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Our Present Age

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the final "this generation" that Jesus spoke of

Christians At War Time To Arm Up?

THERE IS AN AIR of darkness hovering over the thoughts causing many to think that maybe, maybe we need to think about arming ourselves, not just for protection, but for war. War against the corrupt government. War against an Islamic invasion from within. War against the one called the Antichrist. Since this past year has found me engaged in frequent discussions concerning this topic, I thought it good to share a few thoughts.

REVELATION 13:10

Let's start with Revelation 13:10 which tells us that "he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword."

Jesus' statement came after describing a new world order that would rise up, described in Revelation 13:1-10 as a beast. This beast government will make war with God's people.ⁱ A war implies that God's people are also fighting back. As we will see in later paragraphs God's people are called to fight, but not using the physical weapons that worldly governments use. During this time when the Antichrist, who is in charge of the new world order, wars against God's people, he is given power to "overcome" them; to kill all who come against him with the weapons of this world.ⁱⁱ Because he is given power to defeat those who oppose him, any physical effort taken to resist him will be ineffective. He has the power and authority to kill one fourth of the world's population.ⁱⁱⁱ

Because of this power to overcome God's people, any who arm themselves to come against him will be overcome by him: prison, death, loss of possessions.

Taking up arms against the Antichrist is not the Biblical way, even as it was in the days of the oppressive, tyrannical Roman government when Jesus told Peter to, "put up again your sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."^{iv} Jesus taught that God's people fight against the evil in the world in a whole different way when he went on to state, "Think not that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?"^v Why didn't he then? Because he understood God's will, and to take things into his own hands would have put him outside of God's will. If Jesus had stepped outside of God's will, God would have departed from him.^{vi}

Jesus is clear that how we engage warfare is different than how the world engages warfare. Jesus is also clear that how you engage is a choice. That's an obvious statement, isn't it? The problem is even the majority claiming the name of Christ doesn't see the reality for engaging warfare unless the weapons and means they can see and touch are used. When you are not able to see the reality or practicality of engaging the warfare as Jesus did, you will not be able to make the choice to engage the war as Jesus did.

Let me interject that there is a difference between engaging in militia style warfare and defending our home. Luke 11:21 encourages defending your home and family: "For when a strong man is fully armed and guards his palace, his possessions are safe." Self-defense is one thing. Taking up arms against an oppressive government is something entirely different, especially in these final years of earth's history.

As much as we don't like considering it in this way, governments are ultimately raised to power and removed from power by God.^{vii} He uses the heathen nations and their militaries to accomplish His will, but it is God who determines the course of nations and its leadership.

Because all nations and their leadership are ordained by God, we are to submit to our governments as if we are submitting to God's will for our nation, because we are.^{viii}

If we resist, even an oppressive cruel government, we will suffer the consequences (prison, death, loss of possessions): "Whosoever therefore resists the power, resists the ordinance of God: and *they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.*"^{ix} To resist and rebel is the same as if we resisted and rebelled against God.

There are times when we need to resist and rebel. That time is when the government makes laws that remove our freedom to obey God. There are many laws where we do not need to resist the government, even though they are against God's laws. These laws include sex before marriage, pornography, drunkenness, smoking marijuana, abortion, and similar laws that give a person the choice to participate or not to participate. The laws we are to resist are those that infringe on our ability to obey God and gives us no choice to obey or not to obey Him, such as laws against public preaching, who we are to worship and pray to, what moral standards we are to embrace, and the choice to receive a mark/vaccine to buy or sell. During these times we need to obey God and not governmental laws.^x Nowhere in Scripture is there precedence for taking up arms when an oppressive government restricts and persecutes God's people. The sword/weapon we are to use is God's word.^{xi}

It's good to keep in mind that when the Apostle Paul wrote Romans 13:1-6, encouraging submission to the government, he was in prison, submitting, not resisting, bringing the good news of Jesus to the prisoners. Even though Paul was arrested for obeying God's law above man's, he did not resist or encourage resistance with swords, but submitted to the authorities which meant going to prison and at a later date would mean his death.^{xii}

TWO PHASES OF WAR

The final physical war against God's people has two phases. Phase I is when the Antichrist overcomes God's people. Phase II is when God's people overcome the Antichrist.

LET'S LOOK AT PHASE I

Scripture records that the one called the Antichrist will control the entire world through economic mandates. He will enforce his mandates against resisters using war and death. The majority of his resisters will be Jews and Christians. He will go after them with a vengeance, seeking to take "no man alive." It is in this phase that many will "take up the sword," but to no avail.

