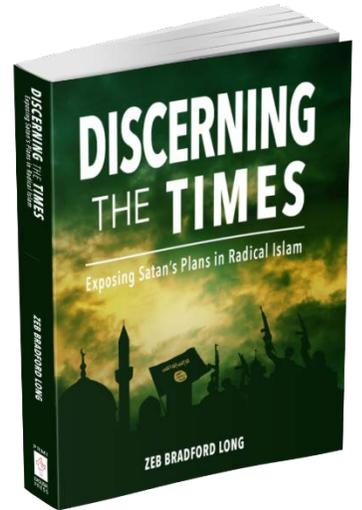


SAMPLE CHAPTER FROM DISCERNING THE TIMES

I've chosen to send you a sample chapter from the book Discerning the Times.

The urgency to research and write these books stem from a visionary encounter that I had during a time of intercessory prayer.

What follows is Chapter 2 from Discerning the Times. It's been reformatted from its print size for this method of delivery.





Apocalyptic Visions and the Call to Prayer

Why am I working to discern the times so that I can develop this prayer strategy to defeat radical Islam?

It may sound strange to many modern ears, but the truth is that the Holy Spirit caught me up into the presence of the resurrected Jesus Christ, where He clearly spoke to me. Jesus gave me clear warnings as well as marching orders. I am extending this personal call experience to you so that you will understand my motives, passion and urgency to defeat Radical Islam. My prayer is that the Holy Spirit would also call you into Jesus' army of intercessors.

None of what follows is written out of hatred for Muslims, Islamophobia, or a reactionary conservatism to protect Western culture. I am, of course, not immune to such influences, but what drives me is that I have by grace alone been born again into God's Kingdom, and have come to know the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God in three persons. There has been ignited in me the fire of the Holy Spirit to follow Jesus Christ, the Lord of the universe, and to offer all of who I am to the great cause of advancing his Kingdom.

In March 2010, I had a very personal encounter with Jesus. This happened during the health care debate in the United States. All during the debate I had a heavy burden to pray. Over the weekend of March 20, as Congress was moving toward the vote the call grew in intensity. I could not help it; the Holy Spirit continued to pray through me, and I knew I needed to yield to the Spirit. This intercessory prayer work was so intense that I felt that I should not go to Canada for a long-scheduled meeting. I knew I was called by the Father to stay within the territorial boundaries of the United States.

On Sunday morning I fully intended to go to church, but instead the Holy Spirit told me to walk the prayer paths at the Community of the Crossⁱ and pray. I walked around the land pausing in different locations, first along the river, and then up the prayer trail, until I finally came to the prayer bench on the ridge with a view overlooking the higher mountains across

the valley. It was there that I started to intercede in earnest, mostly in tongues as the Holy Spirit was rushing through me. But from time to time my prayers in the Spirit did take on words. I was praying for the health care debate; I was praying for the US Congress to exercise wisdom.

I had the persistent image of a rope that was being pulled so tight that one-by-one the threads were fraying and snapping. I did not know exactly what that meant, but I kept praying into the vision. As I did, I saw the rope continuing to fray. I kept asking the Father, “Lord, what does this mean?” Over and over I prayed.

Suddenly I was caught up into the heavenly realms and was overwhelmed by apocalyptic visions of mass destruction. It would take pages to write all that I saw, but it was overwhelming and terrifying. As I reflected on this I realized that I was seeing the end of our world as we know it. The destruction seemed to come from two directions. Attacks came against our churches from “within” as biblical faith in Jesus Christ was eroded by the worldview of liberal progressivism. Our systems of government were also assaulted by progressivism, and I saw western society and political systems collapsing.ⁱⁱ And then I saw massive destruction coming from “without” as Radical Islam unleashed terrorism around the globe.

The vision was graphic and intensely disturbing. Not just visual, but visceral, as actual lived experience. A whole Tom Clancy-like novel would be required to detail the unfolding drama of what I experienced while caught up in the Spirit. I remember thinking to myself as this started to happen, “Lord? I thought you were calling me to pray about the health care debate?” No answer came back, just overwhelming visions.

So, in brief, I saw the massive, unsustainable public debt needed to feed, clothe and house the millions dependent on the social welfare system, collapsing whole economies. The streets of New York, Toronto, and London full of starving people rioting for food. I saw Christians fleeing the Netherlands because of the imposition of Sharia law. I saw the Church persecuted in the UK, Canada, and in America by liberal Christians and by radical Muslims.

