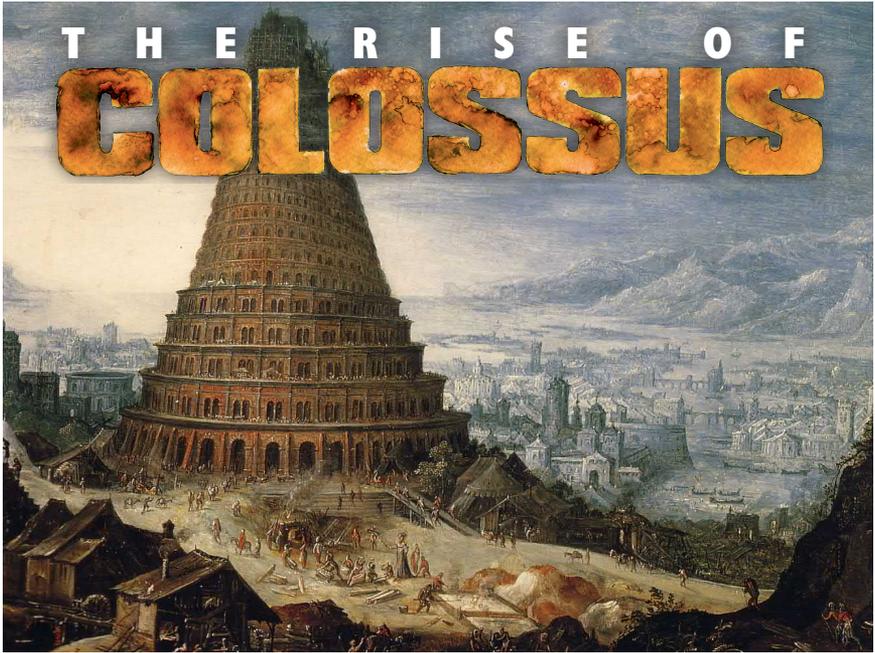


T H E R I S E O F
COLOSSUS

The
**Magnificent
Civilization**



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN PROPHECY about the end of the world?

Judging from the headlines of the tabloid newspapers at the grocery store, somebody must be. They regularly feature headlines of doom and gloom, bizarre encounters with a 600-foot Jesus that is supposedly prophesied in the Bible, and other such nonsense. They sell a lot of papers. Amazing as it may seem, people buy such silly stuff.

But it's not just the foolish and insincere newspapers that find a ready audience. For a long time, movies with thrilling plots about the end of the world have successfully entertained and even scared a lot of viewers. But still, it's just entertainment. Life goes on... to somewhere.

And it's not just the entertainment media that has made a lot of money from this subject. Preachers stir up a lot of business with their books and even their movies. But once the show is over, it's out the theater or seminar door, but to where? For most of us, it's just back to business as usual, making a living and hopefully finding some pleasure along the way. Yet the world is surely headed somewhere, and even if you don't like its direction, you're still a part of it. There is no hope of getting off the planet. Wherever the world is headed, you're going with it.

Regardless of all the sensationalism and the hucksters out for gain, there are legitimate prophecies in the Bible written by men of character and dignity. One such man is Daniel, a prophet who lived some 2500 years ago. He was a Jew who lived the majority of his life in Babylon. It is in his book that the clearest prophecies of the end can be found. Yet even he was not allowed by God to understand how or when these prophecies would come about. The last chapter of the book of Daniel says, "The words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end."

At the beginning of a new millennium, what would make us think that we are in the “time of the end?” How can we be sure? Is there any way to know? History tells us of many horrible times when men had good reason to believe it was surely the end of the world. Yet the end did not come. Why would this present day be any different?

“But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

If these two things, *travel* and *knowledge*, mark the time of the end, then Daniel’s book is ready to be unsealed. Maybe to those born in the past few decades, travel and knowledge are no big deal. But only a hundred years ago, the basic transportation for people was their feet, or a horse if they had one; as it has been so from the beginning. But today, what used to be a big planet has shrunk to a golf ball, man’s plaything. Cheap and easy travel is changing the way we live and how we view the world. It has also brought new and frightening problems. Now a deadly virus like Ebola can originate in one country and fly around the world in a few hours. Before the health officials even know what has hit us, people drop dead from a foreign invader. Yesterday it was beyond human imagination; today it is becoming commonplace.

Knowledge is the same. Such rapid access to information is storming society so quickly, no one really knows where it is taking us, or even if we want to go there. Want to build a terrorist bomb? The info is out there somewhere; just wirelessly surf the web in the comfort of your living room on your state-of-the-art laptop. But hurry, because if you blink twice, your new computer may become obsolete. This increase in knowledge is pushing us ahead so fast we can barely keep our feet underneath us. Maybe we lost our balance a long time ago and just haven’t hit the ground yet.

This extreme rise in knowledge and travel is making life radically different from how human beings have always lived on the earth. Science is tampering with the universe like a child let loose in the control room of a nuclear power plant. Some rejoice over this newfound freedom. Some shudder.

Is this the beginning of a Golden Age of Progress, or is our ship like the Titanic, plowing through the midnight waves, proudly defiant of the icebergs? Are we steaming to a glorious future, or a grisly nightmare? Shall we break out the lifeboats, or order more champagne? Who really knows where the world is headed?

Some would say, “God only knows!”

