



## *Will We Ignore the Literal?*

*<sup>3</sup>When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup>Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.*

*<sup>5</sup>They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; **for this is what has been written...** — Matthew 2:3-5*

*<sup>26</sup>"Look, He is speaking publicly, and they are saying nothing to Him. The rulers do not really know that this is the Christ, do they? <sup>27</sup>However, we know where this man is from; but whenever the Christ may come, **no one knows** where He is from." — John 7:26-27*

At Christ's First Coming, in a span of just about thirty years, they went from correctly quoting the literal, plain text of Scripture to embracing its complete opposite. Although they did not follow through by acting upon it themselves, they initially knew **exactly** where the Messiah would come from, and yet in a relatively short span of time the literal handling of God's Word was abandoned so that a completely opposite belief took its place—"no one knows where He is from". For those of us who have been Christians long enough, we've seen the exact, same thing take place over the past thirty years of this present time line, where God's Word, previously accepted by faith for its plainest, literal meaning, has been assigned alternative explanations which take it just as far afield in the shadow of His Second Coming as that documented in His First Coming.

The remarkable thing about Christ's First Coming was that His arrival was mathematically predicted. (Dan. 8:25-27) There was a tremendous expectation of His arrival because of that which was specified in the plain text of God's Word, but because of the various historical, social and spiritual issues taking place, the literalness of God's Word instead began to be exchanged for what was personally desired. In other words, a substitution took place from what God's Word said for what they wanted it to say. The closer to His predicted time of arrival, the less literal they took God's Word.

This is even more curious when one considers the fulfillment of more than 325 prophecies in the course of the First Coming. Not even one of them was a figurative or symbolic fulfillment; every single one came true literally.

- Christ was born in Bethlehem;
- Christ rode into Jerusalem on a donkey;
- Christ healed the sick and raised the dead.
- Likewise Christ literally performed a literal fulfillment some 325 times.

Their spiritual blindness which can be attributed to their distortion of the Scriptures led to their blindness of His literal fulfillment of each and every prophecy before their very eyes as they still clung to their false and superimposed interpretations of the very Word of God He carried out to the last letter.

So why does it appear that the Church-at-large is repeating the exact, same mistake in the shadow of His Second Coming today? If we cannot find a prophesy which was not plainly and literally fulfilled in the First Coming, why are we often so dogmatic in holding to scenarios and alternatives which are anything **but** plain and literal, scripturally speaking?

This is most frequently seen in the speakers, websites and blogs dedicated exclusively to all things prophetic who have assigned the fulfillment of Scripture to modern advancements in technology. In particular of late, there is no shortage of pronouncements of the rise of crypto-currencies such as Bitcoin being the exclusive harbinger of the mark of the beast and control of the world economy, to the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) as ultimately powering the anticipated image of the beast. The mark of the beast itself is beset with a host of passionate evangelists who insist on their particular variation of technology being the fulfillment of Scripture, depending on the chip du jour various technologies offer with an accompanying scheme to be physically implanted. I am not saying none of these are absolutely impossible, and I am quite sure Satan will use anything and everything for evil, I am just cautioning that it still has to fulfill the plain text meaning of God's Word. If it has to be abstractly or symbolically substituted, it is **not** going to be the literal fulfillment characterizing the fulfillment of every prophecy to this point in history.

I believe there is a misconception entrenched in our thinking which purports that, as science-educated, Western enlightened modern man, we are incapable of falling for

["Will We Ignore the Literal?", Page 2 of 6](#)

anything superstitious, and certainly would see through all that has beguiled and deceived previous generations. Yeah...that explains all the UFO sightings, the never-ending search for Big Foot, and all the staple of “reality” television shows where they’re detecting supernatural phenomena and the like. At the very same time this technology is touted as being the fulfillment of Scripture, it is being utilized to substantiate the very same superstitions and beliefs that have cycled through every generation since the beginning of time. And yet there are those who espouse each successive turn in technology as finally being the ultimate fulfillment of Scripture. It is often stated that because biblical prophets lived in an ancient world which could not explain the advanced technology revealed in their divine visions, they described them the best they could.

Modern man cannot be fooled into worshiping idols, right? Modern man cannot be fooled into returning to the kind of worship engaged by ancient, uncivilized cultures, right? Modern man cannot be deceived into throwing aside all he knows and disintegrate into dancing wild and naked around the fire to a god of his choosing, right? If that is what you think, then I have just two words for you: “Burning Man”.

