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This Month's Features:

1. Judging Ourselves
2. AMERICA IS (in the Bible)

LOSING OUR WINGS?



Those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, . . .

Isaiah 40:31

Can America still fly like an eagle? We have been looked upon as a beacon of hope and promise throughout the world, but observers have seldom witnessed a presidential election like the one now engaged in, with our national identity so convulsed by a clash of basic truths: washing our laundry out in the public arena. Listening to news reports often pains me to my core, realizing that the persons placed on our ballot for the highest office of our Land now reflect what many consider dysfunctional within America, not its greatness.

While I do believe the GOP nominee's popularity emerges from his willingness to assail "political correctness" and "say it like it is"—it often appeared that rules of decency and decorum have also been emptied from the bath tub, along with the baby.



Let us be ready...



Looking into one corner of the Presidential ring we observe what sometimes appears as a bombastic whistle blower, while in the other we have a leader of organized crime —er, government; so that when someone throws a "winning punch" it distresses me to consider where this boxing match will finally land our country!

Then, while trying to make sense of the knots our nation is tying itself into; those wrestling with political correctness would now forbid us to even discuss the things we know to be true: that both parties are now embracing values that are much less than honorable at the top

(continued . . .)

of the ticket, for example, with one party even refusing to seriously consider the dangers presented by militant Islam.

Clearly, this is not the way for our nation to “soar like an eagle” to the heights of decency and honor! Nor can we honestly deny that our nation’s current humanistic bent towards dependence upon “acceptable” science, as a source of all that is “truth” (while denying the existence of moral truth, altogether)¹—has so confused our populace, that some of our institutions of higher learning have actually started to think of free speech as a *threat* on the college campus, as they pursue a “tolerance” that offends no one (they say).²

So, with college students no longer able to speak freely about issues that honestly concern them, please inform me, *where is the future of this “free republic” called the USA now headed?*

—And, dare I say it? Dare we even approach . . . the religious issues? For political correctness would forbid us to admit that Mohammad resorted to the use of jihad to increase his religious following—thus making it impossible for us to accurately assess the problem now decimating the western world, and particularly the European continent. For, although “Christianity” has at times engaged in similar activities (think: the Inquisition, or the civil war in Ireland)—our religion was not *founded* by a Man of physical warfare, or based upon government overthrow—for He gave *His life* to save us, upon a Cross.

Christ’s teaching, to “love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,” (Matt. 5:44) was painfully demon-

strated for us, as He prayed for those crucifying Him, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they are doing” (Luke 23:34)!

And neither do we. For we are often guilty of being ignorant, ourselves, not because we *cannot* know the truth, but simply because we fail to confront it, head on.

Last UPLOOK was largely devoted to taking aim at obvious errors in the way many see our future: pointing out that Christians are not guaranteed a free pass from trouble and tribulation within this world. “In this world,” Jesus informs us, “you *shall* have tribulation” (John 16:33)—even *great* tribulation. God always tells it like it is and, therefore, when He also informs us that His returning will only take place after our world has again attempted a “final solution” at Armageddon (Zech. 14:1-3) we know that we can indeed *look up*—for world events are actually pointing towards the redemption of this old tired planet!

In the meanwhile, it is useful to realize that true Christianity is not mindless, and that in order to “fly like an eagle” we must discern what may be chaining us down to spiritual defeat. In other words, we must confront (and correct) our own unholy perspectives in this life [first article]. Then, although we may hate to admit it, we must also carefully assess (in a *non violent way*) the political correctness and misinformation that continues to press in upon us, today—realizing that the present shake out of right-and-wrong will ultimately result in Jesus returning, just as He has promised all along, from the heavens [second article]! Be blessed in Jesus.

†



¹ "Judge not, that you be not judged. ² For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.

Matthew 7:1-2

³¹ For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. ³² But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.

1 Corinthians 11:31, 32

JUDGING OURSELVES ?

