**Lesson: Portents in the Sky**

There is much debate about the existence of unidentified objects that soar in the air, and even below the sea. Some say these are alien spacecraft inhabited by extraterrestrial beings; others say they are top secret experimental vehicles being built by the USA or some foreign nation. As a research psychologist observing by night a military operation in a remote area of the country over two decades ago, my driver and I both saw an aerial object flying high above in the jet stream as we lay upon the hood of our truck awaited a convoy. It flew as a discus creating a bright arc, appearing and disappearing three times, while traversing about ninety degrees of space in less than a minute (roughly, Mach 3). Certainly, there are spacecraft that can fly ten times that, such as during a launch at Cape Canaveral. Of course, when it comes to military secrets, what they have is far more advanced than what the general population knows about. Even top-secret things that I was privy to as a military scientist were nothing compared to stuff classified at higher levels (e.g., “compartmentalized”). A very selected few ever have a “need to know” about what is really going on in the highest echelons of governments.

Suffice it to say that there is enough evidence to suggest that UFOs exist. The question remains as to the origin of occurrences which cannot be explained. Despite the countless theories being suggested, rarely if ever is it postulated that these appearances might be portents from God, or His messengers (angels). Similarly, false portents sometimes are sent by Satan and his horde of demons. A case can be made that these sightings are spiritual phenomena, which are becoming more frequent as the end of days nears.

* JOE 2:30–32; ACT 2:19–21 ~ The Lord will show wonders in heaven above and the earth below: blood, fire, and smoke. The sun will turn into darkness and the moon into blood before the day of the Lord occurs. Whomever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.
* LUK 21:25–27 ~ Jesus said there will be signs in the sun, moon, stars, and on the earth that will distress the nations, with the sea and the waves roaring. People’s hearts will fail them when they see these things, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. Next, we will see the Son of Man arriving with power in a cloud of great glory.
* 2 TH 2:9–11 ~ Those false signs and fake miracles come from Satan. Such deceptions belong to the self-righteous who will die, for they did not believe the truth that could save them. God will let them believe their lies and perish.
* REV 6:12–15 ~ There was a great earthquake; the sun became black and the moon became like blood. The stars fell from the sky. The heaven departed as a scroll being rolled together. People tried to hide and take cover, especially the rich and powerful.
* REV 12:1–2 ~ In heaven there appeared a great wonder, a woman clothed in the sun and the moon under her feet, and upon her head were twelve stars. (More from this scripture is given below.)
* REV 15:1 ~ I (John) saw another marvelous sign in heaven: seven angels bringing the seven last plagues, filled with the wrath of God.
* REV 16:13–17 ~ I saw three evil spirits leaping like frogs out of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet; they are spirits of the devil working false miracles throughout the earth, gathering armies for battle against God Almighty. They assembled their armies at a place called Armageddon near the mountain of Megiddo. Then the seventh angel poured out his vial, and a voice from heaven said, “It is over.”

There are instances in the Bible where prophets have seen visions of objects flying in the sky with peculiar shapes and dynamics. Since human flight was yet to be discovered, they described these events in terms familiar to them, such as winged angels, chariots of fire, or a flying scroll. No doubt, there is symbolism attached to these events, not to mention meaning to be derived by looking at the content and the scriptures that surround these passages, or that connect with them elsewhere in the Bible. When you see many passages grouped together it is easy to see the power of God and His angels in many of them.

* 2 KI 2:9–12 ~ Elijah brought Elisha with him, and the two prophets crossed the river after Elijah had parted it with his cloak. Elijah granted Elisha a wish, and Elisha responded he would like to have twice the prophetic power of his mentor. Elijah responded that his request would be granted if he was allowed to view Elijah’s departure from this earth. About that time a chariot of fire with horses of fire came between the two men, and swept Elijah into heaven like a whirlwind. Elisha cried unto God while Elijah disappeared.
* 2 KI 6–17 ~The Syrian army had surrounded Elisha and his servant in order to capture Elisha. The servant was very afraid. So, Elisha prayed that God might open his eyes. Quickly he could see what Elijah saw: that the Syrian army were themselves surrounded by angels with chariots and horses of fire. Then Elisha prayed to God to blind their enemies so they could escape, and God granted his request.
* EZE 1:4—EZE 2:3 ~ Ezekiel saw a fiery whirlwind coming down from the sky, with bright yellow color emerging from the center. Then emerged four living creatures that looked like men, but each had four faces and four wings. Their wings were joined together and remained so wherever they went. Each had one face of a man; to the right the face of a lion to left the face of an ox; the fourth face was of an eagle. Two wings covered their bodies, and two wings were joined with angels on each side. And they followed the spirit, these creatures shining as burning coals or lamps; out of the fire within them came bolts of lightning. As Ezekiel observed this phenomenon there appeared wheels, and they worked like a wheel within each wheel. The rings of each wheel were ominous, with eyes all around them. And the wheels went wherever the creatures went, as they followed the spirit, for the spirit of each creature was in the wheels. A loud noise like many waterfalls could be heard as they maneuvered. When they stood firm, they let down their wings. And a voice came from the heavens, and above that firmament was a throne like sapphire stone, and on the throne sat a man; and fire surrounded the throne and the man, creating the appearance of an emanating rainbow. This was the manifestation of the glory of the Lord. When Ezekiel saw it, he fell on his face hearing a voice speak to him saying, “Son of man stand up, and listen to me carefully. I am sending you to the children of Israel, a rebellious nation where their fathers have transgressed up to this very day.”
* ZEC 5:1–4 ~ Zechariah looked up and saw a flying scroll some twenty cubits long (thirty feet) and ten cubits wide (fifteen feet). And the angel said, “This is the curse that will go forth over the face of the entire earth; for everyone who steals or swears falsely by my name will be cut off.”
* REV 12:12–17 ~ Once the dragon (devil) was cast down, a curse fell upon all the earth. He arrived with great anger knowing he had but a short time. And the dragon persecuted the woman who had brought forth a male child. But the woman was given two wings like that of an eagle so she could fly away into the wilderness, to be nourished for a time, times, and half a time (assumed to be 3.5 years, or 1+2+ ½). Next, the serpent tried to wipe her out with a flood, but the earth swallowed up the water, making the dragon even more furious with the woman. He left to make war with her seed who keep the commandments and adhere to the testimony of Jesus Christ.

