

Prophecy in Perspective

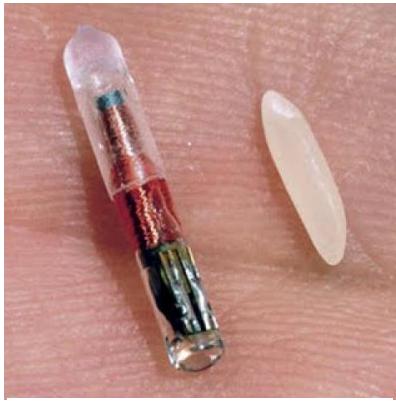
Dr. Scott Gregory Downing
An Email Newsletter

Our Times - *Prophecy in current events*

From Terrorism to Terabytes: The Mark of the Beast Becomes Possible!

"And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six." (Revelation 13:16-18)

According to this passage from Revelation 13, along with its context, there will arise a world dictator that is commonly known as the Antichrist. In Revelation 11:7 the Antichrist is referred to as "***the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit.***" He is described as one who "***shall make war against them (tribulation saints), and shall overcome them, and kill them.***" Revelation 13:3 indicates that he will duplicate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, probably by faking his own death as it says: "***one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed, and all the world wondered after the beast.***" He will be the perfect, but evil counterfeit of Jesus Christ. He will arise in the latter days to offer himself as the world's latter



RFID microchip compared to a grain of rice
(Wikipedia)

day savior. He will be lauded as a great world leader; the "hope of the earth." He will seem to usher in the New World Order that so many through the centuries have waited for. He will appear at the beginning of the seven year tribulation period. The Scriptures show us that the Church will be raptured away to heaven by Jesus who will return in the clouds prior to this time (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Revelation 4:1-2). This event of the coming of the Lord in the clouds for His Church-Bride could occur at any moment. In our days, things seem to be rapidly developing for the rise of the Antichrist. During the first half of the seven year tribulation period he will appear to be a man of peace. He will make a covenant with Israel for peace for seven years (Daniel 9:27).

But in the middle of that period he will break this covenant with Israel and begin to persecute them and all who come to faith in Jesus Christ during that time through the testimony of the 144,000 sealed Jewish witnesses. (Revelation 7) These are known as "tribulation saints." These will not be "Church Saints," as the Church-Bride of Christ will have been taken out at the rapture. For the second half of the tribulation period many will resist the Antichrist. But he will demand absolute loyalty. Those who will resist him in will be killed: "***And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them, and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of the life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world***" (Revelation 13:7-8).

No doubt, the Antichrist will utilize the technology that is being developed today to track down any who will resist him. For the first time in history, the technology exists to bring virtually the whole world under the evil eye of the Beast. Pictured above is one example of an existing technology called an RFID chip (radio frequency identification microchip) which can easily be placed under the skin of either humans or animals. Prophetic Scripture forewarns that the Antichrist and his evil world government will have great capability through the use of super-computers and computer networks. He will likely utilize the implantation of tiny computers under the skin of billions of people. This way he will know most everything about most everyone on the earth: their background, their beliefs, their voting records, their family make-up, and their willingness or unwillingness to cooperate with the new world order, etc. Grant Jeffery writes about current technology in his book, Shadow Government:

New surveillance technologies are rapidly creating a permanent surveillance society controlled by the shadow government. Unseen watchers can track your location and activities twenty-four hours a day. The new totalitarian surveillance systems exceed anything conceived by the Nazi Gestapo or the Russian KGB.

A development known as Digital Angel involves implanting a combination RFID and GPS microchip beneath the skin of an employee. The chip identifies the person and instantly locates him or her (within a distance of three feet) anywhere on the planet through the Global Positioning System. With Digital Angel, it is known when an employee enters the building, greets the receptionist, gets a cup of coffee, makes photocopies, works at his or her desk, or uses the rest room. It is known when the person leaves for lunch and when he or she returns. It is known how much time the person spends in meetings or walking the halls or visiting a colleague. This is a new and very precise way to keep employees under a microscope." (Grant Jeffery, Shadow Government, 2009, p. 157)

