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Deception or Discernment?

By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #9 ~

There’s a particular problem I have observed during my Christian life, and it’s that there’s a lot of confusion, uncertainty, deception, error and apathy about end times prophecy. I have talked to many people, watched TV shows and You Tube, and read magazines and books on this subject, and some things that are being said are Biblical, but other things are irrelevant, strange, or just not true. I’m sure many of those who share these things are sincere and well-meaning, but sometimes they just don’t know what they are talking about. This naivety and lack of understanding on this important subject of prophecy greatly concerns me.

Let me list some things I have heard talked about with regards to

prophecy in my 45 years as a Christian: the European Common Market, the European Union, wars, earthquakes, Israel, Babylon, red heifer ashes, blood red moons, Antichrist, 666, Iran, Russia, China's 200 million man army, Fatima, Armageddon, pre-trib rapture, pan-trib rapture, Jewish temple, Seals, Trumpets, Bowls, Preterism, A-millennialism, imminence and date setting, and then there's predictions by Nostradamus that some people think are actually coming true.

Here's the main point: God wants you be discerning with regards to the things I just mentioned and everything else that's being said about Christ's coming and the end times. God wants you to know what's Biblical. He wants you to know what His Word says on the subject of prophecy so you aren't misinformed, doubting, afraid, or fooled by the devil's lies.

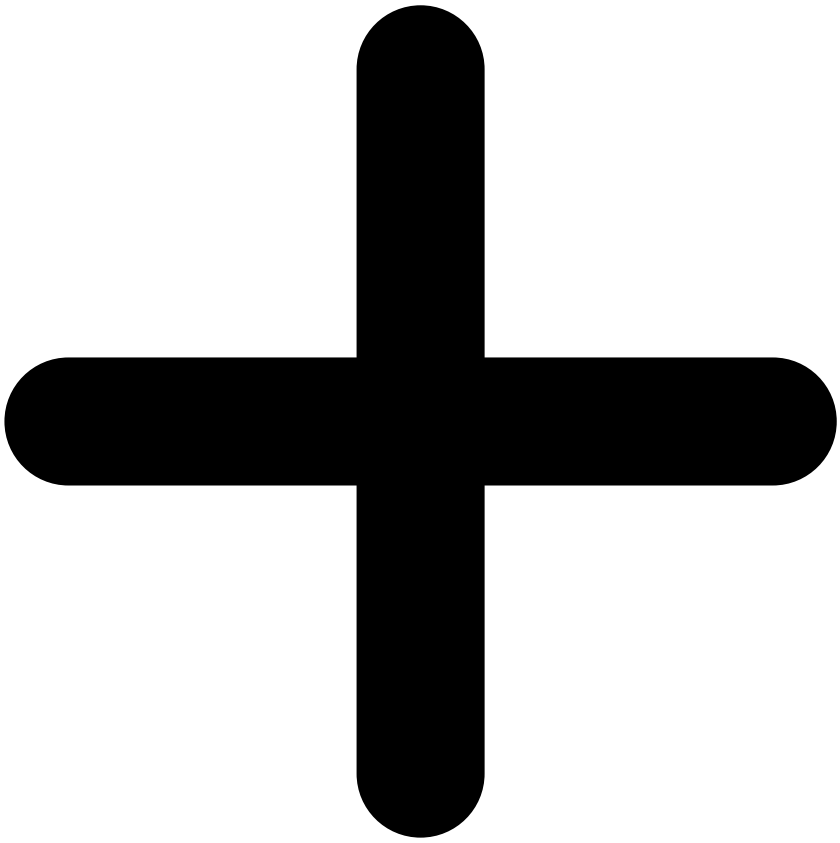
When a cataclysmic event takes place, that evil devil wants people to worry, to be confused, or be scared out of their mind. When some *"Chicken Little"* erroneously cries out, *"The sky is falling, the sky is falling,"* that deceptive devil wants people to believe it and think they need to head for the hills. This should not be. Jesus said, *"Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God?"* Mark 12:24. Many terrible things and events will take place in the years leading up to Christ's return, but God's people by God's Spirit need to know God's truth about what will be happening in the world.

Once in a while I will watch something on the Science or Discovery Channel that's about prophecy, and I need to be Biblically sharp so I can understand what is being said, whether it's from God or not from God, whether it's relevant or irrelevant. In Matthew 24:3 Jesus says, *"Watch out that no one deceives you."* You are to see to it that no one misleads you when it comes to prophecy, for the devil will do all he can to get you off track, to lead you astray. Your mind needs to be taught with Biblical truth so it becomes like a sieve, a spiritual filter that screens out the good from the bad, that enables you to recognize the truth and

discard the error, so you can know the difference between what's important and what's not important. You don't want to be deceived, you want discernment!

My desire, my prayer for you is that you grow in discernment, in wisdom, in understanding. God wants you to know what His Word says about what's going on in the world in these end times. In his prophecy epistles, Paul says, *"Examine everything carefully"* (1 Thessalonians 5:21), and *"Let no one in any way deceive you"* (2 Thessalonians 2:3). In the months ahead we will be looking at many passages in the Word that give us clarity about the world we now live in, and where things will be heading as we get closer to the end of this age. Next week we will look at Matthew 24 which tells us many significant events leading up to the coming of Christ and the resurrection and rapture of the believers.

P.S. I encourage you to look at the article about hope that I just put up today. Every day we need hope – we need to be looking forward to the great future God has for every one of His children.



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