

Grace and Glory

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whole counsel of GOD

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Loving His Appearing

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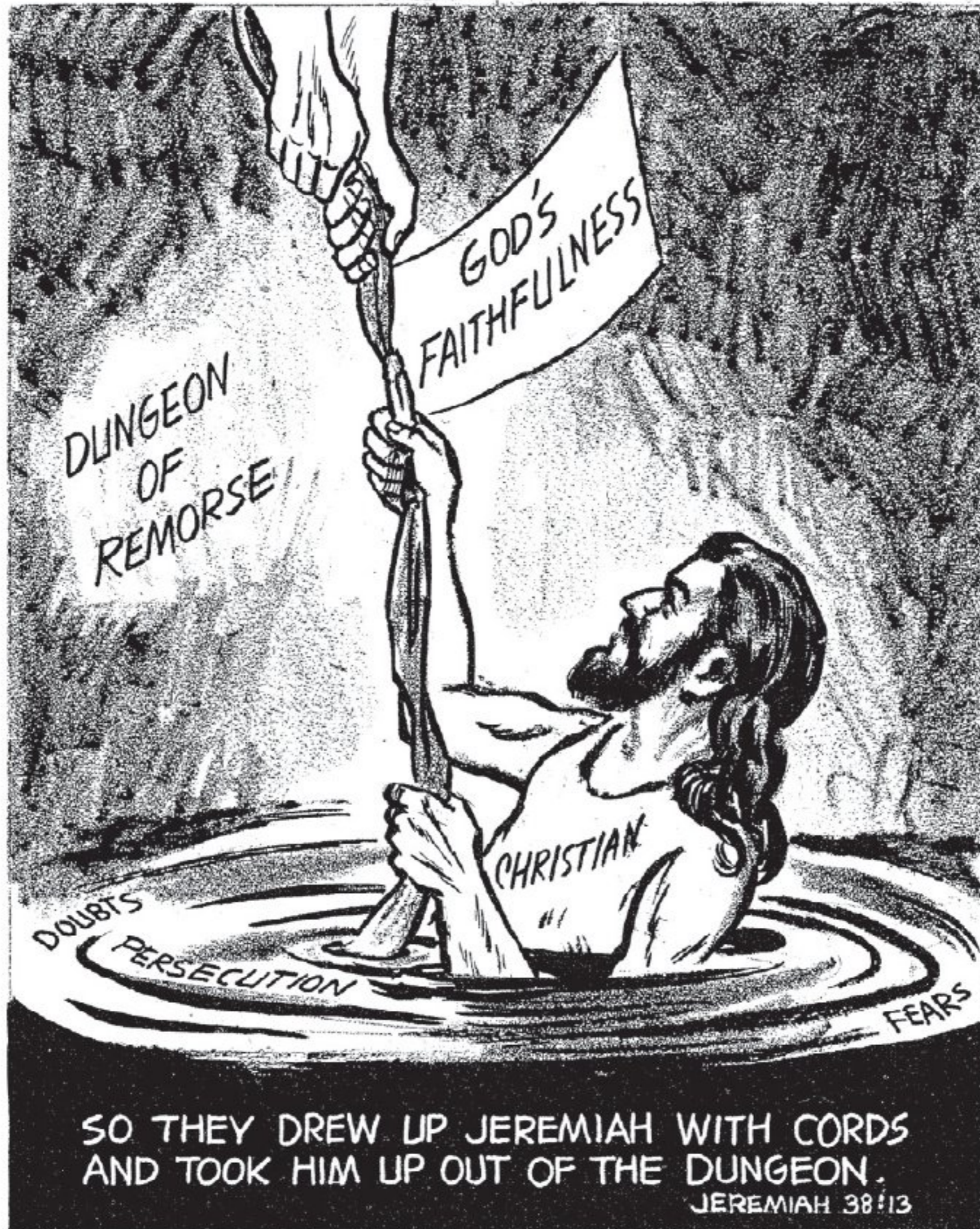
Blessed be God,
even the Father of
our Lord Jesus
Christ, the Father
of mercies, and the
God of all comfort.

II CORINTHIANS 1:3.

