

Is It Really Getting Worse?

We have been conditioned in the 20th & 21st Centuries to believe that Jesus will return any moment. Is this really the case? The 2 main thrusts of this idea is Matthew 24 and the observation that things are going from bad to worse in the world today. I have shown¹ that Matthew 24 was a warning to the Jerusalem Christians of the city's demolition, and not an end-time prophecy, so are our times really that bad?

The Seventh Day Adventists (SDA) thought so. From their Historist eschatology – based on the Bible – they predicted Jesus to return in 1844. But he didn't. "When Jesus did not return in 1844 as expected by the Millerite movement, the resulting Seventh-day Adventist movement came to see itself as the remnant of God and believed that their mission was to preach the three angels' messages again."²

In Uriah Smith's study of the Book of Daniel, he outlines the ungodly, anti-religious spirit of the French Revolution where atheism surged and enlightenment, along with power and paganism, flourished. He wrote from his SDA perspective:

"Though restrained, the spirit of persecution was not destroyed. It broke out whenever there was opportunity. Especially was this the case in England. The religious state of that kingdom was fluctuating, it being sometimes under Protestant, and sometimes papal jurisdiction, according to the religion of the ruling house. The bloody Queen Mary was a mortal enemy to the Protestant cause, and multitudes fell victims to her relentless persecutions. And this condition of affairs was to last more or less to the time of the end. The natural conclusion would be that when the time of the end should come, this power which the Church of Rome had possessed to punish heretics, which had been the cause of so much persecution, and which for a time had been restrained, would now be taken entirely away; and the conclusion would be equally evident that this taking away of the papal supremacy would mark the commencement of the period here called the "time of the end". If this application is correct, the time of the end commenced in 1798; for there, as already noticed, the papacy was overthrown by the French, and has never since been able to wield the power it before possessed. That the oppression of the church by the papacy is what is here referred to, is evident, because that is the only one, with the possible exception of Revelation 2:10, connected with a "time appointed", or a prophetic period.

The king here introduced cannot denote the same power which was last noticed; namely, the papal power; for the specifications will not hold good if applied to that power.

Take a declaration in the next verse: "Nor regard any god"³. This has never been true of the papacy. God and Christ, though often placed in a false position, have never been professedly set aside and rejected from that system of religion. The only difficulty in applying it to a new power lies in the definite article the; for, it is urged, the expression "the king" would identify this as one last spoken of. If it could be properly translated a king, there would be no difficulty; and it is said that some of the best Biblical critics give it this rendering, Mede, Wintle, Boothroyd, and others translating the passage, "A certain king shall do according to his will"⁴, thus clearly introducing a new power upon the stage of action.

Three peculiar features must appear in the power which fulfills this prophecy: (1) It must assume the character here delineated near the commencement of the time of the end, to which we were brought down in the preceding verse; (2) it must be a wilful power; (3) it must be an atheistical power; or perhaps the two latter specifications might be united by saying that its wilfulness would be manifested in the direction of atheism. A revolution exactly answering to this description did take place in France at the time indicated in the prophecy. Voltaire had sowed the seeds which bore their legitimate and baleful fruit. That boastful infidel, in his pompous but impotent self-conceit, had said, "I am weary of hearing people repeat that twelve men established the Christian religion. I will prove that one man

1 – canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Is-Matthew-24-About-End-Times-notes.pdf

2 – en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Angels%27_Messages#Standard_view

3 – Daniel 11:37

4 – Daniel 11:36

may suffice to overthrow it". Associating with himself such men as Rousseau⁵, D'Alembert⁶, Diderot⁷, and other, he undertook the work. They sowed to the wind, and reaped the whirlwind. Their efforts culminated in the "reign of terror" of 1793, when the Bible was discarded, and the existence of the Deity denied, as the voice of the nation.

