

“No More Delay”

(Rev. 10:1-11)

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I. Introduction

A. When will Christ return?

1. Man’s fascination with the question
 - a. All guesses have been wrong so far
 - b. And yet...the pieces are moving together

2. Isaac Newton

Three-century-old manuscripts by Isaac Newton calculating the exact date of the apocalypse, detailing the precise dimensions of the ancient temple in Jerusalem and interpreting passages of the Bible...exhibited in July for the first time...lay bare the little-known religious intensity of a man many consider history’s greatest scientist.

Newton, who died 280 years ago, is known for laying much of the groundwork for modern physics, astronomy, math and optics. But in a new Jerusalem exhibit, he appears as a scholar of deep faith who also found time to write on Jewish law...even penning a few phrases in careful Hebrew letters...and combing the Old Testament’s Book of Daniel for clues about the world’s end.

The documents, purchased by a Jewish scholar at a Sotheby’s auction in London in 1936, have been kept in safes at Israel’s national library in Jerusalem since 1969. Available for decades only to a small number of scholars, they have never before been shown to the public.

In one manuscript from the early 1700’s, Newton used the cryptic Book of Daniel to calculate the date for the Apocalypse, reaching the conclusion that the world would end no earlier than 2060.

“It may end later, but I see no reason for its ending sooner,” Newton wrote. However, he added, “This I mention not to assert when the time of the end shall be, but to put a stop to the rash conjectures of fanciful men who are frequently predicting the time of the end, and by so doing bring the sacred prophesies into discredit as often as their predictions fail”

In another document, Newton interpreted biblical prophecies to mean that the Jews would return to the Holy Land before the world ends. The end of days will see “the ruin of the wicked nations, the end of weeping and of all troubles, the return of the Jews captivity and their setting up a flourishing and everlasting Kingdom,” he posited.

*nobody believed it possible until 60 years ago (news.aol.com 6/29/2007)

3. The fascination with the number “2000”

a. Approximately 2000 years from Abraham to Jesus

1. Approximately 2000 years from Jesus to today
2. Approximately 2000 since Israel was destroyed

*70 AD

*In 2070 it will have been 2000 years

b. Hosea told of the fall of Israel

1. Hosea 6:1-2 *(1) Come, let us return to the Lord. He has torn us to pieces but he will heal us; he has injured us but he will bind up our wounds. (2) After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in his presence.*”

c. He said Israel would be restored “after two days”

1. Bible says a day is a thousand years to the Lord
2. II Peter 3 talks of the return of Jesus

3. Then in II Peter 3:8 *“But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.”*

d. Hosea said that God will restore Israel after “two days”

1. Two days = 2000 years?
2. Went into exile in 70 AD

e. And Hosea said “on the third day he will restore us”

1. The 1000 year millennium?

4. We can't be dogmatic regarding the exact day; however....

- a. See signs all around us
- b. How much longer????
- c. Rev. 10 says that at a certain time

**“there will be no more delay”*

**“the mystery of God will be accomplished”*

II. Review

A. The big picture in Revelation

1. The last Apostle gets a look at the end times
2. How Christ will establish His Kingdom on Earth

B. We’ve already seen....

1. Prior to the seven years of Tribulation
 - a. The Church is taken to Heaven
 - b. War involving Russia and Iran (Ezekiel 38)
 - c. Antichrist offers protection to Israel
 - d. Signals the start of the Tribulation
2. The Tribulation
 - a. A break (interlude) between #6 and #7
 - b. Now halfway through the seven years of tribulation
3. Jesus will return at the end of the Tribulation
4. The 1000 year Kingdom
 - a. The Millennium
5. The Eternal Kingdom

C. The Seven Seals in the Tribulation

II. Text

1. The Angel (v. 1)

- a. The mighty angel from Heaven
 1. He’s a “good” angel

b. Not Jesus Christ

1. Called “the Angel of the Lord” in the O.T. but not in N.T.
2. Jesus never appears as an angel in Book of Revelation
 - a. Always as Son of God since Resurrection
3. The angel swears an oath to Christ (the Creator) in v. 6

c. Similar to other mighty angels

1. (Rev. 5:2)— *“Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?”*
2. (Rev. 18:1)— *“After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory.”*
3. This may be Michael – the Archangel
 - a. Means – “He is like God”

d. His description

1. Clothed with a cloud – power
2. Rainbow was on His head – promise
3. Face shone like sun – God’s presence
 - a. The “shekinah” glory

