Pre-Trib Conference 2024 Summaries

Today the lesson is an overview summary of the presentations from the Pre-Trib Conference held at the Sheraton Hotel at DFW airport 9-11 December. This was the 33rd conference in this series. Of note is the fact that all but one were held in DFW area. At the end of this year's conference, Dr. Tommy Ice stated that the conference is by design <u>academic</u> in nature. It is not for the normal church goer. There are other conferences that are designed for them. The Pre-Trib Conference is sponsored by the Pre-Trib research center. As such, the presentations are usually the product of <u>research</u>. In other words, there are often "new" perspectives or new facts that have been uncovered and presented to the audience. There is also an interpretation of current events in terms of prophecy.

This lesson is simplified for the church audience. The presentations deal with topics related to the pre-tribulation rapture and dispensationalism which are of interest to the church-goer who is interested in the Bible, prophecy and growing in grace and knowledge. While some of the presentations may seem boring, there are gems among them. There are even some that engender heated debate. There was one such presentation at this conference. It was presented by a Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS) PhD student in his third year (as a PhD student). The questions and answer session for this presentation was heated and at times emotional. More on that later.

Of course, since the general theme of these presentations deals with prophecy which is yet to be fulfilled there is interest for the believer who is studying doctrine on a daily basis and is growing in grace.

Day 1 (Monday): Presentation 1

Title: Seeing the End-Times through the Eyes of Jesus: Current Considerations from the Olivet Discourse

Author: Jeff Kinley

"Jeff Kinley is a best-selling author and former pastor who has written over 35 books. He is a recognized expert and thought leader in the field of Bible Prophecy, having authored 10 books on the subject. Currently he hosts a podcast called Jeff's weekly Vintage Truth Podcasts.¹"

In Matthew chapters 24-25, Jesus prophecies concerning the "end-times" contain very powerful observations of the future. At each of these Pre-Trib conferences I have attended, there is a presentation that either focuses on these chapters or alludes to them. Dr. Tommy Ice wrote a book on them. In it he says in the introduction: "Any person seeking to understand the breadth, fullness, and details of Bible prophecy will, at some point in his or her study, spend time with the words of Jesus in Matthew 24, 25 and parallel passages. Bible prophecy cannot be understood fully apart from the words of Jesus in those passages.²"

Herman said, "The Olivet Discourse' is often referred to as the most important single passage of prophesy in all the Bible. Daniel was referred to as the most important prophetic book of the Bible. But Daniel dealt with a great deal of prophesy that has already been fulfilled, however, here JESUS CHRIST deals primarily with prophesy yet to be fulfilled.³"

The presentation gave an outline of the passage which is helpful to follow the prophesy. Keep in mind, as Herman pointed out, that the disciples actually ask two questions, the second question being in two parts.

¹ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Speaker_Bios.pdf

² Ice, T. (2021). Understanding the Olivet Discourse.

³ https://www.springvalleybiblechurch.org/Audio/Matthew/notes/2014-11-01%20Matthew.pdf

Jerusalem Will Be Destroyed (Matthew 24:1-2) Humanity Will Be Deceived (Matthew 24:4-5, 11, 24-26) Wars Will Be Fought (Matthew 24:6-8) Believers Will Be Despised (Matthew 24:9-10) Love Will Be Scarce (Matthew 24:12-13) The Gospel Will Be Declared (Matthew 24:14) The Temple Will Be Desecrated (Matthew 24:15-22) The Antichrist Will Display Miracles (Matthew 24:23-26) 4

The issue with the outline is that it does not include chapter 25. I think Herman did a better job of presenting this material than did this speaker. But it reminds us of the centrality of Matthew 24-25 in future fulfillment of prophesy. Listen to the words of

"The Olivet Discourse, delivered shortly before Jesus' crucifixion, is the most important single passage of prophecy in all the Bible. It is significant because it came from Jesus Himself immediately after He was rejected by His own people and because it provides the master outline of end-time events.⁵"

Day 1 (Monday): Presentation 2

Title: Apostasy or Rapture?