The historian thus describes this great religious change:-

"It was not enough, they said, for a regenerate nation to have dethroned earthly kings, unless she stretched out the arm of defiance toward those powers which superstition had represented as reigning over boundless space."⁸

Again he says:-

"The constitutional bishop of Paris was brought forward to play the principal part in the most impudent and scandalous farce ever enacted in the face of a national representation...He was brought forward in full procession, to declare to the convention that the religion which he had taught so many years was, in every respect a piece of PRIESTCRAFT, which had no foundation either in history or sacred truth. He disowned, in solemn and explicit terms, the EXISTENCE OF THE DEITY, to whose worship he had been consecrated, and devoted himself in future to the homage of Liberty, Equality, Virtue and Morality. He then laid on the table his episcopal decoration, and received a fraternal embrace from the president of the convention. Several apostate priests followed the example of this prelate...The world, for the FIRST time heard an assembly of men, born and educated in civilization, and assuming the right to govern one of the finest of the European nations, uplift their united voice to DENY the most solemn truth which man's soul receives, and RENOUNCE UNANIMOUSLY THE BELIEF AND WORSHIP OF DEITY."⁹

A writer in Blackwood's Magazine, November, 1870, said:-

"France is the only nation in the world concerning which the authentic record survives, that as a nation she lifted her hand in open rebellion against the Author of the universe. Plenty of blasphemers, plenty of infidels, there have been, and still continue to be, in England, Germany, Spain, and elsewhere; but France stands apart in the world's history as the single state which, by the decree of her legislative assembly, pronounced that there was no God, and of which the entire population of the capital, and a vast majority elsewhere, women as well as men, danced and sang with joy in accepting the announcement."

But there are other and still more striking specifications which were fulfilled in this power.

The Hebrew word for woman is also translated wife; and Bishop Newton¹⁰ observes that this passage would be more properly rendered "the desire of wives. This would seem to indicate that this government, at the same time it declared that God did not exist, would trample under foot the law which God had given to regulate the marriage institution. And we find that the historian has, unconsciously perhaps, and if so all the more significantly, coupled together the atheism and licentiousness of this government in the same order in which they are presented in the prophecy. He says:-

5 – Jean-Jacques Rousseau (28 June 1712 – 2 July 1778) was a Francophone Genevan philosopher, writer, and composer of the 18th century. His political philosophy influenced the Enlightenment in France and across Europe, as well as aspects of the French Revolution and the overall development of modern political and educational thought. (Wikipedia) [LDS]

6 – Jean-Baptiste le Rond d'Alembert (16 November 1717- 29.October.1783) was a French mathematician, mechanician, physicist, philosopher, and music theorist. Until 1759 he was also co-editor with Denis Diderot of the *Encyclopédie*. (Wikipedia) [LDS]

7 – Denis Diderot (5 October 1713 – 31 July 1784) was a French philosopher, art critic, and writer. He was a prominent figure during the Enlightenment and is best known for serving as co-founder, chief editor, and contributor to the *Encyclopédie* along with Jean le Rond d'Alembert. (Wikipedia) [LDS]

8 – Sir Walter Scott (1827) "Napoleon Bonaparte", Vol.I, p.172

9 – Sir Walter Scott (1827) "Napoleon Bonaparte", Vol. I, p. 173

10 – Thomas Newton (1 January 1704 – 14 February 1782) was an English cleric, biblical scholar and author. He served as the Bishop of Bristol from 1761 to 1782. In 1754 he published a large scholarly analysis of the prophecies of the Bible, titled *Dissertations on the Prophecies*. (Wikipedia) [LDS]

"Intimately connected with these laws affecting religion was that which reduced the union of marriage – the most sacred engagements which human beings can form, and the permanence of which leads most strongly to the consolidation of society – to the state of a mere civil contract of a transitory character, which any two persons might engage in and cast loose at pleasure, when their taste was changed or their appetite gratified. If fiends had set themselves at work to discover a mode most effectually destroying whatever is venerable, graceful, or permanent in domestic life, and obtaining at the same time an assurance that the mischief which it was their object to create should be perpetuated from one generation to another, they could not have invented a more effectual plan than the degradation of marriage into a state of mere occasional cohabitation or licensed concubinage. Sophie Arnoult, an actress famous for the witty things she said, described the republican marriage as the sacrament of adultery. These anti-religious and anti-social regulations did not answer the purpose of the frantic and inconsiderate zealots by whom they had been urged forward."¹¹

"Nor regard any god". In addition to the testimony already presented to show the utter atheism of the nation at this time, the following fearful language of madness and presumption is to be recorded:-

"The fear of God is so far from being the beginning of wisdom that it is the beginning of folly. Modesty is only the invention of refined voluptuousness. The Supreme King, the God of the Jews and the Christians, is but a phantom. Jesus Christ is an impostor."

