



Prophetic Observer

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Keeping Time On God's Prophetic Clock

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Pestilence

by Bob Glaze

With the invention of modern technology that has produced the computer and internet, we have seen a drastic increase in ways to encroach upon our neighbors both foreign and domestic. The supercomputers have exponentially increased ways to expedite them into the information highway with the speed of electricity. Since the inception of modern warfare, new ways to subvert and overcome the enemy have produced knowledge that will double every 12 months and is predicted to increase even faster. According to the DigitalJournal.com, knowledge is predicted to eventually double every single day. Is this increase of knowledge a sign of the end of days, as noted in Daniel 12:4: "But thou Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

Many countries are involved in a new cold war that is focused on subverting the opposing governments into chaos and confusion. China is one of the main culprits in this endeavor. As recent as 2017, China attacked Equifax which exposed data on 145 million Americans by giving their Social Security numbers and driver's license numbers. It was called "the largest known theft of personal identification information ever carried out by state sponsored actors (www.theepochtimes.com). Prior to this, the FBI published a wanted poster on February 19, 2017, for four Chinese military-backed hackers for their role in the cyberattack. Prior to that incident, on May 19, 2014, five Chinese military hackers were exposed for crimes committed between 2006 and 2014.

Perhaps the greatest threat to the world is the coronavirus which originated from Wuhan, China. Wuhan is a city of several million and is small compared to cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, or Chongqing, but has become the center of attention in the last few months. The coronavirus can be spread through body fluids when one human comes into contact with another human through droplets from coughing or sneezing.



Although there are several viruses within the corona family, the most dangerous is the one that is spread from animals to humans. The coronavirus comes in many different flavors such as SARS (Sudden Acute Respiratory Syndrome) in 2003, which was transmitted from bats to humans. In 2012, another coronavirus occurred in the Middle East—MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome). Just what is the coronavirus?

According to the World Health Organization (WHO):

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV). A novel coronavirus (nCoV) is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans. ... Common signs of infection include respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath, and breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure, and even death. ... Standard recommendations to prevent infection spread include regular hand washing, covering mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing, thoroughly cooking meat and eggs. Avoid close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing.

The real question is since nCoV is a new unidentified coronavirus, is it a man-made derivation of the natural virus? Could nCoV be produced for biological warfare? What countries have the ability to store such weapons? According to information given on biological warfare, there are 17 countries mentioned on www.emedicinehealth.com. The history of biological warfare consists of Scythian archers who dipped their arrows in decomposing bodies; dead animals and humans

cast in wells to contaminate the water; firing earthen vessels full of poison snakes into enemy ships; British forces given smallpox infected blankets to Indians; anthrax, cholera, and wheat fungus that was used on opposing forces.

The Geneva Protocol of 1925 was signed by 108 nations to outlaw biological warfare, but there was no method of verification addressed. In 1942, the United States War Department investigated the use of bioweapons as a force against the United States and tested again in 1966. In 1979, anthrax was accidentally released from a weapons facility in Russia that killed 66 people. Although there have been many accidental releases, the next release will more than likely be a bioterrorist act.

When utilized for good, the latest tools can work wonders. However—as with most cutting-edge technology—there is always the potential for misuse.

A gene editing technology called CRISPR has set off alarm bells in the defense community; the technology allows researchers to edit genomes, thereby easily modifying DNA sequences to alter gene function.

In the right hands, this tool has the potential to correct genetic defects and treat disease. In the wrong hands, however, it has the potential for evil.

CRISPR technology is becoming cheaper to run and therefore more accessible to individuals bent on bioterrorism.

—www.medicalnewstoday.com

So, who is most likely to be the culprit to release such wanton death? Certainly, the United States is the most likely target, and we have many enemies that would like us to be decimated.

Matthew 24:7 has been the most referred to Scripture in the Bible to reflect this scenario, “For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places.” These are judgments that immediately lead into the Tribulation period. It is like the lightning of a storm seen just before the sound of thunder. This prophecy may be realized in the fourth seal of Revelation 6: “And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword, and with hunger and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.”

Up until now, the greatest catastrophe to ever hit the earth was from 1347 to 1351. It took only four years to cause from 75 to 200 million people to die from the Black Plague. In that period, the only forms of transportation were by animal or ship. Today the Pacific and Atlantic oceans can be crossed in a matter of hours and the infection would be transported just as quickly. Scientists are now predicting a pandemic could be

full-blown in a matter of weeks.

The lists of infected countries grows each day and will soon encompass the globe. Countries with poor medical facilities and access to medications will be the hardest hit. The elderly and infirmed will be the first to succumb to this virus. China’s 1.5 billion does not have the facilities to treat even a small percentage of its people. According to the *New York Post*, Wuhan, China, the epicenter of the virus, has a population of about 12 million and has reported that half of its population fled before the lockdown. That means that almost 6 million people could possibly be spreading the virus.

