

PROPHECY

CALVARY CHAPEL PASTORS SHARE INSIGHTS INTO TODAY'S HEADLINES

Condensed by Carmel Flippen

Don Stewart offers a Christian perspective on the latest headlines during his daily briefing on HisChannel; Jack Hibbs regularly hosts 'Bible Prophecy in Perspective' talks at Calvary Chapel Chino Hills, CA. Why are they so passionate about Christians examining current events through the lens of biblical prophecy?



Pastor Jack Hibbs

Jack: 1 Chronicles 12:32 says the sons of Issachar *had understanding of the times* and knew *what Israel ought to do*. We're living in an amazing moment in time. The Bible tells us eschatologically that the Last Days began when Jesus was born into this world.

Then there's also the Last Hour which 1 John 2:18 talks about. I believe we're right at the end of the Last Days, just moments before the Last Hour. There are events shaping up in the world around us which are the precursors to the Tribulation Age. They show us that nations are coming unhinged. Jesus said that when you begin to see these things come to pass, when you see the dominoes lining up, be watching "*because your redemption draws near*" (Luke 21:28).

Don: I wrote a book called *25 Signs We're Near the End*. I could find a headline a day for each of those 25 signs. These are some of the things we're seeing daily: exponential increase of technology; persecution of Jews and Christians; lawlessness and violence; plagues and pestilence; the preparation of the Third Temple in Jerusalem.

Which of these signs has jumped out at you the most in the last two years?

Don: Lawlessness and violence. Remember Jesus says, "*As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of [the coming of] the Son of Man*" (Luke 17:26). What are the two things we find in Genesis 6? Lawlessness and violence. The former always leads to the latter. It's happening

so fast our heads are spinning. A few years ago, we never would've believed that the day would come when people would applaud about killing children after they're born. But this is the slippery slope we're on.

It's going to increase, too, as we get closer to the end. People will see what's always been in the human heart but was suppressed by God's grace. The good news is, the Gospel will go out, and people will get saved. It will get lighter and darker at the same time.

Jack: We have more laws than ever in our nation's history, but we've got more lawlessness. Why? You've got to reach the heart—the broken human heart that needs salvation.

If you believe Christians will be raptured before the Antichrist's rise and the Great Tribulation, why be concerned with how today's headlines intersect with prophecies about the future?

Jack: In Acts 20:27, Paul says he did not hold back from teaching the entire counsel of God. Most importantly, we can use future events, that we'll have no part of, as evangelistic tools for people today. It's a great way to encourage people. The Old Testament prophets didn't get to see the fulfillment of the things they spoke about the future. We get to take the Word of God that they authored through the Holy Spirit and look into the future, all to build our confidence in the Bible. The same God who made all those ancient prophecies that were fulfilled is the same God who is going to keep His promises.

Don: We're here not just to be observers, but to be salt and light. This is a means to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, because the God of the Bible knows the end from the beginning. He claims to know things that haven't happened yet. Here we are looking at the stage being set for future events which Ezekiel predicted 2,600 years ago [in Ezekiel 38]. How in the world could anybody know these things?



A view of the modern-day city of Jerusalem in Israel, the focus of many future events predicted in the Bible.

The fact that the Jews would still exist in the Last Days, though you're not going to see any Edomites or Moabites because none of those people groups have existed since the first century A.D.? That they'd return from all over the world to their ancient homeland, to a land decimated by war? That they'd been away for a long time? That they'd return in large numbers? That they'd create great wealth to the point that other nations want to take something from this tiny country the size of New Jersey? We see today everything in place that the Bible predicted.

Current events our readers should keep an eye on? Brexit

Jack: If you don't know, Brexit is Britain's exit from the failing European Union (EU). Britain's national independence has been evaporating under the globalist government being born out of the EU. It's the right thing to do, though it may be too late. Brexit shows the border issue is not just an American problem; it's a global one.

Don: There is tremendous pressure on the UK to return to the EU so it can control them. French President Emmanuel Macron called Brexit the worst European crisis since WW2. Globalism is coming; it will not be able to be stopped. How do we know that? The Book of Revelation tells us about a one-world government.

Jack: The Bible talks about a man from the revived Roman empire who will arise from a conglomerate of 10 world leaders. He will be a "stout" fellow who speaks proud or arrogant words (Daniel 7:20, 25; Rev. 13:5, KJV). The Bible says he will eventually throw off all the other leaders and seize power (Daniel 7:24). Revelation 13 describes a sort of demonic trinity: this man, the Antichrist; his cohort, the False Prophet; and an image given power

by humans to speak and discern who has the identifying mark of their global government.