Author: Andy Woods

"Dr. Andy Woods is the senior pastor of Sugar Land Bible Church in Sugar Land, Texas and president of Chafer Theological Seminary. Over the years he has written several books and articles on the topic of Bible

⁴ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Kinley-Seeing_End-Times_Thru_Eyes_of_Jesus-Slides.pptx

⁵ Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice, Charting the End Times: A Visual Guide to Understanding Bible Prophecy (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), 35.

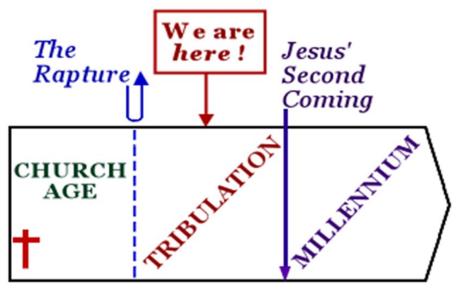
prophecy and serves as a board member for the Pre-Trib Research Center.⁶"

The topic of Andy Woods' presentation concerns a single word in 2 Thessalonians 2:3, "apostasia." Someone had told the Thessalonians that they were now in the Tribulation. Paul wrote to tell them that certain things, like the Rapture, must happen prior to the Tribulation.

Dr. Andy Woods uses two illustrations from Constables notes on 2 Thessalonians to illustrate the problem. The first illustration shows the false view that they held.

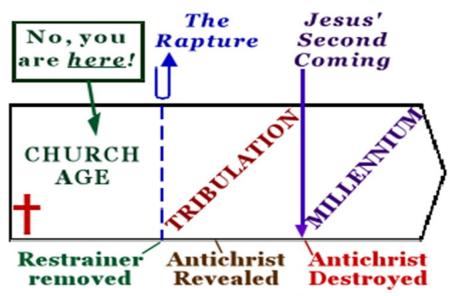
⁶ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Speaker_Bios.pdf





Constable's 2 Thessalonians Online Notes, 13

Paul's Correction of their Error



Constable's 2 Thessalonians Online Notes, 13

The issue in the text is the meaning of the word "apostasia."

2 Thessalonians 2:3 3 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the <u>apostasy</u> comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,

There are two predominate views: a) it means apostasy (of the Church) or b) it is a synonym of "rapture." Without going through all 139 slides and the technicalities presented, Dr. Woods makes the case that it is a synonym of "rapture." He does this not through a single rationale but from ten⁷:

- 1. There Have Always Been Doctrinal Departures
- 2. Second Thessalonians Was an Early Letter
- 3. The Definite Article Before the Noun Apostasia
- 4. The Noun Apostasia Can Refer to a Physical Departure
- 5. The Verb Aphistēmi Can Refer to a Physical Departure
- 6. The Extended Context Favors a Physical Departure
- 7. The Immediate Context Favors a Physical Departure
- 8. Second Thessalonians 2:3a is Part of a Review Course
- 9. Early Bible Translations Better Convey the Physical Departure
- 10. The Physical Departure View is Held by Credible Scholars

Day 1 (Monday): Presentation 3

Title: Artificial Intelligence: Transhumanism and the De-Evolution of Democracy

Author: Dr. Richard Schmidt

⁷ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Woods-Apostasy_or_Rapture_2_Thessalonians_23A-Paper.docx

"Dr. Richard Schmidt, is the Senior Pastor at Union Grove Baptist Church, a city south of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Richard has a diverse background from Bible school training, serving as an assistant pastor, while also serving over 20 years in law enforcement finishing his carrier as Acting Sheriff of Milwaukee in January 2019.⁸"

This presentation spent half the time reviewing future events leading up to the end of the Tribulation. In the middle he provides a definition of "AI" from "Britannica:

"Artificial intelligence is: the ability of a digital computer or computercontrolled robot to perform tasks commonly associated with intelligent beings. The term is frequently applied to the project of developing systems endowed with the intellectual processes characteristic of humans, such as the ability to reason, discover meaning, generalize, or learn from past experience. Britannica⁹"

He highlighted the issue in China:



⁸ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Speaker_Bios.pdf

⁹ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Schmidt-AI_Transhumanism_De-Evolution_of_Democracy-Slides.pdf

Transhumanism is not specifically defined in the presentation. I assume we are talking "trans" meaning here a mix of human and other than human like (AI) computers and machines.