2. The Action (v.2-3)

a. The little book in his hand

1. It might be the same scroll as in Rev. 5
 - a. Biblian vs. Biblardian
2. But this time it is fully opened
 - a. Looking ahead to when Jesus has opened all of the seals
 - b. “No more delay!”

b. His posture

1. Russia's attempt to claim the Arctic
 - a. Submarine under the polar ice-cap
 - b. Planted a titanium encased flag
 - c. May contain 25% of the worlds oil

2. The angel
 - a. Right foot on the sea
 - b. Left foot on the land

- c. Sign of God's possession of the whole earth

1. (Dt. 11:24)— ***“Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours...”***

2. (Joshua 1:3)— ***“Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses.”***

- d. Encouragement to Tribulation Saints and you

1. This land is God's

(Rev. 11:15) ***The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever.”***

2. Even the sea

- e. The loud cry

1. The whole world will hear it

2. The roar of a lion

- a. Biologists tell us lion gives out a roar just prior to final blows of conquest

3. The Answer (v. 4)

- a. The Seven thunders answered
- b. Who are they? And what did they say?

- c. Probably 7 angels
- d. What did they say?
 - 1. We don't know
 - 2. John ready to start recording and told *not to!*
 - 3. Therefore I won't even speculate
- e. Other examples
 - 1. Paul (II Cor. 12:4)— ***“how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible things, things which he was not permitted to tell.”***
- f. There is so much that I don't know
 - 1. Life after death
 - 2. The mystery of creation
 - a. The “big bang”
 - b. Where did that come from????
 - 3. Scientists still don't know what causes gravity
 - a. Isaac Newton proved it existed
 - b. But never figured out what caused it
- g. The mystery I'm confronted with the most is death and suffering
 - 1. Why does a loving God allow the righteous to suffer?

III. What I do know about suffering

A. If I knew all of what God knows, I'd do what God does

- 1. Dr. Welch at his son's funeral
 - a. Would have done it the same way
- 2. Romans 12:2 “the will of God is good, acceptable, and perfect”
 - a. In your life

3. Romans 8:18 “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

4. God sees the tapestry from the right side

a. Need the dark threads

B. Struggles make you stronger

1. Cradles of Eminence

In 1962, Victor and Mildred Goertzel published a revealing study of 413 “famous and exceptionally gifted people” called *Cradles of Eminence*. They spent years attempting to understand what produced such greatness, what common thread might run through all of these outstanding people’s lives. Surprisingly, the most outstanding fact was that virtually all of them, 392, had to overcome very difficult obstacles in order to become who they were.

2. Life is... 10% what happens to you; 90% how you respond to it.

3. Glenn Cunningham

“You may have heard the true story about the ten-year-old boy of a generation or two ago who, along with a friend, accidentally poured gasoline instead of kerosene on a stove fire in his little country schoolhouse. The stove blew up killing the other little boy instantly. The ten-year-old was so seriously injured the doctors wanted to amputate his legs.

But the boy’s parents begged, “Give us just one more day.” Each day, they asked for another day. And each day, the doctors hesitatingly gave it.

After months of living and hoping one day at a time, the doctors took off the bandages only to find that the boy’s left leg was two and a half inches shorter than his right leg, and his right foot was missing most of its toes. The doctors said, “This boy will never walk.” But with perseverance, he walked. “He’ll never walk without crutches,” they said. But with perseverance, he walked without crutches. And then he broke into a wobbly jog. And then he decided to try running. And in a handful of years, this boy, Glen Cunningham, had become one of the greatest runners in Olympic history. In fact, he was once called “the world’s fastest human being.”

4. Winners persist despite obstacles

“Cripple him, and you have a Sir Walter Scott.

“Lock him in a prison cell, and you have a John Bunyan.

“Bury him in the snows of Valley Forge, and you have a George Washington.

“Raise him in abject poverty, and you have an Abraham Lincoln.

“Subject him to bitter religious prejudice, and you have a Disraeli.

“Afflict him with asthma as a child and you have a Theodore Roosevelt.