And to this, Daniel would agree. His God sealed the prophecies until the end. Not until they are unsealed will the mystery be made known. But to whom will He reveal such mysteries? What will they do with such understanding? Who will listen to them?

We have heard something in our hearts about this “time of the end,” and so we write this paper. Perhaps you will hear in your heart what we have heard in ours. It is taking us to a place worth going. 🌐

Something is wrong at a fundamental level in the lives of vast numbers of people. Something vital is missing. Something essential and meaningful has been displaced by something hollow. Something is promising comfort and security, yet is crushing the freedoms and consciences of men. Can you tell what it is? We call it Colossus.

The Magnificent Civilization



“The economy is out of sight. Unimaginable wealth and luxury is all around. America rules the world. So why is everyone so depressed?”¹

As the global village blasts off into the 21st century, many are enjoying unprecedented economic prosperity. Yet the increasing number of people who are lonely and alienated is unrivaled by any other time in human history. Why?

The crushing loneliness that many face as they pour their cereal at the breakfast table, or sip their coffee at the local diner, is simply a side effect of the fast-paced, popular culture we live in. While the industrialized world is basking in unequalled levels of wealth, medicine, science, and life expectancy, its people are plummeting into an epidemic of sadness.

Skeptics will scoff, “Crisis? What Crisis?!” But strip away the denial, the wishful thinking, the façade of sunny, can-do Americanism, and it becomes clear that something is wrong at a fundamental level in the lives of vast numbers of people. It isn’t so much what is happening to those people as what

isn't. Something vital is missing. Something essential and meaningful has been displaced by something hollow. The possibility that forces outside our control are overwhelming us, changing us, is so frightening that many people frantically grasp at safe responses to their escalating anxiety.

People rely in record numbers on prescription drugs.² They escape into the multimedia pleasureplex in an attempt to cope with reality. The French radical Gilles Ivain wrote of the beginnings of this some thirty years ago: "A mental illness has swept the planet... no more laughter, no more dreams. Just the endless traffic, the blank eyes that pass you by, the nightmarish junk we're all dying for. Everyone is hypnotized by work and comfort."

For those living in this hyper-commercialized, global society, a

question presents itself: "Have we and the rest of the industrialized world gained power and wealth at the price of a piece of our soul?" Or, in the words of a very misunderstood prophet of 2000 years ago: "What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?"³

The moment you confront these questions head on, the cool, commercial façade of this magnificent civilization suddenly dissolves. Before you is a web of psychological, sociological, and cyber-cultural threads, and behind you a wake of meaningless existence. "Why am I sad? Why was I created? Why can't I love? What am I living for?" These questions gnaw at your soul, like someone trapped under the ice in a river, frantically searching, desperately



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trying to claw their way out... but where is the opening?

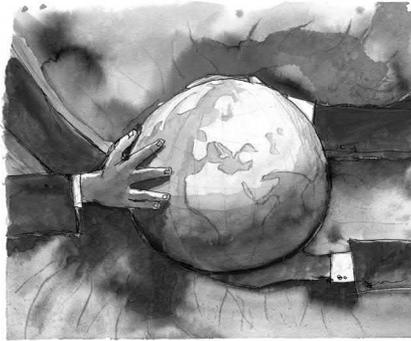
So now, into the midst of the most fundamentally isolated society in human history plops the Internet. Instead of old-fashioned relationships, people are now promoting the 'Net culture. Chat rooms are the craze. You laser in by subject, interacting with people "along a slender strand of common vocational interests." People have now effectively surrounded themselves with specialists, whom they call on briefly for one thing only — to fulfill themselves.

In this, the affluent members of the human species have made a sudden leap from a real to an electronic environment. For generations, human beings have gotten their cues from each other and from nature. Now, they get them from the computer and video game screens. Could this be related to the ever-increasing rates of clinical depression and loneliness?

These technological placebos lift the mood, calm the nerves, and attempt to fill the ever-increasing void in peoples' lives. Emanating from their screens are thousands of explicit and subliminal marketing messages every day teeming with sex and violence. The underlying purpose of this electronic culture is to keep people entertained, and numbed to the moral panic that is happening all

around them.

Depression is a symptom or a defensive response that tells us something important about ourselves or our culture. It makes no sense to clip its alarm wires with drugs like Prozac. This however, is what countless people are doing. And for the masses, who are mindlessly being herded down a psychotropic path to pledge allegiance to this new world order, everything seems fine and dandy. The alarm is simply not sounding.



Postmodernism is a philosophy that says we've reached an endpoint in human history. The "modernist" traditions of advancement and ceaseless extension of the frontiers of innovation are now dead. Originality is dead. The avant-garde artistic tradition is dead. All religions and utopian visions are dead. And resistance to the status quo is impossible because revolution, too, is now dead. Like it or not, people are stuck in a permanent crisis of meaning, a dark room from which they can never escape.

Amazingly, all of this was envisioned 2500 years ago by a prophet named Daniel. The political, social, religious, and economic luster of this emerging global society was depicted as an enormous statue — a Colossus.⁴ It was awesome and its appearance was dazzling and of extraordinary splendor. The feet

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of Colossus represented the religiously dominated political system that would rule the planet in the last days of human history. While elections will still be held and people will still go about business as usual, Colossus will have intruded into every aspect of normal life, passing moral laws to hold the decaying society together, while offering peace, prosperity, and security for those who submit to its rule.