As documented in the presentation, AI is now used in fingerprint recognition, Iris recognition, Speech recognition, behavior recognition (as in walking gait recognition). There is something called Artificial Super Intelligence (ASI) that "would solve problems that are currently beyond human comprehension and may have the ability to improve themselves without human intervention."

Twenty Ways It will change the World (from a human viewpoint):

1.

2. Creativity would be at an all time high as humans integrate their minds more and more with AI and computers

Day 1: Presentation 4

Title: The Essence of Sound Biblical Hermeneutics: Grammatical-Historical-Contextual

Author: Ray Mondragon

"Ray Mondragon is Professor of Hermeneutics and Exegesis at Chafer Theological Seminary in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He is also a professor at Trinity SW University, Word of God Seminary in Ukraine, and professor at the International Baptist Bible College in Ukraine. He also teaches regularly at Grace Church of Albuquerque, NM.¹⁰"

Pre-Tribulation theology is based upon a literal hermeneutic. As a result, there are often presentations at the Pre-Trib conferences that either touch on or focus on hermeneutics. This presentation encompassed three main points:

¹⁰ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Speaker_Bios.pdf

- 1. Universal Nature
- 2. In Theology
- 3. Essential Principles

Hermeneutics are "universal" in that it is not limited to just Bible interpretation. One application mentioned had to do with interpretation of the U.S. Constitution. Is it to be interpreted from the perspective of the writers of the Constitution and what they intended or is it a living document to be adapted to some political agenda for what people today intend?

Thees kinds of issues apply in theology. Dispensational theology is based upon a literal interpretation of the Bible. Some theologies today look at the "1,000 years" in Revelation chapter 20 as "a very long time." Dispensational theology, based upon a literal interpretation says 1,000 years means just that, 1,000 literal years.

Another name for literal interpretation is "GRAMMATICAL-HISTORICAL-CONTEXTUAL METHOD." Study of the text starts by looking at the grammar. What does the text say based upon the grammar of the language. Then put the text in its historical context. Then look at the internal contexts: The verse context, the chapter context and the context of the book.

Since Herman has been over this material which is voluminous, I will leave it at that.

Day 1 (Monday): Keynote Speaker

Title: The Second Coming of Elijah: Malachi 4:4-6

Author: Carl Broggi

"Carl Broggi is Pastor of Community Bible church in Beaufort, South Carolina since 1990. He is a graduate of Boston College (BS), Dallas Theological Seminary (ThM), and Southwestern Baptist Seminary (DMin)."

"In addition to his ministry as a pastor, he hosts a live weekly radio program called The Bible Line which can be heard on WAGP.net 88.7 FM in Beaufort, South Carolina. People from across the nation call in or email to ask Dr. Broggi questions about the Bible. He is also a regular guest on Stand in the Gap radio. Carl's radio ministry is called Search the Scriptures. Carl's busy pastor's schedule has him preaching/teaching through entire books of the Bible as well as shepherding his congregation.¹¹"

I can't say much about this presentation. It was given at a dinner at night. I was not in attendance. However, the video will be available at some time in the future. We can revisit this at that time.