Another writer says:-

"August 26, 1792, an open confession of atheism was made by the National Convention¹²; and corresponding societies and atheistical clubs were everywhere fearlessly held in the French nation. Massacres and the reign of terror became the most horrid."¹³

"Hebert¹⁴, Chaumette¹⁵, and their associates appeared at the bar, and declared that God did not exist."¹⁶

At this juncture all religious worship was prohibited except that of liberty and the country. The gold and silver plate of the churches was seized upon and desecrated. The churches were closed. The bells were broken and cast into cannon. The Bible was publicly burned. The sacramental vessels were paraded through the streets on an ass, in token of contempt. A week of ten days instead of seven was established, and death was declared, in conspicuous letters posted over their burial places, to be an eternal sleep. But the crowning blasphemy, if these orgies of hell admit of degrees, remained to be performed by the comedian Monvel¹⁷, who, as a priest of Illuminism¹⁸, said; -

"God, if you exist, avenge your injured name. I bid you defiance! You remain silent. You dare not launch your thunders! Who, after this, will believe in your existence? The whole ecclesiastical establishment was destroyed."¹⁹

Behold what man is when left to himself, and what infidelity is when the restraints of law are thrown off, and it has the power in its own hands! Can it be doubted that these scenes are what the omniscient One foresaw, and noted on the sacred page, when he pointed out a kingdom to arise which should

11 – Sir Walter Scott (1827) "Napoleon Bonaparte", Vol.I, p.173

12 – The National Convention (French: *Convention nationale*) was the third government of the French Revolution, following the two-year National Constituent Assembly and the one-year Legislative Assembly. Created after the great insurrection of 10 August 1792, it was the first French government organized as a republic, abandoning the monarchy altogether. (Wikipedia) [LDS]

13 – Ethan Smith (1833) "Key to the Revelation" p.323

14 – Jacques René Hébert (15 November 1757 – 24 March 1794) was a French journalist, and the founder and editor of the extreme radical newspaper *Le Père Duchesne* during the French Revolution.[1] He was a leader of the French Revolution and had thousands of followers as the Hébertists or the Hébertistes; he himself is sometimes called *Père Duchesne*, after his newspaper. (Wikipedia) [LDS]

15 – Pierre Gaspard Chaumette (1763-1794) a French Politician [LDS]

16 – Archibald Alison (1856) History of Europe" Vol.I, p.150

17 – Jacques Marie Boutet (25 March 1745 – 13 February 1812) was a French actor and comic playwright from Lunéville. His pseudonym was Monvel. He was a small, thin man without good looks or voice, and yet he became one of the greatest comedians of his time. (Wikipedia) [LDS]

18 – Definition of illuminism. 1 : belief in or claim to a personal enlightenment not accessible to humankind in general. 2 capitalized : beliefs or claims viewed as forming doctrine or principles of Illuminati. [LDS] (source: Google)

19 – Sir Walter Scott (1827) "Napoleon Bonaparte", Vol.I, p.173

exalt itself above every god, and disregard them all?

We meet a seeming contradiction in this verse. How can a nation disregard every god, and yet honor the god of forces? It could not at one and the same time hold both these positions; but it might for a time disregard all gods, and then subsequently introduce another worship and regard the god of forces. Did such a change occur in France at this time? – It did. The attempt to make France a godless nation produced such anarchy that the rulers feared the power would pass entirely out of their hands, and therefore perceived that, as a political necessity, some kind of worship must be introduced; but they did not intend to introduce any movement which would increase devotion, or develop any true spiritual character among the people, but only such as would keep themselves in power, and give them control of the national forces. A few extracts from history will show this. Liberty and country were at first the objects of adoration. "Liberty, equality, virtue, and morality", the very opposites of anything they possessed in fact or exhibited in practice, were words which they set forth as describing the deity of the nation. In 1793 the worship of the Goddess of Reason was introduced, and is thus described by the historian:-

"One of the ceremonies of this insane time stands unrivalled for absurdity combined with impiety. The doors of the convention were thrown open to a band of musicians, preceded by whom, the members of the municipal body entered in solemn procession, singing a hymn in praise of liberty, and escorting, as the object of their future worship, a veiled female whom they termed the Goddess of Reason. Being brought within the bar, she was unveiled with great form, and placed on the right hand of the president, when she was generally recognized as a dancing girl of the opera, with whose charms most of the persons present were acquainted from her appearance on the stage, while the experience of individuals was further extended. To this person, as the fittest representative of that reason whom they worshipped, the National Convention of France rendered public homage. This impious and ridiculous mummary had a certain fashion; and the installation of the Goddess of Reason was renewed and imitated throughout the nation, in such places where the inhabitants desired to show themselves equal to all the heights of the Revolution."²⁰