Just as Rome embraced Christianity to save the decaying empire, so again, Colossus will join forces with this mighty world religion and usher in a new global church-state that will dominate the entire world. People will swap their freedoms for security in this new world order. All who do not pledge allegiance to Colossus will be dealt with in an appropriate fashion. After all, who but utter rebels would stand in the way of this perfect society?

Colossus is at the root of everything that is happening in society today. The forces at work, although expressed through the words and acts of men and nations, have their source in the spiritual ruler of this world — Satan.

This may be hard to swallow, since Hollywood and the mass media have for decades been successfully giving the Western world an electronic lobotomy. They have made Satan out to be a ridiculously fantastic, red-horned “devil” who is the star of Saturday morning cartoons and the ancient myth of Christianity — he can’t be

taken seriously. In the meantime, this virtuoso propagandist has been masterfully herding all of humanity to a very specific destination — a magnificent civilization.

Many will scoff at this ancient prophecy and its relevance to current events, but the parallel of this dream to the contemporary political and religious climate in the world is chilling. Like it or not, when you look underneath the veneer of modern life, you are face-to-face with a decaying, hopeless humanity. Filling this vacuum of well-being is the cold iron strength and the clammy clay persuasion of Colossus, the world government revealed to Daniel in his dream. While promising comfort and security, it is crushing the freedoms and consciences of men.

But there is something else taking shape, something else coming into view. It has nothing to do with Colossus. It has a different source, a different nature. Ultimately it will destroy every trace of Colossus. **It is just around the corner.** 

¹ “America the Blue”, by Kalle Lasn and Bruce Grierson, *The Utne Reader*, September 22, 2000

² “How many millions and millions of people cantakeProzac and Zoloft and all the other drugs? We have more adults taking antidepressants than the National Institute of Mental Health estimates there are depressed people in the United States. The market is saturated, so the pressures move automatically to other markets. And the biggest next market is children.” (Dr. Peter Breggin, May 3, 2001, interview for the PBS Frontline Special “Medicating Kids”, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/medicating/interviews/breggin.html>)

³ Mark 8:36-37

⁴ Daniel 2:31-35

The Signs of the End



Isaiah. Jeremiah. Daniel. Recognized as prophets, the words of these men have stood the test of time. What exactly makes a man a prophet? The bible has a simple test for the veracity of a prophet's word: whether or not it comes to pass (Deuteronomy 18:21,22). Yet the bible does not limit a prophet to being one who has written a book of the bible (consider Baalam in Numbers 22). Certainly, there are prophets of the nations – men of the world with a measure of insight and perception

into the events of the future. The books *Brave New World* and *1984* stand as the prime examples of key prophetic warnings for our time. Read them, for they clearly foretell events and social patterns and attitudes that even now are coming upon us.

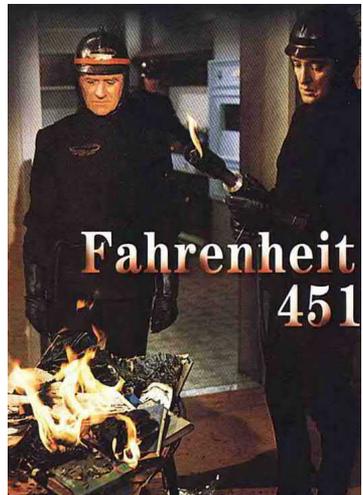
Another prophet of the last century was Ray Bradbury. He wrote at a time that straddled the dawning of a new age: the information age of technology and communications as televisions and computers were first appearing in the early 1950s. In his book *Fahrenheit 451*,* he envisioned a time when people felt an affinity to electronic screens and shunned anything as old fashioned as reading. They were happy with the work of the "firemen" – those whose job it was to burn books. As the fire captain explained,



"Give the people contests they win by remembering the words to more popular songs or the names of state capitals or how much corn Iowa grew last year. Cram them full of non-combustible data. Chock them so damned full of the 'facts' they feel stuffed, but absolutely 'brilliant' with information. Then they'll feel they're thinking, they'll get a sense of motion without moving. And they'll be happy, because facts of that sort don't change. Don't give them slippery stuff like philosophy or sociology to tie things up with. That way lies melancholy."

Bradbury's penned words no longer seem set in the far distant future. As technology hurtles forward at a breathless pace, it is becoming altogether too real. Yet, this is

451°F is the temperature at which paper combusts



not at all unexpected. Consider the words given to another prophet, Daniel, written over 2500 years ago:

“But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go to and fro, and knowledge will increase.”

(Daniel 12:4)

A simple prophecy, yet it holds the key to unlocking the end of days. These two aspects of the prophecy are the absolute clearest indicators of the very last times of the end: *the increase and ease of travel* and an *exponential explosion of knowledge*.

“Many will go to and fro.”

Early in the first millennium A.D., it probably seemed to many that the Romans’ intricate systems of roadways across the known ancient world was part of the fulfillment of Daniel’s prophecy. Indeed, a proverb of the day even said, “All roads lead to Rome.” At its peak, that roadway system spanned 53,000 miles and contained about 372 links. It provided the essential growth mechanism for the Empire, creating a massive public works project and enabling them to mobilize troops and move armies.



For a variety of military, commercial and political reasons, the Romans became adept at constructing roads, which they called *viae* (plural of *via*). It means “to go” with the sense of transporting in a vehicle. *Viae* were thus always intended primarily as carriage roads, the means of carrying material from one location to another. These long highways were very important in maintaining both the stability and expansion of the empire. The Roman legions made good time on them, and some are still used millenia later. In late antiquity, the same roads contributed to the Roman military retreats by offering avenues of invasion to the barbarians.