Day 2 (Tuesday): Presentation 1

Title: Rebuilding the Temple as an End-Time Sign

Author: Dr. Randall Price

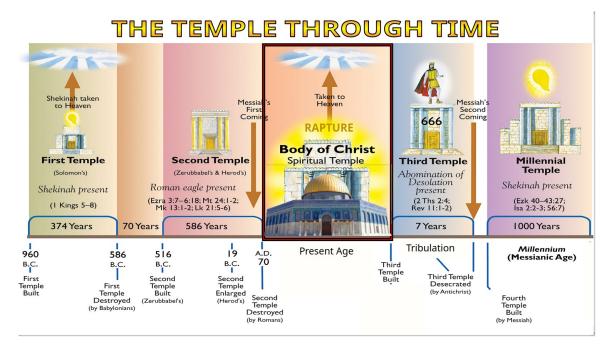
"Dr. Randall Price serves as President for World of the Bible Ministries. He is a Biblical archaeologist and retired Liberty University Distinguished Research Professor. Dr. Price has led people all over the world through his archaeological digs, guided tours, with over a hundred Middle East trips under his belt."

"He has written many books and articles, been part of documentaries, and is a frequent conference speaker. He has also served on the board of the Pre-Trib Research Center for many years.¹²"

¹¹ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Speaker_Bios.pdf

¹² https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Speaker_Bios.pdf

There is no temple on the temple mount today. But, according to Scriptures there will be a temple in the Tribulation. So, when the temple is built you know the Tribulation is not far off. It is a sign of the "end-times." Dr. Price's presentation in PowerPoint was a huge 150 slides long and something like 600+ MB in size. It has many illustrations and pictures. One the I copied here is helpful in seeing the different temples on the temple mount through time¹³:



Something that surprised me is that there is less Muslim concern at Jews worshiping on the temple mount today.

Something I have talked about previously is that there is a Temple Institute that is ready to build, staff and operated a temple. What did surprise me is that there is more than one such organization.

Day 2 (Tuesday): Presentation 2

Title: The Beautiful Simplicity of the Rapture—A Gypsy Testimony

¹³ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Price-Rebuilding_Temple_as_an_End-Time_Sign-Slides.pptx

Author: Paul Wilkinson

"Paul Wilkinson is our brother in the Lord from Oldham, Lancashire, which is located in the north of England. He received his doctorate at the University of Manchester with a focus on Zionism and John Nelson Darby."

"He is the author of For Zion's Sake: Christian Zionism and the Role of John Nelson Darby. Also, The Rise of Christian Palestinianism. He has been a research consultant for documentaries and currently serves as a council member of the prophetic witness movement international.¹⁴"

This presentation provided insight into "gypsy" evangelism. A true gypsy is a "Romani" that comes from the region of Romania, as I understand it. However, gypsies are often seen throughout Europe, often found in small bands of people.

Day 2 (Tuesday): Presentation 3

Title: The Identity of the Seven-Sealed Scroll in Revelation 5

Author: Dr. Robert Thurman

"Robert Thurman is president of Brookes Bible College in Saint Louis, MO. He was born and raised in St. Louis. He is a graduate of Southeastern Baptist Theological College in Wake Forest, North Carolina (BA in Biblical Studies) and The Master's College in Santa Clarita, California (MA in Biblical Studies). He is currently in the final phase of a Doctor of Ministry degree (D. Min) through The Master's Seminary in Los Angeles, California. Robert has served in churches in Missouri, Illinois, Louisiana, and North Carolina. While serving as a church planter in North Carolina, he also taught in Christian schools and served as a K–12 principal. He has pastored Forest Park Bible Church in

¹⁴ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Speaker_Bios.pdf

St. Louis since 2011. He began teaching at Brookes in 2013, and he became the president of Brookes in 2016. He has been married to Ashley since 1995. Together they have a son, Cole, and a daughter, Elise.¹⁵"

In Revelation chapter 5, there is the declaration that no one could open the seven sealed scroll. The question that Dr. Thurman addresses is the identity of that scroll. What is it? There are many different views on this. "Proposals include the Lamb's Book of Life, the Torah, or the Torah and the Prophets. Some assert that the scroll contains all the blessings and curses stipulated in the Mosaic Covenant.¹⁶ Still others see the scroll as representing the entire Word of God.¹⁷ Some scholars see the scroll as representing the New Covenant.¹⁸ But others maintain that the scroll is a last will and testament containing the saints' inheritance.¹⁹ Many see the scroll as a divorce document that Christ will present to unfaithful Jerusalem so that He can marry the New Jerusalem.²⁰ Others believe that the scroll contains God's complete plan for the ages from beginning to end.²¹ Other views exist as well, including the viewpoint that the identity of the scroll does not matter.²²"