All this war and violence will cause famines throughout the nations, the global economy to enter hyperinflation, and the removal of the middle class leaving only the super rich and the super poor.^{xiii} The result of all this is more death, with the majority of the one fourth of earth's population killed entering hell.^{xiv} A large portion of those killed are God's people.^{xv}

In Revelation 12:13-17 we are told the main target of the Antichrist's anger is Israel. It is Israel because it was through her that Christ entered the earth.^{xvi} When the Antichrist comes to power, he will immediately go after Israel; however, God will protect Israel on her own soil.^{xvii} The Antichrist then becomes more furious and will go on a killing spree throughout the entire earth to kill all Jews and Christians not protected by God in Israel.^{xviii}

In Revelation 13 it is again confirmed that the Antichrist goes on a killing spree against God's people and overcomes them wherever they are.^{xix} Eventually all

God's people will be killed before Jesus returns. How he is able to accomplish such a massive, global genocide is through the cashless, global economic system that will be in place.^{xx} Once the cashless economy is in place, you then have one of two choices to make: receive the Antichrist's economic system or be killed. Trust and faith in God demand that we refuse the cashless economy. Concerning our current vaccine, it is too close to this economic Antichrist system and should also be rejected. It appears that the current vaccine is laying a firm foundation for the coming cashless system. In this phase, the Antichrist unleashes a global holocaust more horrible than anything experienced before in history. It will all be made possible through this mandated, global cashless economy.

It is these times of great tribulation, times we are moving quickly toward, that prepares God's people for engagement with the Antichrist and for entering God's eternal kingdom. Through the tribulation fires, the church will wake up and a grand revival of the Holy Spirit will take place within them.

As it is now, the majority claiming to be Christian are not Christian and are not prepared to meet Christ in the clouds. The persecution/great tribulation by the Antichrist prepares God's people to be ready for Christ's return.^{xxi} Unfortunately, the majority will not see the restrictions and persecutions as blessings and beneficial.^{xxii} The majority will not have the Spirit of the early disciples—the Spirit of God—that allowed them to rejoice when thrown in prison, flogged, fed to the lions, nailed to a cross, and many other horrible things. Not having this Spirit, the majority will embrace the economic system of the Antichrist. I would encourage you to read *Foxes Book of Martyrs* and focus on how the Christians responded and not on the horrors they experienced.

LET'S MOVE ON TO PHASE II

As much as we don't like to think of it in this way, all the killing by the Antichrist in Phase I was for the purpose of purifying God's people through the testing of their faith.^{xxiii} The ultimate test of our faith will be in having to choose between the Antichrist's economic system or not

being able to buy or sell. Our faith will be tested through the loss of everything. Our faith will be tested to see if we love not our lives even if it means death.^{xxiv}

It is after God's people go through great tribulation that those without God will be judged by God. Before God pours out His wrath upon the ungodly, judgment first begins with His people, as recorded in 1 Peter 4:17: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" The great tribulation, brought by the Antichrist, is permitted by God to judge all who claim the name of Christian to wake us up.

THE GREAT AWAKENING

After God's people are purified and made white through the great tribulation fire, the remaining remnant will have wakened to the fullness of God's Spirit. This awakening is the great revival I've always heard the denominations talk about, but has yet to take place. Many false prophets/preachers/teachers today are teaching that the great revival will be here before we enter great tribulation; however, the great refining fire of the great tribulation must take place first. This great revival is referred to in Scripture as the pouring out of God's Spirit,^{xxv} doing exploits,^{xxvi} and the two witnesses.^{xxvii} Let's look at the Scriptures concerning these.

JOEL 2:28-32

Joel speaks of a great pouring out of God's Spirit that precedes the return of Christ. This outpouring was partially fulfilled on the day of Pentecost when the disciples received the Holy Spirit.^{xxviii} The second part of its fulfillment takes place after the great tribulation when God's people are fully revived by the Spirit's power (the two witnesses). The final fulfillment takes place when we are in God's eternal kingdom face-to-face with Him. Though partially fulfilled now, there is a lot more coming—a great power-filled revival, as we will see in the next Scripture.

DANIEL 11:32

During the time of the Antichrist, this power-filled revival of the Holy Spirit allows God's reawakened remnant to *do exploits*, to take action with great miracles and deeds against the Antichrist and his system. What these exploits look like are revealed in our next Scripture.

