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Reading the time on the face of God's clock, Pt3: Drug taking.

As we may look abroad and see the evidences of the passage of the weeks and months of the year in the realm of nature, in the evidence of the physical decline of the human body, not to mention the movement of the hands on our clocks and watches, even so may we look around and note the indications of the passage of time in the lifespan of this world as it is revealed to us in the Bible.

Christian, the Bible is a map by which we find our way to heaven but more than that, it also marks the present position of mankind on the way to the end of the purpose God has for this earth!

Satellite Navigation is not new! Just as I can insert a destination into my Sat Nav and then watch my progress upon its screen as I journey toward my destination, even so I can observe exactly the present position of humanity on its journey toward eternity!

In keeping with the title, the Bible will tell us of the passage of time and the approach of the final hour for this world.

There are given to us in the Bible certain features that will mark the end of this age. These features may be seen in times past, but never to the degree of union and fusion as they will be seen in the last days!

I want to look at some of these features and observe their pre-eminence in the affairs of today, from the nations afar off to our own doorsteps. I think that as we look at these increasingly predominant elements of life today we will see that one is linked to another. There is a successive springing forth and developing out of each other. One wickedness gives birth to another of greater depravity!

As I take up the subject of that which is yet another feature of the last days breaking forth before our eyes, may I commend a sermon preached upon the subject by Rev Andy Foster, minister of Penticton Free Presbyterian Church in Canada. I commend it to all our readers. **Click here** to listen.

1. THE REFERENCE TO DRUGS AND THEIR WIDESPREAD USE IN THE LAST DAYS MAY BE SEEN IN REVELATION 9:21 AND 18:23.

"Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts."

"And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived."

The word 'sorceries' in these two verses is a translation of the Greek word: 'pharmakeia'. It is also translated as 'witchcraft' in Galatians 5:20. There it is listed as one of the works (employment, activities) of the flesh.

Both words, 'sorceries', and 'witchcraft' quite obviously refer to satanic, devilish activity. It is commonly believed that the word 'pharmakeia' means 'enchantment with drugs'!

We are told in many places that the devil will engage himself in the affairs of mankind in the last days of this age to a degree which before he was not permitted. We must never think of the devil as 'a free agent', able to do as he wishes! He is subject to the sovereign control of the Lord. All that he does is most wonderfully superintended by the Lord to accomplish, not the desired outcome of the devil, but rather the supreme will of the God of Heaven and Earth.

Nothing demonstrates this for us like the wonderful events surrounding Calvary.

"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles



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and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it," Acts 2:22-24.

Another example of God's supreme jurisdiction over all things is seen in Genesis 45:44-8; 50:18-20.

"And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt."

"And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants. And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive."

As Psalm 78:10 states: "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." It is thus that God, in His supremacy causes all things to "work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," Romans 8:28.

Let these truths, which are oft set forth in the Bible, comfort us amidst the evil activities that daily increase before our eyes and which we know can be traced to the persuasions and nurturings of the devil.

In the verses we have in Revelation, in which we find this word 'pharmakeia', we are told by the Lord how it is that the devil will further his evil purpose amongst men in the final days. It is, as the word 'pharmakeia' means, by 'the administering and use of drugs'!

INCREASE

I need not tell you that in the last 100 years there has been a phenomenal increase in the abusive use of what are called 'recreational drugs'! They are so called because they serve to provide 'pleasure' to the user. Perhaps I should say 'the appearance of pleasure' for one has only to consider the ravages wrought upon the bodies and minds of those who become 'hooked' upon their use, to see that the drugs which have become common, in modern times, have the same deceitful effect, but to a greater degree as that of a still commonly used though much older drug: alcohol!

"Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder," Proverbs 23:29-32.

What a sting the modern drug has! The 'pleasures' such drugs induce are seen to be anything but pleasurable, as is portrayed in the appearance and the activities of those who are their gullible 'devotees'!

Revelation 9 depicts scenes during that period known as 'the great tribulation'. Chapter 8:1 tells us that this period is to take place following the opening of the seventh and last seal. The time of the seventh seal is composed of seven smaller periods, the beginning of each one being signalled by the sounding of a trumpet.