Don: But here's the kicker: the whole world will be under one banner. No one can buy or sell without the mark [of the beast (Rev. 13:16)]. What does that mean? One, the technology has to be in place; two, there has to be a mindset to use it; and three, there are no borders anymore.

Interestingly, there's a March 2019 headline reading, "EU Shock: How a Staggering 86 percent of EU citizens 'do not feel very attached' to Brussels." This idea of a socialist, global government just doesn't work, because people like their own history, culture, and laws. Daniel 2:42 says in the Last Days this coalition will be like iron mixed with clay. Iron and clay don't adhere—what you have is the government doing something that the people don't want.



Pastor Don Stewart

Technology

Don: In Daniel 12:8a (NIV), Daniel says, "**I heard [these prophecies], but I did not understand.**" He was told, "**... Seal the words until the time of the end (4a). None of the wicked will understand, but those who are wise will understand (10b).**" Even 30-40 years ago, could anyone have imagined the power in our phones and computers? And it's nothing compared to what's coming. It's happening right now, and we see the puzzle pieces coming together.

There are at least three passages in Scripture which assume the age in which we live. There's the cashless system in Revelation 13, where no one can buy or sell without the mark. Can you imagine living in the first-century

Roman Empire trying to figure out how that system could be monitored worldwide? Or even fifty years ago, imagining how everyone worldwide, in outer Mongolia or wherever it may be, could be monitored on every transaction? Would that even be a question that we would ask today? No, not with our modern technology.

When the two witnesses in Revelation 11 die, it says the whole world throws a party for 3 1/2 days, and then sees them rise into heaven (Rev. 11:7-12). How can the whole world see and know this? It assumes a modern technology.

Then in Matthew 24:15 when the disciples ask Jesus for the sign of His return, He says, "**When you see the 'abomination of desolation' ... standing in the holy place.**" If this event takes place in the Temple's Holy of Holies, how will anyone see that? The high priest only goes in once a year. Otherwise, no one can enter in. Yet the Third Temple—which already has architectural plans in place—will be built with modern technology.

Jack: It says the entire globe will know when it happens. If you're a skeptic of the Bible, you've got to figure that out. How did prophets 2,000 years ago predict our generation's technology, where we're watching things happening worldwide instantly on our phones? They didn't know, but the Holy Spirit who authored the Bible knew that.

The image of the Antichrist will be animated; breath will be put into it. I don't remember the Bible saying the False Prophet or the Antichrist can discern who has the mark, but it appears this man-made thing will have the ability to detect whether people have it in their hands or foreheads. You know technology will have to be advanced enough for something to be inserted into the thin skin of your forehead, undetectable unless it's scanned. In the age we're living, how much longer will it be before economies are combined with a cashless system and the ability for people to be scanned for personal information?

Israel

Don: The ancient prophets predicted this tiny country would not only exist in the Last Days, but would be in the world's spotlight. Now they're in the headlines every day. We're seeing the five enemies predicted in Ezekiel 38-39 gathering against them in the north and the south.

Here's what Israel's facing: Iran's building up weapons and soldiers on the northern border to be able to attack Israel through Lebanon, and at the same time in Gaza, the rioters are getting more emboldened. They're between a rock and a hard place, so keep your eye on that.

Jack: Israel is quickly becoming a superpower in the region, and the Bible says those in the lands of Libya, Turkey, and Iran will come against Israel to take their spoils. Israel's sitting on one of the largest recent offshore finds of natural gas reserves. Watch their oil discoveries improve—they're already increasing.

Don: Then there's conflict on the Temple Mount. The very famous Golden Gate, which the Messiah will enter through, has been shut since 1187. Inside that, there's an area which has been blocked off from the public since 2003. Islamic leaders broke down the iron police gate, and are now basically building another mosque there, blocking the Golden Gate.

What would you like our readers to understand in closing?

Jack: One thing we all need to ask the Lord is, *Open our eyes to see what You're doing in this world.* Every day, you will see God's hand at work. God's speaking; the question is, are we listening?

Don: Here's the bottom line: Be of good cheer. Let not your heart be troubled or afraid, because we're going to win in the end. When you are beaten down, hit from every side, remember the Lord Jesus Christ is still on the throne, still running the show, and one day we will see Him. So we are His Christian soldiers, fighting with spiritual weapons, and He will win the battle. 🙌

This article has been edited and condensed to fit this format.



This model shows how the Temple in Jerusalem may have looked. Bible prophecy indicates that in the Last Days, the Temple will be rebuilt.