

IT IS TIME TO WAKE UP! : PART 1

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Let me begin this article by stating that I know from the start that some of my online friends who will read this article are probably not going to like or even agree with what I am about to say here. Some of you may possibly even take offense. Well, if that is the case, I am sorry, but I am compelled to say something once again. As the Apostle Paul wrote in his Epistle to the Galatians when he had to deliver a strong word of rebuke to them:

"Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"

Galatians 4:16, KJV

My friends, quite simply, I am very tired of seeing so much nonsense being promoted on the social networks when it comes to the topic of Bible prophecy. My gosh! It is everywhere; and with the recent 2024 U.S. presidential election, the level of nonsensical statements which are being made has

clearly switched into high gear. I have written about this same subject before in articles such as "Facebook False Prophets and Misguided Teachers", a link for which you will find at the end of this same article.

Now, taking a soft approach to this subject, I realize that some of my online friends are probably a lot younger than me age-wise, and perhaps with regard to how long you have known the Lord as well. As a result, maybe you don't have a strong foundation in God's Word yet either. Thus, I can understand why you may be doctrinally confused regarding certain topics which are related to Bible prophecy. I will admit that this is in fact a difficult area to grasp when it comes to Bible study. I am not ashamed to admit that even I still struggle with some parts of it. That is one reason why I wrote the article entitled "Humility in Our Understanding of God's Word", which I encourage you to read.

However, for those of my online friends who are older in both a physical and spiritual sense, and who, like me, have been studying the Scriptures for a very long time, there is really no excuse for promoting so much of this misguided nonsense. You should know better. My friends, you need to stop promoting all of these erroneous interpretations of Bible prophecy and man-made doctrines which deceive God's sheep. You're giving them false hope and false expectations, and in some cases, they may even reach a point where they abandon their Christian faith altogether.

Sadly, some of you seem to have very short memories. If that is the case, allow me to remind you that it was just over a decade ago that some misguided Christians were foolishly claiming that Barak Obama was the Beast -- or the Antichrist -- and that Obamacare -- a.k.a. the Affordable Care Act -- was the Mark of the Beast. In fact, tragically, even though Obama has been out of office for years now, some Christians continue to foolishly believe those ridiculous lies, and still insist that Barack Obama is the Beast, or Antichrist.

Seriously, my friends, when are you deceived folks going to wake up? When are you going to stop making false predictions regarding Christ's return? When are you going to stop saying that this particular person or that person is the Beast, or the Antichrist? To make matters worse, now some of you folks are foolishly claiming that Donald Trump is the Antichrist,

and the pope is the False Prophet. You erroneously say that the Great Tribulation is just around the corner, or that it supposedly has already started. But that is not all. Some of you unwisely claim that millions of Christians will soon be beheaded by guillotine. You insist that Jesus is coming at any minute now, and that the Rapture will soon occur. You spout off so much nonsense which, quite frankly, never even occurs, even though some of you people have been preaching this same misguided stuff for literally decades.

I mean, really think about this for a moment. First, some of you claim that Barack Obama -- a liberal Democrat -- is the Antichrist, and now about a decade later, the Antichrist has apparently switched political parties -- and apparently skin color as well -- and he is now Donald Trump, a Republican. Do you see how ridiculously absurd that sounds? Please open your eyes!

Concerning Jesus Christ's return and the Rapture, as I have clearly pointed out in some of my other articles, such as the seven-part series entitled "Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?", and also "Fight Against Futurism!", do you realize that people have been predicting Jesus' return and the Rapture for the past two hundred years? Yet every single person who has ever made such a prediction has been dead wrong without fail. Furthermore, to their own shame, the list of people who have been making these erroneous predictions even includes some big name preachers who were later forced to retract their misguided predictions out of embarrassment.

Although you may not like to hear it, I must tell you that those of you who are foolishly -- and perhaps ignorantly -- making the same kinds of claims right now about all of these things are dead wrong as well, even though you refuse to see it. Furthermore, I am so convinced of what I am saying, that I am willing to step out on a limb and predict that twenty years from now, you will STILL be waiting for Jesus Christ's return, simply because your understanding of Bible prophecy has been seriously skewed. Perhaps you were brought up in that environment, or maybe you were deceived by some of the fast-talking, popular preachers. But whatever the case may be, the simple truth is that your understanding has been clouded, whether you realize it or not.

