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VOLUME XXIV ISSUE 10

OCTOBER 20, 2000

How Long Till Anti-Christ?

The Election In America And Biblical Prophecy

One of the more cherished privileges gained by our founding fathers as they launched the experiment of this American Republic was that of citizen voting. By creating a Republic, they avoided the perils of democracy as so vividly and violently demonstrated by the excesses of the French Revolution. Originally purchased through bloodshed and indescribable sacrifices, that wondrous privilege has been maintained by the continued shedding of blood in nearly every generation of succeeding Americans. In the beginning of the experiment and through

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this and that

Editors
 Jerald L. Manley
 Gary Roland
 Dorothy Gundersen

A recent issue of The Baptist Heritage produced more reader response than any article previously written. I was greatly intrigued by certain of the letters received. There is a message contained in the relative numbers. Fourteen preachers wrote to have their name removed from the mailing list. To offset this, two men of God—in my view, worthies of the faith—wrote to express encouragement. Dr. J. B. Williams and Dr. Hugh Pyle are warriors awaiting the recognition of the Chief Shepherd. I thought it

This publication is mailed to you on purpose. Someone who knows you felt you would profit by receiving it. If you do not agree, we will remove your name upon request from the next possible mailing. We have no desire to intrude.

most interesting that what fourteen preachers found disturbing enough to invest thirty-three cents in asking their name be removed (most who disagree, just toss the paper away, I am certain)—was acceptable to two proven giants. This is not to discount the others (one preacher contacted us re-

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this and that

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questing 50 copies for his church families) who responded with favorable comments; I value each as a treasure undeserved, but highly prized. However, the difference in the 'stomachs' of the different generations of preachers stuck me as worthy of note. What served as "amen worthy" Bible preaching a few short years ago is highly offensive to many independent Baptist preachers today. What will the future hold?

No two preachers have ever seen all things exactly alike. Nearly all that I write, someone, nearly anyone, could write much better. I write what I believe needs to be said. I offer it for free and my church pays to mail it. No reader will ever get more for his or her money. Preachers and Readers, I pray for you. Please do the same for me. ☩

—Pastor Manley

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the anti-Christ apparently does not make this claim until the midpoint of the tribulation, before you answer my question, consider the nearly universal acclaim and high honors given to the Dalai Lama.)

What is your opinion? How long will it be before such a platform would not only be acceptable but desirable to the American electorate? It does make for interesting, but chilling, thinking does it not?

The sad thing is that if this nation is in existence at the time that he is revealed, American voters will accept the leadership of the anti-Christ, even if they do not actually vote for the anti-Christ, should, for instance, he arise from a European nation.

Thank God for *the blessed hope* of the soon appearing of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. It is the only true hope that believers have in any election year in America.

—Pastor Manley

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long years afterward, the memory of having been ruled by parliamentary dictate and kingly prerogative kept the love of that privilege alive and cherished. With the passage of two centuries, the privilege of casting a ballot, always optional, has become without measurable value to the majority of the citizenry. Year by year, fewer "intelligent and informed" citizens actually exercise this special privilege. While one may be disappointed to observe this, it is nonetheless a fact of contemporary American life. How many will vote in this year of elections and with what motivation they will vote only historians (if there remains any history for America to possess) will discuss. Frankly, when a recent poll alleges that over ten percent of eligible voters do not know the name of the current president of the United States and that an even larger percentage could not identify the names of the present candidates for the office, one can only hope that those folks do not exercise their "right" to vote. It is with

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more seriousness than jest that I suggest a voter competency test be administered before a voter votes. Since the ability to read and write is no longer a permissible requirement for voting, the test could be a verbal multiple choice. Those who vote ought to know at least who the candidates are. Perhaps a slogan such as "vote only if you must" should be considered.

Entirely seriously and without any jest, I remind my readers that some election will be very last election America holds. Take careful note that I do not say this election will be the last election nor even that it might be. Neither I nor anyone else (no matter how much more intelligent or better informed that I) has the knowledge of when that last election will be held. If this nation endures through the rapture and its aftermath, the great tribulation and its judgments, and until the climactic battle of Armageddon, there will be no further elections. I know of no biblical guarantee that this na-

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all strange to those who study Scripture instead of reading Christian fiction.)

Could a man who is known as one given to flatteries and known to be a public, habitual liar receive a majority of votes?

Would a man who desired to change the times and seasons be elected? Does putting away the old ways have any appeal at the ballot box?

Could a man who has a life of moral perversion be elected?

Could a man, a leader of a nation and of the nations, who is religious, but who despises true believers to the extent of placing pressures on them be elected to office in this country?

Would a man who claimed to be God receive any votes? (Though

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Jerusalem, albeit temporary. We know (11) he is not afraid or shy concerning the use of military force. There is every indication that in spite of his moral perversion and his affinity for lying that (12) he is a very religious person.

