

**Here are my (Mike Osminski) concluding comments for "Conversation on the Prophetic":**

1) The question was raised concerning "Imperialism" and how it fits in with this discussion. The book of Daniel provides answers concerning this matter. The central issue in the book of Daniel is described in Daniel 7 in which the Son of Man (Jesus's own title that He ascribed to Himself in the Gospel narrative) comes before the throne of judgment in heaven and receives from the ultimate authority in the cosmos, the Ancient of Days (Yahweh/God the Father), a kingdom that is described as exercising final dominion in the earth in terms of human history. This kingdom is seen in chapter 2 as the kingdom of heaven, another term that Jesus used to describe His mission in the Gospels. In Daniel 7, four rivals also claiming the right to this world transforming power are described as four "beasts." Their claims are rejected and the Ancient of Days grants this authority to the Son of Man. These beasts are seen in this chapter and throughout the entire book of Daniel as representing human empires that vie for final say in human history in terms of who or what (kings or their empires) exercises ultimate authority to rule the earth. Clearly, God has accorded this place of authority to Jesus the Messiah alone, not human empires, political entities, or nations. In the entire book of Daniel, the only enemy, the only obstacle to the Son of Man's kingdom being established in the earth according to the purposes of the Lord would be these nations, these empires and the supernatural "princes" behind their earthly power (Daniel 10:10-21). A major statement being made in the book of Daniel is that human empires/political entities are the main opposing forces to the kingdom of heaven's reign over the earth.

Daniel 7 also raises the fact that the Son of Man has a people in the earth to whom He bequeathes the care of that kingdom, the saints of the Most High. They would be Israel under the Old Covenant and the Church in the New Covenant. These two iterations of the people of God, Israel and the Church, are the only God-ordained "nations" in Scripture. There are no other "chosen" nations in Scripture. All other national entities are described as beasts that are empowered by heavenly princes. The Lord may use nations to accomplish His purposes in the earth, but those nations always have the potential to become beasts when they seek to usurp the authority given to the Son of Man alone. When nations (or national kings & leaders) attribute God-like characteristics to themselves, when they seek to exercise ultimate authority in the earth, they oppose the Lord and His king, the Son of Man, and they will be humbled.

This exercise of ultimate authority is described in human terms as "imperialism," and is rejected by the Lord as illegitimate use of power. This rogue use of the legitimate authority that the Lord God grants to the nations of the earth (illustrated in Romans 13:1-7) morphs into the language of illegitimacy in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12, particularly verses 3 and 4, in which human leaders and empires attributed to themselves divine authority. This abuse of power is countered by the prophets of the Old Testament, the church in the book of Revelation (the beast of Rev 13), particularly by apostles and

prophets , and by the Lord in the book of Daniel (Nebuchadnezzar in chapter 4, Belshazzar in chapter 5, Persia in chapter 8, and Antiochus Epiphanes in chapter 11)

This also explains nationalistic idolatry. When any human political entity begins to demand worship, when any nation claims "chosen" or "elect" status by God (this is exactly what Rome did at the time of Jesus), that nation crosses Divine boundaries and begins to move into beastlike status. Again, the only two nations granted the status of chosen nationhood in Scripture are Israel under the Old Covenant and the Church under the New Covenant (1 Peter 2:9,10). The purpose of these chosen nations is to bear witness to the Lord as the only True God, proclaim the Gospel of Jesus the Messiah/Son of Man, and lead the nations of the earth into worship of the Lord (Isaiah 2:2-5 and the rest of the chapter). These kingdom aspects (the Lord's eschatological plan) are also described in the purpose of the book of Revelation, particularly in Rev 11:15-19: "the kingdom of the world (all opposing political forces) has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Messiah (Son of Man, introduced in Rev 1:13), and He shall reign forever and ever."

### **Concluding comments (number 2) for "Conversation on the Prophetic"**

2) Concerning the questions regarding the apostolic office and what the Lord is doing in this hour, I would like to point out these observations. There are three illustrations of apostolic commissioning that lead to three iterations of apostles in the New Testament:

- a) historical/post-resurrection apostles (1 Corinthians 15:1-7; Revelation 21:14).
- b) post-ascension apostles (1 Corinthians 15:8-11; 9:1,2; Acts 9:1-19; 22:4-16; 26:12-19).
- c) Revelation 1 apostles (Revelation 1:9-20 and see also Rev 2:2 and 18:20).

In Revelation chapter 1, Jesus appears to John during a time of persecution (by the Roman empire), great trouble, turmoil, and confusion, in which Jesus commissions both apostles and prophets to bear witness to Christ, be faithful to His word, to evaluate and prophesy to the churches so that they might persevere in their testimony and Divine call, that they might walk in heavenly worship and apostolic revelation, and that they might overcome political, religious, and cultural obstacles to the proclamation of the

Gospel of the kingdom and their prophetic witness. This experience in the First Century provides the church with a pattern for the remainder of church history until the return of Christ at the second Coming. The book of Revelation is called a "prophecy"; therefore, it provides the pattern for prophetic and apostolic ministry for the church throughout her existence in history.

It is interesting that Jesus appears to John, one of His original apostles (a historical/post-resurrection iteration), a second time in Revelation 1. John's "falling at His feet as dead in Rev 1:17" speaks that this is an unveiling to John unlike anything that he has ever experienced, including Jesus's post-resurrection appearances to the disciples in the Gospels and in Acts 1. This image helps us to understand the significance of a third, different in intensity, iteration of the apostolic office and its commissioning in Revelation 1.

When God's people come into seasons of intense persecution and trouble, as occurs in the book of Revelation and is described as "great tribulation" in 7:14, the Lord counters that evil with a powerful and hereto unexperienced vision/unveiling of His person and grace to empower His apostolic and prophetic church to prevail in His purposes against beastlike empires, manifestations of false prophecy, and seductive powers of materialism and fleshly desires of Babylon (Rev 13:1-18; 17:1-18; and 18:1-24). This third iteration of the apostolic office will exist to lead the church through difficulty until He returns.

There is an Old Covenant illustration that typifies this "second" unveiling of Jesus to one of His original apostles. In Exodus 32, Moses descends the mountain of God where He has seen Yahweh appear to Him in His awesome presence and provide for Moses and the people of the Lord the terms of the covenant. The people have sinned in being seduced to worship the golden calf. Moses breaks the tablets of the covenant, the Lord threatens to destroy the people because of their idolatry, Moses intercedes on their behalf, and the Lord forgives their sin. Moses must then ascend the mountain a second time to renew the covenant and to secure the Lord's dwelling in the midst of His people (not just forgiving their sin, which He has already done). Moses asks the Lord to show him favor and to "reveal to me your glory." The Lord says that He will let His goodness pass before Moses and proclaim His name to him but no one can see His face and live.

This is told Moses in spite of the fact that he and the Lord have spoken "face to face" on a number of times (Exodus 32 and 33). This implies that the revelation Yahweh in chapter 34 is going to be an unprecedented manifestation. As in Revelation 1, it will take an unprecedented revelation of the Lord to empower God's people in a time of great challenge to the established purposes of the Lord being fulfilled. The church in this hour will experience a similar manifestation of the glory of the Lord as Jesus commissions us to a new and greater level of apostolic and prophetic activity. This phenomenon is referred to as a "new song" in Psalm 40:3;96:1;98:1;144:9;149:1; Isaiah 42:10 and the cited songs of deliverance from great trials in Exodus 15:1; Numbers 21:17; Deuteronomy 31:19-22; 32:44; 2 Samuel 22:1;2 Chronicles 29:27,28 and Revelation 15:3.

IN CHRIST,

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