My dear friends, you really need to stop and ask yourselves why people have been so wrong regarding Christ's return and the Rapture for the past two hundred years. Make no mistake. They were just as sincerely convinced regarding what they believed concerning Jesus' soon return, as some of you are right now. Yet sad to say, they were all wrong, just as you dear folks are wrong today as well.

So what did those folks of decades ago miss? How did they get it so wrong and become so deceived? In similar fashion, what are you folks today missing as well so that you have become so deceived? For my part, I have earnestly tried to tell you multiple times over the years via my Bill's Bible Basics articles, my poetry, my graphics, my KJV Bible Verse Lists, and more recently via my songs and music videos.

Sadly, despite all of my efforts to point you to Scriptural truth, it seems that very few of you have a desire to listen to me, or better said, listen to what the Holy Scriptures actually say regarding these issues. You've been so deceived by the popular, modern doctrine of Futurism, that you even refuse to consider that you might be wrong. To the contrary, with some of you, your immediate reaction when I try to tell you the truth is to say that I am wrong. You accuse me of being deceived, when in fact I am convinced that some of you are the ones who are actually deceived. Yet despite your unbelief in what I have been saying for years now, here I am trying to convince you once again.

As I point out in some of the aforementioned articles, and just so you really understand, I know exactly where all your heads are at. I know why you believe as you believe, because for almost forty-two years of my adult Christian life, I too was a dedicated Futurist. I fervently believed in Futurism, and I likewise fervently preached its beliefs to others. In fact, if I were to list here the prophetic events which I was still anticipating at that time in my life, you would surely say, "Wow! That sounds just like me! That is exactly what I believe too!" So you see, I know where you folks are coming from; yet I was forced to forsake it all in order to embrace the true meaning of Bible prophecy. It is time for you folks to do the same. You need to wake up!

Now regarding the 47th U.S. president, Donald Trump, let me say the following. Look, my friends, as I've stated clearly

in a number of my politically-oriented articles, similar to so many of you, I don't trust politicians either. After all, most of them are people of the world who think as the world thinks, and who do things as the world does things. They are selfish, egotistical, and primarily interested in retaining their wealth and power. As such, we have good reason to not trust many of them. In fact, in the Book of Psalms we find the following wise advice:

"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes."

Psalms 118:8-9, KJV

However, there is another side of the coin which some of you need to seriously consider and not ignore, because currently your understanding is lopsided. Now for those of you who are dissing Donald J. Trump, and calling him the antichrist -- a seriously misinformed belief in itself -- please be advised that your current attitude is in direct contradiction to the Scriptures, which not only tell us that we are to obey and honor the powers that be -- unless they clearly contradict God's Word -- but which also inform us that God Himself raises up leaders in order to fulfill His divine purposes, whether for good, or for evil.

If you happen to be a person who doubts that this is so, then I urge you to carefully study the following group of verses. The truths they speak are as plain as day. First, allow me to share some verses with you regarding how God raising up leaders:

"Lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiff neck. For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another."

Psalms 75:5-7, KJV

"Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:"

Daniel 2:20-21, KJV

"This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men."

Daniel 4:17, KJV

"I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me."

Jeremiah 27:5, KJV

"For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king. And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice. Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD. And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel."

1 Samuel 15:23-26, KJV

"And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."

Acts 12:21-23, KJV

"The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will."

Proverbs 21:1, KJV

The previous group of verses are rather clear, aren't they? Not only do they reveal that God raises up leaders according to His divine purposes, but He also controls their hearts, as He did with Pharaoh of Egypt in the Old Testament. Those verses likewise inform us of what happens when proud leaders refuse to obey the Lord, or refuse to give Him credit, and instead take glory upon themselves, as was the case with foolish King Herod.

Having established that point by way of the Scriptures, let me now share some additional verses with you concerning how we Christians are obliged by God's Word to obey and to honor leaders, and other people in positions of authority, whether it is our local sheriff, or the leader of our nation:

"Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."

Matthew 5:25-26, KJV

"They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."

Matthew 22:21, KJV

"And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him."

Mark 12:17, KJV

"And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's."

Luke 20:25, KJV

"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

Romans 12:18, KJV

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake."

Romans 13:1-5, KJV

"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee. Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men."

Titus 2:15-3:2, KJV

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king."

1 Peter 2:11-17, KJV

So as you can see, those verses represent Scriptural truth straight from God's Word. There is no arguing against them. We Christians are supposed to strive to live in peace with all men, and we are supposed to obey the law, recognizing that they were put in place by God for our own protection and benefit. Either you believe all of the previous verses, or else you deceive yourself and rebel against them.