In his rise to world domination, according to Jesus, the "Abomination of Desolation," which is the Lord's designation for the Antichrist, will establish himself in Jerusalem's re-built temple, obviously as the earth's new god. (Matthew 24:15, see also, Daniel 9:27) When this occurs, it will be the indication that the second half of the seven year tribulation period has begun. This will probably be the time when the mark of the beast, 666 will be required of all in order to continue living on the earth. According to Scripture, the spirit of Antichrist, Satan, is already at work in the world, preparing for his appearance and global take-over. (2 Thessalonians 3:7)

Today, as never before, it is becoming possible to accomplish this great feat of monitoring and controlling virtually the entire population of the earth! How amazing that the Lord seems to be bringing the subject of intelligence gathering and mass surveillance before us today. Our current leftist and humanist led government and judicial leaders are very busy "transforming" America into a servant nation. Much progress is being made for the great globalization of government and religion. I believe the spirit of Satan is at work now preparing America to be part of Antichrist's global evil empire. Truly, the rapid advance of technology in the area of mass surveillance is a subject that we must not ignore as we look for the Lord's return! The following article shows this to be the case!

The NSA Is Building the Country's Biggest Spy Center (Watch What You Say)

By James Bamford (3-15-12, 7:24 PM)

The spring air in the small, sand-dusted town has a soft haze to it, and clumps of green-gray sagebrush rustle in the breeze. Bluffdale sits in a bowl-shaped valley in the shadow of Utah's Wasatch Range to the east and the Oquirrh Mountains to the west. It's the heart of Mormon country, where religious pioneers first arrived more than 160 years ago. They came to escape the rest of the world, to

understand the mysterious words sent down from their god as revealed on buried golden plates, and to practice what has become known as “the principle,” marriage to multiple wives.

Today Bluffdale is home to one of the nation’s largest sects of polygamists, the Apostolic United Brethren, with upwards of 9,000 members. The brethren’s complex includes a chapel, a school, a sports field, and an archive. Membership has doubled since 1978—and the number of plural marriages has tripled—so the sect has recently been looking for ways to purchase more land and expand throughout the town.

But new pioneers have quietly begun moving into the area, secretive outsiders who say little and keep to themselves. Like the pious polygamists, they are focused on deciphering cryptic messages that only they have the power to understand. Just off Beef Hollow Road, less than a mile from brethren headquarters, thousands of hard-hatted construction workers in sweat-soaked T-shirts are laying the groundwork for the newcomers’ own temple and archive, a massive complex so large that it necessitated expanding the town’s boundaries. Once built, it will be more than five times the size of the US Capitol.



Huffington Post



Rather than Bibles, prophets, and worshippers, this temple will be filled with servers, computer intelligence experts, and armed guards. And instead of listening for words flowing down from heaven, these newcomers will be secretly capturing, storing, and analyzing vast quantities of words and images hurtling through the world’s telecommunications networks. In the little town of

Bluffdale, Big Love and Big Brother have become uneasy neighbors.

The NSA has become the largest, most covert, and potentially most intrusive intelligence agency ever.

Under construction by contractors with top-secret clearances, the blandly named Utah Data Center is being built for the National Security Agency. A project of immense secrecy, it is the final piece in a complex puzzle assembled over the past decade. Its purpose: to intercept, decipher, analyze, and store vast swaths of the world’s communications as they zap down from satellites and zip through the underground and undersea cables of international, foreign, and domestic networks. The heavily fortified \$2 billion center should be up and running in September 2013. Flowing through its servers and routers and stored in near-bottomless databases will be all forms of communication, including the complete contents of private emails, cell phone calls, and Google searches, as well as all sorts of personal data trails—parking receipts, travel itineraries, bookstore purchases, and other digital “pocket

litter." It is, in some measure, the realization of the "total information awareness" program created during the first term of the Bush administration—an effort that was killed by Congress in 2003 after it caused an outcry over its potential for invading Americans' privacy.

