

For Some, It Could Be Time for a Thicker Pair of Glasses

Many years ago, I watched a movie titled *My Cousin Vinny*, which starred Joe Pesci as a lawyer from New York who was defending his cousin who was being tried for murder in Alabama.

During the trial, Pesci's character was cross-examining a witness—an older lady who was wearing very thick glasses. As a part of the questioning, Pesci asked the witness how her sight was, and she responded that with her glasses on, her vision was pretty good. Pesci then took a tape measure and walked about 75 feet from the witness and asked the witness to tell him how many fingers he was holding up. After she provided an incorrect answer, Pesci walked up to the witness and said, "Maybe it's time for some new glasses."

I was thinking about this scene while I was listening to some American prophecy preachers proclaiming their interpretation of the events described in the eschatological books of the Bible. Each preacher shared their thoughts on what would be coming upon the earth and the events that would lead up to the "Tribulation" and the "return of Messiah" known by many as the "rapture." The more I listened to them, the more I began to realize that, for the American body of believers, "maybe it's time for some new glasses."

Why, you may ask? Each of these men, who were considered experts in the fields of prophecy, had based their entire eschatological foundation upon the Scriptures as they relate to the United States of America. They failed completely to even consider that every book of the Bible and every event that takes place in those books are written only from the viewpoint of the nation Israel.

Israel is the center of all biblical text and of the understanding of all biblical text. If you shift the focus from Israel and the Middle East to any other location or nation, you will always come to errant conclusions about the fulfillment of the prophetic statements found on the pages of the Scriptures.

One clear example is found when considering those who proclaim that the body of Messiah will be removed from the earth before the beginning of the Tribulation. This is a popular position for American theologians. I would ask those teachers to please try preaching that position to the believers in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon or Egypt who are daily being martyred because of their unwavering faith in Yeshua as their Messiah.

It would be impossible to convince those of such a great testimony that what they were going through was not to be considered the tribulation simply because they don't live within the geographical coordinates known as the United States of America.

When one reads the Bible and takes its words out of the context of the geographical boundaries of the Promised Land and its surrounding neighbors, the distortion is even greater than the distortion caused by the incorrect eyeglass prescription worn by the witness in the movie.

It is only when the worldwide body of Messiah decides that it is time to get a "new pair of glasses," it will allow us to view the Bible within the context of the Bible itself, that we will begin to understand and see the signs of the times. {eoa}

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