Chapter 9, verse 1 indicates that at the sounding of the 5th trumpet the powers of "the bottomless pit" are released. It is a terrible time for those men who have not "the seal of God in their foreheads", verse 4. Verse 6 tells us just how terrible for the ungodly will be those days. "And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them".



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The children of God will be spared of course from such torments. They will have the seal of God upon their foreheads.

"And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads," Revelation 7:2-3.

The verse we are looking at, verse 21 of chapter 9, is speaking of the time following the sounding of the sixth trumpet, the one before 'the last trump', the seventh being the one that signals the actual return of Christ. It is that period that covers the three and half years before the appearance of the Lord Jesus in His glory and power.

The judgments of God are being poured out upon the kingdom of Antichrist. These are recorded for us in chapters 8 and 9 of Revelation. Unregenerate man's response to these dreadful afflictions is recorded for us in 9:20-21.

"And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts."

2. PLEASE NOTE THE FIRST SIN MENTIONED - THE WORSHIPPING OF DEVILS.

That is something we see increasing all around us today. Please remember, all false religion is in fact 'devil worship'! "What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils," 1 Corinthians 10:19-20.

Such worship of the devil will be carried on especially during the time of Antichrist's exaltation, the last three and a half years of this dispensation. "For that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God," 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4. "And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" Revelation 13:4.

A 'golden cup' is mentioned in Revelation 17:5 as being in the hand of the woman upon whose forehead there appears " . . . a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

A woman, in Holy Scripture, is the symbol of a moral system. I think I need refer only to the Church of Jesus Christ, that system of truth and righteousness established by Christ, for it is commonly likened unto a woman. "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" Song of Solomon 6:10. "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife," Revelation 21:9.

Here are but two of the many examples of the Church of Christ being likened to a woman.

But in Revelation 17 we have an evil 'woman', however, and she depicts the religious amalgam of false religions and renegade 'Christendom' which will develop to its fullness in the last days and which is already taking shape under the term: 'Ecumenism'!

This woman appears at a time before the revealing of the Antichrist in his full power. He is the 'beast' referred to in verse 3 of Revelation 17. "So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a



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woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns."

The woman is dominant at this stage. The Beast carries her and she exercises a controlling influence as does any rider upon a beast, verse 7. She 'sits' on the horns on the head of the Beast, verse 9. The Beast is described as having "seven heads and ten horns." I believe the 'seven heads' refer to the various spheres of full governmental power, seven being the number of fullness.

The 'ten horns' refer to the ten kings of the territories covered by the old Roman Empire (see Daniel 7:7), who have sworn allegiance to the Antichrist and submitted themselves to him so that they and their armies have become his instruments by which he puts forth his power, just as does a animal endued with horns!

The fact that the 'woman' sits upon the beast with the ten horns indicates that he has not yet reached the zenith of his powers in the scene depicted in Revelation chapter 17. We have to turn back to chapter 13 to see the Antichrist at the height of his power.

Please remember that the book of the Revelation is not written chronologically and therefore we must carefully compare scripture with scripture to avoid forming false views of what Scripture is teaching us.

In Chapter 13, verse 1 we read: "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy." There is no 'woman' but where she rode there are now 'ten crowns'! He has come to a position of supreme power in the ten kingdoms. Please note that he will thus remain for only a short time. "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months," verse 5. He is 'allowed' by God to reign for only 42 months or 1260 days or 'time, times and half a time'. These are the terms so often employed to designate the last three and a half years of this age.

The extent of his power is referred to in verses 16 and 17. "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name."

This is power indeed! It especially refers to commercial trade. It will be entirely under his control. Governments find it most difficult to control their merchants! Leading the rebellion in today's great debate here in the UK, against leaving of the EU, are the merchants. They fear that their profit-making will be curtailed by 'Brexit'!

So then how will the Antichrist exert such power over buyer and seller alike? This is where I believe that 'drugs' will play a part!

Look again at Revelation 18:23. "And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived."