But "this is more than just a data center," says one senior intelligence official who until recently was involved with the program. The mammoth Bluffdale center will have another important and far more secret role that until now has gone unrevealed. It is also critical, he says, for breaking codes. And code-breaking is crucial, because much of the data that the center will handle—financial information, stock transactions, business deals, foreign military and diplomatic secrets, legal documents, confidential personal communications—will be heavily encrypted. According to another top official also involved with the program, the NSA made an enormous breakthrough several years ago in its ability to cryptanalyze, or break, unfathomably complex encryption systems employed by not only governments around the world but also many average computer users in the US. The upshot, according to this official: "Everybody's a target; everybody with communication is a target." (http://www.wired.com/threatlevel/2012/03/ff_nsadatacenter/)

Remember, no Christian today, prior to the rapture of the church, will need to fear taking the mark of the Beast as that cannot come to fruition until the Antichrist is revealed. And, according to the Bible, the Antichrist cannot be revealed as long as the Church is on the earth. (2 Thessalonians 2:3-7) After the rapture of the Church, then there will be a massive and complete falling away from the faith. We see strong indications of apostasy already beginning today! (1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-7) Only after the Restrainer, the Holy Spirit, Whom today indwells believers, is "**taken out of the way**," can the "**Wicked (Lawless one) be revealed.**" (2 Thessalonians 2:8) Our calling for today is to live holy lives and tell as many as we can about the Lord Jesus Who died for our sins, rose again, and Who is coming back! Much incentive for the lost to come to faith in Jesus Christ will result from telling them of these future events!

On the Prophetic Horizon: The Rise of the Kings of the East

Bible prophecy has some things to say to us about the growing activity among the "**kings of the east**" in the latter days. (Revelation 16:12) So often our focus is on the events in the Middle-east. As important as these events are to the fulfillment of Bible prophecy, there are other regions spoken of in the Scriptures such as the lands to the East of the Euphrates that urge us to pay prayerful attention.

China, a growing super-power in the East, has been cooperating with Russia in war games. (See vol. 54 of *Prophecy in Perspective*) China has been bullying Taiwan, is responsible for considerable cyber terrorism against the U.S. and is now, along with North Korea, stirring up conflict with Japan over the contested ownership of some islands. China certainly seems to desire to expand her power beyond her boarders. The book of Revelation speaks of a time in the future, during the great tribulation period, when the Euphrates River will be dried up for the purpose of great and ponderous military movement. (Revelation 17:12) This will remove an ancient barrier to the demonically charged governments and forces of the East. At this time a force of no less than 200,000,000 demonically possessed troops will stream across the dried river bed of the Euphrates. (Revelation 9:13-16) Under the leadership of the "**kings of the east**" they will make their way to the valley of Megiddo to prepare to attack and destroy Israel. Additional members of the "**kings of the east**" coalition most likely will also include Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Japan, and North (and possibly) South Korea. Persia will likely have already been annihilated along with Russia in their earlier attempt at destroying Israel in the Battle of Gog and Magog. (Ezekiel 38-39) This battle will probably take place early in the seven year tribulation period, if not before. Current trends in China in their concerted "saber-rattling" toward Japan should make us sit up and take notice. The following article should be of special interest to us in these days.

CORRECTED-UPDATE 3-Japan says faces increasing threats from China, N. Korea

By Kiyoshi Takenaka

TOKYO (Reuters) - Japan faces increasingly serious threats to its security from an assertive China and an unpredictable North Korea, the defense ministry said in its first annual report since hawkish Prime Minister Shinzo Abe took office.

The report was harshly critical of China's actions in waters near East China Sea islets claimed by both countries, and prompted a sharp response from Beijing, where a foreign ministry spokeswoman said Japan was exaggerating the threat to "artificially create regional tension and confrontation."



A Chinese marine surveillance ship (R) alongside a Japan Coast Guard vessel near disputed islets on February 4, 2013

(JAPAN COAST GUARD/AFP/File, Japan Coast Guard)
(Photo from <http://www.afp.com/>)

Sino-Japanese relations have been strained by the territorial row as well as remarks from Abe suggesting he wants to cast Tokyo's wartime history in a less apologetic tone. "There are various issues and destabilizing factors in the security environment surrounding Japan, some of which are becoming increasingly tangible, acute and serious," said the defense white paper, issued as ruling party politicians call for the Japanese military to beef up its ability to respond.

The general commanding a Japanese airborne brigade whose paratroopers would be among the first troops to respond to an attack on a far-flung island, told Reuters his unit could benefit from better intelligence gathering tools, including drones.

"For any island operation, intelligence is crucial," Tadao Maeda, commanding general of the 1st Airborne Brigade, said in an interview. At present, his unit relies on intelligence from ground or maritime forces. Japan has allocated funds in this year's budget to look into possible acquisition of drones.