Now, of course, there are exceptions to the rule. After all, there are leaders who are evil and corrupt, and other people in positions of power who abuse their authority. If such an individual were to try to force us to do something which is against our conscience, or which outright contradicts God's Word, then similar to Peter and the Apostles in these verses which are found in the Book of Acts, we must resist them. This is likewise a subject I discuss in the series entitled "Civil Disobedience and Christian Persecution":

"Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people. Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned. And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men."

Acts 5:25-29, KJV

So as I said, there are indeed exceptions to the rule. But generally speaking, we Christians are supposed to live in peace and obey the law. No doubt, there will be, and in fact are, certain leaders who we simply do not like due to their ungodly or unfair policies. When such people rise to power, it can be a real test of our faith. It is at times such as these that we must trust our Heavenly Father, and believe that He knows what He is doing, even if we personally do not understand it. As we have seen through the previous set of verses, whether for good or for evil, God raises them up in order to fulfill His divine purposes.

The Scriptures clearly reveal that God will even raise up wicked, pagan leaders -- His vessels of wrath -- in order to fulfill His Will. For example, the Lord raised up Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and even hardened his heart, in order that His power might be revealed by way of the Ten Plagues, as is revealed in the following group of Bible verses:

"The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will."

Proverbs 21:1, KJV

"And the LORD said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go."

Exodus 4:21, KJV

"And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt . . . And he hardened

Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said. And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart is hardened, he refuseth to let the people go . . . And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither did he hearken unto them; as the LORD had said."

Exodus 7:3, 13-14, 22, KJV

"But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said . . . Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said . . . And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go."

Exodus 8:15, 19, 32, KJV

"And Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go . . . And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had spoken unto Moses . . . And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, neither would he let the children of Israel go; as the LORD had spoken by Moses."

Exodus 9:7, 12, 34-35, KJV

"And the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs before him . . . But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go . . . But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go."

Exodus 10:1, 20, 27, KJV

"And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh: and the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land."

Exodus 11:10, KJV

"And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may know that I am the

LORD. And they did so . . . And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel: and the children of Israel went out with an high hand . . . And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen."

Exodus 14:4, 17, KJV

"Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? when he had wrought wonderfully among them, did they not let the people go, and they departed?"

1 Samuel 6:6, KJV

Centuries later, the Lord raised up pagan Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar -- whom He even referred to as "my servant" -- to serve as His rod of chastisement against the apostate, rebellious Israelites. Thus, we see that Nebuchadnezzar was another vessel of God's wrath. Consider the following group of Bible verses which verify this particular point:

"Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations."

Jeremiah 25:7, KJV

"And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him."

Jeremiah 27:6, KJV

"Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying, Take great stones in thine hand, and hide them in the clay in the brickkiln, which is at the entry of Pharaohs house in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah; And say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid; and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them. And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt, and deliver such as are for death to death;

and such as are for captivity to captivity; and such as are for the sword to the sword."

Jeremiah 43:8-11, KJV

Please go to part two for the conclusion of this article.

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IT IS TIME TO WAKE UP! : PART 2

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God Raised Up Cyrus The Great To Liberate Jews, God Raised Up General Titus To Destroy Jerusalem And Temple, Who Are We To Judge God's Actions And Decisions?, Vessels Of Wrath And Vessels Of Mercy, Be Careful Regarding Speaking Against Leaders God Has Exalted, My Views Regarding Donald J. Trump, Deceptive Tactics Of Politicians, Trust God For The Future And Wait And See, Closing Remarks, My Suggested Reading List

Continuing our discussion from part one, once the Jews had served their seventy years of captivity in Babylon, the Lord then raised up yet another powerful, pagan ruler who served as His instrument to liberate the Jews from Babylon. This he did so that the Jews could return to the land of Israel, and begin repairing Jerusalem and rebuilding the temple compound. This pagan ruler was Koresh -- a.k.a. the Persian king Cyrus the Great -- who was in fact prophesied in the Scriptures, as we can determine by the following group of verses:

"Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; That frustrateth the tokens of the

liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish; That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof: That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me."

Isaiah 44:24-45:4, KJV

"Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up."