Yet despite those roads, for millennia most men were content to live and work in a very small geographical area. Traveling was an aberration and not the norm. It was not uncommon for most men to be born and die in the same general locality, never having left the same 30 mile radius. All of this changed, however, with the onset of the Industrial Revolution.

In 1872, Jules Verne’s fictional character Phileas Fogg attempted to travel around the world in 80 days. The gentlemen’s bet against the possibility of circumnavigating the globe in a mere eighty days seemed preposterous, or at least, nearly impossible. The railroads and hot air balloons of that time were newer novelties, just in their infancy. At that time, most travel had to be done on foot or on horseback. How far we’ve come since then!

Horses have historically been man’s most faithful mode of transport

until the advent of the novelty known as the “horseless carriage” around the turn of the century. Then, in the 1920s, Henry Ford’s genius of standardizing parts and simplifying models and utilizing a production line factory model for mass-producing automobiles enabled prices to drop enough for widespread acceptance. Old horse trails were gradually widened and intra-city roads were paved to make way for the newer motorized carriages. Still, roads were localized to within metropolitan areas and cities, with little to connect these isolated localities.



Southern California gave birth to an entirely new lifestyle which revolved around cars. Cities back East had been built in the railway era with central business districts linked to outlying suburbs by commuter trains and trolleys. But the tremendous growth of Los Angeles occurred at a time when automobiles had finally become affordable. Between 1920 and 1940, the population of southern California nearly tripled as almost 2 million people arrived from across the United States. In the years immediately preceding the Great Depression, the

city was inundated with middle-class arrivals from the Midwest. Retirees and small businessmen were drawn in increasing numbers to southern California by real estate ads promising a warm, mild climate and a good life. This was to be the first large-scale migration conducted mainly by car. Los Angeles soon became unlike any other city the world had ever known — a sprawling, horizontal anomaly.



It was a thoroughly suburban metropolis of detached homes — a glimpse into the automobile-molded future. Restlessness, impermanence, and speed were embedded in the culture that soon emerged, along with an openness to anything new. Other cities were being transformed by car ownership, but none was so profoundly altered as Los Angeles. By 1940 there were about a million cars in the LA metro area, more cars than in forty-one of the then 48 states.

The automobile offers drivers a feeling of independence and control. Travel was freed from the hassles of rail schedules or the location of trolley stops. More importantly, driving seemed to cost much less than using public transportation. This illusion was created by the fact that the price of a new car did not include the price of building new roads. Lobbyists from the oil, tire, and automobile industries, among others, had persuaded the state and federal agencies to



assume that colossal expense. If the automobile companies would have been required to fund the roads — in the same way that trolley companies had to lay and maintain track — the landscape of the American West would look quite different.

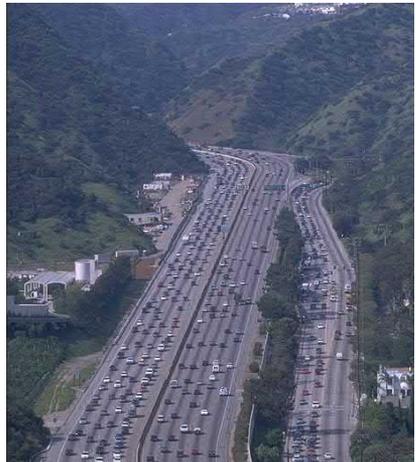
The nation's car culture reached its height in southern California and inspired such innovations as the world's first motel (motor hotel) and the first drive-in bank. Drive-in fast food restaurants were a natural follow-up, as well as the drive-in movie theaters and even Robert Schuller's Drive-In Church in Garden Grove. The triumph of the automobile encouraged not only a geographic separation between buildings, but also encouraged a manmade landscape that was loud and bold. Architectural details could no longer afford to be subtle; it had to catch the eye of motorists traveling at high speeds. Hence the visual lure of bright colors and meccas of glowing neon.

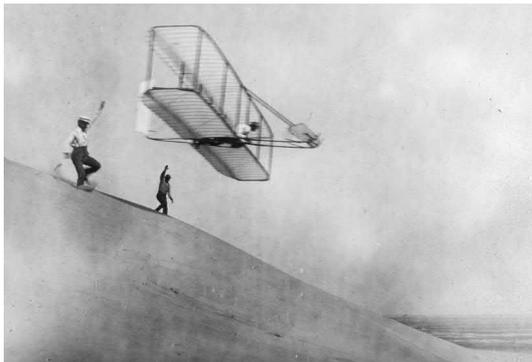
In 1956, Congress passed the Interstate Highway Act. President Dwight D. Eisenhower had pushed hard for such a bill, having been enormously impressed during World War II after observing the efficiency of Adolf Hitler's Reichsautobahn, the world's first superhighway system. Eisenhower set out to create the US equivalent — what is now known as the Eisenhower Interstate

System. Thus, the Interstate Highway Act brought autobahns to the United States, changing its landscape and culture forever. The Act became the largest public works project in the nation's history, building 46,000 miles of roadway with more than \$130 billion in federal US funds. The new highways spurred cars and truck sales, as well as the construction of new suburban homes. People could now live further and further from their places of employment and commute in to work each day. Fast

food restaurants and gas stations quickly sprang up at each exit ramp. The automotive industry now ranks as the largest industry in America, including such support infrastructure as sales, repair, road construction, advertising and marketing, etc.

