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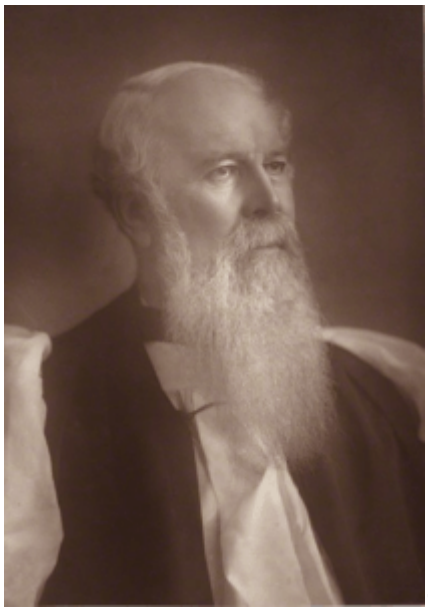
J.C. Ryle's Prophetic Creed - An Excellent Read



~ A Saturday Morning Post #136 ~

Introduction by Steven J. Hogan

One of my favorite authors on Bible prophecy is J.C. Ryle, a well-known and well-respected Christian pastor, teacher and writer. Serving the Lord Jesus in England during the 19th century, his insight into this important area of prophecy is both amazing and instructive. The book that he wrote on prophecy, *"Are You Ready for the End of Time?"*, is a collection of eight of his sermons on this subject, and were given over 150 years ago. I have wondered what he would think today, with so many Bible-predicted events taking place, and particularly that the Jews are now back in their land. Knowing that Jesus Christ will soon come back to earth, I can't help but think that he would be passionately and excitedly preaching and teaching on His glorious return. What is written below is J.C. Ryle's prophetic creed (from his preface to his book). Might our Lord encourage and motivate you as you read it.

From J.C. Ryle's book, *"Are You Ready for the End of Time?"*

The following, then, are the chief articles of my prophetical creed:

1. I believe that the world will never be completely converted to Christianity by any existing agency before the end comes. In spite of all that can be done by ministers, churches, schools and missions, the wheat and tares will grow together until the harvest; and when the end comes, it will find the earth in much the same state that it was when the flood came in the days of Noah (Matthew 13:24-30, 24:37-39).

2. I believe that the widespread unbelief, indifference, formalism and wickedness, which are to be seen throughout Christendom, are only what we are taught to expect in God's word. Troublous times, departures from the faith, evil men waxing worse and worse, love waxing cold, are things distinctly predicted. So far from making me doubt the truth of Christianity, they help to confirm my faith. Melancholy and sorrowful as the sight is, if I did not see it I should think the Bible was not true (Matthew 24:12; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:1, 4, 13).

3. I believe that the grand purpose of the present dispensation is to gather out of the world an elect people, and not to convert all mankind. It does not surprise me at all to hear that the heathen are not all converted when missionaries preach, and that believers are but a little flock in any congregation in my own land. It is precisely the state of things which I expect to find. The gospel is to be preached 'as a witness', and then shall the end come. This is the dispensation of election, and not of universal conversion (Acts 15:14, Matthew 24:14).

4. I believe the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is the great

event which will wind up the present dispensation, and for which we ought daily to long and pray. ‘Thy kingdom come’, ‘Come Lord Jesus’, should be our daily prayer. We look backward, if we have faith, to Christ dying on the cross, and we ought to look forward no less, if we have hope, to Christ coming again (John 14:3, 2 Timothy 4:8, 2 Peter 3:12).

5. I believe the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ will be a real, literal, personal, bodily coming; and that as He went away in the clouds of heaven with His body, before the eyes of men, so in like manner He will return (Acts 1:11).

6. I believe that after our Lord Jesus Christ comes again, the earth shall be renewed, and the curse removed; the devil shall be bound, the godly shall be rewarded, the wicked shall be punished; and that before He comes there shall be neither resurrection, judgment, nor millennium, and that not till after He comes shall the earth be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord (Acts 3:21, Isaiah 25:6-10, 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18, Revelation 20:1, etc.).