This vision happened to me! I did not make it up or imagine something that wasn’t truly taking place in the Spirit. I was caught up in the Spirit. And then it all grew more terrible. I saw Islamic jihadist attacks using biological, nuclear, and conventional weapons, first against Israel, then against the United States and the United Kingdom, and in mounting waves of destruction against Canada, Russia and India. Then, the massive attacks were leveled against all the Christian nations and populations of Africa. Australia was under siege. Cities were laid waste, and millions of people were dead or dying. Chaos and anarchy abounded so that the complete breakdown of civil government and society resulted.

In Europe I saw waves of fanatical, reactionary revolutionaries overthrowing Western democratic governments, and in answer to the cries of a desperate population for food, shelter, and order, came the establishment of various forms of Fascist, Communist, and Islamic tyrannies.

I saw a worldwide holocaust, this time not just against Jews, but also against Christians.

Christians and Jews were slaughtered in staggering numbers with vast heaps of beheaded bodies in nations wherever the balance of power had tipped in favor of Muslims. Western democracies of the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada were unable to do anything about this new worldwide holocaust because they had been completely destroyed, compromised or subjugated by Islamic hegemony.

Worst of all was the state of the Church in the West. It was depleted as most of its members were dead and the entire formal leadership structures destroyed, with all nominal members having converted to Islam. Yet she was still alive, like a seed in winter driven deep underground with no means of expressing her faith beyond the Holy Spirit within a few faithful hearts. The Church had been rendered helpless to take part in preventing any of these evils. The Church in the West was unable to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ around the world, and had been stripped of all earthly means to engage Satan's iron veil of Islamic tyranny that was falling over the West.

Then I glimpsed with horror Satan's end game where the strongholds of Islamic terrorism and Liberal Progressivism were but pawns in the grand scheme! The ultimate goal was the complete replacement of the Father's plan of redemption as revealed in the Old and New Testaments with the deception and bondage of the totalitarian system of Islam. Churches and synagogues were either destroyed, empty of people, or converted into flourishing Mosques.

I was overwhelmed and confused about the visionary experiences that, like a monstrous wave, had just washed over me. Actually I felt like Ezekiel who, after seeing his vision and being carried to the exiles at Tel Abib, sat dumbfounded for seven days,ⁱⁱⁱ though of course my experience was not nearly as long and severe as his. After recovering from the shock of the visionary experience, I asked the Lord, "What is all this? What does it mean?" The Holy Spirit had taken me way beyond interceding for the health care debate into another prophetic reality.

Intercede So That These Things Do Not Happen!

Then I experienced the Lord speaking to me with the same vividness and urgency of the vision, telling me that He was pouring out His Holy Spirit worldwide, raising up intercessors to pray so that none of these things would come to pass. The Lord said, "I have given you a glimpse of Satan's plans for the world; these are not my plans!" Then there came the reaffirmation of a calling that God has given PRMI: Our mission is to join the Holy Spirit's work of mobilizing, equipping and deploying intercessors through whom the Father is going to remove the blocks to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ moving worldwide.

I also was aware that there was great blessing in store for the nations as these blocks to the Gospel were removed. I saw millions upon millions of Muslims liberated from the death and tyranny of Islam by Jesus Christ who was welcoming them into His Kingdom of life and freedom. There also came the terrible awareness that this was a call into intense battle

against the empire of Satan. And that while the victory would be God's, we still had a critical role. We were to be called into the gap as intercessors like Moses for Israel and Jesus ultimately for His Church. God would indeed defeat Satan's plans and confirm His own. This would be a costly battle to which we were being called, and our prayers, obedience and suffering would all be an essential part of Jesus' victory over the demonic strongholds of Radical Islam. There would be battles and victories over other strongholds as well, but the focus of this call to prayer is Radical Islam.

Then the Lord was saying that I was not to be afraid to name the strongholds Satan is raising up to implement this awful future. I then felt His guidance that I was called into the gap to pray, and that I was to mobilize, equip and deploy other intercessors to step into the gap at this time.

I submitted this mystical experience and call to the PRMI Board of Directors and our ministry team for discernment and clarification.^{iv} I have since learned that other intercessors were called into the heavenlies at the very same time I was, and were given the same call.