I know, judgment (judging) is not a subject we normally talk about while sitting around the camp fire roasting marshmallows in the cool of the evening. Even so, when facing the future, this concept seems to just keep bouncing around in the back of our minds as we observe our nation and world rocking and rolling over the edge of sanity, today. Why do we seem to be teetering on the brink, so often? Why can't we simply get along, as we used to, in America? Is there something wrong at our core? In the news, it seems that there is always some fire raging beneath the surface, and even as we sense ourselves coming closer to God, Himself, we sometimes feel it is a good fire (Lk. 24:32)—other times quite frightening, as we are “cut to the heart” (Acts 2:37). As our society seems to run from God, we may also find ourselves running in our own minds from one fire . . . to another, fighting constantly to put these burning conflicts out, within. This also, I believe, is one reason pundits are often resistant to the whole concept of “something being very wrong” with our nation today. Perish the thought that the American Dream . . . might actually be smoking; somehow flawed, or dangerously maligned. Why, you might think that God, Himself, would not dare topple such an icon.

Even some church leaders seem confused about what is politically correct—within the church, itself. Things are so utterly confusing!

Unless, you are familiar with the Bible.

Several years ago the presidential mantra was sung out, “It’s the economy, stupid!” —as though all we had to do was spend a few more dollars, and everything would be alright. Yet today, as we approach a 20 trillion dollar debt, within a country that seems to have lost its soul, is this our primary necessity?

So, let us go back to the Bible, to the very back (yes, to the Revelation) and look for God’s perspective on the final church era. We will find it located within a list of mini-letters given to indi-

vidual churches, with the last (Laodicea) representing the church age present at the time of Christ’s returning. Christ mentions “fire” within this letter, as a purging influence. And yet, it would seem that the flames may actually be avoided. So, as we read this letter together, perhaps we might ask ourselves, “Why go through the fire, when we can simply open the door?”

¹⁷ *Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'--and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked--* ¹⁸ *I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, . . . As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.* ²⁰ *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.*

Revelation 3:17-20 [emphasis added]

Note with me, if you will, how the this mini-letter closes: with a picture of Jesus standing at “the door” and knocking. Perhaps you (like myself) have heard ministers use this same Bible text to invite us to receive Christ into our hearts—at a Billy Graham Crusade, for example. Yet, this was originally an invitation given *to this church*. As we continue to back our way into the text through this back door, we begin to notice, as well, that the Lord seems to be pleading with us, as if urging us to realize that He is indeed counseling us to do something that will be painful, but truly for our benefit. For He says, “as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten”—obviously, God does believe in corporal punishment, and He is much concerned with our attitude towards it!

In fact, the writer to the Hebrews echoes the same quote, as it originates from within the book of Proverbs. There, Solomon reminded Jewish believers that “whom the Lord loves, He chastens”—just like a son whom He loves (Heb. 12:6, Prov. 3:12). So then, this “spanking” is for failing to see the need to be clothed with righteousness (Rev. 3:18)? Not exactly, it actually goes deeper, and this is where we begin to discover a serious truth that can save each of us a lot of trouble in life, if we are willing to repent—before we have to be judged(!).

So, now we are ready to begin answering our earlier question, before proceeding. If Jesus is “standing at the door” and knocking—why does He first advise us to buy “gold tried in the fire”—which represents trial and tribulation (1 Peter 1:6,7)? Why cannot we simply open the door, and repent?

(Continued on page 7)



AMERICA IS

IN THE BIBLE

⁴ *The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it.*

Daniel 7:4

We are entering an age of global governance, global socialization, and a time that will be dominated by a humanist mindset. Within this world, man becomes the measure of all things, not only within Communist China (and a revived Russia) but also within the West, and within these United States. This is the “new America” with a government of the people, by the people, and without God’s help (they think).

Historically we have not thought of America in this way because at our founding we were very much like that eagle inscribed on our dollar bills: noble, uplifted on wings of faith and zeal, and starting to soar upon the winds of heaven to new heights (even to the moon!). How unlike the mere “lion” was our nation, at its inception and in our beginnings. For that lion is the national symbol of Great Britain: old, crusty, and behind the times . . . at least, it lagged behind the curve that America was then launching into, within her new dream.

Yes, the lion is yet the national symbol of Great Britain, and England once had a famous colony—whose symbol is the noble eagle, flying

as a beacon of freedom (especially religious freedom, in our founding) to new heights. For “they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount with wings as eagles. . . .” (Is. 40:31).

But now, we are becoming humanized: the lion with eagle’s wings now starting to “stand on two feet as a man” —hands on hips, walking with a swagger, as our wings are spiritually “plucked” — with head high against the heavens in defiance; feeling more like the rest of humankind around the world; reuniting with our brothers, we think.

