

Is Globalization a Fulfillment of Christian Biblical Prophecy?

Toni Williams
Georgia Southern University

This paper will explore the changes in globalization over the past 50+ years as it relates to the Christian Bible. Given the Christian view that many Old Testament prophecies have been fulfilled, these prophecies will be described in detail. It will examine financial events and how they appear to correlate with Biblical prophecy. In particular, there will be an emphasis on the move to one world currency and a one-world government. The potential for a unified economy and government to solve the world's economic woes will be examined. The financial and political events that substantiate these prophecies will be discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Is globalization a fulfillment of Christian Biblical prophecy? Does the move to one-world currency and one-world government line up with prophecy penned in the Bible thousands of years ago? Globalization is a term used by nearly every political and financial leader today. The term is not new to most. Webster defines it as “the development of an increasingly integrated global economy marked especially by free trade, free flow of capital, and the tapping of cheaper foreign labor markets” (Merriam-Webster, 11th ed.). The twenty-first century may go down in history as the century of globalization. In recent years, improvements in technology have nurtured an interdependence among nations. No advanced nation of any kind can survive today without interacting with the global economy. There is almost no such thing as a product that is not dependent on parts, trade, or investments from foreign countries.

Although the term globalization did not appear in dictionaries until 1951, the concept of globalization has been around for centuries. There are many arguments about the inception of true globalization, but the focus of this paper is on the changes in currencies and governments globally. There are organizations whose regulations have impacted the way the fiscal systems of the world operate; these organizations will be discussed. The impact of these organizations on the apparent move to one world currency and a one-world government will be considered.

To set the stage for the changes in these organizations, the prophecies of the Christian Bible that have already been fulfilled must be discussed. Many of the books of the Old Testament are considered books of prophecy. The prophecies penned in these books will be explained. The Bible contains colorful imagery, metaphors, and symbolism; the significance of these will be defined. The final book of the Bible, Revelation, gives a symbolic picture of what the world will look like in the “end times”. This book describes a time when the world will be under the rule of one government, one economic system, and one leader. Much of the imagery of this book is similar to the imagery used in the Old Testament book of Daniel.

To understand why Christians believe that globalization is a fulfillment of Biblical prophecy, the prophecies that have already been fulfilled must be understood. A few of these prophecies date back to 605 B.C. In the book of Daniel, the writer, while in captivity in ancient Babylon, interpreted the dreams of King Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel described three kingdoms inferior to Babylon. At the time of Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon was the strongest nation in the world. It was hard to imagine this empire being overthrown. The three kingdoms in the King's dream are believed to be the Medo-Persian Empire, the Greek Empire, and the Roman Empire. The Medo-Persian Empire was in control, followed by the Greek Empire and, finally, the Roman Empire.

In the book of Daniel, the writer also had a vision some 50 years after interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream. This dream was more than five hundred years before the birth of the Roman Empire. This dream described what Christians believe is a revived Roman Empire. The prophet predicted that the restoration of this empire would be in the form of ten nations. Christians believe that this empire would eventually become the greatest empire the world has ever seen. Fifteen centuries after the fall of the Roman Empire, the nations of Europe are methodically transforming themselves into what Christians believe to be the revived Roman Empire that was described in the prophecies of Daniel.

Biblical prophecy warns that in the end times, ten nations will emerge out of the old Roman Empire and control Europe politically and economically. Today, we are currently seeing a rebirth of the Roman Empire, or an altered form of it. This seems to align with the prophecy of Daniel. Gradually but steadily, the nations of Europe have come together, creating a modern replica of the ancient Roman Empire. Europe is more integrated today than any time since the days of ancient Rome. The European Union is now considered by many to be the second most powerful political and economic force in our world (www.fact-index.com).

Further review of these topics will go into much greater detail about the prophecies that have already been fulfilled, the changes made to the world-wide organizations such as International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Trade Organization (WTO), United Nations (UN), and the European Union (EU), and how these changes correlate to Christian Biblical prophecy. Details from this study will give the reader a better understanding as to why Christians believe that globalization is a fulfillment of Biblical prophecy.

Understanding imagery and symbolism

The use of imagery and symbolism in the Bible confuses many readers. Bible scholars understand that the use of numbers has a special meaning in the Bible. Colors have significance in the Bible as well as animals. In order to understand the imagery and symbolism, it is important to understand the underlying meaning of numbers and descriptive language of the Bible. Satan is referred to as a serpent; the use of beasts refers to earthly kingdoms. The color red refers to sin, violence or destruction. The use of crowns describes control or authority. Horns represent strength or power.

