

Good News!

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Well... here, we are, in the first days of 2022 and many are wondering after two years of trials, tribulations, and turmoil, what to expect in this New Year. At the beginning of every New Year, there are many resolutions spoken, and promises made with optimism about the future. What about you, are you optimistic about the future, and Why, or Why Not? For the past decade, in the United States of America, we have seen many changes in our society, and more recently in our government, that seem bewildering to many, especially those of us called "Baby Boomers," being the group of individuals born between 1946 and 1964. This is "My generation." I have grown up in a very interesting time in that my Grand Parents, and my Parents, endured the hardships of three wars, WW 1, WW2, and The Korean War, and in the midst of all that was the "Great Depression." I have had the opportunity of hearing stories, "First hand," as to what hardship really is, and everything else that comes with it. Looking back it is obvious that hardship and turmoil seems to be a part of life. Even Jesus, when He walked among us, told us to expect all kinds of hardships including the wars mentioned above. He even spoke of pestilence, which we have been, and still are experiencing with Covid-19!

Matthew 24:6-8 (NKJV)

⁶ And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

Wow... verse eight doesn't make me feel too optimistic! As if that was not enough look at verses nine through twelve!

Matthew 24:9-12 (NKJV)

⁹ Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. ¹⁰ And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. ¹¹ Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. ¹² And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

Verses 9 through 12, although descriptive of many past events, it also seems to be describing events happening currently all over the world and growing at unprecedented levels. Some of you reading this might be wondering by now, "I thought the title of this writing was "Good News..." so where's the Good News?"

The Good News

Unbelievably, all of the Bad News I have mentioned so far is the greatest indicator of proof for the Good News that is coming! It sounds confusing, but take into consideration the word "Credibility" for a moment. The definition according to *Encarta Dictionary* is 1. Believability and 2. Willingness to believe... Synonyms of credibility include the following: Trustworthiness, reliability, integrity, authority, and sincerity. The question is, "How does all the Bad News in these Bible passages mentioned so far give credibility to the Good News?" (We will get to the Real Good News shortly.) The answer is found in the word, "Prophecy," which in simple terms means prediction. I have talked much about prophecy over the recent years and have heard many criticisms of people

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that do so. Very few churches and Bible scholars devote a lot of time to prophesy for fear of causing depression or panic among their followers. Studies show that 25% or more of the entire Bible includes reference to prophesy! If this is true, why do you suppose that God included so much prophesy in His Word; was God trying to instill fear to keep people in line? Consider this... perhaps God is trying to instill confidence! Many people in the world make predictions. I have talked about them in the past, people such as Nostradamus. The main difference between prophesies of people like Nostradamus and prophesies in the bible may be summed up in two words: Detail and Accuracy. To study the comparisons in detail and accuracy between prophesies in the bible to other so-called prophets would fill hundreds of pages, so I will leave it to my readers to research to their own satisfaction. However, I will point out that you will find the bible to be both *very detailed* and 100% accurate. For example, the bible prophesies concerning the rebirth of Israel as a nation are so detailed and extraordinary there is no chance of chalking them off as ,”coincidence!” There are hundreds upon hundreds of prophesies in the bible made over thousands of years by diverse people, of diverse backgrounds, that all point to a common cause, “The reconciliation between God and Man.” This is the Good News!

The entire Bible, the “Bad Stuff” included, serves one purpose, to bring God and Man back together into fellowship. When you consider the characters depicted throughout the Bible with all of their shortcomings and sinful natures exposed for all to see, when you see how God used them despite those shortcomings, this should give everyone HOPE. Whatever you may have done, whatever sin you may have committed, you are not beyond the Grace of God! God provides us with glimpses into the future through events we can relate to in order to ultimately show us His plan for our redemption as something we can have confidence in through the reliability of His Word. Everything from the original birth of the nation of Israel to its scattering, and ultimate Re-Birth which took place in 1948; the birth and ministry of Jesus Christ all prophesied in minute detail, all given to us to give us the hope and confidence of our salvation! This- my friends is “Good News,” ***and it isn't over yet!*** All of the bad things we see happening around us today are all a continuation of prophesies concerning our redemption! When you consider the reliability of the Bible so far, you can rest assured ***with total confidence*** that future prophesies will be fulfilled as well. I will conclude with another prophesy which is soon to be fulfilled, once again, this is Good News!

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NKJV)

¹³ But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

There You have it... The Ultimate Good News!