Yes, such is more fitting for us within this twenty-first century. Our public schools, and public square will no longer suffer dissent or dissenting opinions on science and technology: no longer make allowance for those who discover evidences of intelligent design, nor air dissenting opinions concerning climate change, or even . . . moral views that favor a more common approach to life and “common sense.” We will not even question whether, say, a man should be allowed to enter a woman’s bathroom because on this particular morning he awoke with the feeling that his “feminine side” was more active, and so, he should now be allowed entrance into the woman’s private stalls (until his “male side” kicks in, again) . . .

This is what the prophet saw, when seeing the projection of the end of our age: of the lion first flying with an eagle’s wings (then having them plucked) and then of the Russian bear rising up to devour (next verse). Finally he saw the dominion of the third world, wherein the entire planet would see unprecedented influence exercised by third world countries in both the economic and political spheres.

⁵ *And suddenly another beast, a second, like a*

bear. . . After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

Daniel 7:5-6

Yes, those four wings and four heads, are key to the meaning of its symbolism: denoting common things (like common poultry, or fowl)—experienced in the four corners of the globe, while being given “dominion” within a world that formerly allowed such honors to the more robust giants of our world. So that the day would arrive wherein a “minor” third world country (whose diversity is represented by its multi-colored leopard-like body) might bring a serious charge against a much larger, and more powerful nation, within the world court: eventually being able to wreak havoc upon national and internal affairs (even breaching sovereign borders and political activities) without overt military action. Ah, but we are getting ahead of ourselves. First, the composite picture of how this megalith emerges as one body: within an international federation of states that can effectively re-define human warfare and interaction.

First the megalith, and then its interaction:

. . . I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.² Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. . . .

Revelation 13:1-2 [emphasis added]

We have turned to the “end of the Book” —to the Apocalypse (John’s Revelation) and observed this behemoth having ten horns, but have left out a key ingredient of its geopolitical structuring, that is becoming increasingly evident today: until our closing. For the moment, let us look at the composite structure of this monstrosity, **before citing its interaction.**

Please notice with me the structure of this blasphemous creature. First, let us note that it has seven heads and ten horns with ten crowns . . . but then, against this backdrop (Rev. 17:9-12) the apostle refines his drawing by making use of national symbols—and, what is this? The symbols are identical to those given us earlier by the prophet, Daniel, in reverse order!

First: the body of a leopard
Second: the feet of a bear
Third: the mouth of a lion.

Why this reversal? Perhaps it is because, as Daniel noted, the leopard (third world) has been given *dominion* within this end time assemblage of nations. Never happen, you say? The third world will never be given over-arching control of the world’s economies, or political spectrum? No, perhaps . . . but have you recently examined a stock market port- folio? Ever heard of the BRIC nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China)? How about the disproportionate influence of Muslim nations, today, or . . . ISIS?

No, scratch that last entry. For **Daniel hints at the destiny of that last entity, when giving a more detailed explanation of how these nations interact.** For now, simply note that the “lion” no longer has “wings” within the above description. —A very convenient omission for

American patriots (nothing against patriotism, count me in! However, truth must trump personal allegiance, in this case, don’t you think?) For in this international confederation of nations having a “mouth” within the UN, we may note that within international affairs (and particularly in military matters) it is most certainly dominated more by that “wingless lion” (i.e. the USA—Britain’s most famous, former, colony). Whose wings have been (are being) plucked away within the USA, by our humanist inclinations.

Note, that this wingless lion has *not* lost her underlying identity: we yet remain the United States of America, even today. Further, the “mouth of the lion” still roars (less loudly, perhaps??) by way of international communications links and . . . Holly-

wood, do you think? Who, anywhere in the civilized world, is not influenced by American communications, today? I say, a bulls- eye (again) for Bible prophecy. America maintains her dominance as the communications capital of the world . . . and more. She is becoming the “mouth piece” of modern globalism. Back to the prophet Daniel, for the “mechanics” of this living megalith.

⁷ *After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.*

Daniel 7:7 [emphasis added]

Please note that Daniel, himself, says that the composite picture of the creatures he has earlier described, also possesses “ten horns”—exactly as is described in Revelation thirteen (vs. 1). Our interest in quoting from above, however, is primarily to call attention to the *interaction* of

**America maintains
her dominance as
the
communications
capital of the world**

this federation of nations, as is described by the prophet.

