



Dealing with Prophetic Attention Deficit Disorder

“Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap; for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth. But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.” — Luke 21:34-36

“...However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?” — Luke 18:8b

“Because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold. — Matthew 24:12

“Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. — Daniel 12:3

Believe it or not, between all the predicted events and signs of the Last Days provided by Christ, the Apostles and the Prophets is the precise information of what to do when such are recognized as taking place. Regardless of one’s spiritual status as a believer or non-believer, Scripture clearly tells *both* what they are supposed to do with the information. It would be hard to find a Christian who would disagree that, according to Scripture, the only suitable action for a non-believer when seeing some kind of sign or prophetic event fulfilled is to repent from the heart and receive Christ as their personal Savior; the only suitable action to take for an unsaved person is to get saved. But there seems to be far from universal agreement among Christians as to what the already saved should do. In fact, I would argue that a significant percentage seem to cling to the notion that they need to study more, read more books and websites, go to more prophecy conferences, and do whatever it takes to “solve the puzzle”. This is what happens when the prophetic passages of the Bible are read in the pursuit of increasing one’s knowledge instead of the more important goal of strengthening one’s faith. When the unsaved see such things, it is a warning to hurry up and *get* saved; when the saved witness the same, it is a warning to live like they really and truly *are* saved.

Jesus warns in the Olivet Discourse on the End Times that the saved are not to have *“hearts...weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life”*. (Lk. 21:34) The Greek word *“kraipale”* in some translations is rendered in English as *“surfeiting”* instead of *“dissipation”* to convey the meaning of something that is overdone to excess so that it actually becomes disgusting. Few things are more illustrative of what it means to achieve an excess of disgusting proportions than *“drunkenness”*, where both one’s thoughts and behavior leave reality and visibly testify on the outside the degree of disgusting deterioration achieved on the inside. When we understand that the biblical definition of *“worries”*—rendered in the Greek as *“merimna”*, actually means to become so disrupted by something that it results in changes to both our mind (internal) and personality (external), we can see that Christ is warning that even the most obvious prophetic signs and fulfillments will be missed by those consumed with this life.

Satan understands this very well. He understand it *so* well, in fact, that every single false teaching, false movement, and purveyor of false doctrine have, at their core, a common, unified purpose: to get us to trust in *this* life. The age of apostasy we find ourselves currently living in is defined by a growing number who no longer live exclusively for the next life, but embrace an attachment that is excessive to the point that it alters their thoughts and behavior in favor of this life.

At Christ’s First Coming, there was something in the sky so obvious to a few Believers that they were driven to leave their homeland and seek Him out. But in spite of the vast majority in the land of Christ’s birth having the Scriptures, the Temple, the priesthood, and allegedly practicing a faith that anticipated the time and place of His arrival, most could not see it. What happened at His First Coming is a shadow of what will take place at His Second Coming. Their hearts were weighted down by this life.

*“For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, **and they did not understand** until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. (Mt. 24:37-39)*

It would appear to be the same today in this earliest shadow of Final Judgment in the example of *“the days of Noah”*, an illustration of what is to ultimately come: an excess

leading to a loss of reality to the point it kept them from seeing what was taking place until it was too late.

Notice that Christ's admonition is not to pray only for escape from what is to come, but "*that you may have strength...to **stand** before the Son of Man*". (Lk. 21:36) Those who heed His warning to "*Be on guard*" and "*keep on alert at all times*" (Lk. 21:34-36) are not meeting such requirements by simply having knowledge and awareness, but putting His Word into practice to the point that they are going to be able "*to **stand** before the Son of Man*". Again, it is not a test of knowledge, but faith.

Both the Hebrew word for "faith"—"*emunah*", and the Greek word for "faith"—"*pisteos*", can be equally translated as "faithfulness". They are interchangeable. The biblical definition of "faith" is someone who is "faithful" in their walk and obedience to the Word. Luke 18:8 could be realistically rendered, "However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find **faithfulness** on the earth?" It describes Believers as being in the exact *opposite* state of those whose hearts are "*weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life*". (Lk. 21:34)

The proof that a Christian is truly understanding the fulfillment of biblical prophecy in our times is evident in a life that is *even more* obedient—*more* faithful, to the Word than ever before. They are not just "knowledgeable", they are **faithful**. The education system of our fallen world would have us think that the definition of "*faith*" is to simply "believe" or "acknowledge" or "vote in favor of"; God's definition is to be a *doer*.