One historian has described the federal government's 1950s highway-building binge as a case study in "interstate socialism" — a phrase that aptly describes how the West was really won. Today, five, six, and seven lane freeways are not uncommon in Southern California. The car culture and mega-freeways there have become so integral to the way of life of the residents there that the Interstates have taken a life of their own. They are now known locally as if living, breathing entities: "The 5," "The 8," and "The 15."





Motorized air travel was unheard of before the previous century. Orville & Wilbur Wright's first motorized flight in Kitty Hawk, NC was in 1903. Since then, aeronautics has become perhaps the fastest growing science with advancements happening at a rocket pace. The 1960s saw the mass deployment

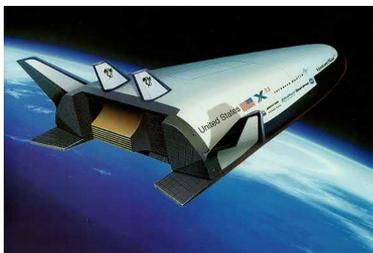
of jet engines and the "jumbo jet." The 1970s saw the rise of supersonic air travel, with planes traveling at 2 and 3 times the speed of sound. One could have breakfast in New York, get on board a Concorde jet and be dining at a cafe in Paris by noon. The U.S. Air Force's SR-71 Blackbird still holds the world transatlantic speed record, capable of traveling at speeds in excess of 2100 MPH (Mach 3+) and with an average cruising altitude of over 80,000 feet!

Today, the race is on to develop so-called "Space Planes." No longer are aeronautic engineers content to follow the curvature of the earth just a few miles up. Instead, planes are being developed that will propel one into the sub-stratosphere at rocket-like speeds



and trajectories, then slingshot the passengers back toward earth at blistering speeds by harnessing the incredible gravitational pull of the earth. It will soon

be possible to go anywhere in the world in *under two hours*. It is rumored that the U.S. military already has this technology in place under a project code-named *Aurora*.



The increase in travel is not without its detriments. Even now, great fear is being felt on the other side of the globe as the H5N1 avian flu is spreading

across Asia, Europe, and Africa. With 95 recorded human deaths, fears of a worldwide pandemic are not groundless. The increase of world travel in recent time has made it far easier for viruses and diseases to spread at an uncontrollable pace.

"Many will go to and fro..."



“Knowledge will increase.”



In 1438, Johannes Gutenberg wanted a cheaper way to produce the handwritten Bibles of his era. His moveable type, the precursor to the modern printing press, fostered literacy, advances in scientific knowledge, and eventually was the spark behind the Industrial Revolution. So what is the next big thing? What seemingly insignificant invention or creation will change the world on the scale of the *book* for information dissemination? No one can predict the full effects of the current information revolution, but its effects are evident in our daily lives. We can see the changes creeping in and either struggle to maintain the “old ways” and comfortable

traditions or just complacently accept the new regime. Changes to our daily lives accompanying the Information Revolution are so subtle as to be unnoticeable, save by only the most keenly observant (or those orchestrating their advancement).

Before the printed word, man relied on memories, storytellers in the family or tribe for accounts of history, or the occasional traveling messenger or minstrel for the latest news. Before telephones and computers, people knew more frequently the pleasure of writing and receiving personal letters — the small joy of a handwritten card in the mailbox from a distant friend or relative. The modern replacement, e-mail, offers a more efficient and cost effective delivery method, yet remains so *electronic*, so cold and sterile compared to the warm tactile sensation of holding someone else’s handwritten note in one’s own hand. Exactly what Gutenberg wanted to get away from because the alternatives are cheaper and more efficient.

500 Channels but Nothing On

Before televisions or computers, man generally had a stronger sense of community and family ties, a greater attachment and security in neighborhoods and families. Now, televisions glue most to their homes, isolating them from other human beings. Still, in the late ‘50s and ‘60s, it was common for families to be seen gathered together around the household television set for a little social time in the evening. Now, several TVs are commonplace for most households — one for each family member, even. So now, increasingly, each family member watches something different





on another TV set in a far corner of the home. Even that last vestige of family togetherness is being eroded as a distant memory.

Only 25% of Americans know their next door neighbor. That number is on the decline. What does that speak of modern society? The decline of human-to-human contact is apparent around the globe. In the Middle East, café life — telling stories over a cup of

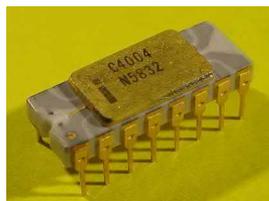
tea — is disappearing as satellite TV bombards them from above. Bistros across Paris are closing early or have gone out of business altogether. Everyone is rushing home after work to sit and watch TV.

A New Dehli newspaper described India's share of the \$5 billion in annual global sales of American movies and television programming as "termites eating away at traditional values." This is not unplanned — Colossus has an agenda, like a master puppeteer pulling the strings.

The average American adult watches over thirty hours per week. Over two million children are still up watching TV after midnight each day of the school week. Do you think it's called "Television *programming*" for nothing? Television teaches the latest generations the world over to favor image over actual, style over substance, fantasy over reality. Is it any wonder that the lines of reality are blurred or being erased altogether from many children's minds?

