

Thoughts on Coming Apart and the  
Coming Great Reset



Turning and turning in the widening gyre  
The falcon cannot hear the falconer

Kit Webster

**November 3, 2023**

## **Christianity Is Dead - Long Live Christianity**

**Turning small t-truths into obsessions &, thus, seeing and treating them as large-t truths is destroying us. - Mark Kahn**

**If a decades-long project of zero-tolerance for bigotry and bullying can produce such large numbers of bigots and bullies, that project is an utter failure. - Jonah Goldberg**

### **Presentation Of Information**

**I carefully consider every line that is posted to this site. The primary purpose is to contemplate my theses out loud, but I also include what I consider interesting bits of information and occasional attempts at humor. To assist those that only want the first category of information, I highlight the thoughts I believe are most important.**

## **Markets**

### **Updated Charts**

No change in outlook - Although my analysis of the dollar looks good, so far, a lot of people I respect continue to call for the "dollar wrecking ball." Long story, but the short version is that the world is, in effect, short dollars and the result of their having to repay debts in dollars will strengthen demand for dollars in a self-reinforcing virtuous cycle. Sounds good to me, but, so far, I do not see it in the charts.

Other things concern me:

I have the dollar going down at the same time gold is;

I have bitcoin going up at the same time the stock market is going down.

Something's gotta give.

Going out on a limb - the play-by-play of the stupidity of predicting a market crash. Last week, I foolishly predicted "the beginnings of a market crash in several weeks." Since these things are inherently difficult and my track record is less than admirable, it seems like a particularly foolhardy thing to do.

But, I like challenging myself, and as long as no one, including me, takes me too seriously, it could be an interesting exercise. In full disclosure, while I have bought some puts and am looking at others, I have taken no big steps that indicate I believe myself.

One week in, how's it going?

About the way you would think it would go after a short period of time - nothing much has happened, one way or the other. An ancillary prediction - that the stock market should generally rise in the short term - remains in place.

I will continue to update you on my quest as we go along and if I see any interesting signposts along the way.

## **Short Takes**

This Israel-Hamas thing is unfolding into the tragedy I thought would. Basically, the barbarity of the Hamas attack was the straw that broke the camel's back. Israel will do its best to destroy them.

Imagine if drug cartels had come across the border, mutilated people while they were still alive; raped and killed, and then took hostages back across the border. I would guess that we would not stop until that cartel was totally wiped out, in spite of any calls for a ceasefire.

Make no mistake, what is happening in Gaza is a sickening tragedy, but once Hamas struck, it was essentially inevitable.

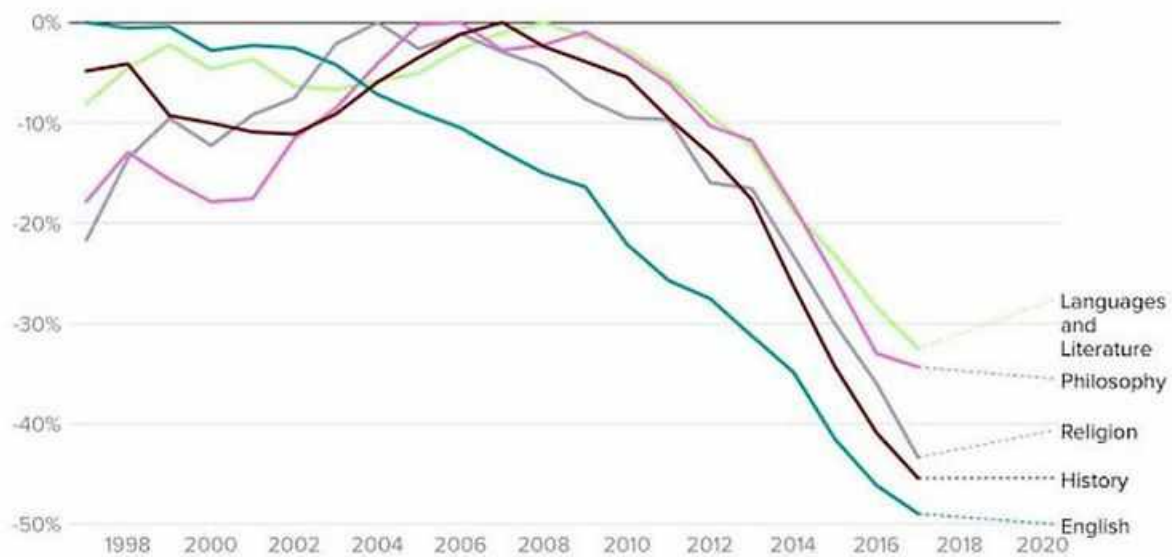
As we continue into the middle innings, the question is, what is the endgame?