“Stab him with rheumatic pains until he can’t sleep without opium, and you have a Steinmetz.

“Put him in a grease pit of a locomotive roundhouse, and you have a Walter P. Chrysler.

“Make him second fiddle in an obscure South American orchestra, and you have a Toscanini.
 “At birth, deny a child of her ability to see, hear and speak, and you have a Helen Keller.”

C. God wants you to use what you learn through suffering

1. Its okay to ask God “why?”
 - a. But then look for an answer
2. Reading article about Joe
 - a. I never knew where his strength came from
 - b. Then I read about his boyhood sufferings
3. Share your lessons from the “school of suffering” with those still in it
 - a. Don’t allow it to be a lesson wasted

D. Suffering prepares you to comfort others

1. Romans 5:3-4 ***“but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.”***
2. Fanny Crosby, the blind poet, allowed hundreds of hymn lyrics to flow from her heart, because she also understood that suffering can be the source of blessing to others.
3. There is no question that God has permitted some of these so-called tragedies to come to people whom He could trust to suffer for the sake of comforting others
4. Who can you help this week?

E. Suffering will keep you close to Jesus

1. II Cor. 12:9 ***“But He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.”***

F. Suffering for Jesus is an honor

1. Philippians 1:29 ***“For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him but also to suffer for Him,”***
2. Earning a “purple heart”
 - a. wounded for the cause

- b. wounded for the cause of Christ

***** **Back to Revelation 10** *****

4. The Announcement (v.5-7)

- a. The angel announces the final act of God's reclamation
- b. Lifts his hand to Heaven (huge angel!)
- c. Swears by God

- 1. Based on the highest authority
- 2. The Creator of all

*Jesus (John 1:3)

- d. No further delay

- 1. "kronos"
- 2. Can mean "time" or "delay"

*the obvious meaning here is "delay"

- e. Great encouragement

- 1. Delays!
 - a. Impatience
 - b. John the Baptist
 - c. Apostles

- 2. Even today
 - a. Waiting
 - b. Delays

3. II Peter 3:3 *"There shall come in the last days scoffers saying 'where is the promise of his coming....'"*

- f. Time to reveal the "mystery of God"

1. No more delays
 - a. Wrap it up!
 - b. The 7th angel
2. Close out the mysteries
 - a. Full knowledge is coming
 - b. Will understand the mysteries

5. The Assignment (v. 8-11)

- a. A voice spoke to John (v. 8-11)
 1. God?
- b. Assignment?
 1. Take the little book / scroll
 2. From the angel
- c. Angel says →
 1. “Take it and eat it”
- d. Meditate on the word of God
 1. Internalize it
- e. Bitter sweet
 1. Sweet as honey in mouth
 - a. The glories of salvation
 - b. The battle belongs to the Lord
 2. Bitter in stomach
 - a. The judgment of God
 - b. Those who refuse Christ
- f. Tell the world

1. Preachers are called to warn
2. Crisswell

“If I have one indictment against the modern pulpit, it is this: the preacher so often preaches about the love of God and about the things that are fine, nice, sweet and good. But there has dropped out of the modern pulpit that awful sound of warning. We do not have the prophet and his message any longer. We do not often hear the threatenings of God and the voice of the judgment of God. We need it, for one is as true as the other.”

- g. And John did
- h. Why bitter / sweet?

1. Typical of God’s word
 - Sweet promises
 - Yet bitter judgment on those who refuse it
2. It hurts to think of the Tribulation
 - a. Israel redeemed
 - b. Christ regains earth (yet)
 - c. Ungodly judged
3. Bitter sweet

IV. Summary

A. Is God calling you to proclaim the bitter sweet message?

- a. As a pastor or missionary?
- b. As a missionary to your family neighbors and coworkers?

B. Are you going through the school of suffering?

1. Are you asking why?
2. How can you use what you are learning
3. Use what you have already learned

C. The unexpected loss of a loved one?

1. *Psalm 116:15.....“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints”*

3. Why?

- a. The Lord’s view of death as “precious” is because He alone can see both sides...the full scope of life as we know it here, and also as He knows it beyond this dark veil we call death.
- b. Parents miss their children
- c. God missed his child and wanted him home
- d. The warmth as God welcomed him home