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STRONG CORDS



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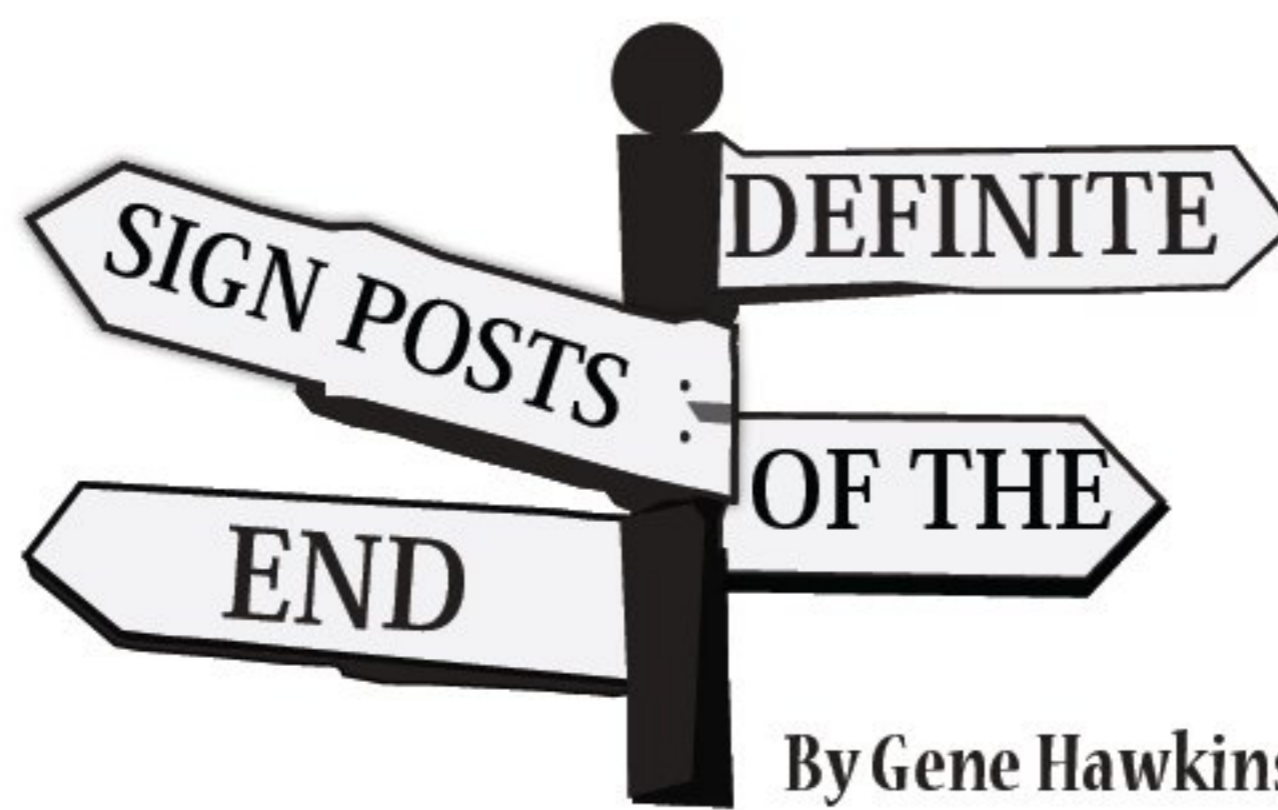
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Editor: Gene Hawkins



“And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. Luke 21:20-22

3 Jerusalem stands as perhaps the most definitive sign of where the world stands on the time line of end time prophecy. The above portion informs us that Jerusalem will be the focus of attention in the end time and according to Matthew 24, the scenario outlined above will occur around the middle of the tribulation week. Jesus declared plainly “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:” Matt. 24:15-16 According to Daniel 9:27, the anti-christ will set up his image in the temple “in the midst of the week,.... and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate...” Matthew presents a detailed chronological view of the events leading up to this time as Jesus answers three major questions asked by the disciples. They wanted to know, first of all, “when shall these things be?” Secondly they queried “... what shall be the sign of thy coming, and...” and thirdly they enquired of the sign pointing to “the end of the world?” (age) Matt. 24:3 This last question was actually designed to inform them as to when Jesus would end their oppression and restore the kingdom to Israel. This had been their burning desire for some time, and even after the resurrection, just prior to His ascension into heaven, they asked him “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” Acts 1:6