This is a very complex problem with many moving parts. As we have discussed, the Palestinians are pawns in a geopolitical chess game whose principal participants are the US, Iran and Israel. Even if you destroy Hamas and provide Gaza with functional government, the geopolitical game will still be active.

The Middle East may not be an unsolvable problem, but it is a great semblance of one. Most likely, the best that can be done is to find another unstable equilibrium.

**No, we're fine**

### Change in Share of Humanities Majors in All BAs at U.S. Institutions, Relative to Peak



Source: [IPEDS, preliminary for 2017](#) • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#)

*The Atlantic*

**You will be glad to know that Boston Dynamics' robot dog can now talk and is equipped with AI**



**Damn, I love irony - College campuses discovering free speech just in time to allow threats to their Jewish students is a little too convenient. - Karen Markowitz**

**It's really, really hard to keep score - On Oct. 28, pro-Palestine rioters clashed with black Hebrew Israelites (a black nationalist group) in Chicago.**

**George Friedman talking about the obliqueness of diplomacy -**

International affairs has a strange dishonesty in it. Mystery is an inherent vice. China can't simply define what it needs from the United States, so it pretends that it needs nothing. Washington can't simply tell China what it is prepared to do because doing so would signal that it knows China's needs. Putin can't say what has become common knowledge to everyone, so he had Lukashenko say it.

There are two reasons for these kinds of diplomatic dances. One is pride. Admitting need indicates weakness, and no one wants to be taken advantage of. But second and more important, admitting need reveals intentions, and all nations have a political need to hide their intentions. It's a cryptic business, yes, but when taken together, all these little signals create a mutual understanding because the complexities of truth and denial make it impossible to understand what is intended. And even when the intention is benign, the safest course is to construct a more threatening intention so as not to be trapped in another's scheme.

This is really getting old - Biden continues to assert powers whenever and wherever he wants - from the *Wall Street Journal* - "The Biden administration invoked emergency federal powers to assert oversight of powerful new AI systems." (Kit)

Seems that everything, all the time, is an emergency. The 100-page order requires AI companies to "address algorithmic discrimination" and "ensure that AI advances equity," because, of course it does.

**Very 2023 - Per a 2022 decision by the sport's global governing body, nations competing in the artistic swimming team event at next year's Paris Olympics can (but aren't required to) include up to two men on their eight-person squads.**

**Last year's murder rate in the United States, according to the FBI's annual national crime report, fell 6%, and one analyst says the national homicide rate has plummeted up to 12% so far this year.**

**McDonalds has announced the closure of its location in Downtown San Francisco after 30 years**


**Perspective - Elon Musk tells Joe Rogan: "The degree to which Twitter was simply an arm of the government was not well understood by the public. It was a state publication. Republicans were suppressed at ten times the rate of Democrats."**

**Macroaggressions in a safe space**



**"Today, [President Biden] and Vice President Harris are announcing that their Administration will develop the first-ever U.S. National Strategy to Counter Islamophobia in the United States. We look forward to continuing our work with community leaders, advocates, members of Congress, and more to develop the strategy – which will be a joint effort led by the Domestic Policy Council and the National Security Council – and counter the scourge of Islamophobia and hate in all its forms." While I am against Islamophobia, I am probably missing something, because that does not seem to be a particularly significant problem at the moment. On the other hand, antisemitism is rampant. This move, of course, is politically-driven to improve the optics of a party that is under criticism by Muslims.**

**Finally!**

 **The Washington Post**

**Sign in**

**ENVIRONMENT**

**Climate**

Weather

Climate Solu

## **Dozens of bird names honoring enslavers and racists will be changed**

The American Ornithological Society says it will alter the names of North American birds named after humans, starting with up to 80 of them.



By Darryl Fears

Updated November 1, 2023 at 9:52 a.m. EDT | Published November 1, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. EDT

**Be forewarned - DoorDash has warned Americans if they do NOT give tip, their food delivery may be delayed or may not get delivered at all as drivers refuse to deliver food to non tippers.**

**Just abhorrent - this is a Jew - what would have been the reaction if he were trans or black?**



This [video clip](#) is a wonderful study in (our) absurdity.