Not all numbers in the Bible have a special meaning, but in the prophetic books, the numbers used have significance. Three is the symbol of the Trinity. The number six is the number of man. In the book of Genesis, man was created on the sixth day:

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.....God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning – the sixth day” (Genesis 1: 27; 31, New International Version [NIV]).

In Revelation, it represents the wicked man, the Antichrist:

“This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man's number. His number is 666” (Revelation 13:18, NIV).

The number seven represents completeness. This number is used many times in Revelation. Described in Revelation are seven churches (1:9–3:22), seven seals (6:1–8:1), seven trumpets (8:2–11:19), seven symbolic figures (12-14), seven bowls (15-16), seven judgments (17:1–19:10), and seven triumphs (19:11–22:21). Bible scholars use the meanings of this imagery in order to understand the true meaning of the scripture and the fulfillment of prophecy.

Prophecies already fulfilled

The Bible is full of prophecies, many of which have already been fulfilled. Prophecy is defined as “a statement that something will happen in the future” (www.merriam-webster.com). The prophets of the Bible believed they were sent by God with a message from God. These prophecies were delivered in both verbal and written communication. In many cases, the written communication used symbolism. There are hundreds of examples of prophecy in the Bible that gave us history in advance. For example, the Old Testament contains many verses pertaining to the birth of Jesus. Micah 5:2 predicted Jesus would be born in Bethlehem; Isaiah 7:14 states that he would be born of a virgin; both Genesis and Numbers state that he would be from the lineage of Abraham and Jacob. The New Testament, written hundreds of years later, describes the fulfillment of these prophecies in detail.

Daniel’s Prophecies

When most readers of the Bible think of Daniel, they think of the story of Daniel being thrown into the lion’s den as a result of refusing to pray to Darius the Mede (Daniel 6), or the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego being thrown into the fiery furnace (Daniel 3). The visions interpreted by Daniel while in captivity in Babylon in the sixth century B.C. are prophetic in nature. The first of Daniel’s prophecies was the interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. The king’s dream consisted of a statue with a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, stomach and thighs of bronze, legs of iron and feet of a mixture of iron and clay:

“You looked, O king, and there before you stood a large statue – an enormous, dazzling statue, awesome in appearance. The head of the statue was made of pure gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay” (Daniel 2:31-33, NIV).

The statue represents four world empires or kingdoms:

“This was the dream, and now we will interpret it to the king. You, O king, are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory; in your hands he has placed mankind and the beasts of the field and the birds of the air. Wherever they live, he has made you ruler over them all. You are that head of gold. After you, another kingdom will rise, inferior to yours. Next a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth. Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron – for iron breaks and smashes everything – and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others. Just as you saw that the feet and toes were partly of baked clay and partly of iron, so this will be a divided kingdom; yet it will have some of the strength of iron in it, even as you saw iron mixed with clay. As the toes were partly iron and partly clay, so this kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle. And just as you saw the iron mixed with baked clay, so the people will be a mixture and will not remain united, any more than iron mixes with clay” (Daniel 2:36-43, NIV).

The first is the kingdom of Babylon. It is represented by the head of gold. The kingdom of Babylon was inundated with gold. At the time of this dream, Babylon was the greatest empire in the world. For this empire to be overtaken was unfathomable. The second empire represents the Medo-Persian Empire. The two arms of silver represented the arrangement of the two nations ruling together. This empire became the greatest in 538 B.C. The third empire, represented by the stomach and thighs of bronze, is the Greek empire, who came into power in 330 B.C. under the reign of Alexander the Great. During his time, the soldiers he commanded wore bronze armor and their weapons were made of bronze. The final empire is the Roman Empire, characterized by the legs of iron. The Roman Empire has always been known for its “iron legions”. Rome came into power in 63 B.C. The ten toes on the statue represent a revived Roman empire of 10 powers that will arise at the end of time. The Bible clearly states that part of this empire will be strong and part of the empire will be weak.