The defense ministry report said: "China has attempted to change the status quo by force based on its own assertion, which is incompatible with the existing order of international law," echoing recent comments by Abe and his cabinet. "China should accept and stick to the international norms." The row over rival claims to tiny East China Sea islets flared up last September after Japan nationalized the isles, known as the Senkaku in Japan and the Diaoyu in China. Patrol ships from both countries routinely shadow each other near the islands, raising concerns that an unintended collision or other incident could lead to a broader clash.

"Some of China's activities involve its intrusion into Japan's territorial waters, its violation of Japan's territorial airspace and even dangerous actions that could cause a contingency, and are extremely regrettable," the paper said. Japan said in February



Japanese paratroops during recent military exercises

that a Chinese naval vessel had locked its fire control radar on a Japanese destroyer, a step that can be considered a step away from actual firing.

China denied the warship had locked its radar on the Japanese vessel. But the white paper said Beijing's assertion was "inconsistent with the facts." Commenting on the defense report, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman, Hua Chunying, said it contained "false criticisms" and followed growing calls in Japan to strengthen the military.

"The international community cannot but be concerned by Japan's real intentions and its future development," she said. "We hope that Japan can correct its attitude."

BOLSTERING DEFENSE

Abe returned to power for a rare second term after his ruling bloc won a general election late last year, promising to revive the economy and strengthen Japan's defenses. He also wants to revise the post-World War Two pacifist constitution to legitimize the military, although winning support for contentious revisions is likely to take time. Japan is already bolstering defense of the disputed islands and this year raised its defense budget for the first time in 11 years.

The military is conducting joint drills with the United States, its main security ally, and fortifying defenses against missile attacks, while the government is reviewing its mid-term defense policy.

Japan plans to draw up a new defense plan by December, and Abe's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) submitted recommendations to the government last month that included looking into acquiring the capability to attack enemy targets. Japan has long maintained that it has the right to strike enemy targets when an intention to attack Japan is clear, the threat is imminent and there are no other options. But any sign that Japan is moving to obtain such capabilities could upset China and South Korea, where resentment against Japan's wartime aggression and colonization runs deep.

"The balance of power will be lost if we don't start considering striking back when attacked," said Osaka University professor Kazuya Sakamoto, who sits on a panel advising Abe on security policies. The LDP has also recommended that the military should set up an amphibious Marines division equipped with tilt-rotor aircraft like the V-22 Osprey to boost the defense of remote islands.

Maeda backed the proposal to acquire the U.S. aircraft, whose deployment to Japan's Okinawa island has prompted local opposition because of concerns about its safety. "For the airborne, the Osprey is a very attractive piece of hardware," he told Reuters. Japan has set aside about \$80,000 in this year's defense budget to research the possible acquisition.

Abe, whose LDP is expected to cement its grip on power in this month's upper house election, also wants to revise an interpretation of the constitution that bans using the right of collective self-defense, or aiding an ally under attack. A panel set up during Abe's first 2006-7 term recommended that the ban be lifted in certain cases, such as intercepting ballistic missiles bound for the United States. A new committee of advisers is expected to reach similar conclusions.

North Korea launched a missile in December, stepping up the threat that the isolated, impoverished state poses to rivals. In February, it conducted a third nuclear test, which moved Pyongyang closer to developing long-range nuclear missiles. "The launch of a missile ... showed that North Korea has

advanced its technologies to extend the range and improve the accuracy of ballistic missiles," the white paper said. (Additional reporting by Ben Blanchard in BEIJING; Editing by Linda Sieg and Raju Gopalakrishnan)

Serious students of Bible prophecy will watch in the days ahead for further developments in the East. The Lord, in His sovereign authority, is certainly allowing these unfolding events in the interest of fulfilling all of His promises to Israel to establish them as His permanent land and people for the kingdom that is coming soon! Are you watching for the Lord?

Upward Call - How to walk in view of Prophecy

Troubled Times for "Evangelicism"

Recent developments and events in Egypt, Syria, Iran, Russia, and now, China and Japan, give Bible believing Christians much to study and to pray about. There is also much to do in taking a stand for the truth in the so called "evangelical" church. Unfortunately, current "evangelicalism" is not what it used to be. Many have used the term "evangelical" in reference to themselves as a cover to hide truly disturbing doctrines and views. Growing numbers of evangelicals, as well as Catholics are utilizing the term "purpose driven" as a general reference to living out the Christian life. In reality, however, I am convinced by my research that this movement, and term, is a ready repository of many ecumenical and even false teachings. We should be very careful in getting away from the whole council of God as our guide for the true Christian life. The Christian walk is not a life that is "driven" by the often mystical, psychological and syncretistic musings of a popular book or trendy slogan. This approach often influences Christians to remain spiritually shallow and dependent on the latest thoughts or sayings of a popular man or woman. Rather, we are better off to be supernaturally guided and directed by the indwelling Holy Spirit and through the daily council of the Word of God.