“The end,” of which Jesus speaks, is multifaceted, and is far different than that which the disciples envisioned. It is also contrary to the view of many today. In fact, some have used Matt. 24: 13 as the cornerstone for a doctrine which teaches against the truth of eternal life. “But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” This verse is taken completely out of

context, and interpreted to mean that if an individual does not “endure,” or “hold out faithful” **to the end of his life**, without making any kind of mistake, then he will be lost and go to hell. The context of “the end,” is found in Matt. 24:6 where Jesus declares that “...ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the **end is not yet.**” He means the end of that period of time. Verse 7 continues to describe a world where “...nation shall rise against nation,...” along with famines, pestilence, and earthquakes, adding that these are only the “beginning of sorrows.” He then asserts that they shall “...deliver you (Jews) up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye (Jews) shall be hated of all **nations** for my names sake.” This is exactly the same time period seen in Luke when these armies begin to gather around Jerusalem, wherein the most devastating time of the tribulation period will ensue. Verses 16-18 present, almost verbatim, the same message found in Luke 21, as the inhabitants of Jerusalem are exhorted to flee, for their own safety. The days in question will be the most devastating days Jerusalem and the world have ever witnessed. In fact Jesus says in verse 22 that “...except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved:...” Such days refer to the 1260 day reign of the antichrist, which begins 250 days before the midst of the week. This is “the end” designated by Jesus in verse 13. “He that endureth to the end (of that devastating period of time) the same shall be saved,” (delivered, protected, healed preserved) literally, or physically. Daniel agrees with this same premise which is described in Dan. 12:12 “Blessed is he that waiteth, (entrench, adhere to, tarry) and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.,” meaning that a faithful remnant of Jews will endure the 1260 day rule of the antichrist, and lead the way for 75 more days, to gain the first glimpse of Jesus when “.....he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him,...” Rev. 1:7

4

Note that Jesus also projects another “end” in Matt. 24:14. “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all **nations**; and **then shall the end come.**” The “end,” of which He speaks here, is the one men today generally proclaim as “doomsday.” Some look on the events of this present time and shout that we are rapidly approaching it, but the timeline of this verse shows that such an event will not come until AFTER

the thousand year reign of Christ. The millennium is the period of time wherein the Jews will fulfill the great commission to “..... teach all **nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:....” Matt. 28:19,20 This is the “gospel of the kingdom,” of which The Master speaks, and “the end,” will come after that thousand years has been completed.

5 The Lord told the disciples that “...all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.” Matt. 24:6 He only announced the “beginning of the end,” in our opening text as He spoke of the armies gathering around Jerusalem. The hostile atmosphere and assault against Jerusalem announced by the opening verses of this article, will not come to pass until very near the middle of the week. However, present day circumstance in the Middle East surely points out that the “beginning” of such sorrows is already taking place at this present hour, and will intensify to produce the
5 aforementioned desolation at the appointed time. Israel, as a nation, is in trouble at this present hour, surrounded by multiple enemies. The January edition of Newsmax magazine declared emphatically that “Today, everywhere they look Israeli leaders see the dogs of war straining at their leashes.” This comment comes following the recent 8 day war, wherein Hamas fired an estimated 1500 rockets and missiles at Israel from Gaza. These caused minimal damage, thanks to Israel’s Iron Dome Defense system that destroyed those incoming missiles, but the greater worry, according to some analysts is that “the missiles fired at Israel were essentially a trial run for a much greater battle with Hezbollah, Hamas, and Iran, that could come later this year.”

This article goes on to describe the tremendous opposition which this tiny nation faces. “To the north, Hezbollah has amassed a cache of over 100,000 missiles, many of them more capable than the weapons in Gaza’s inventory. Some intelligence analysts believe Hezbollah also has acquired scud missiles from neighboring Syria.”

