, **THAT NO ONE** may take your crown.”

The *King James Version* reads, “that no MAN” may take your crown. We seldom, if ever, come face to face with Satan or his demons. But Satan uses PEOPLE to influence us. Let no man—no human—come between us and our crown.

The New Testament is filled with warnings against false teachers. We just mentioned one that was given by Christ in Matthew 24. Paul, in Acts 20:29, warned the Ephesian ministry to watch out for false ministers whom he calls “savage wolves” who will come in among them, not sparing the flock. And men would rise up among them speaking misleading and perverse things.

Paul warned the Thessalonians in 2 Thess. 2:1-12 that Christ will not return before a man of sin appears, teaching lawlessness, and will deceive those who do not love the truth. There will be a

falling away from the truth.

In 2 Tim. 4:3-4 Paul told Timothy a time will come when the church will not endure sound doctrine but will turn their ears away from the TRUTH and be turned aside to fables.

Peter, in 2 Peter 2:18-22, says these false teachers will teach licentiousness—the freedom to *disobey* God’s laws. They promise liberty but will actually bring bondage on the church. V. 21 says, “For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.”

Jesus warned that a time is coming when we won’t be able to trust family members (Matt. 10:34-39). Christ was quoting from Micah 7:5-6, which tells us not to trust friends and family for they can lead us astray.

We have the TRUTH. We have The HOLY COMMANDMENT. We have the way of righteousness. We must not let *any man*—any false minister, any friend or family member—take that away from us.

And let’s not forget that we, too, are HUMAN! It’s possible that we could take the crown off *our own heads!* We must not take away our own crown! We must not give up. We must not become weary in well doing. We must not become discouraged. We must continue to overcome our sins.

May Take

“Behold I come quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one **MAY TAKE** your crown.”

This word “to take” is the Greek word *lambano*, which means “to take” or “get hold of.” It DOESN’T mean something is *offered* and it IS NOT taken *violently*. In this case, it’s as if it is *stolen away* (not in an armed robbery but in a burglary when no one is home) or *taken by deceit* and con. It is like a con artist who steals his victim’s money and the victim doesn’t realize it until it’s too late.

Your

“Behold I come quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take **YOUR** crown.”

The crown is OURS. We don’t have to wait for it to BECOME ours (we just have to wait to receive it). It *already* has our name on it. Our names are already written in the Book of Life. We must hang on to what we have until Christ returns so we don’t get our name blotted out of that book! (Rev. 3:5).

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opposing views. They think their viewpoint is normal, because everyone around them shares their view. For example, on Feb. 6, 2003, while America was deeply divided on whether it should go to war with Iraq, veteran *Washington Post* columnist Mary McGrory wrote, “Among people I know, nobody was for the war.” Imagine that—she knew absolutely no one who thought invading Iraq was a good idea (Goldberg, pp. 17-18).

Getting to the Source

The New York Times is a very liberal newspaper, run by very liberal Democrats. This newspaper is the ROOT CAUSE of much of the liberal bias in American media.

“*The New York Times*, a paper 99.5 percent of the American people do not read, yet which is still the most influential newspaper in America because the most influential people in America do in fact read it.

“So yes, the *New York Times* does indeed occupy a unique place in American journalism. ... It’s mostly because it sets the agenda for so many other news outlets, especially the networks where most Americans get their world and national news. The fact is, the Big Three news networks wouldn’t know what to put on the air without it. ...

“If the *Times* decrees a story important, by definition it *is* important. And when the *Times* ignores a story—or a book or social trend or an idea—then it is invisible. ...

“On a typical morning, this is how assignment editors and producers at the network news divisions begin their day. Step one: They open up the *New York Times*. Step two: They scan the paper for stories to put on their nightly newscasts. Step three: They get one of their high-priced reporters (who is in his or her own office also reading the *New York Times*) on the phone—a reporter who may not have come up with even one original story idea in his entire network career (I mean that *literally*)—and tell him or her to go out and do the *New York Times* story. Step four: He or she does, and that evening, a video version of the *Times* story is on the air” (Goldberg, pp. 58-59, 61-62).

This would not be such a problem if *The New York Times* were not such a liberal newspaper. While it always leaned to the left, it became especially liberal in the 1970s.