"It is unfortunate that so many disparate views exist because it is evident that revealing this scroll and its opening by Christ is a pivotal moment in future prophecy. It is something about which God wants us to know and understand. When Christ the Lamb takes this scroll from the Father's

¹⁵ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Speaker_Bios.pdf

¹⁶ J. P. M. Sweet, *Revelation* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979), 120-123.

¹⁷ William Bruce, *Commentary on the Revelation of St. John*, Second Edition ed. (London: James Speirs, 1906), 125.

¹⁸ Robert Govett, *The Apocalypse Expounded by Scripture* (London: C.J. Thynne & Jarvis, 1929), 118.

¹⁹ George Raymond Beasley-Murray, *The Book of Revelation: Based on the Revised Standard Version* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1981), 120-121.

J. Massyngberde Ford, "The Divorce Bill of the Lamb and the Scroll of the Suspected Adulteress: A Note on Apoc. 5,1 and 10, 8-11," *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period* 2 (1971): 136-143.

²¹ Simon Kistemaker and William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2001), 202.

²² https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Vlach-How_Jesus_Fulfills_OT-Paper.docx

open hand, great rejoicing erupts in heaven. Understanding the identity of the scroll should cause God's people here on earth to erupt in great joy and hope.²³"

What Dr. Thurman suggests is that the scroll is the title deed of the earth. In his words:

"Scholars have debated the identity of the seven-sealed scroll in John's heavenly vision, offering inventive interpretations. However, the scroll is best understood as containing the title deed to the earth that Jesus, the God-Man, will rightfully claim. Each broken seal reveals a new judgment that will fall upon the earth to subdue and conquer Jesus' enemies. Once the seal is open, He reigns upon the earth with His redeemed people for 1,000 years. When Jesus took the scroll out of the Father's hand, all the hosts of heaven rejoiced. Understanding the scroll should produce rejoicing in those who have trusted in Christ.²⁴"

Something not specifically mentioned throughout the conference is the Angelic Conflict.

Day 2 (Tuesday) : Presentation 4

Title: How Jesus Fulfills the Old Testament

Author: Dr. Mike Vlach

"Mike Vlach is professor of Theology at Shepherds Theological Seminary. He has a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, a Master of Divinity degree from The Master's Seminary, and a PhD in Systematic Theology from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Dr. Vlach was awarded the 2008 Franz Delitzsch

²³ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Thurman-Seven_Sealed_Scroll_of_Revelation-Paper.docx

²⁴ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Thurman-Seven_Sealed_Scroll_of_Revelation-Paper.docx

Prize for his dissertation, The Church as a Replacement of Israel: An Analysis of Supersessionism. Dr. Vlach taught at The Master's Seminary for 15 years where he served as Professor of Theology. While there he was Managing Editor of The Master's Seminary Journal for nine years."

"A regular conference speaker, Dr. Vlach has appeared on The History Channel. He is most known for his books, Has the Church Replaced Israel: A Theological Evaluation (B&H), and He Will Reign Forever: A Biblical Theology of the Kingdom of God (Lampion).²⁵"

While this presentation was OK, I think the way that Robby Dean teaches this is better. I have at some point in the past taught this from Robby Dean's perspective.

Day 2: Presentation 5

Title: Discussion of Current Events

Author: Bill Koenig

Bill Koenig is a correspondent who has his own websites that report on the news. His presentation was interesting because it related catastrophes in current events to Biblical principles. One of his websites to look at is https://www.watch.org/

Day 3 (Wednesday): Presentation 1

Title: Premillennialism and Mistaken Identities in Genesis 3–4.