Syria is in the midst of her own difficulties as Bashar al-Assad continues his brutality in trying to maintain his dictatorship. The difficulty for Israel is that many jihadists, including Al-Qaida, have now infiltrated the troops trying to overthrow Assad, and hope to establish a presence there, even as the Muslim

Brotherhood has done in Egypt. Hezbollah presents a special threat in Syria because they have constructed small training camps near several Syrian chemical-weapons depots which has caused great concern for both Israel and the U.S. Pres. Obama was advised "...that a force of 75,000 soldiers would be needed to keep Assad's weapons of mass destruction from falling into jihadi hands, should the Assad government collapse."

Egypt is Israel's enemy to the South, and although Pres. Mohammed Morsi was instrumental in brokering the Israeli-Hamas ceasefire, Egypt's border with Israel is, in no wise, as secure as it was when Hosni Mubarak was in power. Moreover, Morsi, according to one assessment, has visions that the Muslim Brotherhood would gain powers in Egypt "that even a pharaoh would envy."

Gaza is home to a great number of militant jihadist terrorist groups who are constantly pressuring Hamas "to attack Israel in order to protect its credibility as the leader of the Palestinian resistance."

6

P.A. Pres. Mahmoud Abbas, in the West Bank, pressed the U.N. until he won "recognition for provisional-nation status," but that is seen by some as a great detriment to peace through a "two state settlement" in the Middle East, because there is no provision to even acknowledge Israel's right to exist.

Also to the West is Jordan, a once stable government that is now torn by growing protests against the monarchy, and is in no position to aid Israel.

Then, there is the ever present threat of Iran. Israel has a long history with them, for Iran is a part of the ancient Persian regime. Cyrus liberated the Jews and issued the decree that they should go back to Jerusalem after the 70 year Babylonish captivity was over, but a number of years later, a man by the name of Haman, obtained permission from King Ahasuerus to completely annihilate them during the days of Purim. Esther 3:7-9 Current Iranian Pres. Ahmadinejad is out of the same mold as this wicked Haman, for he too has repeatedly called for the destruction of Israel, and Iran has continued full speed ahead to develop nuclear weapons, capability. Israel has threatened to attack Iran in an effort to thwart these nuclear efforts, but Former U.N. Ambassador John Bolton outlines the tremendous problems facing them in regard to this strategy. "Iran, without attacking

directly from Iran, could unleash both Hamas and Hezbollah, and make it essentially impossible for the Israeli air force to be in three places at once. So what is already a very difficult decision from Israel's point of view---whether to go after the Iranian nuclear weapons program---becomes even more difficult." Newsmax also adds that "many analysts believe the point of no return for any attack on Iran's nuclear infrastructure will arrive in the spring or early summer." Some are of the opinion that 2013 may bring Israel face to face with its greatest existential threat since then President Richard Nixon ordered the massive resupply effort by which they were delivered in 1973 during the Yom Kippur war.

Israel was established as a sovereign state in 1948, but 65 years later, neither they nor the world have attained a state of peace. Neither has this chosen people, as a nation, come anywhere near a more spiritual condition than they enjoyed in 1948. We quote from Sis. Bodie's Sign Posts in December of that year.

7 **"RECENTLY A WORLD ZIONIST CONGRESS CONVENED IN LONDON.** This meeting was addressed by delegates from Palestine, America, and Africa. This was the first great Zionist world conference since the war. And notice, after six million Jews had been massacred, there was not one word said about God in that World Congress, not a prayer to Him, nor even a word of acknowledgment of Him, the Almighty Jehovah Who revealed Himself to Israel. This is the spiritual state of the Jewish people of today. God will be obliged to bring them down lower still after they have entered into their land. Their suffering will continue until their Messiah and King brings peace to them under His reign. It is coming, even as the partition of Palestine is a Sign of their further blessing. They, as well as men of the world, so construe it; as the following item indicates. It was published by The Los Angeles Examiner, a newspaper always in favor of the Jews receiving their homeland. It is a panegyric of praise to these people of destiny.