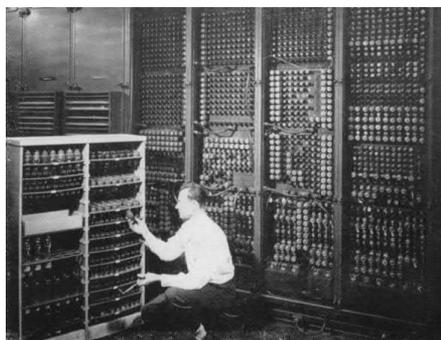
Cannot compute

In 1971, Intel marketed the first microprocessor, the C4004, which could perform an astonishing 60,000 additions per second. Today, engineers are squeezing more and more transistors onto the surface of each silicon chip. Today's processors are calculating not in terms of tens of thousands or even millions of operations per second, but rather *billions*



of operations per second.

In the 1960s, computers were room sized and used vacuum tubes and large drums or magnetic tape reels for information storage and retrieval. Today, they are altogether different. "Make it mobile" is the order of the day. Palm-size computers are the latest rage: combining telephone, computer, fax, television, and music player into a single small handheld



device. The explosive popularity of the notebook computer and the emergence of high-speed wireless networks has made it possible to take a computer with you wherever you go and jump on the Internet at will. Entire cities are now tooling up to deploy city-wide wireless networks. Welcome to your *brave new world*.



Where is all this taking us? Is it possible to know or predict? The law of unintended consequences governs all technological revolutions. Could it be that we are opening a veritable Pandora's Box? In 1965 Gordon Moore, Intel's co-founder, made an interesting prediction. The so-called Moore's Law states that every eighteen months, the number of transistors in microchips double, yielding a doubling of computational power as well. The implications of this observation are staggering. Where will we be in twenty years? What will be possible with that level of technology? Don't ponder too long, or you just might short circuit.

When CD-ROMs first made their commercial debut in 1987, they were heralded by John Sculley, then CEO of Apple Computer, as set to revolutionize the use of personal computers. Indeed, these tiny, shiny 1 ounce, 4.675" diameter discs could hold 650 megabytes of data – more than enough room to hold an entire encyclopedia set. In fact, at the time, they could contain the text of all of the books in the Library of Congress.



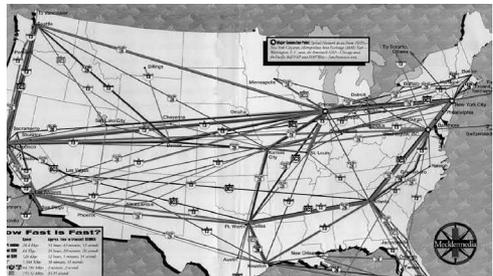
Today's portable music players such as the iPod are just larger than a pack of playing cards and have a capacity of 60 or more gigabytes – enough space to hold 15,000 digitized songs. The distinctive white ear buds can be seen being worn by more and more people as one walks about town. People are living their lives to their own soundtracks, immersed in a sea of music. Vacuous and trancelike, they go from one song to the next, an audiophile junkie addicted to music.



The Internet:

Reaching toward a marvelous electronic future, the magnificent civilization – the splendor of Colossus.

Conceived in the 1960s as a Department of Defense communications system designed to survive nuclear war,





the outgrowth now known as the *Internet* has since become privately driven and grown exponentially with input from the private sector. With nuclear war no longer the driving concern, marketplace forces have replaced government funding and propelled it forward at a frantic pace.

Representing just one facet of the multi-protocol Internet, there are billions of web pages on the World Wide Web. The popular search engine Google now claims to index over eight billion pages — more than one for each of the 6.25 billion people alive on the planet today. And more web pages are being created daily. With the proliferation of information, one would think that things should become more clearly defined and categorized. And yet things are nearly out of hand, as the pace is impossible to keep up with. The Internet is growing at such a rate that it has taken on a life of its own.

The Internet makes life beyond the “old” physical barriers of time and space possible. You can roam the world or travel back in time without leaving your home. Make new friends. Read stock quotes. Exchange information with colleagues overseas. Buy. Shop. Research. Telecommute



via your wireless paperless office to the company’s virtual private network. Experience virtual community, virtual travel, virtual love. The new reality.

As neighborhoods and communities become less intimate and more isolated, we find ourselves able to earn college credits, begin romances, exchange electronic mail, and much more. All this thanks to the Internet, which wasn’t even know to most of the general populace before the mid-1990s. How



much has changed our lives in just ten short years! Anything you could do before, now you can do with an “e-” before it: e-mail, e-banking, e-shopping, online games, online music and movie downloads. Yet all of this serves to divorce us from reliance on physical contact with other human beings. The Internet provides us with a secure, comfortable buffer, safely

distancing us from others.

The Internet is mesmerizing. No brain scan or study yet conducted has identified a physical basis for the seemingly insatiable hunger for electronic stimulation. Computers are often more alluring than television and likewise hold a stronger grip. Those who are placidly leveled are content to passively observe the television set, leading a Walter Mitty-like vicarious existence. Those more demanding of intellectual stimulation gravitate toward the computer



where limitless knowledge awaits, there for the discovering. Bradbury's fire captain's words ring true: "*Cram them full of non-combustible data. Chock them so damned full of the 'facts' they feel stuffed, but absolutely 'brilliant' with information.*"

Few realize that there is a hollow in the human soul, put there by God in hopes that His highest creation, mankind, would somehow seek for Him. Some attempt to fill the void with sports, others with food, others with relationships. But one trend is alarmingly clear: a growing cult-like faith in *information*, a belief that if we learn how to surf the 'net, we'll be smart. Full of facts. Absolutely brilliant

with information. A sense of motion without moving. It's right out of *Fahrenheit 451*, and exactly as the prophet Daniel foretold.