Please note that from Daniel's perspective, the creature is described top down: first the US (in the head, with its "iron teeth") and finally, in conclusion, he describes its feet: Russia . . . in a mop up operation "trampling the residue" of what is left over, within the Tribulation (further into John's prophecy, in chapter 18). Why include this appendage that describes the interaction of these nations? It is because, at the outset, the US is leading the military operations (with its "iron teeth")—but at the close, and in the final demise of the global federation, Russia is mopping up.

You will probably not find this analysis in any mainstream periodical. If you wish to follow its logical conclusion, therefore, I must counsel the reader to simply continue reading . . . your newspaper. And it is at this point that we must pay attention to another warning within Scripture regarding the end times, just before Christ returns. In this analysis I ask the reader to put aside the common "religious" reasoning that would deny that hard times are coming, and simply consider the Scriptures in the light of day.

In every case where Jesus forecast end time events, His statements were preceded by a warning against deception (Matt. 24:4, Mark 13:5, Luke 21:8). The apostle Paul, as well, warned, concerning the end of the age, that:

⁹ *The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,*
¹⁰ *and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*

2 Thessalonians 2:9-10

Pretty heady stuff, especially when considering a particularly chilling warning given by Christ in Matthew's gospel concerning the danger of persons being able to perform mi-

raculous signs . . . and still be damned (Matt. 7:22,23)! This does not mean that miracles are evil, in and of themselves. The apostle Paul makes this clear by saying that these are *lying* wonders having an *unrighteous deception* (in the text above)—but, within a day of political correctness, wherein the most obvious evils are forbidden to even be spoken against (as say, in the matter of homosexual practices, clearly condemned in Scripture—Romans 1:26-28, 1 Cor. 6:9-11) one can begin to sense the particular danger of living in a time such as our own.

Consider this: level headed persons are constantly pointing out the

How do we defeat the Darkness? . . . with the Light!

necessity of *identifying* the enemy—when terror strikes, for example; chiding our President for resisting the moniker "Islamic terrorism."

"How can we fight an enemy we cannot identify?" they ask.

Yet the same is true within the spiritual realm. How can Christians resist a sin that is forbidden to be spoken against ("gay" activities, aka homosexuality)? No, we do *not* hate the homosexual, any more than we hate liars, adulterers, or cheats—Jesus offers salvation and forgiveness to all, but it is *forgiveness* that is being offered, not "inclusion" of their sin into our canon of righteousness!

Thus, in a very small way, we have already identified a pressing issue and a danger that *already confronts us* as we face the continued unfolding of Bible prophecy: the

tendency to hide our heads in the sand, and to close our eyes, from the Bible's obvious fulfillment—even as the Mack truck of divine judgment begins rolling into our intersection of time and eternity: continuing to flatten all who would ignore it.

The phrase that was omitted, earlier, from the tail of our earlier quotation of Revelation 13:2 actually defines the power source behind the final global empire of Antichrist. It is this, Scripture states that, "*the dragon gave [the beast] his power, his throne, and great authority.*" You know who the dragon is (it is the devil—Rev. 20:2) and whether you believe he exists or not, we can most certainly sense his influence around us, today, with ever increasing ferocity.

How do we fight such overwhelming force, today? How can we defeat the Darkness? Why, of course, you know the answer already: with the Light!

We defeat lies with the truth, and darkness with Light. As the apostle Paul says so succinctly in his summary of the end times:

And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

2 Thessalonians 2:8

Yet to defeat the darkness *today*, we must first open up our hearts to His light *now*: so that when He returns, we may shine with Him.

Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

Revelation 1:7

Arise and shine with Jesus, and be blessed forever more!

(Continued from page 3)

=Judging ourselves=

Got “a handle” on this question? Look at it this way: we are standing in a house on fire, and through the smoke we hear a knock at the door. Why go through the fire if, behind us, there is a way of escaping through the door?

WHY GO THROUGH THE FIRE, IF WE CAN SIMPLY OPEN THE DOOR, AND ESCAPE?

Before we go further, let us avail ourselves of a tool no other book in the world makes available: the systematic nature of the Bible. For although composed by many writers, there is one Author. Therefore, Christians can take this amazing Book and utilize it as its very own commentary (to explain its deepest passages and secrets). Let us now take firm hold of this concept of Christ standing at the door of the church at the end of this age; just as we are about to see Him returning in the sky.