"CONGRATULATIONS, PALESTINE. Today we hail the BIRTH OF A NEW FLAG. Today we hail the BIRTH OF A JEWISH STATE—PALESTINE. The U. N. has returned ERETZ ISRAEL to the Jews. The U. N. has ended 2,000 years of national homelessness for the Jews. They will be HOME-BOUND instead of HOME-LESS. They will be free of ghettos and the badge of shame. They will be free of tyrants and of men again. This

marks the fulfillment of the millennial hope for the reunion of the Jewish people with the land of their ancient inheritance—a hope that accords with Biblical prophecy: a hope that commands the support of men of good will everywhere. Never have the Jewish people bowed their heads in despair. Never have they surrendered their faith and manhood. For 2,000 years the Jew has been a lonely river in the midst of the ocean of mankind. The mightiest flood of human suffering has never caused it to overflow. The fiercest fires of human cruelty heated in the furnace of bigotry have never caused it to dry up. Today we can hear the Jews all over the world utter with joy the words of their traditional prayer :

*"Brethren, members of the household of Israel,
Who find themselves in the midst of trouble and woe,
The Lord has heard your cry and will bring you forth
From suffering into joy, from darkness unto light,
From slavery unto freedom."*

"We can see the light kindle in their eyes. We can see the hillsides and valleys of Palestine bloom again. We can see the rebirth of a great nation. We can see them create new cities. We can see them 8 build a new civilization. When the time shall come that the prophecy of the Jewish seers are fulfilled; when nations shall no longer raise sword against nation; when the olive leaf instead of the laurel shall adorn the brow of the great; when the achievements of noble minds shall be familiar to the dwellers of cottages and palaces alike, then the history of civilization will have enriched and glorified the coronet of time. On its pages will be written not the warrior's prowess and his victories, not the diplomatic schemes and triumphs, but the progress of liberty loving people all over the earth. LONG LIVE ISRAEL. LONG LIVE THE JEWISH STATE. May she stand till the last sun is gone. May she stand fast in the storm and sunlight until eternity shall dawn." And we add, Amen!"

Sis. Bodie's "amen," is for the glorious promise that Israel will be restored, and we would shout that same refrain. Despite the tremendous opposition outlined above, this nation will eventually come into all the glory that God has promised. However, as our dear sister pointed out, Israel's spiritual state when they gained their homeland in 1948 was one which did not acknowledge God, and that condition has not improved. Thus "the armies" which Jesus described at the beginning of the feature, will compass Israel and usher in the prophesied desolation which is coming. Such devastation will bring

them to their knees and, whereas they did not acknowledge The God Of Israel in 1948, they will call upon Him “in that day.”

Presently, the various nations and terrorist groups outlined previously are beginning to gather around Jerusalem like vultures. This trend will continue, and intensify, until the full blown condition of which Jesus warned, will come to fruition. The world is becoming a virtual “powder keg,” and none of the world leaders have a clue as to what will transpire next. Most of them are on the edges of their collective seats wondering whether or not Israel will attack Iran, and what consequences that might bring to their own nations. Israel greatly fears that nothing will be done in regard to their arch enemy and they would simply be a “sitting duck,” trying to find some defense against a nuclear attack from Iran.

The good news for Christians is that the entire Church will be in heaven by the time Luke 21:20 is fulfilled. Even better news is that those who earnestly look for Jesus and “love his appearing,” could be translated out of this world at any moment. Jesus described a very fearsome time in Luke 21, but He concluded that discourse with these words. “And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.” V. 28 That admonition is for us, as well as the Jews of that day, for even now, we are witnessing --- actually living in that time --- when “...these things **begin** to come to pass...” We too should “lift up” our heads, for our redemption is to be taken out of this world before the severe judgments of the tribulation even arrive.

We are confident that once the bridal company is removed, darkness will descend upon this world in a manner never before witnessed because “.....the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth (hinders) will let, (hinder) until he be taken out of the way.” II Thess. 2:7 Those who are intensely walking in the light are the “hinderers.” When they are removed, nothing will stop the satanic “mystery of iniquity which doth already work,” and the plaintive cry of S.O.S. 6:13 will be heard throughout the land. “Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies.” Those two armies were the only thing holding back the forces of evil which are even now gripping this entire world. One day soon, we too will hear that same glorious voice of the trumpet which fell on John’s ears when a door was opened in heaven “.....**come up hither!**” Rev. 4:1