In the first year of King Belshazzar’s reign, Daniel had a dream. In the dream, Daniel saw four animals coming from the sea. The animals were a lion with the wings of an eagle, a lop-sided bear, a four-

winged leopard, and an unknown beast that was “terrifying and frightening and very powerful” (Daniel 7:7, NIV). The lion is used in the Bible as a symbol of power and authority. Archaeology has revealed that a lion with eagle’s wings was a common symbol in Babylonian designs and sculptures. The lion represented Babylon. The lop-sided bear represented the Medes and Persians. The bear was raised up on one of its sides, representing the inequality of the two powers of the Medo-Persian alliance. The four-winged leopard represented Greece, with its four commanders who divided the kingdom of Alexander the Great after his death. The final beast had ten horns and its teeth were iron, the same metal as the fourth kingdom of the statue. Three of the ten horns are uprooted by a “little horn”, the ruler who will dominate the world during the Tribulation period (Daniel 7:7-8). The Tribulation period is described in detail in the book of Revelation.

The next interpretation by Daniel was under the reign of King Belshazzar (553-539 B.C.). During a banquet, the king saw a hand writing on the wall. The words written were “Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin” (Daniel 5:25, NIV). Daniel told the king that the meaning of these words indicated that his kingdom would soon come to an end and would be divided and given to the Medes and Persians. That same night, King Belshazzar was killed and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom (Daniel 5:26-31).

All of the prophecies in both Nebuchadnezzar’s dream and Daniel’s dream have been fulfilled except for the final kingdom that is described in both Daniel and Revelation.

Correlation of Daniel’s prophecies with the book of Revelation

There are correlations between the prophecies in the book of Daniel and the book of Revelation. In this book, John sees the “beast”, also called the Antichrist, rising out of the sea having seven heads and ten horns:

And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority” (Revelation 13:1-2, NIV).

Linking this with Daniel’s similar one (Daniel 7:16-24), it is concluded that some sort of world system will be installed by the beast, the most powerful “horn”, who will defeat the other nine. The ten-nation empire is also seen in Daniel’s image of the statue in Daniel 2:41-42, where he pictures the final world government consisting of ten empires represented by ten toes of the statue.

Changes in Government

The Bretton Woods Conference of 1944 served as a catalyst for many organizations that oversee the financial transactions of our global economy today. The purpose of the conference was to stabilize and reorganize the world economy. Out of this conference, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank Group, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trades (GATT) were formed; on January 1, 1995, the World Trade Organization (WTO) replaced GATT (www.wto.org).

In December 1945, the Articles of Agreement for the IMF was signed by 29 governments (imf.org) The IMF has a strategy to centralize control of international finance. In the event of an international crisis, it would be easy for the IMF to step in and seize control of the nations’ currencies and economies. The World Bank gives low interest rate loans to developing countries. The establishment of these groups created a surge in international banking and global lending.

In 1945, the United Nations was formed by 51 member states. Within 10 years, the membership had grown to 76 members. The membership continued to grow, and by the 50th anniversary of the UN, the membership had reached 193 members. The purpose of the United Nations is to ensure peace, promote humanitarianism efforts, and enforce international laws (www.un.org). Many believe that the formation of the United Nations is related to biblical prophecy. The role that the UN plays in the global political environment is indicative of the move to a one-world government.

Another prophecy connected with the United Nations is in Revelation 17-18 where “Babylon the Great” is condemned. Babylon the Great in end-times is an assembly of nations attempting to unite

against God. In 2009, the largest and most expensive U.S. Embassy in the world opened in Baghdad, 53 miles from Babylon. The 104-acre, twenty-seven-building complex is situated on the banks of the Tigris River (www.cnn.com). In his book, “The Coming Economic Armageddon”, David Jeremiah states, “Today the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is also pumping millions of dollars into Babylon. With the help of private donors, the UN hopes to turn Babylon into a thriving center of tourism and commerce. If everything goes according to plan, Babylon will be a cultural center complete with shopping malls, hotels, and maybe even a theme park” (Jeremiah, 2010). In the book of Revelation, John records the following:

“After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendor. With a mighty voice he shouted: ‘Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit, a haunt for every unclean and detestable bird’ (Revelation 18:1-2, NIV).

Bible scholars predict that there will be a rebuilding of Babylon, or the region of Babylon. Babylon will be one of the three capitals of the final world leader, the Antichrist. The political world will be ruled from Rome (Revelation 17), the religious world from Jerusalem (2 Thessalonians 2), and the economic world from Babylon (Revelation 18).

The World Trade Organization is comprised of 162 member countries. The purpose of the WTO is to help manage and regulate the global marketplace. The WTO administers trade agreements, oversees trade negotiations and disputes, and helps develop trade policies. Thirty-five countries have joined the WTO since 1995(www.wto.org).