"Evangelicalism" is not what it used to be when some preachers no longer see the homosexual's aggressive movements to re-define marriage as a central issue. And for years, other trendy, but misleading, movements such as "Mystical/Contemplative/Spiritual Formation," and "New Age" movements, as well as the "prosperity gospel" have made inroads into "mainstream evangelicalism." Important strategic ministries to singles and youth are greatly affected by these trends. Local church pastors and leaders should acquaint themselves with these trends and protect their congregations through oversight and sound and expository teaching from the Word of God. Growing numbers of evangelicals are even expressing, in various ways, increasing openness to the Mormon cult through seeking to achieve common ground. Richard Land, who is President of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission for the **Southern Baptist Convention** has stated that: "Perhaps the most charitable way for an evangelical Christian to look at Mormonism is to look at Mormonism as the fourth Abrahamic faith." This statement is very misleading! Mormonism is not "Abrahamic," nor is it a "faith!" Mormonism is a cult! It originated through the occultic and Christ rejecting deceptions of Joseph Smith and was perpetuated by the vile and immoral teachings of Brigham Young. It is time to be concerned! (I encourage you to "google," "National Organization of Evangelicals Seeks Common Ground with Mormonism," and read the article there on the *Apprising Ministries* site.)

The recent decision by the Boy Scouts of America to open their membership to homosexuals shows that latter day trends to reject God and His Word are impacting local ministries in practical ways. I am encouraged to hear of some of our Southern Baptist Churches taking a strong stand and withdrawing their support and affiliation with the Boy Scouts of America and focusing on Christian versions of the "scouting" theme through participation in ministries like the Royal Ambassadors. Still, doctrinal error is pouring into latter day Christianity through the false teaching that permeates the Trinity Broadcasting Network and many other

Christian broadcast outlets and ministries. Bible believers need to be careful to whom they turn for understanding God's truth. Ministries would be blessed by God in separating from compromise. (2 Corinthians 6:14-18) With the Lord's return drawing nearer with each passing day, we should be prepared to stand for truth no matter the cost! Souls will be won if we are bold to hold forth the Lord Jesus Christ and His gospel in truth, no matter the consequences! (Philippians 2:15-17)

It is up to each individual Christian to study these trends and to grow in Biblical discernment. We need to stand, to witness and to walk fearlessly in these very eventful and important days in the history of the earth. Most important of all for our growth in Biblical and spiritual discernment is to read the Word of God in a systematic way. A verse here and there will not do in these latter days of such great and insidious spiritual deception. Begin with Genesis and read two or three chapters in the Old Testament, and one or two chapters in the New Testament, beginning with Matthew, each day! This will get you through the Old Testament about once in a year and the New Testament about twice in a year. Second, live out the Word through a truly holy and joyful life in the Lord. Third, Pray often! Forth, get under expository Bible preaching as you seek fellowship with other like-minded believers. And lastly, read good Christian books on the cults and the false movements of our day. A good place to start is by getting a copy of two important books: The Kingdom of the Cults, and The Kingdom of the Occult. Being aware and up to date does take hard work. But it is well worth it! Take to heart the words of Peter when he exhorted the Church:

***"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil"* (1 Peter 3:15-17).**

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(Note: If you would like to interact with Dr. Downing concerning this newsletter, views, etc. you can "blog" with him at prophecyinperspective.com. If you would like to subscribe to this newsletter at no charge, please send your name and email address to: sgdowning@bellsouth.net. Also, you can purchase his book, "Good News From a Far Country", a study in the book of Daniel [\$15]; "Becoming Mighty in Spirit...through Revelation's Prophecies" [\$10]; or his latest book, "Becoming Mighty in Spirit...through Developing a Prophetic Walk...A study in the lives and ministries of Elijah and Elisha" [\$10] by contacting him.)