THE EVENING CHIME

Mary M. Bodie

A. S. Copley

IT WILL MAT-TER MUCH I VEN- TURE, AT THE END- ING OF OUR RACE. WE WERE
 WHEN THE MILES HAVE ALL BEEN COUNT- ED, AS WE JOURN- EY HERE BE- LOW, WITH NO
 YES, SOME- TIMES THE WAY IS RUG- GED, AND THE ARCH- ING SKIES ARE GRAY, BUT THE

HALT- ED BY THE MAS- TER IN OUR CHOSE OF EARTH- LY PLACE BUT THE LIT- TLE FREES AND WOR- RIES, THAT BE-
 LAG- ING ON THE HIGH- WAY, WITH NO HALT- ING AS WE GO ALL THE DAL- LY, VEX- ING DE- TOURS THAT COM-
 RAPT- URE WAITS OUR WATCH- ING, WHEN WE REACH THE CLOSE OF DAY. WE SHALL WALK A- MIDST THE FLOW- ERS IN THAT

SET THE WAYS OF TIME, WILL NOT BE RE- MEM- BERED YON- DER WHEN WE HEAR THE EV'- NING CHIME.
 SOME THE PIL- GRIM'S TIME, WILL NOT MAR OUR PLEAS- URE YON- DER WHEN WE HEAR THE EV'- NING CHIME.
 GOLD- EN SUN- LIT CLIME, AND FOR- GET OUR EARTH- LY HARD- SHIPS, WHEN WE HEAR THE EV'- NING CHIME.

CHORUS
 INTERLUDE CHIMES AD LIB.
 WHEN WE HEAR THE EVENING CHIME, FLOAT- ING
 GLAD- LY HEAR SO SUB- LIME

OUT UP- ON THE AIR FROM THE HO- LY CI- TY FAIR. WHEN WE HEAR THE EV'- NING
 LOUD AND CLEAR

CHIME JUST ON TIME NOTH- ING SAD WILL BE RE- MEM- BERED, WHEN WE HEAR THE EV'- NING CHIME.

Last song written by Bro. Copley, 1945.

The Evening Chime

R. Hawkins

“When the miles have all been counted, as we journey here below”
– *The Evening Chime*, p. 285 *Grace & Glory Carols*

T*he year was 1945.* Brother Copley would turn 85 years old that July and at some point he started work on his last musical composition. I am sure many have a fondness for the *Evening Chime*, but at Roy Clark’s home-going in September the song struck a chord within me. Played that day sans vocalist, it was just Brother Copley’s lilting melody from 1945 carried on the air by a cello and a piano. It was a beautiful moment and a wonderful tribute that inspired me to take a closer look at the chime *‘floating out upon the air from the Holy City fair.’*

11

To say that Brother Copley had been given a ministerial help meet might be an understatement. He met the formerly Catholic Mary Bodie around 1912, and no surprise she was filled with the Holy Spirit soon after. Both married and still raising families, they were a powerful force, each receiving revelations of truth of which they taught, published and preached. How it must have pleased the Father that a friendship, and not a rivalry, would enrich both their ministries, and over time her words would join his melodies and they would make music together.

Like so many others in the Pentecostal Grace Churches, I have known only one song book. It is that hard brown book with the gold cursive letters spelling out *Grace and Glory Carols*. Its mere existence, right along with most everything else associated with *Grace and Glory*, was made possible by the man who lived out the Apostle Paul’s words, *“for to me to live is Christ.”*

A.S. Copley expounded on the Word of God- *‘yea, the deep things of God’*, tirelessly preaching, teaching and writing - and because of those endeavors - he recognized a need for scriptural songs in the Church. The only problem however, which he took to the Lord in prayer, was the ability to hear and write melody. In the *Grace & Glory* of July 1921 he recalled that request: *“When the prayer was all forgotten, suddenly the Spirit of God took hold of me and I began to write.”*

The spirit of God enabled Brother Copley to write

words and music to 45 songs. He composed the music to 107 others with Mary Bodie adding words to most. He wonderfully altered the work of others to express Pauline teaching, most notably on the standard hymn, '*Jesus, Lover of my Soul*'. The song originally composed by Charles Wesley sits on page 145 of the *Grace and Glory Carols* under the name: *Paul's Version* – a lasting testament that Brother Copley was not above lifting a song from a Methodist and attributing it to the Apostle Paul.