Organizations such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, and the International Monetary Fund promote an arrangement encouraging a one-world government. Anti-globalists argue that if a country turns to the IMF and the World Bank for financial assistance, they will be required to essentially abandon their national sovereignty. These organizations will supposedly do away with the need for diverse world governments. Objectives include a sense of unity, oneness in politics, religion, moral values, and the use of a single, world-wide currency (Jeffrey, 2009).

The European Union (EU)

The modern European Union began when six nations signed the Treaty of Rome in 1957. On February 7, 1992, the 12 nations of the European Community signed a unity treaty paving the way for fulfillment for the full political union of Europe. “The significance of the new treaty is that it sets in motion Europe’s desire to increase its international political force in proportion to its growing economic clout. It also set in motion plans for monetary union, including a central bank and a single European currency” (LaHaye & Hindson, 2007). In 2015, the EU was comprised of 28 members (europa.eu). The unification of these countries created free trade and the potential for a unified form of government.

The revived Roman Empire – EU

Most victorious empires from history immersed themselves into the culture, tradition, and technologies of the nations they conquered. The Roman Empire was different. They required their governors to crush the laws, religion, language, and society of every nation conquered. Rome replaced existing cultures with Roman laws and cultures. The impact of Rome on Western societies is unprecedented. After thousands of years, Europe, the Middle East, and even North America have retained forms of government, language, culture, and laws derived from those of ancient Rome. The biblical prophets predicted that Rome would rise again to world dominance at the end of the age.

The idea of a revived Roman Empire seems unfathomable at this point in time. Many of the EU countries are in a major financial crisis. The Bible does not specifically say that the new empire will be centered in Rome, but the belief is that the area of Rome will be the new financial capital. Within the past week, the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union. The speculation is that many other EU countries will follow. If so, this may very well be the beginning of the revived empire described in the book of Daniel.

The idea of the United Kingdom leaving the EU leaves financial analysts and economic experts scratching their heads. The financial impact that this move will have has yet to be determined. Even though the UK deciding to leave in what was a very close vote makes little economic sense, it makes perfect sense prophetically. Before the vote, the European Union was comprised of 28 nations. Bible prophecy indicates that there will be a major financial and political crisis that will pave the way for an economic leader and political leader to take control and rectify the woes of the world. The changes that have taken place give Europe the potential to become a unified power, both politically and economically.

Changes in currency

The US dollar is the most widely used currency in the world. Many countries accept it as an alternative to their own currency. Both Ecuador and El Salvador adopted the US dollar in 2000. In 1999, the Euro became the second most important currency in the world, replacing twelve other currencies (www.globalfinancialdata.com). To date, 19 countries use the euro as their currency (ec.europa.eu). The euro simplifies foreign exchange problems and thereby reduces significant currency exchange costs. Adoption of the euro paved the way for fully integrated Europe-wide tax systems as well as common fiscal and monetary policy.

Even though there has been a huge consolidation of currencies taking place globally, the move to a cashless system is being implemented. From an economic standpoint, this is a natural evolution of the way to do business. From a prophetic standpoint, these events are not random. There is a network being put in place that can monitor and control every financial transaction. This same system will eventually be used to monitor and control the distribution of goods and services, including the world's food supply. One day this financial network will be controlled by one person, the one who the Bible calls the beast:

“He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name” (Revelation 13:16-17, NIV).

It is important to note that the use of one global currency is a significant part of the prophecy of what will take place in the end times. In order for the world leader, known as the Antichrist, to rule economically, he will need to have a method to control all financial transactions. With the rapid changes in technology and the global acceptance of cashless transactions, the financial system is being constructed in order for these events to take place.

CONCLUSION

Until our generation, it has been impossible for any one person or government to completely control the world's economic system. The changes that have taken place over the past 50-60 years economically and politically have paved the way for a unified government and unified economic system. With the growth in the United Nations and the major changes in currency, the foundation has been laid for Biblical prophecy to be fulfilled. The most recent changes in the European Union leave Bible scholars watching for more changes to see if a Revived Roman Empire will come to fruition. The changes have been gradual, and in the eyes of the world, have just been part of the normal course of business. Globalization has become commonplace. Changes in technology excite the average consumer by creating conveniences never before experienced. The integration of global culture, politics, and economies are embraced worldwide. However, the prophecies of the writers of Daniel and Revelation are being fulfilled before our eyes. These changes that are taking place have been part of a carefully crafted plan that was written about thousands of years ago.

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