

February 2013

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## Life In the Big City

*“For in a single hour all this wealth has been laid waste.” And all shipmasters and seafaring men, sailors and all whose trade is on the sea, stood far off and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning, “What city was like the great city?”* --Revelation 18:17, 18 (ESV)

**I**n interesting report by the National Intelligence Council concerning current world trends, suggests that “We are at a critical juncture in human history, which could lead to widely contrasting futures.” One of the world trends that has already led to widely contrasting futures, is what demographers call *Global Urbanization*. Think of it as “life in the big city.”

If geography is still taught in school, perhaps students might soon hear the new term *urban agglomeration*—referring to a metropolis with 10 million or more residents. In 1950, only one city in the world (“the city that never sleeps”) could pony up such numbers. However, by 1990, there were ten such urban agglomerations in the world, and today, 23 cities are so designated.

According to forecasts of the United Nations Population Division (UNPD), the number of urban agglomerations will expand to 37 in the next 15 years. Ultimately, the UNPD believes some 2.6 billion people will be moving to urban areas during the next 39 years.<sup>1</sup>

So does this mean that major cities throughout the world are experiencing an uptick in birthrates? No. Most nations, including the U.S., are in fact beginning to fall below population replacement levels. Urban agglomerations simply point to a world that is hurriedly transitioning from rural living to “life in the big cities.”

It has been our observation that people who live in large cities seem to reason differently and tend to **vote differently**, than those who reside in rural communities. We think a quick glimpse at local election maps drives the point.

In the recent 2012 statewide general elections, voters in 24 rural counties strongly favored Mitt Romney, a moderately conservative candidate, while 15 more densely populated (in most cases) “urban” counties—cast their lot for the decidedly liberal incumbent, President Barack Obama. Again, every county east of the Cascades in rural Eastern Washington, including rural Lewis and Wahkiakum counties in Southwest Washington, voted for the conservative ticket, and, except for Lewis and Wahkiakum, all of Western Washington was in the bucket for the liberal offering.

Similarly, the recent *Referendum 74* dealing with homosexual “marriage,” broke largely along urban versus rural populations, with six Western Washington counties and one Eastern Washington county providing an ample margin of approval for the measure. Whitman County, the eastside’s “odd-fellow,” is assuredly weighted leftward, on some issues, due to a small population of 45,000, including 11, 699 state employees serving 25,320 students at “WASU” in Pullman.<sup>2</sup>

Even so, *R-74* didn’t need help from any rural county.

King, the most densely populated county in the state, gave R-74 a big thumbs up with a jaw-dropping 67-33% vote—alone providing 38% of all “yes” votes statewide.<sup>3</sup>

If we have concerns regarding the worldview of great numbers of those who inhabit high-density communities, we’re not alone. Secular anthropologists find that greater urbanization tends to go hand-in-hand with the deterioration of the family unit, lower marriage rates, and consumerism. And, according to Wilfred Hahn, a world-leading global economist/strategist and regular contributor to *Midnight Call*<sup>4</sup> magazine, the Bible, generally speaking, does not reflect an approving view of large cities either.

In the Book of Revelation, “great cities” are referred to ten times. “Only one of these ten references,” says Mr. Hahn, “points to a wonderful and benevolent outcome, and this is the ‘great city’ of the New Jerusalem...descending out of heaven from God (Revelation 21:10).”

Hahn points out that the woes of Bible prophecy are frequently addressed to large cities for their violence and immorality. Concerning Nineveh, for instance, Nahum says: “Woe to the city of blood, full of lies, full of plunder, never without victims!” (Nahum 3:1). Describing Jerusalem, Isaiah says: “See how the faithful city has become a prostitute! She once was full of justice; righteousness used to dwell in her—but now murderers!” (Isaiah 1:21). Sodom and Gomorrah are shown as cities at the apogee of great moral failure.”

Another characteristic of large cities noted in the Bible, says Mr. Hahn, is the potential for smugness and self-determination, the same attitude that afflicted Babel. He says we are reminded that Babylon the Great boasts in her heart: “I sit enthroned as queen. I am not a widow; I will never mourn” (Revelation 18:7). Further, notes Hahn, “Sodom is said to be ‘arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy’ (Ezekiel 16:49). Seen in this light, cities are hotbeds for both humanism and immorality.”<sup>ibid</sup>

Cities, and the builders of those cities don’t receive high marks in the “Book of Beginnings” either.

Cain, the first commercial developer mentioned in Genesis, had obviously relocated away from his family to build a community suited more to his own personal likes and dislikes. Similarly, other early cities with dubious mention are Nineveh, Rehoboth, Resen, and of course, that great city in the land of Shinar with the ambitious tower project headed by Nimrod.

Nimrod (meaning “let us rebel”), evidently had an ability to fight and kill ruthlessly, enabling the consolidation of Babylon, a sinister city-state in the Euphrates valley. Bible commentators suggest the Tower of Babel was the first organized rebellion of humans against God and that Nimrod was the first man that formed a plan of government—subjecting others to it.

Our global economist/strategist Wilfred Hahn concludes that we are witnessing “a world of larger and larger cities, ever higher population density, and globalism (this being a form of a global city)—unified, smug and intent upon constructing a world apart from God. The sins of Babel are today being replicated on a massive global scale.”<sup>ibid</sup>

The good news is that John (the revelator) was shown the climax of the ages, including the ultimate disposition of “Mystery Babylon,” to put our fears at rest. God clearly wants to keep His people in the loop—and on high alert concerning His soon coming. VERY SOON COMING!

*Rick Forcier*

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Population Division. World Urbanization Prospects—The 2011 Revision.

<sup>2</sup> 2011 Washington State Employees, Job, Title, Salary, [www.ibloom.net/index](http://www.ibloom.net/index)

<sup>3</sup> Pierce County was a surprising large county exception, rejecting R-74 by a whisker-close 0.8%

<sup>4</sup> Hahn, Wilfred, “Burning Alight: 12 End-time Fuses,” [www.midnightcall.com](http://www.midnightcall.com), March 2013