The Holy Spirit is calling an international team of intercessors to take part in the great counter-offensive against Satan's strongholds so that these terrible visions will never come to pass, and the Father's plans for life and freedom will prevail.

A Ten-Year-Old Encountering the Holocaust

While this visionary encounter was an unexpected experience, my call to mobilize prayer to defeat Satan's strongholds of death actually has its beginnings in my childhood. When I was in elementary school, my young soul was seared with pictures from the Holocaust I saw graphically displayed in *Life* magazine. I also found and read my parents' copy of Elie Wiesel's just published book, *Night*. At that time, when I was 10 years old, I was aghast to find there was such evil in the world.

I knew that God was giving me two life assignments. The first assignment was to take the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the whole world as the only way of life and hope. The second assignment was that God would use me in ways I still cannot fully grasp, to defeat the great evil I had seen in *Night*, preventing another holocaust like that from ever happening again.

Both of these callings have had a profound impact on the course of my life. First, I have been driven not only rationally and theologically to understand the Kingdom of God, but to cooperate with the Holy Spirit to advance the Kingdom of God in the world. Second, this early encounter with the radical evil of the Holocaust led me into a lifelong passion to understand how Satan was able to build the demonic stronghold of Nazism to accomplish such evil.

The question that has tormented me for years is, "What could have been done in the human and spiritual realms to prevent the tyranny, human suffering, mass slaughter and destruction due to the Holocaust and World War II?" Sir Winston Churchill has called World War II "the unnecessary war," because "There never was a war more easy to stop than that

which has just wrecked what was left of the world from the previous struggle.”^v Churchill further notes his motive for writing the history that has provided one part of the answer to my urgent question. “It is my earnest hope that pondering upon the past may give guidance in days to come, enable a new generation to repair some of the errors of former years and thus govern, in accordance with the needs and glory of man, the awful unfolding scene of the future.”^{vi}

I have taken to heart the lessons gained by such insights that Churchill presented. What I have added to them is their interface with the spiritual realm. Here my teachers start in the Bible, reach back to include the great intercessors of the past, and culminate with Rees Howells whose role in defeating Nazism in the spiritual realm worked in tandem with Churchill in the human realm.

From these teachers, God has given us guidance as to the strategies and tactics of how the spiritual and political leaders of future generations may gain victory over threats to the Church and to humanity. Most importantly, we can learn how to defeat this evil well before Satan's plans reach their terrible flowering as they did in Nazism.

My Worldview Assumptions

I make no apologies for being a Christian. I affirm that Jesus Christ is who He says He is: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6) I affirm the universal creeds of the Church, the Apostles’ and the Nicene.

My biblical worldview has been shaped by the present-day empowering work of the Holy Spirit which is the only way that Christians can take part in fulfilling the Great Commission effectively. I have a Reformed understanding of God sovereignly working in human history which includes us as his friends and coworkers to spread and enlarge the Kingdom of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth. I am convinced through the biblical witness, 2000 years of Church history, and my own personal experience, that the work of intercessory prayer is the starting point of our cooperation with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to grow the Church and to fulfill the Great Commission.

I am the first to admit that the worldview of many Christians, especially in the Western world, cannot accept the fundamental premise of this book, which is that both the Triune God of Grace and the Devil are at work in human history. My purpose here is not to debate these assumptions—certainly some may dismiss my work out of hand. My warning to those who do reject this is that it is only with a biblical worldview that they will be able to understand and do anything about the evil that is growing in the world.

The Method in Preparing this Prayer Strategy

I am not alone in writing this book. I am joined by a prayer and discernment team that

includes intercessors from a number of western and non-western nations and cultures. Because of the sensitivity of this topic, those in this team will remain unnamed.

My approach to discerning the times and developing this prayer strategy is to seek primarily to understand Jesus' plans and purposes in the world. My sources are the Bible, rational analysis of history and the present facts, as well as revelation by the Holy Spirit today which is consistent with the witness of the Bible. I am at the same time seeking to understand what Satan is doing in the world and what his evil purposes are.

So, my focus is on both what God is doing and what Satan is doing. The rationale is that our battle, the real war in which we live, is "not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens." (Ephesians 6:12)

We must not be ignorant of Satan's stratagems and tactics and long-term objectives. This is the primary battlefield on which we as intercessors and spiritual warriors are called to engage.