Author: Jason Coke

"Jason Coke grew up in Canada and earned degrees in Industrial Engineering and business administration. He worked as a consultant in

²⁵ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Speaker_Bios.pdf

the Middle East for nearly a decade, and his love for the international church and the Bible inspired him to attend Dallas Theological Seminary where he earned his Master of Theology degree. At the same institution, he is currently a third-year PhD student in Bible Exposition. He is married to his wife Joan, and they have one son named Gabriel. Jason hopes to return to the Middle East to serve as a pastor and seminary professor.²⁶"

The essence of this presentation identified some issues with translation of the words in Genesis 3:16 and Genesis 4:1.

For Genesis 3:16 he started with the NIV translation

Genesis 3:16 (NIV) To the woman he said, "I will make your <u>pains</u> in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

There are issues in the translation of individual words. Without going into the lexical analysis presented at the conference, I will just provide the final result that Jason Coke arrived at:

Pains. The meaning is "sorrow." The Hebrew word can mean "Sorrow, pain, toil, labor.²⁷"

Birth (childbearing). The lexical meaning is "conception" not birth²⁸. The King James gets it correct. Next week if we deal with the topic of the "Virgin Birth," we will revisit this topic since it is the "virgin conception" not birth. It is true that the conception leads to birth, but the "virgin" conception, the uniting of two sets of DNA was done without a

²⁶ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Speaker_Bios.pdf

²⁷ https://biblehub.com/hebrew/6093.htm

²⁸ https://biblehub.com/hebrew/2032.htm

male partner, Joseph. The Holy Spirit provided the necessary DNA to produce a sinless male.

Children. The Hebrew word usually means son. In the plural, it would mean "sons." Obviously it can mean children. But, there is another word that might be more appropriately translated "children."

Over. The preposition translated "over" is a Hebrew word that can mean "with." There is another preposition which might be translated "over." This was the most contentious of the issues in the audience. But something amazing happened as a result of this presentation, partly focused on this word. People got our their Bibles and consulted what was written there. No other presentation got the audience to engage with the speaker the way this one did. With all the opposition that this young man got to his presentation, he got people into the Word. Bravo.

Husband. The Hebrew word is literally "man." It is often translated as "husband" depending upon the context.

From his slide presentation²⁹:

Actual Meaning	Translation
Sorrow	Pain
Conception	Birth
Sons	Children
With	Over
Man	Husband

²⁹ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Coke-Premillennialism_and_Mistaken_Identities_in_Genesis_3-4-Slides.pdf

This results, for Jason Coke, in a revised translation³⁰:

To the woman he said, "I will make your pains in childbearing very severe multiply your sorrow and your conception; with painful labor sorrow you will give birth to children sons. Your desire will be for your husband man, and / because he will rule over with you."

He related this and the additional material he developed on Genesis 4:1 to the expectation of the Messiah as the "seed" of the woman.

Day 3 (Wednesday): Presentation 2

Title: The Gog-Magog War: Current Stage-Setting

Author: Mark Hitchcock

"Mark Hitchcock has authored over 30 books related to Bible prophecy. Mark is one of the top-selling Christian authors. He has a BS from Oklahoma State University, a JD in law from Oklahoma City University School of Law and has earned a ThM and PhD degrees from Dallas Theological Seminary and is an associate professor at Dallas. He lives in Edmond, Oklahoma with his wife Cheryl and serves as Senior Pastor of Faith Bible Church. He and his wife have two married sons and three grandchildren. He serves on the board of the Pre-Trib Research Center.³¹"

³⁰ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Coke-Premillennialism_and_Mistaken_Identities_in_Genesis_3-4-Slides.pdf

³¹ https://www.pre-trib.org/images/2024_Conference/2024-Pre-Trib-Speaker_Bios.pdf

One of the topics covered by Dr. Hitchcock is the Gog-Magog attack on Israel. When will it occur?

Current events point toward the Gog-Magog War.

The timing could be before the rapture or before the Tribulation if the precondition of rest and security is in place.

The coalition is coalescing before our eyes.