

Pastor Letter April 3, 2020

Prophetic Rollercoaster

The WILD Ride of Prophecy is being fulfilled as never before.

..whether recent trends will subside again or not – only God knows.



Matt 24:36 reminds us that only God knows the exact return of Jesus Christ to this earth.

Regarding the subject of Bible Prophecy, it is so important that we see what is actually happening instead of what we might think is occurring.

What seems to be unfolding at this point is that that the most advanced nations on earth have fallen into economic and political crisis.

It is breathtaking to see the recently vaunted US economy fly off of a cliff at a time when contrary political forces in Europe threaten to destroy the current EU arrangement.

Europeans are increasingly concerned about their own economies and looking to more extreme solutions to handle current challenges. The nation of Hungary has given its Prime Minister Victor Orban dictatorial power to make all national decisions.

The EU is in anguish about its bogged-down efforts to help subsidize its poorer members like Greece, Italy and Spain. We know that the efforts will be replaced by a more radical Europe.

European unity also has been challenged by the Brexit vote to secede from the continent, the heavy influx of migrants from 2015 to present, rising antisemitism in France and Germany, plus the taxing cost and anxiety over the coronavirus pandemic that is hitting Europe—especially Italy—very hard. Much of Europe and virtually half of the world's population is on lockdown.

Just a month ago, who would have ever dreamed that this would have happened?

Equally sobering is this excerpt from Jim Tuck's "Prophetic Times" newsletter sent out today regarding increasing unity between the 7th Day Adventist church and the church at Rome. I include that below. The aims of the religious organizations are noble but the end result of worldwide religions is forecasted in the Bible to become intolerance of Sabbatarians. We are seeing segments of transition in that direction.

Seventh-day Adventists, Roman Catholics and Evangelicals Sign a Historic 'Ecumenical Charter'

February 20, 2020 adventmessenger.org reported: "On Saturday, January 25, 2020 a historical "Ecumenical Charter" was signed by Seventh-day Adventists, Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans, Evangelicals and Methodists. The signing ceremony took place in the San Paolo Maggiore Roman Catholic Church in Bologna, Italy. The document that was signed is a pledge of commitment to each other.

Adventists pledged a commitment to Rome, and Rome reciprocated that commitment. Make no mistake. The churches that signed this document promised to uphold the principles of the Ecumenical Charter which includes affirming an allegiance to each other.

- The Charter declares that the church is “**one, holy, catholic and apostolic**” and therefore the “**inescapable ecumenical task consists in making visible this unity.**”
- The Charter declares that the churches are “called together in the unity of faith.”
- It calls for the “**visible unity of the Church of Jesus Christ in the one faith and in witness and in common service.**”
- It says “the most important task of the Churches is to **proclaim the Gospel together through word and action**, for the salvation of all human beings.”
- The Ecumenical Charter states that the purpose of this document is to “to avoid harmful competition and the danger of new divisions.”
- The Ecumenical Charter recognizes “the spiritual gifts of the different Christian traditions” and appeals to every church to “welcome each other’s gifts.”

In Luke 21:36 we are encouraged to “watch” to be ready to stand before the Son of Man at His return. Likely the primary intent of that is to watch and regularly examine ourselves to strive to be as close to God as possible. We go through this introspection at Passover time as we consider additional ways to put sin out of our lives. But at the same time, we cannot afford to be “asleep at the switch” so to speak and ignore what is happening all around us. It also says in the Olivet Prophecy that in our patience possess we our souls. We cannot overreact in drawing conclusions but indeed we can increase our readiness to be alert...and in this upcoming segment of time, grow spiritually as much as we can with God’s help.

For Next Time:

Since all of us are probably facing different routines and perhaps doing projects or activities we have not been able to get to but are doing now since we are confined to our homes, I would be interested in learning what activities you may be engaged in besides increased prayer and Bible study. Perhaps you are studying a new language, writing a song or poem, growing a garden, painting a room, spending some family time walking or hiking, calling or writing to other brethren, or finally getting around to all those tasks you’ve put off “until you have time.” The brethren would love it if you would share with the rest of us what you are doing while all of us are basically restricted to home. I’ll pass on as many of your activities as I can next time hopefully with a picture or two to share.

For Upcoming Church Meetings

I have sent out detailed instructions on how to catch the streaming video for tomorrow and Passover but repeat them here just to be sure everyone has them.

Tomorrow's service begins at 11 A.M.

The Passover service will start at 8 P.M.

The service on the First Day of Unleavened Bread will begin at noon.

In each case, make sure you have logged in at least 10 minutes before the scheduled start time. These earlier start times on the Sabbath and the First Day of Unleavened bread enable those who are interested in doing so to also listen to the cybercast from Cincinnati at 2: 30 P.M. <https://www.ucg.org/webcast>

PASSOVER: You may handle Passover on April 7 in one of three ways:

- (1) by connecting with us at 8:00 p.m. by logging on to the St. Pete website no later than 7:45. Simply follow the instructions found at the end of this message,
- (2) by connecting with Cincinnati at 8:15 p.m. by using the link above, or
- 3) by keeping it yourself following the instructions found in the "Keeping Passover at Home" attachment that has already been sent out.

Night to Be Much Observed (NTBMO): On April 8, as the First Day of Unleavened Bread begins (Exodus 12:42), members will observe this evening in their own homes. Florida has a statewide stay-at-home order that will last at least until the end of April.

First Day of Unleavened Bread: We will connect to the St. Pete website once more with services beginning at noon.

Log on to the St. Pete website by clicking on this link:

<https://www.ucg.org/congregations/st-petersburg-fl>

When the page opens, **in the white part** of the box (under the red "Special Announcement" section), there is a menu bar on the right hand that says:

Welcome Posts Calendar Sermons Webcast Community
Click on WEBCAST. You will be asked for a password. THE PASSWORD is:

DO NOT click in the brown box at the top of the website or you will be connecting to the home office in Cincinnati.

If you have problems, Bart Huitema's phone number is 941-807-9957. Five minutes before services start, he will no longer be answering his phone so check in early and make sure you are all set.

bv



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"Rollercoaster in the sky" by [dmcneil](#) is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0](#)

Credits:

Page 1: The Cyclone, Space Mountain

Above: Busch Garden's Scorpion, Pittsburgh's Steel Phantom