7. I believe that the Jews shall ultimately be gathered again as a separate nation, restored to their own land, and converted to the faith of Christ, after going through great tribulation (Jeremiah 30:10-11, Jeremiah 31:10, Romans 11:25-26, Daniel 12:1, Zechariah 13:8-9).

8. I believe that the literal sense of the Old Testament prophecies has been far too much neglected by the Churches, and is far too much neglected at the present day, and that under the mistaken system of spiritualizing and accommodating Bible language, Christians have too often completely missed its meaning (Luke 24:25-26).

9. I do not believe that the preterist scheme of interpreting the Apocalypse, which regards the book as almost entirely *fulfilled,* or the futurist scheme, which regards it as almost entirely *unfulfilled*, are

either of them to be implicitly followed. The truth, I expect, will be found to lie between the two.

10. I believe that the Roman Catholic church is the great predicted apostasy from the faith, and is Babylon and antichrist, although I think it highly probable that a more complete development of antichrist will yet be exhibited in the world (2 Thessalonians 2:3-11, 1 Timothy 4:1-3).

11. Finally, I believe that it is for the safety, happiness and comfort of all true Christians, to expect as little as possible from churches or governments under the present dispensation, to hold themselves ready for tremendous convulsions, and changes of all things established, and to expect their good things only from Christ's second advent.

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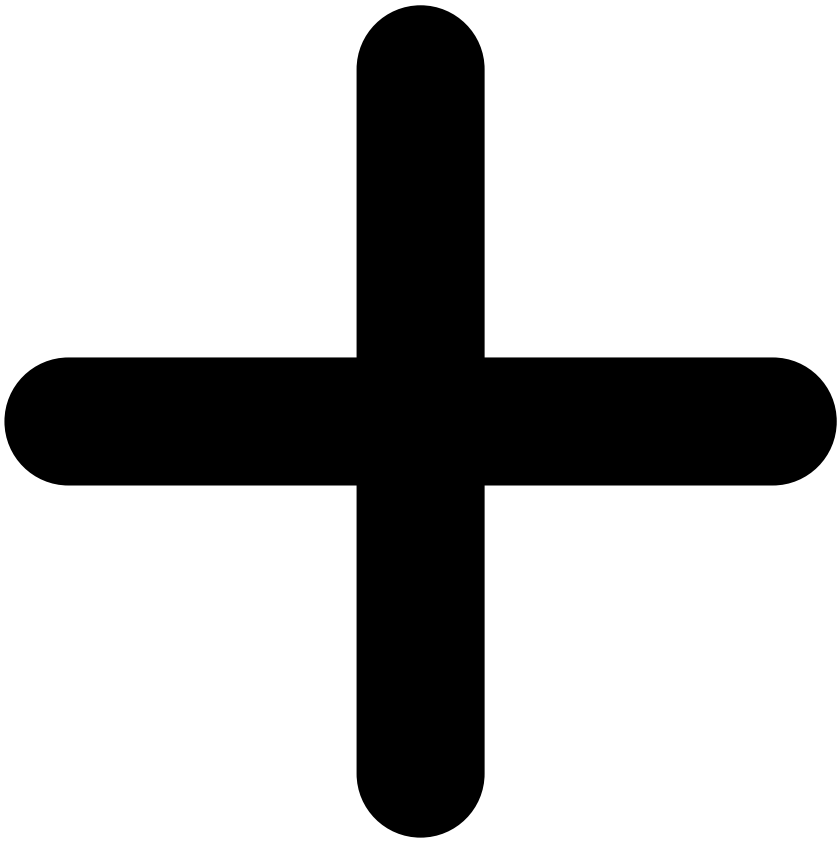
Steve's P.S. "What the Bible Says About the Future" lists 40 specific statements that describe our future and how we are to live in the time leading up to the return of our Lord, Savior and King. I encourage you to read this previous post so that you know what our Lord has in store for you.





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