2 Chronicles 36:22-23, KJV

"Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and

let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem. Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem. And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered. Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods; Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. And this is the number of them: thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives, Thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand. All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem." Ezra 1:1-11, KJV

"But in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon the same king Cyrus made a decree to build this house of God. And the vessels also of gold and silver of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that was in Jerusalem, and brought them into the temple of Babylon, those did Cyrus the king take out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto one, whose name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor; And said unto him, Take these vessels, go, carry them into the temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be builded in his place. Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid the foundation of the house of God which is in Jerusalem: and since that time even until now hath it been in building, and yet it is not finished. Now therefore, if it seem good to the king, let there be search made in the king's treasure house, which is there at Babylon, whether it be so, that a decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter.

Then Darius the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon. And there was found at Achmetha, in the palace that is in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein was a record thus written: In the first year of Cyrus the king the same Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits; With three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king's house: And also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and brought again unto the temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to his place, and place them in the house of God."

Ezra 5:13-6:5, KJV

"And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia. And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king."

Ezra 6:14-15, KJV

"And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus."

Daniel 1:21, KJV

"So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

Daniel 6:28, KJV

So as you can plainly see, even though Cyrus the Great was a pagan king, nevertheless, he served as one of God's vessels of mercy upon the Jews. As a final example of an evil, pagan leader who served as another one of God's vessels of wrath, consider the fact that Roman general, Titus, who was the son of Emperor Vespasian, and who was also responsible for the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple compound in 70 AD during the seven-year First Jewish-Roman War -- exactly as

Jesus had forewarned would happen -- was prophesied in the Book of Daniel, as we clearly see by the following verses:

"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

Daniel 9:26-27, KJV

So as you can hopefully see, whether for good or for evil, God Himself does in fact raise up national leaders so that His divine purposes will be accomplished through them. It is my belief that this applies to leaders today as well, just as it did thousands of years ago. To reject this idea is to deny the truth of the Scriptures and secular history itself. As I said, we may not like some of the leaders that the Lord raises up, but as God said to the Patriarch Job, who are we to question His judgments and decisions. Consider this verse:

"Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?"

Job 40:8, KJV

In his Epistle to the brethren at Rome, the Apostle Paul likewise mentions God's vessels of mercy and His vessels of wrath. As I just explained to you, the Apostle also advises his readers to not question why God has made an individual a certain way, or selected them for some particular task. Consider the following set of verses:

"For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth

he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?"

Romans 9:15-24, KJV

So regarding 47th US President Donald J. Trump, and those of you who are foolishly speaking against him, and erroneously claiming that he is the Antichrist, I advise restraint and a degree of caution. Do you honestly want to be found guilty of speaking against someone whom the Lord has raised up?

To be clear, as I have mentioned before, there are obviously certain things regarding Trump's personality and political positions which I personally do not like either. In fact, I have been very candid about this. Mr. Trump is a very proud, vain, egotistical, narcissistic, worldly man. I question his true motives, and I even question the sincerity of his faith in Jesus Christ.

Let's face it. We all know what politicians are like. They will say whatever needs to be said, and put on a great act in order to win your vote. Sadly, it seems that Christians are some of the most naive, gullible people around. So, no, I don't fully trust Trump either. Neither am I comfortable with the fact that he has surrounded himself with so many Dominionists and people associated with Big Business.

Whether Trump will prove to be a vessel of wrath or else a vessel of mercy during his second term remains to be seen. However, if God has raised up Trump for this time, despite his personal flaws, to serve some specific purpose in His overall design and plans for the United States, who are you or I to question it? So my advice is that we should simply trust the Lord for the future, not worry about it, and just wait and see what happens. Shall we?

Regarding everything else I stated in this article concerning Bible prophecy -- such as Jesus Christ's return, the Rapture, the rise of the Antichrist, etc. -- I again encourage you to consider reading the other articles and series I mentioned in this article. You will find them listed below.

With these thoughts, I will bring this article to a close. It is my hope that you've found it informative and enlightening, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life as well. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or with any other social network, I would really appreciate if you'd take the time to click or tap on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information and further study, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were either mentioned in this article, or which contain topics which are related to this article. All of these articles are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics web server. To read these articles, simply click or tap on any link you see below.

Abomination of Desolation: Explained!

Beware of Dominionism!

Civil Disobedience and Christian Persecution

Facebook False Prophets and Misguided Teachers

Fight Against Futurism!

Humility in Our Understanding of God's Word

In the Ages to Come

Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?

Please Stop Misinterpreting the Scriptures

To Vote, or Not to Vote

When Was Satan Cast Out of Heaven?

Who Hindered the Antichrist?

Who is Babylon the Great?

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