REVELATION 11:3-12

What these exploits look like is revealed in these Scriptures about the two witnesses. These two witnesses are not two people, but are Jews and Christians. You can read my commentary on this truth at www.hope-for-today.com/AOA/articles/articles/aoa-two%20witnesses.htm. The remnant of God's people will now have the power to bring all kinds of judgment upon the earth in the same manner that Elijah and Moses did in their generation: "These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will." What this remnant will be able to do, that Moses and Elijah did not do, is to take immediate death producing action against those who harm them: "And if any man will hurt them, fire proceeds out of their mouth, and devours their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed." I know, not exactly the stuff you hear from the pulpit, but there is a difference between hearing pompous oration and studying the Bible.

PURPOSE OF THE EXPLOITS

After going through the tribulation fire and being revived with Holy Spirit power, the remnant has the mission to execute judgment on the Antichrist's kingdom and to repossess the kingdom for God.^{xxix} Daniel explains this in Daniel 7:18 when he wrote: "But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even for ever and ever."

Keep in mind that the action taken by God's people to "possess" the Antichrist's kingdom is not with guns or bombs or political or social activism. God's people take the same action during this time that Moses, the prophets, and Jesus took: they relied on God's spiritual

armor and the power of His Holy Spirit releasing the miraculous exploits described above with the two witnesses.

Through His people, God releases His judgment upon the Antichrist's kingdom. Historically, after the flood, God's judgments were released through those He appointed, His prophets. In this time of the Antichrist, God appoints His chosen people—you and I, the two witnesses—for the task of bringing down the kingdom of the Antichrist; not with physical arms, but with God's spiritual power.

After God's people (the two witnesses) finish their testimony three and a half years later,^{xxx} the Antichrist is given power to kill the remnant. They will be raised from the dead and then God will unleash His final judgments upon the earth through the vial judgments of Revelation 8:10-11.^{xxxi} He will then establish His earthly kingdom. This earthly kingdom is Jesus' one thousand year rule on earth with His now raptured/gathered people.^{xxxii}

THE DEVIL'S ULTIMATE GOAL

The Devil's end goal, working through the Antichrist, is to steal Christ's inheritance as the eternal king sitting on the throne of David. Whoever sits on David's throne is ruler over all God created. This is described in the covenant God made with David in 2 Samuel 7:11-16.^{xxxiii}

In this covenant God promises David and Israel that the Messiah would be a descendant of David, sit on David's throne, and rule over the household of God for eternity. Whoever sits on David's throne inherits all that God created and rules it all as God.

This is what Lucifer, who became the Devil, is after. When he first rebelled against God his reason was stated clearly when he boasted: "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High."^{xxxiv}

His ultimate goal is to take God's place. To accomplish this he has to establish his palace and throne in David's city (Jerusalem) as recorded in Daniel 11:45: "And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas

in the glorious holy mountain [Zion]; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.”

The holy mountain is referred to as Mt. Zion. The seas refer to the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. In between the Mediterranean and Dead seas are Israel and Jerusalem. Mt. Zion is the highest point in Jerusalem. Jerusalem is also referred to as Zion and the city of David.^{xxxv}

Lucifer’s goal and rebellion took him to the garden where he manipulated Adam and Eve to sin.^{xxxvi} Their sin turned authority of the earth over to the Devil, who now became earth’s god/ruler.^{xxxvii} As earth’s god, he is able to create a world after his own image and move it toward his ultimate goal of stealing Christ’s inheritance.^{xxxviii} That image is one of sin and destruction. Immediately creation began to move from a state of incorruption to corruption and death. Pain, suffering, death, thorns, and briars would now be the norm. After the fall the new spirit of sin and corruption lead the people to sin so great that all people and animals had to be destroyed in order to cleanse the earth of sin. This cleansing came through the flood.