According to YouTube, drone footage reveals that Wuhan is a ghost city. “China has flooded cities and villages with battalions of neighborhood busybodies, uniformed volunteers, and Communist Party representatives to carry out one of the biggest social control campaigns in history.”

According to nytimes.com, “Despite their high-tech tools, the authorities are mainly relying on a flood of workers to keep hundreds of millions of people from coming in contact with outsiders.”

There are those critics of China who are saying the communist government deliberately released the virus to destroy the U.S. stock market in retaliation for President Trump’s trade practices. Others say that the virus was spread (or escaped) from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, a “covert biological weapons programme.” These conspiracies have not been substantiated. The news organizations that released these claims are on washingtontimes.com:

The deadly animal virus epidemic spreading globally may have originated in a Wuhan laboratory linked to China’s covert biological weapons program, according to an Israeli biological warfare expert.

Radio Free Asia this week rebroadcast a local Wuhan television report from 2015 showing China’s most advanced virus research laboratory known the Wuhan Institute of Virology, Radio Free Asia reported.

The laboratory is the only declared site in China capable of working with deadly viruses. ...

Dany Shoham, a former Israeli military intelligence officer who has studied Chinese biowarfare, said the institute is linked to Beijing’s covert biological weapons program.

On Feb. 12, 2020, 38 countries worldwide reported cases of coronavirus. Mainland China reports 77,660 cases confirmed, but that could be only a percentage of the actual cases. The United States had 53 cases; even Israel had one case. The virus spreads with lightning speed. In one day, Wuhan added 14,840 cases.

Is this the type of the dreaded judgment of Revelation 6?

Culture of Death—Part 2

by Pastor Larry Spargimino, Ph.D.

“Suicide Nation”

“Let those who seek death with dignity beware, lest they lose life with dignity in the process.”

—C. Everett Koop, MD

In July of 1999, David Satcher, Surgeon General of the United States, warned that suicide had become one of America’s most pressing public health concerns.

In his 2016 book, *Culture of Death: The Age of “Do Harm” Medicine*, Wesley J. Smith, Senior Fellow at the Discovery Institute’s Center on Human Exceptionalism, reports that suicide is the tenth leading cause of death in the United States, with more than 41,000 reported in 2013. It was during that time that there was a growing, pro-suicide mentality fueled by a burgeoning suicide advocacy. No longer is suicide a cultural taboo. It is now being promoted as a legitimate option for those who have been persuaded that “death with dignity” is better than their current state.

The book *Final Exit* by Derek Humphry, co-founder of the Hemlock Society (renamed Compassion and Choices), was a best-seller when it was first published in 1991. It is still immensely popular with readers all over the world. Smith relates that some groups today sell plastic suicide bags with Velcro sewn around the opening so that it fits snugly around the neck. Smith purchased a suicide bag from an assisted suicide organization for \$32, plus \$10 for “easy-to-use instructions.” Smith writes, “The cheery promotional material that attracted me to the macabre product assured in bold letters that it is ‘Proven effective!’ and that ‘the customized EXIT BAG is made of clear, strong industrial plastic. ’... It is advertised as having ‘a snug and comfortable fit. ...’”

Suicide Popularized and Glamorized

There was a special report in the January 1997 issue of *Ladies Home Journal* on assisted suicide. It consisted of a roundtable discussion with “experts” and family members of people who had been euthanized. Assisted suicide was presented as an attractive option for those with serious illnesses.

In 2005, *Million Dollar Baby*, an American sports drama film directed, co-produced, and scored by Clint Eastwood, opened with widespread acclaim from critics, winning four Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Actress for Hilary Swank. The film chronicles an underappreciated

boxing trainer, Frankie (Clint Eastwood), the mistakes that haunt him from his past, and his quest for atonement by helping an underdog amateur boxer achieve her dream of becoming a professional. Hilary Swank, who plays the role of Maggie, wins a couple of big ones but is clobbered with a sucker punch. She falls hard on a stool, breaking her neck and leaving her a ventilator-dependent quadriplegic. As the days pass, Maggie develops bedsores and undergoes amputation of an infected leg. She asks Frank to help her die, declaring that she got everything she wanted out of life. She has lost the will to live and wants to exit this world. It’s a classic example of “death with dignity.”

Unfortunately, this is based on the dangerous idea that death is the end. According to the Bible, it is not the end. For some, it is the beginning of a most horrible existence from which there is no escape— “where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched” (Mk. 9:44). It’s also based on the dehumanizing idea that human beings are just animals whose value is only based on their ability to function, rather than intrinsic worth as a living soul made in the image of God. Joni Eareckson Tada has been a quadriplegic for some fifty years. She has written 17 books, and has ministered to thousands. She is also an accomplished artist, painting with a brush in her mouth. Dr. Peter Kreeft has captured the truth when he wrote, “The point of this life ... is to become the person God can love perfectly, to satisfy His thirst to love. Being counts more than doing, the singer more than the song. We had better stop looking for escape hatches, for this is our hatchery.”