Note the words: "thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived." The 'sorceries', or 'enchantment with drugs', are linked with the 'merchants'. The word refers to those who 'travelled in trade'. They are not your corner shop owners but the 'Tzars of trade', the heads of multi-national commercial organisations who, today, are in truth equal in power to prime ministers etc! Trade is KING today and it will be even more so in the days of Antichrist.

LEGALISED DRUGS

But note that these 'merchants' are linked to the drug trade by which 'all nations were deceived'! Drugs, presently illegal will be legalised under Antichrist!

Such a trend is already seen to be developing. The growing and use of marijuana have been legalised since October 2018 in Canada. Canada is one of the most 'liberal' of the western democracies and is under the



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leadership of a 'libertine', one Justin Trudeau.

However, across the world there has been a relaxing of the laws prohibiting the use of drugs and innumerable campaigns are vigorously pursuing a lifting of all bans on their use where the law curtails it. There is just such a campaign running in the United Kingdom. So-called 'celebrities', politicians and experts have backed calls to decriminalise the booming cannabis industry here in the UK. One news report, dated 11th October 2018 states: "The All Party Parliamentary Group on Drug Policy Reform says tens of thousands of people in UK already break the law to use cannabis for symptom relief. The issue was debated on October 12, 2015, and closed after the government responded by saying: 'Substantial scientific evidence shows cannabis is a harmful drug that can damage human health.' This week, UK parliament will be debating the issue again, after a proposal that the drug should be partially legalised for medicinal purposes." (The Sun).

Here is one Internet site's published information of the subject of illegal drugs.

"The illegal drug trade or 'drug trafficking' is a global black market dedicated to the cultivation, manufacture, distribution and sale of drugs that are subject to drug prohibition laws. Most jurisdictions prohibit trade, except under license, of many types of drugs through the use of drug prohibition laws. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's World Drug Report 2005 estimates the size of the global illicit drug market at US\$321.6 billion in 2003 alone. With a world GDP of US\$36 trillion in the same year, the illegal drug trade may be estimated as nearly 1% of total global trade. Consumption of illegal drugs is widespread globally and remains very difficult for local authorities to thwart its popularity. . . . The countries of drug production and transit are some of the most affected by the drug trade, though countries receiving the illegally imported substances are also adversely affected. For example, Ecuador has absorbed up to 300, 000 refugees from Colombia who are running from guerrillas, paramilitaries and drug lords. While some applied for asylum, others are still illegal immigrants. The drugs that pass from Colombia through Ecuador to other parts of South America create economic and social problems.

Honduras, through which an estimated 79% of cocaine passes on its way to the United States, has the highest murder rate in the world. According to the International Crisis Group, the most violent regions in Central America, particularly along the Guatemala-Honduras border, are highly correlated with an abundance of drug trafficking activity. . . . Violent crime Jamaican drug lord Christopher Coke being escorted by DEA agents

In many countries, the illegal drug trade is thought to be directly linked to violent crimes such as murder. This is especially true in all developing countries, such as Honduras, but is also an issue for many developed countries worldwide. In the late 1990s in the United States the Federal Bureau of Investigation estimated that 5% of murders were drug-related. In Colombia, Drug violence can be caused by factors such as, the economy, poor governments, and no authority within the law enforcement.

After a crackdown by US and Mexican authorities in the first decade of the 21st century as part of tightened border security in the wake of the September 11 attacks, border violence inside Mexico surged. The Mexican government estimates that 90% of the killings are drug-related.

A report by the UK government's Drug Strategy Unit that was leaked to the press, stated that due to the expensive price of highly addictive drugs heroin and cocaine, drug use was responsible for the great majority of crime, including 85% of shoplifting, 70-80% of burglaries and 54% of robberies. It concluded that '[t]he cost of crime committed to support illegal cocaine and heroin habits amounts to £16 billion a year in the UK' .

Statistics about profits from the drug trade are largely unknown due to its illicit nature. An online report published by the UK Home Office in 2007 estimated the illicit drug market in the UK at £4-6.6 billion a year.