While Scripture provides several other indicators (some mentioned earlier in this article) about this man who will be the anti-Christ, for our purposes for an examination of his political platform the above twelve items are sufficient. How soon, do you think that a man advocating the policies described in Daniel be electable in this nation? Focusing on some of these platform planks let me ask the following questions:

Would a man who was able to solve the Arab-Jewish problem and secure a peace treaty in the Middle East receive any votes in an American election? (Late addition: is it not strange how the Arab-Israeli conflict has suddenly become front-page news again? It is not at

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tion, the United States of America, will continue in existence even until the rapture. Wishful interpretations notwithstanding, the United States of America is not mentioned specifically in Scripture. America may follow the pattern of other nations and disintegrate or otherwise disappear. Perhaps selfishly, I hope she lasts *at least until the rapture*. With all her faults, I know of no "better land" on earth. However, in my heart of hearts, I see no reason why the Holy God of Heaven should not bring judgment upon this nation, even this generation, and I can see many reasons why He should. Other than biblical Israel, it seems to me that no nation has ever enjoyed the favor of God, as has America. An often-quoted but seldom credited preacher, Leonard Ravenhill, wrote over 40 years ago that if God did not judge America, God would need to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah. While I do not think that God will ever have to apologize to any people or to any person for any of His actions or what

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they perceive to be inaction, Ravenhill was attempting to depict the horrible depths of depravity he saw in America. What appeared to be dangerous depths of degradation those 40 years ago can now be seen to have been very shallow waters indeed. The wickedness and depravity confined to the closets along the back streets of 1960s' America is now a daily fare of Main Street America. The internal rottenness of the nation may well destroy her without the need for a specific act of judgment. However, if this nation should survive until the tribulation, some very interesting political eventualities arise.

During this present election season, the question is often asked as to whether America is ready to accept a Jewish vice president. That is an interesting question, and the nation may or may not know the answer in a few weeks. There is, I must insist, a vastly more important question concerning American elections that I would like to submit. While not having any present or past presi-

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phasize that this is not a search for the individual who is or who will be the anti-Christ but a serious consideration of how ripe the political climate in America at this very hour is for an anti-Christ. Simply stated, would anti-Christ have voter appeal in the year 2000 elections?

In Daniel 7, the anti-Christ is one who will (1) make war with the Saints, (2) wear out the Saints of the most High, and (3) think to change times and laws. We find in Daniel 11 that (4) he honors "the God of forces" and that (5) he will not regard "the desire of women." We discover also that (6) he and another king with hearts to do mischief shall speak lies at one table. He is one (7) who uses flatteries and (8) "shall do according to his will and (9) he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every God and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods." We know (10) he has a great interest in a Middle East peace process and presides over a treaty securing the peace of

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name of this man of sin, it is useless to speculate who the anti-Christ might be. His identity will not be revealed until during the time of tribulation; and that, praise God, is after the rapture. Therefore, no preacher ought to waste the time of his congregation in giving the name of the anti-Christ. (It is a strange coincidence that while I was preparing this message, someone taped an envelope on the church door. That envelope contained a detailed chart proving the name of the anti-Christ.) Through the centuries, various individuals have been "identified" as the anti-Christ; and every such identification, no matter how appealing at the time, has proven false and has done a terrible disservice to the cause of Christ. While many of those named have indeed displayed a spirit of anti-Christ, obviously none have been *the* anti-Christ. Christians would be far better served in studying about the Lord Christ than giving any time to seeking contemporary clues to the identification of the anti-Christ. So, I em-

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dential candidate of any party (Democrat, Republican, Reform, Green, Libertarian, Socialist, or any other) in mind, I would like to pose the far more critical question: "How much longer will it be before America is ready to elect an anti-Christ?"

That question is not intended to be taken lightly. Again, for the record, I have no reference to any current politician in America or in any other country on earth. Even so, I do not intend my question to be merely an academic exercise. If the rapture of believers and the subsequent beginning of the last week of Daniel's seventy weeks of prophecy is indeed near at hand then the anti-Christ must be alive and maturing this very day. If the rapture were to take place, as I pray that it will, during my lifetime -- and from a prophetic biblical viewpoint, it most certainly could -- then unquestionably, the anti-Christ, if he is not already alive, must be born within the immediate next few years. *Think about this.* If the rapture, for an example, is to oc-

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cur within the next ten to twenty years, then the anti-Christ would need *right now* to be at least twenty or twenty-five years old and could be considerably older since we have no idea how old he will be when he assumes power -- though some Bible teachers believe he will be 33 and 1/2 years old. I want you to realize that the anti-Christ will not just "materialize" in this world one day; he will have a history, a reputation, gained before the view of the world so that the nations might be attracted to him. It is possible that he could be a relative newcomer to the world stage, but he would still have a history in his own nation. *Most certainly, he will not be born after the rapture.* Once again, if the rapture is as near in time as we say that we believe it to be then the anti-Christ is just as near.

Please take note that my question is not, therefore, will America be voting *in this election* for an anti-Christ or for the anti-Christ. My question is, in the light of an ap-

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proaching rapture, just how long will it be until the 'intelligent and informed' American electorate is ready and willing to vote for an anti-Christ?

It might be interesting to consider the political platform of the anti-Christ and to speculate what his appeal would be to the eligible voters of this nation. The Bible provides some tantalizing things to consider in this regard. We know that the anti-Christ will have a major influence in the western world (the descendant nations of the Roman Empire) and that he will mediate a temporary peace in the Middle East. We know he will eventually battle the forces of Gog and Magog and those armies gathered by the kings of the East. Sir Robert Anderson in his book, The Coming Prince, covered the topic long ago far better than any contemporary writers have. We know far more as to what anti-Christ will do and how he will do it than we do about his identity. Since in the wisdom of God, God has chosen not to reveal the actual

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