The latest suicide docudrama is Netflix’s new movie, *Thirteen Reasons Why*, released March 31, 2017. A seventeen-year old, Clay Jensen, returns home one day to find a mysterious box on his porch. Inside he discovers thirteen cassette tapes, recorded by Hannah Baker, his deceased classmate, who killed herself two weeks earlier. On the tapes, Hannah unfolds an intensely emotional audio diary, detailing why she decided to end her life.

Death With Dignity

The phrase “death with dignity” is used to imply that death by suicide is inherently preferable to death by natural causes for those who are living with certain crippling and painful conditions. “Death with dignity” means that the person will be spared from the suffering associated with a terminal illness. Euthanasia proponents say that “death with dignity” allows

the patient the freedom to die and escape the indignity of being dehumanized, and experiencing pain brought about by the application of extraordinary medical efforts at preserving life.

The confusion generated by saying that living your life with cancer, or quadriplegia, or some other crippling health issue is somehow undignified is an indictment of all of those multiplied thousands of people who are living successfully in those situations. It is certainly an indictment of someone like Joni Eareckson Tada who has been an inspiration to millions. Likewise, Nick Vujicic, the Australian Christian evangelist and motivational speaker born with tetra-amelia syndrome, a rare disorder characterized by the absence of arms and legs, proves that life with dignity can be a reality, and an inspiration, despite a serious handicap. Do we want to ignore the courageous examples of these heroines and heroes whose lives remind us that overcoming tragedy and difficulty is one of the greatest examples of being made in the image of God? We are living in the glory of the image of God when we can turn darkness into light and misfortune into an opportunity for inspiration.

And what about those who live in the fear of physical and mental incapacitation? At present, there are advanced health care directives by which a person can make their wishes known before an accident or illness incapacitates them. There are laws in most states that bind doctors and require them to abide by these directives. This is an important consideration because the most common justification cited for supporting death with dignity has not been the pain and suffering involved, but rather the fear of “losing autonomy” and the ability to have a role in their own death (*Duke University Journal of Law and Biosciences*).

Quality Of Life

Within the last twenty or thirty years medical technology has given us high-tech helps to improve a person’s quality of life, even in situations where the person is seriously incapacitated due to an illness or accident. Kidney machines, pacemakers, insulin injections, and medications manage pain and depression and can improve one’s quality of life. Quality of life is a subjective concept. By “quality of life,” do we mean the ability to run, jump, deep-sea dive, or do we mean the ability to sit in a wheelchair, read a book, and perform some useful function that does not require a high degree of physical ability? For a Christian, the ability to speak, witness, read Scripture, have an ongoing prayer ministry, and to assist in a number of ways is a good incentive for staying alive. After all, in the perspective of eternity running, jumping, deep-sea diving, and other activities are really not that important. For senior citizens whose physical abilities have been greatly eclipsed by age, they can still have an important role and place in society.

If quality of life, as conceived in terms of running, jumping, and deep-sea diving is the main factor in determining whether or not one should go on living, then everyone after seventy-five or eighty years of age should be euthanized.

While quality of life should enter into the equation, it really needs to be counterbalanced with the sanctity of human life. Because we have been made in the image of God, every human being has an inherent value, rather than just a functional value. A person created in the image of God may not be able to function very well, but that person still has an inherent value. It has become increasingly obvious that when we abandon a biblical view of human life for a materialist view, our humanity is cheapened. This curse of departing from the Bible hangs over the human race like a dark cloud. If America does not see revival and a return to a biblical theism, there will be such murder and mayhem in our society that life will be unbearable.

Is It Ever Right To Die?

We have all seen death in operation. It is a fact of life. Hebrews 9:27 says, “it is appointed unto men once to die.” The Bible also says, “The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if, by reason of strength, they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away” (Ps. 90:10). Even in the antediluvian period, when life spans were greatly elongated into hundreds and hundreds of years, we read the repeated words “and he died” (see Gen. 5). Yes, it is right to die. Christian ethicist Norman Geisler writes: “Keeping a comatose person alive by a machine, one who has an incurable disease and is irreversibly dying, is unnecessary. In fact, it could be viewed as unethical. ... Extraordinary efforts to fight the divinely-appointed limits of our mortality are really working in opposition to God” (*Christian Ethics*, p. 125).

Because of her quadriplegia and years of wrestling with and praying over this issue, Joni Eareckson Tada’s comments are noteworthy: “The Bible teaches that any means to produce or hasten death in order to alleviate suffering is never justified. ... However, *letting someone die* is another matter entirely. Allowing a person to die when he or she is, in fact, dying is justified” (*When Is It Right To Die?* p. 114).

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