In December 2009 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Executive Director Antonio Maria Costa claimed illegal drug money saved the banking industry from collapse. He claimed he had seen evidence that the proceeds of organised crime were "the only liquid investment capital" available to some banks on the brink



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of collapse during 2008. He said that a majority of the \$352 billion (£216 bn) of drug profits was absorbed into the economic system as a result:

‘In many instances, the money from drugs was the only liquid investment capital. In the second half of 2008, liquidity was the banking system’s main problem and hence liquid capital became an important factor... Inter-bank loans were funded by money that originated from the drugs trade and other illegal activities... there were signs that some banks were rescued that way.’ (**Reference**)

These details, given at length, indicate just how integrated the ‘drugs trade’ has become within the legitimate trade structures of some countries. Indeed, it would be actually difficult to gauge the role played by this evil trade in the legal commercial assets of the likes of the USA, Canada, the UK, France and Germany and many other such countries. It would be more difficult still to eradicate it, given the use of drugs and the marketing of them by powerfully rich men !

However, it is not just ‘illegal’ drugs which are impacting upon the nations. A recent court case in the USA highlights this. During the case, it was alleged that some companies which “distribute and sell the drugs are partly responsible for a crisis that has killed more than 400,000 people across the country since 2000, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That’s including more than 47,000 in both 2017 and last year.” (See the report **here**)

When we consider these often overlooked or ignored facts, we can surely see that ‘the drugs trade’ being legalised and controlled by Antichrist is not ‘a pipe dream’ or something afar off!

3. A COMING ‘MADNESS’

I read in my Bible reading just a day or so ago, these words in Jeremiah 51:7, the great chapter on the final days of the Antichrist as foreshadowed by the fall of Nebuchadnezzar. “Babylon hath been a golden cup in the LORD’S hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad.”

This is the ‘golden cup’ we have already considered as being administered to the nations in the days of Antichrist. Its impact is ‘madness’!

How often has the Christian and those who might not claim to be such themselves, yet remain somewhat separate from the spirit of the day, how often many have exclaimed upon hearing the latest criminal outrage: ‘They are mad’!

As someone who can recall the comparative sobriety and the peace of the 1950s, I can but classify the spirit of this age as utter madness! I attribute this madness to a number of evils:

the introduction of false teaching in the pulpits of the established churches and the consequent driving out of the truth of God from the collective mind and heart of the nation; the widespread teaching of ‘Darwinism’ or ‘Evolution’ within the state school system and its destructive influence upon man’s concept of social behaviour and order, given that God has been ‘banished’ from his thinking as Creator and Lord.

Now, to add to this ‘heady toxic social cocktail’, we have the increasing use of ‘hard’ drugs within society, right down to primary-aged children, and you have pictured for us that which John states graphically, in the last book of the Bible, will come to pass at the close of this age!

The following was reported in one of the UK’s daily newspapers on August 22nd 2019. “A dawn police raid smashed a county lines drug gang that forced 40 kids from one school to deal cannabis and cocaine. The teens, some as young as 14, had been supplied with drugs and dealing kits including deal bags and scales. It is thought that girls as young as 14 at Kingsdown School in Swindon, Wiltshire, were pestered for sex in exchange for cocaine. Police say adult dealers had a network of 40 pupils dealing at the school which has just over 1,200 students in total. This is the equivalent of one dealer per classroom. . . . A pair of older teen



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boys, both 16, are believed to have been supplying a network of up to 40 children in their mid-teens at the Swindon school."

The iniquitous madness is happening before our eyes!

As every tsunami signals its approach by the unusual and errant movement of the waves upon the beach, so the lawlessness and delinquency, so evident today, signals a tidal wave of wickedness, fuelled by drugs, rapidly approaching the shores of the nations.

The kingdoms of the old Roman Empire are those who will feel the full power of this flood of iniquity, presently building up and readying itself to fall with devastation upon the world.

Christians, consider these things and forsake the low ground of carelessness and complacency and rather, wisely seek the higher ground of obedience and fellowship with the Lord Jesus.

"Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD'S anger come upon you. Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger," Zephaniah 2:1-3.

Rev Ivan Foster.

30th August 2019.

To be continued....