“The *Times* had always been an editorially liberal paper—responsibly and intel-

ligently liberal. But now, as more and more of its reporters and editors emerged from the hip sixties generation, it took on a more aggressive liberal-activist edge.

“For committed feminists, gay activists, multiculturalists, and all the others who took their side in the culture wars that grew in intensity into the eighties and nineties, ‘neutrality’ was nothing to be admired. The very point of the movements they supported was to attack and undermine traditional forms of thought and behavior” (Goldberg, pp. 63-64).

These “traditional forms of thought and behavior” were the Judeo-Christian Bible-based ethics upon which this nation was founded.

Watch the News Carefully

In order to watch world events as commanded by Christ in Matthew 24, we need to keep an eye on what is reported in the major media. We must also watch ourselves, as commanded by Christ in Luke 21, that we don’t become like the world. *We must not let the media biases influence us.*

We can take from the media the FACTS of events. After all, an earthquake is an earthquake, a pestilence is a pestilence, a school shooting is a school shooting. We may have to reject parts of the story that are liberal propaganda, such as blaming earthquakes on man’s activities (whether it be oil drilling or global warming), failing to link AIDS to illicit sexual activity, and blaming school shooting on guns instead of on the perpetrators.

We must beware of biases in news reporting so we don’t align our belief system with that of the world. For example, a report on gay marriages becoming legal may make such marriages seem to be a good thing—when in fact God condemns homosexual acts, and this contradicts the Bible definition of marriage as being between a man and a woman.

Getting the news from our major media with their liberal biases is like reading Bible helps written by people who are not in the Church of God. We can often learn facts about the Bible or life in Bible times, but we must reject the false ideas and doctrines that the authors include in their books.

Let us watch world events to look for fulfilled prophecy, but also watch for improper biases in the news and reject them.

Know Your Bible Answers

1) Joshua. 2) Melchizedek. 3) Damascus to kill Christians. 4) Herod the Great. 5) Babylon.

Fun Fact

of creation, history, holidays & the Bible



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS
With proper care, a grapevine can produce fruit for a century.

Witerature

Wit and wisdom to complement the truths of the Holy Bible can be found in secular writings.

Being George Washington by Glenn Beck, Threshold Editions, 2011, p. 181.

Search for Truth

“But think about how this might have played if Washington had not been someone who was open to finding the truth no matter where it led him. ...

“The lessons for us today are clear—question with boldness. ... If you think your version of the truth is all that exists, then not only will you fail in pursuing your agenda, but you’ll also fail at motivating anyone else to join you. The search for truth is a lifelong quest without a destination. Don’t fall into the trap of believing so deeply in your own ideology that you cannot even see the flaws in it.

“One of George Washington’s greatest traits was his understanding that man is not perfect. ... Embrace our imperfection by constantly searching for the truth. You might be surprised where it leads you.”

Prov. 23:23, Eccles. 12:10, John 16:13

Quotable Quotes

“Well done is better than well said.”
—Benjamin Franklin

Memory Scripture

“Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”

—Prov. 16:18

Rev. 3:11

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Crown

“Behold I come quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your CROWN.”

The Greek word for “crown” here is *Stephanos*. (We get the name *Stephen* from this. It means “crowned one”). This is a badge of royalty, a prize in the public games or a symbol of honor generally but more conspicuous than the simple fillet.

This is not a *simple* crown but a GRAND AND GLORIOUS crown!

It is a badge, a sign, to tell ALL CREATION that WE ARE ROYALTY. We will be kings and priests (Rev. 1:6). We will be Sons of God (Rom. 8:15-17). This crown is a prize TO BE WON.

Salvation is a FREE GIFT. We cannot “earn” salvation by our works—Rom. 6:23. But our POSITION in the God family, our STATUS, our JOB, our CROWN, will be determined partly by the *character* we build now. We are rewarded according to our works! “For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works” (Mat. 16:27).

Vine’s Expository Dictionary defines the word used for our “crown”: The Victor’s crown, the symbol of triumph in the games or some such contest; hence, by metonymy, a reward or prize; (b) a token of public honour for distinguished service, military prowess, etc., or of nuptial joy, or festal gladness, especially at the parousia of kings. It stands as an emblem of life, joy, reward and glory.”