After the flood, the history of our present age began. The Bible records the beginning of our history showing how nations developed out of people groups separated according to their language. The first major empire to develop and rise appeared less than six hundred years after Noah and his family came out of the Ark. This empire was the Babylonian Empire and would begin the development of the Devil’s visible body on earth. Each succeeding recorded empire would also be identified with a body part, identified below:

Babylon	head	Daniel 2:32,37-38
Medes/Persia	shoulders/arms	Daniel 2:32,39
Grecian	torso	Daniel 2:32,39
Roman	legs	Daniel 2:33,40
Great Britain/ United States	mouth	Daniel 7:4;Rev 13:2
Russia	Feet	Daniel 7:5;Rev 13:2
Islam	Body	Daniel 7:6;Rev. 13:2
Global NWO	Ten Toes	Daniel 2:33,41-43;7:7

The Devil’s purpose for developing his body on earth is to create a global government where he is its king through the Antichrist. Once he is in charge, he will establish his palace and throne in Jerusalem, the city of David, and proclaim himself to be God.^{xxxix} He will then war against all of God’s people to completely remove them from the earth. Note that the Devil’s body is almost complete. The ten toed/new world order is the final empire and is now being completed as the final events are now being put in place in our generation, the “this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled” generation that Jesus spoke of. ^{xl}

FINAL THOUGHTS

To answer the question, “To take up or not take up arms?” we need to recognize that the war we’re in really is a spiritual war, fought against enemies we cannot see but that influence the direction the world has taken and is taking.^{xli} Recognizing this spiritual war we also recognize there is much more at stake than whether we have whatever this world offers us, even our necessities and our life.^{xlii} What is at stake is our eternal destiny: heaven or hell. What is at stake is who inherits David’s throne and rules as God: Christ or the Devil.

We already know that the Devil is a defeated enemy, defeated when his last hold over people was conquered—death.^{xliii} Even though he knows he doesn’t have much time left as god of this world, he does all he can to make one last effort to destroy God’s people and sit as God on David’s throne.^{xliv}

Because the real war is not with people we can see, is the reason the prophets, disciples, even Jesus did not take up arms. Their action was not *no action*, as is often perceived by those not understanding the real enemy. To take action using the world’s methods of legislation, education, guns, and bombs does nothing to prevent the direction the Devil is taking us. Since the 1960’s we’ve had more legislation, social activism, more political involvement, more education, more of everything to fight against the social and political ills affecting our world, yet the result has not been the decrease or elimination of our ills, but the increase of these: more abortions, more violence, more immorality, more removal of Christian freedoms; more, more, more of that which is opposite of God is what we get. We forget that Jesus warned us that the world’s ills would not decrease, but greatly increase and there would be nothing we can

do to stop this increase.^{xlv} Our only hope is the return of Christ. Until then, we need to find our hope, our comfort in the peace and comfort God gives through His Holy Spirit.

What then can we do?

Speaking of the days we now live in, Jesus gave the following seven action points:

1. ENDURE (Matthew 24:13): Encouraging us to endure whatever we may go through does not give the hope that we will be removed from the stresses, but that within ourselves—through the Holy Spirit—we will have the strength to endure and suffer whatever we may face. The fact that we are living at this time in history is proof that you are able to endure—you can do it—you can hold on just a little while longer.

2. PREACH THE GOSPEL (Matthew 24:14): Biblical preaching is much more than much of the foolishness that takes place inside the four walls of a denomination. It does not refer to the pompous homilies, discourses that pattern the Greek oratory more than the public announcing or declaration of truth that is Biblical preaching. To preach in our present age is to proclaim publicly the good news Jesus preached to prepare for the coming of God's kingdom. We tend to keep our "preaching," which really is not preaching, confined to those who really don't need it and should be out preaching the good news themselves. Concerning the two witnesses,^{xlvi} I don't see them remaining inside a denomination to preach. Neither do I see the three angels who will preach at the end of the Antichrist's reign entering a denomination to preach God's word. The people who need to hear the good news are those in the public square without Christ. The people who have the good news to preach are those remaining inside four walls sitting on a pew, hearing the word, but not doing the word; not reaching out to those who need to hear the good news Jesus shared.

3. WATCH (Matthew 24:42): We can know when prophecy is being fulfilled by looking at the news. To watch is to pay attention to and observe what is happening in the world so you will not be unaware of how close we are to the arrival of the Antichrist and Christ's return. To watch is also to guard, to protect your righteousness from the dangers we face today. Jesus warned us to guard ourselves against deception, sin, and decreasing love for one another.

4. BE READY (Matthew 24:44): The time to be ready is before a situation, a crises rises up. Jesus taught about

what was coming in our present age so we would be prepared, be ready when troubles come; ready to meet Christ in the clouds. Today is the day to be ready. If you're ready today, you'll be ready for whatever comes tomorrow.