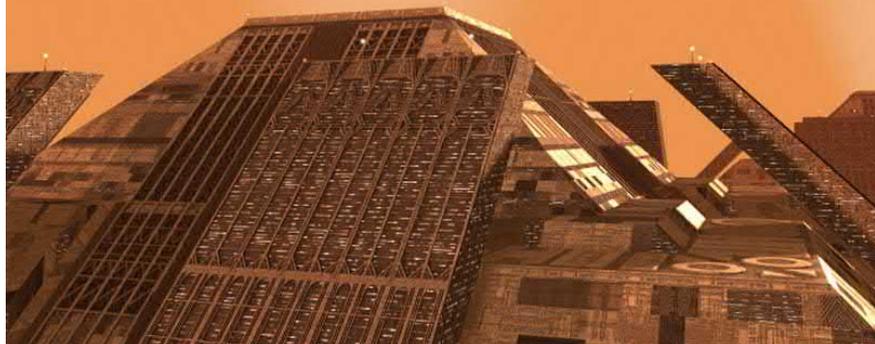
Author's Note:

As I reflect upon this composition of this article, I find myself faced with a bittersweet, two-fold irony:

1). I sat beside a mile-wide Florida river as I wrote this article. The rhythmic lapping of breaking waves at the edge of the beach upon which I sat was a comforting, refreshing sound. The faint call of birds echoed in the trees behind me. So close to nature, and yet I penned this article not with a notepad and pencil, but rather with a notebook computer while wirelessly connected to the Internet via a neighboring wireless hot spot.

2). The really sad thing is that I had to do precious little research for this article, as I am intimately acquainted with the topics here presented. I have been immersed in this whole realm of computers, technology, and the Internet since the outset of the World Wide Web and the advent of desktop graphical operating systems. Indeed, my head is crammed with knowledge. Full of hollow facts. Absolutely brilliant with empty information. But I'm learning to focus on the deeper things, the more satisfying human qualities that make life worth living.

TECHNO BABEL



The Plains of Shinar

Mankind stands on the plains of Shinar, contemplating an information technology tower. *"I will ascend to the heights and become like God, knowing all things,"* he says in his heart of hearts, deep within the inner man. Yet this is nothing new under the sun. The earth has witnessed this same effort only a few thousand years of years ago:

"Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words. It came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. They said to one another, 'Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly.' And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar. They said, 'Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.'"

"The LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. The LORD said, 'Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them. Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, so that they will not understand one another's speech.' So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city. Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of the whole earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth." (Genesis 11:1-9)

Babel means confusion

Tens of billions of words pass through the Internet daily, yet computers and TV spawn aliteracy among many who are increasingly unwilling to read

anything substantive or lengthy that requires concentration. Brevity is key. 5-second sound bites are a must and now “pod programming” on TV and radio are even beginning to eliminate the traditional 30-minute programming model in favor of much shorter segments. Channel surfing. Instant gratification. Fast-moving images. Constant stimulation. All of this is producing sensory overload and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Ritalin are becoming common household words as children’s attention spans get shorter. The worst sin of all is to be boring.

People are blindly traveling into a new world of information and technology. New wonders will pull many along even further as new technologies evolve. Computers are being created that mimic human reasoning and sensory perceptions. Technology promises more and more information with less and less effort. What will increasing computer power make possible? What will the future hold? Who’s in control of the infotech race? Who’s steering? Is anyone really at the helm, or are we merely along for the ride? So many questions...

You might think that the “smart people” are in control; that scientists, researchers, and engineers have a grasp on all this. Yet scientists clearly eschew the book of Ecclesiastes. That book records the mournful writings of the wisest man to walk the planet, King Solomon, who stood in the end forsaken by the spirit of God due to his idolatry and indulgences. At the end of his life, he had come to the following conclusions. We would do well to heed his wisdom and painful lessons:

“All things are wearisome; man is not able to tell it. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor is the ear filled with hearing. That which as been is that which will be, and that which has been done is that which will be done. So there is nothing new under the sun.” (Ecc 1:8)

Babel (From The 1913 Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary):

Babel \Ba“bel\, n. [Heb. B[=a]bel, the name of the capital of Babylonia; in Genesis associated with the idea of “confusion”]

1. The city and tower in the land of Shinar, where the confusion of languages took place.
2. Hence: A place or scene of noise and confusion; a confused mixture of sounds, as of voices or languages.