*For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, **and abides by it**, not having become a forgetful hearer but **an effectual doer**, this man will be blessed in what he does. (James 1:23-57)*

And what will be the parallel evidence of an unfaithful life—someone who is not "*an effectual doer*" of the Word but whose heart has become weighted down with the cares of this life?

"Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. — Matthew 24:12

Again, the fallen world's definition of "lawlessness" would have us believe Christ is speaking about a situation or circumstance where there is no law, perhaps referring to someone who has not heard the Word and therefore cannot put it into practice. But the repeated context of the use of "lawlessness" ("anomos") in the New Testament clearly specifies that the biblical definition is setting aside and refusing to adhere to what is already known. What Jesus is saying is, "Because people who have been given the Word will refuse to live by the Word, it will be visibly evident in their lack of love".

Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. (1 Jn. 3:4)

I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification. (Rom. 6:19)

A true Believer recognizing the signs of the End Times is not characterized by "faith" in those signs, but "faithfulness" in the quality of their personal and public testimony of a deepening walk with Christ. They are not transformed simply by the knowledge of such events, but being sanctified by a deeper rejection of this life in favor of the one to come.

If we study *all* the words of Christ, the Apostles and the Prophets when it comes to the Last Days, and abstain from a kind of myopia which fixates only on the events to the exclusion of the surrounding text accompanying them, the teachings and principles in these verses are richly repeated throughout the whole of Scripture. It is in character with a proven Hebrew principle of interpretation called "light to heavy", meaning that what is important in a "light" situation is even more important in a "heavy" one. On any given day in any age of history it has *always* been important for God's people to avoid being obsessed with this life; in the shadow of Christ's return it is even *more* important. On any given day in any age of history it has *always* been important for God's people to live as a visible example of faithfulness to His Word and ways; in the shadow of Christ's return it is even *more* important. On any given day in any age of history it has *always* been important for God's people to be a visible example of the biblical definition of "love"; in the shadow of Christ's return it is even *more* important. If Christians were gaining the right lesson from all the books, websites and conferences devoted to topics concerning the Last Days, what would it actually result in? A visible testimony of biblical faith, hope and love exceeding that of any previous generation in history. Seeing for

certain that the end to life on this planet as usual is on the horizon, they would live even *more* passionately for what they know is to surely follow.

But the issue is not confined to just the flock. What about the shepherds? How are leaders supposed to act in the shadow of the Last Days?

“Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. — Daniel 12:3

“*Insight*” is a unique understanding of cause and effect in a specific context. Biblically it is characterized as something that so thoroughly understands not just the immediate consequences, but all the myriad and multiplied effects it will ultimately have on all related people, places and things. So what action does a truly biblical shepherd take to most effectively put that insight to its best use? They “*lead many to righteousness*”; they put an even *greater* emphasis on how to live *in* the world but not *of* the world, they hold the sheep accountable to the biblical standards of a faithful walk, and they engender obedience to the Word so that the warmth of true Christ-like love does not diminish to ineffectualness.

Leaders who truly understand the times know it is more important now than at any time in history to make faithful and obedient disciples who do not merely know the Word, but put it into practice. They understand by doing so the flock will be biblically aware of what is about to come, will be found biblically faithful upon Christ’s return, and fulfilling Christ’s qualification, “*By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another*”. (Jn. 13:35) They make an application of knowledge which results in authentic faith as evidenced by faithfulness. They do not merely explain the meaning of each piece of the “puzzle”, but instill how to put it into practice to the point that it results in a life conformed to God’s Word and ways—“*righteousness*”.

There is only room enough to argue about the particulars of the Last Days such as the Rapture, the Antichrist, the two witnesses, the four horsemen and so on only as long as we have addressed the greater issues of faithfulness to the rest of God’s Word in the first place.

In Him,

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