A necessary but secondary concern is with the "flesh and blood" human beings, the Islamic texts, the cultures, and human organizations that Satan is using to build strongholds. We must engage with these human structures because they are the ways in which the demonic work is expressed in the world of time and space and flesh and blood.

I make the assumption, based on my biblical worldview as well as practical experience, that the spiritual realm—both divine and demonic—interfaces with the human realm and decisively shapes it. My basis for this statement is found in the following words of Jesus recorded in John 14:10-17:

10 "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you, I do not speak on my own initiative, but the Father residing in me performs his miraculous deeds. 11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me, but if you do not believe me, believe because of the miraculous deeds themselves. 12 I tell you the solemn truth, the person who believes in me will perform the miraculous deeds that I am doing, and will perform greater deeds than these, because I am going to the Father. 13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. 15 If you love me, you will obey my commandments. 16 Then I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you forever—17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot accept, because it does not see him or know him. But you know him, because he resides with you and will be in you."

This is foundational to the war with Radical Islam: there exists one God in three persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. When we are born again into his Kingdom through faith in Jesus Christ, we become Jesus' friends and coworkers, and are given power and authority by the Holy Spirit to cooperate with the Father in shaping reality—spiritual and material.

Are You Called to Take Part in This War?

If you do not share the basic assumptions of the interface between the spiritual and the human worlds, of the existence of radical evil, of human beings as friends and coworkers with the three Persons of the Trinity enabled to shape reality according to God's vision, then what follows may seem but a distant medieval fantasy. But please give this your attention, because whether you share these assumptions or not, when the evil comes to fruition it will impact all humanity.

If you do not share my spiritual assumptions, then at least make common cause with us on the basis that Radical Islam has made clear its intentions to quench human liberty and creativity by imposing submission to Allah and enslaving humanity in the system of totalitarian control of Sharia law. All who love freedom and cherish diversity and human creativity must join as one to fight against this tyranny.

For you who whisper or shout, "Amen," and feel the confirming witness of the Holy Spirit as you ponder the words of our resurrected Lord Jesus Christ in John 14:10-17, read on! The Lord is calling you, in some fashion, to join this great battle of his truth and life prevailing against Satan's lies and plans for genocide at the dawn of the 21st century.

Chapter 2

Apocalyptic Visions and the Call to Prayer

ⁱ The Community of the Cross: A place of Encounter with Jesus Christ for prayer, equipping, and sending, was established in 2003 by Presbyterian Reformed Ministries International.

ⁱⁱ It is critically important to understand the role of the worldview of Liberal Progressivism in undermining and destroying Western culture and values, most especially in the Christian Church, and our subsequent vulnerability to the assault from Radical Islam. But in order to keep a laser focus on the demonic stronghold of Radical Islam, this other menace will not be the topic of this book's prayer strategy. That will require another careful study and will appear in another publication.

ⁱⁱⁱ **Ezekiel 3:14-15.**

14 A wind lifted me up and carried me away. I went bitterly, my spirit full of fury, and the hand of the LORD rested powerfully on me. 15 I came to the exiles at Tel Abib, who lived by the Chebar River. I sat dumbfounded among them there, where they were living, for seven days.

⁴ In the decision making process of the PRMI Board, leadership teams, and at events of Presbyterian-Reformed Ministries International, we have built in a careful discernment process to keep in step with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and to guard against deception. This process consists of the following:

A. After-Action Reviews: anytime there have been manifestations of the Holy Spirit or we have received guidance from the Holy Spirit calling for action as I have described above.

B. Allowing others to evaluate critically what another has experienced.

C. Asking the Four Discernment Questions:

- i. Does this word or guidance give glory to Jesus Christ in the present and the future?
- ii. Is it consistent with the revelation of God's nature and intentions in the Bible as determined by the Reformed hermeneutic that "Scripture Interprets Scripture?"
- iii. Do other born again Christians share a confirming inner witness of the Holy Spirit?
- iv. Is there objectively verifiable fruit or results within human lives, history, or the physical world demonstrating that God really is at work in this way?

This process of discernment has been applied both to the initial vision calling me to prayer engagement, and throughout the development of this prayer strategy.

^v Churchill, Winston S. *The Second World War: The Gathering Storm*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1948. Pg. iv-v.

^{vi} Ibid.