“And I set my mind to seek and explore by wisdom concerning all that has been done under heaven. It is a grievous task which God has given to the sons of men to be afflicted with.” (Ecclesiastes 1:13)

“I know that everything God does will remain forever; there is nothing to add to it and there is nothing to take away from it, for God has so worked that men should fear Him. That which is has been already and that which will be has already been, for God seeks what has passed by.” (Ecclesiastes 3:14,15)

If we heed what is written, we would realize that the sciences, quests for various types of knowledge, are clearly exercises in futility:

"When I gave my heart to know wisdom and to see the task which has been done on the earth (even though one should never sleep day or night), and I saw every work of God, I concluded that man cannot discover the work which has been done under the sun. Even though man should seek laboriously, he will not discover; and though the wise man should say, 'I know,' he cannot discover." (Ecclesiastes 8:16,17)

"Just as you do not know the path of the wind and how bones are formed in the womb of a pregnant woman, so you do not know the activity of God who makes all things." (Ecclesiastes 11:5)

"But beyond this, my son, be warned; the writing of many books is endless, and excessive devotion to books is wearying to the body." (Ecclesiastes 12:12)

True wisdom and insight come not from keeping up-to-date or compiling facts but from moments of quiet reflection when we stop to hear the voice within. The things we hold most valuable — morality and compassion — is the essence of humanity and can be found only within mankind. No matter how advanced it becomes, technology is still bereft of emotion and a soul. As we are continually assaulted with a barrage of information overlaid, we must remain loyal to the knowledge within ourselves — the *conscience** — the knowledge instinctively placed there by God Himself. If you can just jump off the crazy info-tech ride for half a second... *Shh!* Listen! Pause for a second or two and you just might hear something:

"Be still and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10) 🌐

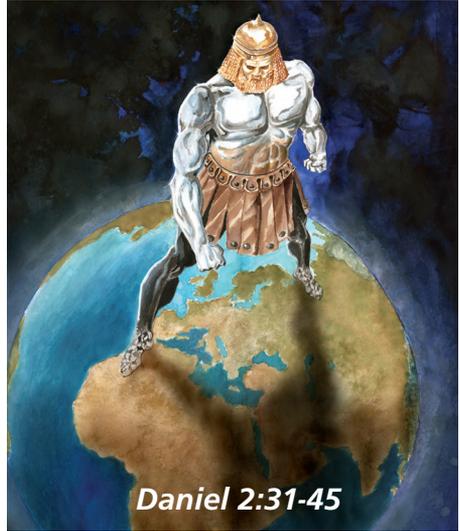


**conscience* means "to know with" e.g. to know with God

WHAT IS THE COLOSSUS

As you can see, Colossus confidently stands upon the earth, unchallenged and undefeated. What does this statue mean and what does it have to do with the time in which we live?

"My king, as you were watching, a colossal statue appeared. That statue, tall and dazzling, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was terrifying. The head of the statue was pure gold, its chest and arms were silver, its stomach and thighs were bronze, its legs were iron, and its feet were partly iron and partly fired clay. As you were watching, a stone broke off without a hand touching it, struck the statue on its feet of iron and fired clay, and crushed them. Then the iron, the fired clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were shattered and



became like chaff from the summer threshing floors. The wind carried them away, and not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

"This was the dream; now we will tell the king its interpretation. Your Majesty, you are king of kings. The God of heaven has given you sovereignty, power, strength, and glory. Wherever people live-or wild animals, or birds of the air-He has handed them over to you and made you ruler over them all. You are the head of gold. After you, there will arise another kingdom, inferior to yours, and then another, a third kingdom, of bronze, which will rule the whole earth. A fourth kingdom will be as strong as iron; for iron crushes and shatters everything, and like iron that smashes, it will crush and smash all the others. You saw the feet and toes, partly of a potter's fired clay and partly of iron-it will be a divided kingdom, though some of the strength of iron will be in it. You saw the iron mixed with clay, and that the toes of the feet were part iron and part fired clay-part of the kingdom will be strong, and part will be brittle. You saw the iron mixed with clay-the peoples will mix with one another but will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with fired clay.

"In the days of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, and this kingdom will not be left to another people. It

will crush all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, but will itself endure forever. You saw a stone break off from the mountain without a hand touching it, and it crushed the iron, bronze, fired clay, silver, and gold. The great God has told the king what will happen in the future. The dream is true, and its interpretation certain." *Daniel 2:31-45*

2500 years ago, King Nebuchadnezzar dreamed a dream that told of the world powers to come. That dream has accurately played out upon the stage of history and now it is time for the final players to take the stage...



The Colossus of Rhodes

Just a few feet taller than Nebuchadnezzar's statue, the Colossus of Rhodes was erected 200 years later than the Babylonian king's statue of Daniel 3. Built at the entrance to the harbor as a tribute to the city's greatness and regarded as one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world, the Colossus lasted 56 years before being snapped at the knees by an earthquake. The statue was never reconstructed because its collapse was taken as a "sign from the gods."



The New Colossus

*Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to
land;*

*Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall
stand*

*A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glow's world-wide welcome; her mild eyes
command*

*The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep ancient lands, your storied pomp!"
cries she*

*With silent lips. "Give me your tired,
your poor,*

*Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*

-Emma Lazarus

The larger-than-life Statue of Liberty (300 ft. tall) at the entrance of New York's harbor resembles the ancient Colossus of Rhodes. In the near future, Colossus will cease to be merely a "representation of greatness" but will portray the revival of the oppressive Roman Empire in Europe.

THERE IS A PEOPLE who woke up this morning with one thing on their minds — to love their Creator with all their heart, mind, and strength, and to love one another just as He loved them. Being just ordinary human beings, we are far from perfect in our love, yet, in hope, we persevere. Our goal? That the kingdom of God would come on earth as it is in heaven, so that love and justice can rule on the earth. Sound impossible? It would be, were it not that the Son of God came to earth to redeem mankind, to set us free from the curse of sin, and to enable us to love. Because we have come to see His worth and our own desperate need, we have surrendered everything in order to follow Him. Our hearts and our homes are open night and day to any who are interested in our life or are weary of their sin and want to know the purpose for which they were created.

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