This is not to say that UFO sightings are acts of God, because some could be acts of humans tinkering with advanced technology or possessing secret knowledge. The least likely explanation is that of space aliens or invaders, unless you consider an angel to be an alien from outer space. Case in point, the Roswell episode which was written off by the government as a weather balloon that crash landed. Certainly, that much secrecy and cleanup would not have taken place for a weather balloon unless it was carrying something top secret. More likely, this was a ruse perpetrated by our government to keep us in the dark about what really happened. Given the proximity of the area to Holloman Air Force Base (the location of stealth fighters by the way), perhaps the military was already experimenting with composite (radar-reflective) materials on an aircraft that crashed. That could have instigated a first strike from the USSR if they thought the USA could fly into their airspace carrying a nuclear bomb without detection. Thus, there are logical alternative explanations that are every bit as difficult to prove as the farfetched ones.

By the way, God also operates on a “need to know” basis at times. Consider the knowledge imparted to St. John and St. Paul, when they saw things that they were directed not to report.

* 2 CO 12:2–4 ~ I knew a man in Christ over fourteen years ago (whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell, but God knows). This man was caught up to the third heaven, and I knew this man, how he was caught up into paradise to hear unspeakable words that I am not free to explain.
* REV 10:1–6 ~ I saw another mighty angel descend from heaven in a cloud. He had a rainbow over his head, his face shown like the sun, and his feet were as a flaming fire. In his hand was a small, opened book. The angel stepped his right foot upon the sea and the left upon the earth. He cried aloud like a roaring lion; after he spoke, seven thunders uttered their voices. I was about to write when a voice from heaven told me, “Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered and do not write them down.”

Furthermore, we do not know when Christ will return, and for good reason. If we did, we could wait until the last minute to get our house in order, whereas God wants us to be prepared now and always.

* MAT 24:36,44,50 ~ Nobody knows the day and hour, not even the angels; not even the Son of Man knows, but only the Father in heaven. For the Son of Man will come when you least expect Him.
* MAT 25:13 ~ Watch therefore, because you know neither the day nor the hour.
* 2 PE 3:10 ~ The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.
* REV 3:11 ~ Jesus said, “Behold, I come quickly. Hold fast to what you have so that nobody can take your crown away from you.” (See also REV 22:20.)

When there is something essential that everyone needs to know, God spells it out clearly so that there will be no mistake in its meaning or purpose. Consider this when you seek knowledge and truth, but do not find absolute answers.

* DAN 2:28 ~ There is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries (as opposed to hiding them).
* MAT 10:26–27; LUK 12:3 ~ Jesus said, “Don’t fear those who hate you, for everything that is hidden now will be revealed later; everything that is unknown will become known. What I tell you in darkness you will speak in the light. What you hear in private will be proclaimed from the rooftops.”
* MAT 13:35 ~ It was prophesied that Christ would talk in parables and would explain secrets that were hidden since the beginning of time (as opposed to keeping them secret).
* JOH 18:20 ~ Jesus said, “What I teach is widely known; I have preached it openly and often in church. Everyone, including the Jewish leaders, has heard what I teach. I teach nothing in private that I have not said in public.”
* ROM 16:25–26 ~ Christ has the power to save you according to the revelation of God’s mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but which is now evident by the scriptures. According to God’s will the mystery is made known to all nations on earth for the obedience of faith.

There are things that we are sure of because God has revealed them. There are some things that we can verify as true by conducting extensive research or experimentation. There are things that we do not know because the answer is deliberately hidden from us by God or by humans. And there are things that we will never know before our Lord returns, and possibly even after we have entered the promised land. Oftentimes, our need to know is based upon our readiness to know, or our capability to understand, not to mention our need to be protected. But when it comes to keeping secrets from one another, it seems that we are always found out in the end. Therefore, it is wise to tell the truth at all times and in all places. If someone needs to be protected from the truth, there should be an explanation as to why.

When you see unusual occurrences in the sky, you might consider thinking about Christ’s return. UFOs may or may not be portents, but they should remind us of who is in control, and it is not the government, or a foreign nation, or the globalists who seek to possess the world. God is sovereign and always will be, so there is no need to fear such things. It is interesting to wonder, however. As for me, I wonder what it will be like to live in the presence of Almighty God for eternity. The mere thought of this enables me to reclaim my joy, knowing that I will see Him face to face.

* JOB 19:25–26 ~ I know that my Redeemer lives, and that He will stand over the earth on the last day. And though worms will have destroyed my body in the grave, yet in my flesh I will see God.
* ISA 40:5 ~ The glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all human flesh will see it together, for the Lord has said so.
* 1 JO 3:1–2 ~ How great is the love that God the Father has for us, that we should be called His children. The world doesn’t know us because it didn’t know Him. We are His children, but we don’t know yet what we will be; we do know, however, that we will be like Him, for we will see Him as He really is.
* REV 1:7 ~ Behold, the Lord comes in the clouds, and everyone will see Him, including those who pierced Him. And all races of people will groan.

By Andrew Barber (Posted 01/02/2022)