Goddess of Reason (U. Smith p:271)

20 – Sir Walter Scott (1827) "Napoleon Bonaparte", Vol.1, Ch.17

In introducing the worship of Reason, in 1794, Chaumette said:-

"Legislative fanaticism has lost its hold; it has given place to reason. We have left its temples; they are regenerated. Today an immense multitude are assembled under its Gothic roofs, which, for the first time, will re-echo the voice of truth. There the French will celebrate their true worship – that of Liberty and Reason. There we will form new vows for the prosperity of the armies of the Republic; there we will abandon the worship of inanimate idols for that of Reason – this animated image, the masterpiece of creation."

"A veiled female, arrayed in blue drapery, was brought into the convention; and Chaumette, taking her by the hand, -

"'Mortals', said he, 'cease to tremble before the powerless thunders of a God whom your fears have created. Henceforth acknowledge NO DIVINITY but REASON. I offer you its noblest and purest image; if you must have idols, sacrifice only to such as this...Fall before the august Senate of Freedom, Vail of Reason.'"

"At the same time the goddess appeared, personified by a celebrated beauty, Madame Millard²¹, of the opera, known in more than one character to most of the convention. The goddess, after being embraced by the president, was mounted on a magnificent car, and conducted, amidst an immense crowd, to the cathedral of Notre Dame, to take the place of the Deity. There she was elevated on the high altar, and received the adoration of all present.

"On the 11th of November, the popular society of the museum entered the hall of the municipality, exclaiming, 'Vive la Raison!' and carrying on the top of a pole the half-burned remains of several books, among others the breviaries and the Old and New Testaments, which 'expiated in a great fire', said the president, 'all the fooleries which they have made the human race commit'.

"The most sacred relations of life were at the same period placed on a new footing suited to the extravagant ideas of the times. Marriage was declared a civil contract, binding only during the pleasure of the contracting parties. Mademoiselle Arnoult²², a celebrated comedian, expressed the public feeling when she called 'marriage the sacrament of adultery'. "²³

Truly this was a strange god, whom the fathers of that generation knew not. No such deity had ever before been set up as an object of adoration. And well might it be called the god of forces; for the object of the movement was to cause the people to renew their covenant and repeat their vows for the prosperity of the armies of France. Read again a few lines from the extract already given; -

"We have left its temples; they are regenerated. Today an immense multitude is assembled under its Gothic roofs, which for the first time, will re-echo the voice of truth. There the French will celebrate their true worship – that of Liberty and Reason. There we will form new vows for the prosperity of the armies of the Republic." "²⁴

How did Britain, Australia and America escape the evils of the French Revolution and the atheistic Enlightenment in its dastardly form? It was the spiritual revivals of the likes of John and Charles Wesley which occurred in England at the same time that gave us a different heritage today.

With all the darkness and atrocities of the French Revolution, did Jesus come back when it was so obvious that he would? No!

21 – Evelyn Mary Millard (18 September 1869-9 March 1941) was an English Shakespearean actress, actor-manager and "stage beauty" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. (Wikipedia) [LDS]

22 – Sophie Arnould (13 February 1740, Paris – 18 October 1802, Paris) was a French operatic soprano. Born Magdeleine Sophie Arnould, she studied in Paris with Marie Fel and La Clairon, and made her stage debut at the Opéra de Paris on 15 December 1757 and sang there for 20 years. (Wikipedia) [LDS]

23 – Sir Walter Scott (1827) "Napoleon Bonaparte", Vol.1, Ch.17

24 – Uriah Smith (1897) “Daniel and the Revelation” p:110-114 [free cut-down PDF version]
(www.end-times-prophecy.org/daniel-revelation.pdf)

So, why should we expect anything different? It's because the Futurist's eschatology is so entrenched in the church that it's the mindset we have adopted. That's despite the injunctions that **the King's Return is on Father's timetable, and it's when we won't be expecting it.**

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(www.CanberraForerunners.org)

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