## Fantastic illustration of the human condition



**Not funny - from the Bee -**

**Governor Gavin Newsom has called on the California state legislature to pass yet another minimum wage increase so that citizens can afford the products that have been made more expensive due to the previous minimum wage increase, sources confirmed Thursday. "This new wage increase will help California households keep up with the increase in the cost of goods and services increased by the last wage increase," Newsom told reporters at a "Fight for \$50" press conference. "There will be no negative effects from this wage increase. And if there are, we will just increase the minimum wage yet another time." "It's a foolproof plan."**

**I'm a Beatles fan. Some songs I think are fantastic, some ok, and some I would just as soon not listen to, again. I just listened to *Now and Then*, the new track created with an AI restoration of John's voice, some George added in from old sessions, and Paul and Ringo in real life. IMO, it is in the ok category. Lyrics simple, harmonies straightforward. I will not be adding it to my playlists.**



## Christianity Is Dead - Long Live Christianity

One of my central themes has been the differences between what the gods say and what religion has become.

It has been so long since humans actually encountered god, that our culture has evolved away from ancient teachings and beliefs - particularly Western culture. We have created our golden calves at the foot of Mt. Sinai.

Or, are they merely ancient teachings and beliefs? If god said it, then there is literally no room for pitiful humans to disagree. As examples, if an infinite god does not like homosexuals or women speaking in church, and particularly if your eternal life depends on it, then homosexuals are bad and women should shut up.

Your outrage is irrelevant.

But, humans have defied the gods at least since Ancient Greek times. They even had a word for it - hubris.

There are still humans that take religion seriously - the religious right, much of Islam, conservative Jews, many Hindus, people who live in tribes.

But in the West, religion faces a marketing problem. Modern culture disagrees with religion to the point that people quit attending religious services. They are just not that concerned about their eternal lives, and they are increasingly concerned about homosexuals and gender equality. Church has become a social club based on platitudes that may or may not show up in religious texts. And, if you are Protestant, the hymns are awesome.

Protestants have been particularly good at this, while Catholics remained more-or-less in line with the teachings of the *Bible*. (Actually, Reformed Jews may have been the first. They created a culture based on a text and took the religion out of it, along with the awkward bits, say from *Leviticus*. They are Jewish, kosher and have no god.)

Then, along came Francis, who has decided to bring Catholicism into the modern era - which means redefining theology, not based on what God said, but based on another construct, entirely. The *Catholic News Agency* put it this way:

Pope Francis has called for a “paradigm shift” in Catholic theology that takes widespread engagement with contemporary science, culture, and people’s lived experience as an essential starting point.

Citing the need to deal with “profound cultural transformations,” the pope presented his dramatic vision for the future of Catholic theology in a new motu proprio issued earlier today.

Titled *Ad Theologiam Promovendam*, or “to promote theology,” the document revises the statutes of the Pontifical Academy of Theology (PATH) “to make them more suitable for the mission that our time imposes on theology.”

“Theology can only develop in a culture of dialogue and encounter between different traditions and different knowledge, between different Christian confessions and different religions, openly engaging with everyone, believers and nonbelievers,” the pope wrote in the apostolic letter.

Pope Francis wrote that Catholic theology must experience a “courageous cultural revolution” in order to become a “fundamentally contextual theology.” Guided by Christ’s incarnation into time and space, this approach to theology must be capable of reading and interpreting “the Gospel in the conditions in which men and women live daily, in different geographical, social, and cultural environments,” the pope wrote.

Perhaps uncharitably, I read this as, "We are going to go with the flow." And he might as well, since all the cool kids are doing it. God is not important; context is. If I were cynical, which I am, I would suspect a significant marketing component in all of this.

I have no dog in this hunt, so it is fine with me, one way or the other.

The fascinating thing is that not even god is impervious to the evolution of the humans. The place and purpose of religion have been redefined in the West, and one of the last bastions of the old order is falling.

We are creating god in our own image.

The very definition of hubris.

And we all know the endings of the Greek stories involving hubris. (Hint, the gods win, always. And humans pay for going astray.)

But, it's ok, because we modern humans know best. I am sure it will turn out differently this time.