This event, which crosses every demographic category of inclusion be it social, ethnic or financial, provides an annual peek into what is about to literally take place when, “*the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; they worshiped the dragon...*”. (Rev. 13:4-5) Millionaires and celebrities “camp” in the most luxurious RV’s and accommodations money can buy side-by-side all the way down to the one’s who barely made it there, hitchhiking with their sleeping bags. All come from every walk of “modern man” to regress in a recapitulation of ancient, pagan worship in the most basic definition of idolatry possible. Having grown into an international phenomenon, here is the truth about how far “modern man” has progressed—to nowhere at all.

*<sup>11</sup>Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb and he spoke as a dragon. <sup>12</sup>He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. <sup>13</sup>He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. <sup>14</sup>And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. <sup>15</sup>And it was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast would even speak and cause as many*

“Will We Ignore the Literal?”, Page 3 of 6

*as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. <sup>16</sup>And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead, <sup>17</sup>and he provides that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. <sup>18</sup>Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six. — Revelation 13:11-18*

**None** of these things has to experience a technological substitute; **none** of these things needs a modern equivalent so as to deceive the science-educated modern man; **none** of these things needs anything but a literal and plain fulfillment **exactly** as specified in God's Word. Events such as Burning Man are proof of that. Cults like "Heaven's Gate" with their Star Trek approach to mass suicide are proof of that. The addiction for the supernatural fed by both the Internet and mass media attest to how modern man will so easily and willingly embrace the Antichrist and False Prophet without **any** technological aid whatsoever. Man has not "evolved" from his ancient spiritual roots at all. The deception will not succeed because of Bitcoin or AI or the Internet, but because he is the same fallen creature he has always been **in spite of** technology.

My brief point is that while it may be natural for non-believers to be deceived into believing technology will be leveraged in apocalyptic scenarios so that they cannot recognize what is actually taking place, the born-again are supposed to automatically distinguish the literal from the figurative, the plain text fulfillment of God's Word from superimposed suppositions. We are supposed to have learned the right lesson from the First Coming and fully expect each and every prophecy in the Second Coming to yet again literally take place. We are not supposed to embrace the substitutes so as to once again go from, "He'll be born in Bethlehem" to "No one knows!"

But how do I know for sure that we are repeating that very same mistake yet again?

*"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*

Those who truly understand that which God has prophetically revealed through the foundational revelations to Daniel will "*lead the many to righteousness*". In other words, the right response to witnessing the fulfillment of God's prophetic Word in our time is to be practitioners of His whole world so as to be spiritually changed according to God's Word.

"Will We Ignore the Literal?", Page 4 of 6

*<sup>8</sup>You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. <sup>9</sup>Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door. — James 5:8-9*

According to James, the right response in the immediate shadow of the realization of the nearness of Christ's return is to behave and live like Christians should.

*<sup>4</sup>But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; <sup>5</sup>for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; <sup>6</sup>so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. <sup>7</sup>For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. <sup>8</sup>But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. — 1 Thessalonians 5:4-8*

According to Paul, those not living in ignorance of what is about to take place are not just characterized as “alert and sober”, but engaged in the pursuit of faith, love and “the hope of salvation”.

Peter's parallel message is particularly relevant for us at present:

*<sup>14</sup>Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, <sup>15</sup>and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, <sup>16</sup>as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. <sup>17</sup>You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, <sup>18</sup>but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. — 2 Peter 3:14–18*

The point is that **all** of God's prophetic Word is accompanied by the expectations for the appropriate spiritual response by His people, that they will not only await its plain and literal fulfillment where the milestone events of the Last Days are concerned, but will personally conduct their lives even more passionately according to the standards of His Word and ways.

If all of the websites, blogs, authors and speakers devoted to their regular prophecy updates truly believed we are living in the shadow of our Savior's return, all efforts would be directed at discipleship and the putting of God's Word into practice so as to be found

“Will We Ignore the Literal?”, Page 5 of 6

“dressed and ready” upon the Master’s return. Instead of trying to justify another weekly prophecy update through yet another spurious connection to the latest trend in technology, the primary concern would be validating that belief by doing everything possible to engender personal faithfulness to God’s Word in our own behavior. Otherwise, we will find ourselves just as ill-prepared and far afield from understanding the plain truth of Scripture as in the First Coming.

Discipleship and faithfulness to God’s Word and ways is ***always*** important, but in the End Times, it is a matter of life and death. If we are not literally applying God’s Word to our life at present, neither will we be able to accept its literal fulfillment in the very near future. For in just the past 30 years of our own time, far too many have transitioned from championing the plain fulfillment of God’s prophetic Word, to alternate interpretations for the very same things which amount to, “no one knows”.

In Him,

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