Got the picture?

OK. Now, we are going to turn to another statement made by Jesus, as recorded for us by Dr. Luke (the writer of Luke’s gospel). Remember, we have been reading a letter written to the very last church era; awaiting Christ’s returning. Something is dreadfully wrong inside this church, and the Lord is about to prescribe some very serious medicine for the cure of her malady. Please observe Jesus’ advice to followers finding themselves in a similar situation—projecting into the future, into our generation, at the very end of the age (you may check the context, in vss. 37-40):

³⁵ *“Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; ³⁶ and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wed-*

ding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately.”

Luke 12:35-36

Ah-hah! So that “door” through which Christ is knocking, is on the other side of the fire (in the front of the house)!

Might we have gotten to that door, before the fire started, perhaps?

EARLIER in our discussion, we had just been returning to the “living room” within Christ’s letter to this final church age, and as we headed towards the “front door we were confronted by Christ’s appraisal of this church era: as having a half-baked Christianity.

“These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: ¹⁵ I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. ¹⁶ So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

Revelation 3:14-16

James, the Lord’s half-brother, notes a similar problem in his epistle to believers. A divided heart leads to spiritual adultery (James 4:1-4). Really?!

Do you remember *where* it was that Luke said Jesus is coming from, when about to “knock on the door” at His returning? It is as one from a wedding. Christ is returning *for His Bride*, and she is not yet ready! Her heart is divided: living for this world (and, increasingly, for the devil himself) while proclaiming her love for the Lord.

How can a Bridegroom receive such a Bride (Eph. 5:25-27)? Surely, there must be a change. No wonder He advises us to buy “gold tried in the fire”—so that we may have a

heart of gold when He returns to meet us! Next question: is there a way to become “fire proof” so that we are not consumed within the fires of trial and testing that confront us?

Thought you would never ask.

In fact, it is only as we voluntarily “judge ourselves” Scripture informs us, that we will not be judged with the world (1 Cor. 11:32—opening text)! Yes, it is true, acknowledging that “our house is on fire” (for pending judgment) is a difficult and humbling experience. For even within the political realm, there are many refusing to admit that our nation is in trouble. They too, now cry out, “We are rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing” (with a \$20 trillion + national debt)!!

Yet although nations rise and fall, institutions wax and wane; for those who know the Lord of Heaven and earth, there is an eternal home awaiting the faithful. Christ yet offers all His children rest, and assurance, so that we will not be judged along with this world.

²⁸ *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”*

Matthew 11:28-30

When our heart, and mind, is truly made up to follow Him, Christ will give aid and assistance in “taking the strain” of enduring life’s troubles and trials, and bring us Home

Safely.

What Must I Do?

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved.”

Acts 16:31

How?

... If you will confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

For with the heart man believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Romans 10:9,10

In Other Words

Acknowledge: your need

—as a sinner (Romans 3:23, II Cor. 5:14-15)

Accept: His work on the Cross —to be your Savior

Confess: your acceptance of His lordship over you.

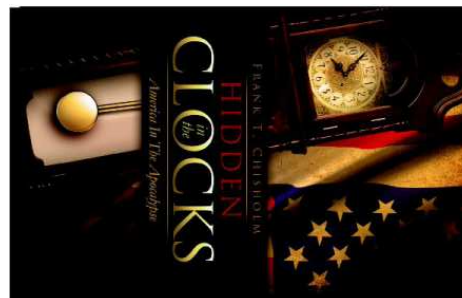
Live for Him: with your new life.

For the scripture says, “Whoever believes on Him will not be ashamed.”

Romans 10:11

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**America, America,
You haven't much Time!**
Hear me read its introduction online @
HiddenInTheClocks.com

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ENDNOTES;

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¹ In other words, scientific research that counters the prevailing politically correct views of the LGBT community (such as a recent report by a PhD & MD at John Hopkins University on human sexuality)—must be dismissed out of hand. This, because the LGBT community has already decided the issue, based on emotional bias. See the report at <<http://www.thenewatlantis.com/publications/number-50-fall-2016>>

² The Glaring Evidence That Free Speech Is Threatened on Campus. The Atlantic Monthly. March 4, 2016. <<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/03/the-glaring-evidence-that-free-speech-is-threatened-on-campus/471825/>> Accessed 8/7/2016.