Another word for “crown” is *diadema*. This is never used as *Stephanos* is. It is always used as a symbol of kingly or imperial dignity.

The crown that awaits us is a GREAT PRIZE! It is like standing on the top step at the Olympics and having a gold medal on a long ribbon placed around our necks while our flag is raised and our national anthem is played. But it is a flag with our name on it that will be raised and a song with our name in it that will be sung. We will be honored with a medal for distinguished service as Christian soldiers. We will celebrate the nuptial joy of the marriage of Christ and the Church. We will celebrate in festal gladness at the coming of the King of Kings. We will celebrate our ETERNAL life, ETERNAL joy, ETERNAL reward and ETERNAL glory.

Let us remember the deep meaning of these words of Jesus Christ: “Behold I come quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.”



Obama Lifts Ban of Arms to Vietnam

“U.S. President Barack Obama on Monday [May 23] lifted a half-century-old ban on selling arms to Vietnam, looking to bolster a government seen as a crucial, though flawed partner in a region he has tried to place at the center of his foreign policy legacy.

Obama announced the full removal of the embargo at a press conference where he vowed to leave behind the troubled history between the former war enemies and embrace a new era with a young, increasingly prosperous nation” (“Obama lifts arms ban in his first visit to Vietnam” by Foster Klug, Associated Press, *Southeast Missourian*, May 24, 2016, p. 5A).

End-time “kings from the east” will attack the “king of the North” when it occupies the Holy Land at the time of the end (Dan. 11:40-44, Rev. 16:12-16). A rearmed Vietnam could be one of these kings from the east.

Japan’s Leader Has Little Use for Pacifism

“Japan ... has not sent a soldier into combat since 1945, a record of pacifism that exceeds even that of its onetime ally Germany. ...

“The deep aversion to military entanglements is being challenged as never before by an ambitious conservative movement led by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. ...

“Seven decades after World War II, Mr. Abe’s governing Liberal Democratic Party says the constraints placed on Japan in the conflict’s aftermath are outdated and enfeebling, and it has proposed an array of constitutional amendments, including a rollback of the charter’s pacifist clauses.

“Mr Abe argues that change is vital because a more potent and assertive China and a nuclear-armed North Korea have emerged on Japan’s doorstep. And he has offered a brasher alternative to the inward-looking exceptionalism that grew out of Hiroshima, campaigning to transform Japan into a ‘normal’ country

with a freer military and a bigger role in global affairs. ...

“‘Abe’s approach is a kind of “military pacifism” that takes war as a given,’ said Motofumi Asai, a former Foreign Ministry official who directed the Hiroshima Peace Institute from 2005 to 2011 and is now a professor at Osaka University of Economics and Law. ‘If Japanese people embrace this, they are denying their postwar constitutional pacifism’ ” (“Japan’s Leader Has Little Use for Hiroshima’s Lessons of Pacifism” by Jonathan Soble, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, May 26, 2016, pp. 1-3).

When the Beast power rises in Europe, aided by the great False Prophet, there will be a movement to force the whole world to worship the Beast (Rev. 13:1-12). In other words, the Beast will try to take over the entire world. This may cause nations in other parts of the world to unite against the Beast. At the time of the end, the Beast power, called the “king of the North,” will be attacked by the king of the South (probably an Islamic union of nations) and “kings from the East.” These will probably be a union of Far Eastern nations such as China, Korea, Japan and Vietnam (Dan. 11:40-44, Rev. 16:12-16).

Superbugs Are Possible

“American military researchers have identified the first patient in the United States to be infected with bacteria that are resistant to an antibiotic that was the last resort against drug-resistant germs.

“The patient is well now, but the case raises the specter of superbugs that could cause untreatable infections, because the bacteria can easily transmit their resistance to other germs that are already resistant to additional antibiotics” (“Infection Raises Specter of Superbugs Resistant to All Antibiotics” by Sabrina Tavernise and Denise Grady, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, May 26, 2016, p. 1).

It is possible now to have diseases that are untreatable. One of the signs that we are approaching Christ’s return is that of “pestilences” or disease epidemics (Mat. 24:3, 7-8).