5. PATIENCE & FAITH (Revelation 13:10): Keep holding on just a little while longer. Patience gives you the strength to endure. Patience is put into action by faith. Because you have faith, understanding the eternal rewards that will be given to you, allows you to hold on just a little while longer knowing that when it's all over you will have your eternal reward. Faith gives strength to patience. Patience gives strength to endure. The end to endurance brings you into your eternal reward. Faith is not hoping for something *you want* to happen; faith is hoping for something that is real, but you don't yet have, but you are preparing your life to receive.^{xlvii}

6. OBEDIENCE (Revelation 14:12): No matter how tough things may get. No matter how strong the temptation becomes to give in. We must muster all the patience, faith, and endurance we can muster to keep obedience a nuclear force within us. Our love for God demands our obedience.^{xlviii} Our love for God demands we obey God and not man.^{xlix} Our love for, and obedience to God determines how near God is to us.^l

7. THE ARMOR OF GOD (Ephesians 6:10-18): The Apostle teaches that to be strong in God and to have the power to overcome the Devil, his temptations, and stresses we need to put on the "whole" armor of God. Putting on six out of the seven pieces of armor is not enough. To fight victoriously against our spiritual enemy requires putting on all seven pieces of the armor: truth, righteousness, gospel of peace, faith, salvation, God's word, and prayer.

I'll end this newsletter with these words from the Apostle Paul:

[May you be] Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; Giving thanks unto the Father, which has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.^{li}

Hold on! Don't let go! Hold on!
It won't be long.

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END NOTES

- ⁱ Revelation 13:7
ⁱⁱ Revelation 13:7, 10
ⁱⁱⁱ Revelation 6:8
^{iv} Matthew 26:51-52
^v Matthew 26:53
^{vi} John 8:29
^{vii} Daniel 2:21, 5:21; Job 12:23; Deut. 32:8
^{viii} Romans 13:1-6; Heb. 13:7; 1 Pet. 2:13-14
^{ix} Romans 13:2 Emphasis added.
^x Acts 5:29
^{xi} Psalm 149:5-9; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:16; Ephesians 6:17
^{xii} Tradition records that the Apostle was beheaded in Rome, dying a martyr's death.
^{xiii} Revelation 6:5-6
^{xiv} Revelation 6:7-8
^{xv} Revelation 6:9-10
^{xvi} Revelation 12:13
^{xvii} Revelation 12:14-16
^{xviii} Revelation 12:17
^{xix} Revelation 13:7
^{xx} Revelation 13:15-17; 15:2-3
^{xxi} Malachi 3:2-3; Isaiah 48:10; Job 23:10; James 1:2-4; Romans 5:3-5
^{xxii} James 1:2-5
^{xxiii} Daniel 12:10
^{xxiv} Revelation 12:11; 1 John 2:15-16
^{xxv} Joel 2:28-32
^{xxvi} Daniel 11:32

- ^{xxvii} Revelation 11:3-12
^{xxviii} Acts 2:1-4
^{xxix} Daniel 7:21-22
^{xxx} Revelation 11:3
^{xxxi} Daniel 2:44
^{xxxii} Revelation 20:2
^{xxxiii} See also 1 Chronicles 17:11-14; 2 Chronicles 6:16
^{xxxiv} Isaiah 14:13-14
^{xxxv} 2 Samuel 5:7; 1 Chronicles 11:5; 2 Chronicles 5:2
^{xxxvi} Genesis 3:1-7
^{xxxvii} 2 Corinthians 4:4
^{xxxviii} Christ is to inherit the eternal kingdom that will come through David's descendants. (Psalm 45:6-7; Psalm 89:3-4; Revelation 1:5-6) He is often referred to as the Son of David. (Matthew 1:1; 21:9) As joint heirs with Jesus you and I will inherit with Jesus all that Jesus inherits: Romans 8:15-17 Jesus is heir of all things. (Hebrews 1:1-4)
- ^{xxxix} Daniel 11:45 9:26-27
^{xl} Matthew 24:34
^{xli} Ephesians 6:12; 2 Corinthians 4:4
^{xlii} 1 John 2:16; Matthew 6:24-25; Revelation 12:11
^{xliii} 1 Corinthians 15:24-26
^{xliv} Revelation 12:12-13, 17; Daniel 11:45
^{xlv} Matthew 24:4-12; Revelation 6:1-11
^{xlvi} Revelation 11:3; 14:6-11
^{xlvii} Hebrews 11:1
^{xlviii} John 14:15
^{xliv} 1 Peter 1:14; James 4:8
^l James 4:8
^{li} Colossians 1:11-14