## War, Energy and Food

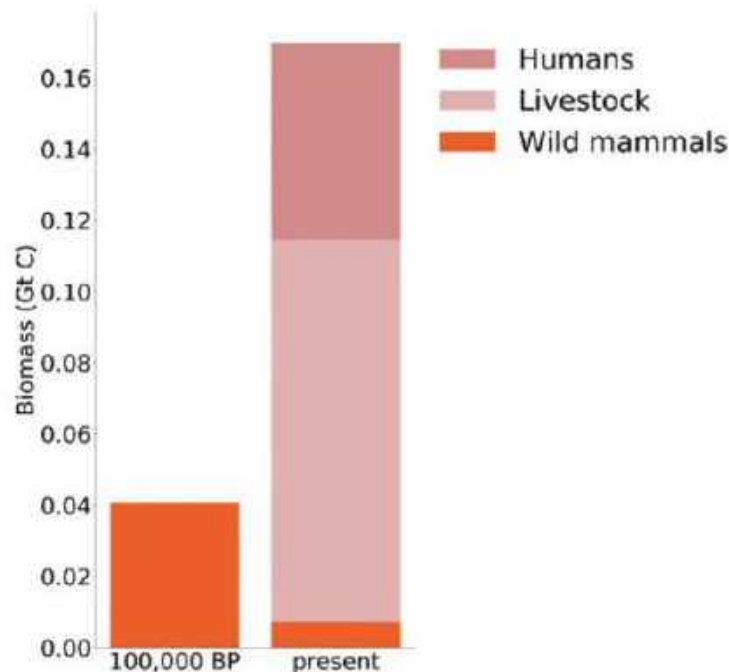
A war with Iran is not out of the question - then, what do other players do?  
The Hamas attack on Israel still has the potential to be an Archduke Ferdinand moment.

I did not have Turkey entering the Israel-Hamas fray on my Bingo card.  
Potentially a very big deal.

George Friedman - Meanwhile, an interesting statement was issued in Belarus, a place where interesting things rarely emerge. Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko said that the war in Ukraine is at an end, and that neither Ukraine nor Russia has the ability to defeat the other. Each side must accept this reality, he said, and should negotiate an end to the conflict. (Kit - it is all but certain that Lukashenko ran that statement by Putin first.)

## It Ain't Easy Being Green

Just in case you are wondering what the effect humans have had on the Earth's biomass



**Fig. S5.** The impact of human civilization on the biomass of mammals. The biomass of wild mammals, livestock (dominated by cattle) and humans before human civilization and at present. Values are based on estimates presented in detail in the relevant sections for humans and livestock, wild mammals and pre-human biomass.

Damned tradeoffs. Norway leads the world in the adoption of electric cars. David Zipper, writing for Vox, explored the downsides: "I discovered a Norwegian EV bonanza that has indeed reduced emissions — but at the expense of compromising vital societal goals. Eye-popping EV subsidies have flowed largely to the affluent, contributing to the gap between rich and poor in a country proud of its egalitarian social policies.

Worse, the EV boom has hobbled Norwegian cities' efforts to untether themselves from the automobile and enable residents to instead travel by transit or bicycle, decisions that do more to reduce emissions, enhance road safety, and enliven urban life than swapping a gas-powered car for an electric one."

The Danish energy company, Ørsted, announced Tuesday they would be pulling out of the billion-dollar project to build wind turbines off the New Jersey coast, a week before an election in which offshore wind has been a controversial political topic. ... Reuters reported earlier this week that the world's largest offshore wind developer was expected to reduce stateside projects "due to supply chain problems, soaring interest rates and a lack of new tax credits."

Speaking at the FT Energy Transition summit on Wednesday, a clean energy executive at supermajor BP said that the U.S. offshore wind industry is "fundamentally broken" and needs a reset. But the regulatory and permitting environment for the industry can be fixed, Anja-Isabel Dotzenrath, head of Gas and Low Carbon Energy at BP, said on the conference, as carried by Reuters. Currently, the U.S. regulatory environment is challenging for developers due to a lack of mechanisms to adjust for inflation, permitting issues, and a lag between the signing of the power purchase agreement and the construction of the projects, according to BP's green energy boss.

Like Princeton, Smith College in Massachusetts is embarking on \$220-million project to replace their fossil fueled central with an extensive ground source geothermal heat pump system to meet campus heating & cooling needs.

In a great irony, air pollution is saving us from some of the effects of global warming. The particles in the air scatter the sunlight, shielding us from some of it. As we clean up the air, we are letting in more warming. One of the principal contributors to this summer's heat is thought to have been cleaner air.

Irony continues to abound (the problem is leaks) - Howarth models a number of different scenarios, varying for how far the L.N.G. travels and how much methane might be released. According to his calculations, even when the gas is delivered with the most modern ship, taking the most direct route, the greenhouse-gas emissions

from the entire ground-to-combustion life cycle of L.N.G.—from the fracking wells, to the pipelines, the liquefaction stations, the ships, and the final combustion—are twenty-four per cent worse than those caused by digging up and burning an equivalent amount of coal. (The worst cases—long voyages in old vessels burning lots of oil—show an impact two hundred and seventy-four per cent worse.)

## Miscellany

Amazing! The exact thing happened to us in the past, only our robber was partial to dark chocolate. From the Bee.



Dad Sadly Informs Kids A Robber Broke In Last Night And Only Stole Their Reese's Cups



*"What's the next best medicine?"*