The Evening Chime however, is like no other song in the *Grace and Glory Carols*. I started with the only thing I knew for sure notated under the songs chorus on page 285: *Last song written by A.S. Copley and Mary M. Bodie, 1945*. That was the year of his death so having the archives of *Grace & Glory* two feet from my desk, I did a little reading

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By 1945 Brother Copley had all but retired from the ministry. He had turned over the pastorate of the Tabernacle to Sister Bodie but was still writing a monthly sermon. I knew from the W.J. Franklin biography of Brother Copley that he became very sick that spring and in the March issue I saw how he knew that: Brother Copley's usual sermon was replaced with one his own titled, *Manifestation of Grace*.

Brother Copley returned in April with "*The Unveiled Face*", '*7 Glory Facts*' in May, "*Christ Crucified & Crowned*" in June, and one by Sister Bodie in July. August of 1945 would be his last called, "*Jesus the Judge*". It was a long article that I quote from the first paragraph: "*Like a flash there came into my mind five basic reasons for Christ's right to judge the church.*"

The following month on September 19th Brother Copley was called home. After 35 years of publication *Grace & Glory* would do a re-print with his February article, '*The Coming & the Day of Christ*'. For those unfamiliar with the biography of this man, there were three women present at the hour of his home-going and again I quote:

"A few minutes before he went to be with the Lord, Brother Copley raised his hand to heaven and said, '*Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost*' - *Rom. 15:13*, a prayer for them rather than a last-minute word of comfort for himself."

I continued through the months of 1945 into 1946 being aware of the magazines practice of printing sheet music for newly penned songs inside of the cover. Sure enough, in February of '46 there was a hand-written copy of *The Evening Chime* (see pg. 10) with Brother Copley's name on the right (music) and Sister Bodie to the left (lyrics) and a notation at the bottom: *Last song written by A.S. Copley.*

I have uncovered nothing more about the *Evening Chime*. I understand the collaboration was often Brother Copley using her poems in his musical compositions, but I doubt *The Evening Chime* began as a finished poem. It was starting to look like a Love story. They either finished it in those last few months of his life or she wrote the words in the wake of his passing. It is all speculation from this point, which is what I will be doing; but the key will be to understand what the song is saying.

Making Melody in your Heart to the Lord

13

I have seen old pictures of a piano in the Bible School parlor. I can imagine Brother Copley weakly coming out of his room that spring and summer and picking out that heavenly melody that was in his head, notes that he must have put on paper. Where and when the words came along nobody knows, but one fact is clear: he had not published a song with Sister Bodie or anyone else in over 9 years.

We know that in August Sister Bodie came to him about cancelling Bible School the next month. With his weakened condition and his first floor bedroom adjacent to the school's bustling classroom, she wanted to make him more comfortable. Again from the Franklin biography: "Oh my no! don't even think of it! I will get my lessons ready for the fall term." I believe going into September of 1945 she stood in that faith.

Working on the words to his song during this period seems out of character. *The Evening Chime* is like no other in the *Grace & Glory Carols* because Sister Bodie places the believer in Heaven **after hearing a chime**. A quick summation of every other *Grace & Glory* song on the subject and we find a **trumpet**. She introduced a new sound for the overcomer that upon hearing '*nothing sad will be remembered.*'

It would seem to be the antithesis to their earlier song *Run for the Prize* (1924), especially when comparing lyrics like '*when we hear the Evening Chime,*'

with the former *'Hear, hear the trumpet, brother, shout 'Saints Arise'*. In my opinion, it would take the passing of a man like A.S. Copley for Sister Bodie to contemplate something as profound as what he might have heard when leaving this world.

But could she have considered such a sound before his passing. Maybe, but it seems a hard fit. She had taken over as pastor of the Tabernacle that year as well as editor for the *Grace & Glory*. She was the principal of the Bible School, a teacher, and furiously writing and staying current on the events of 1945. She not only contributed regular sermon articles and lengthy book studies, but her monthly column, *Definite Sign Post of the End*, chronicled the ending of the Second World War including the Atomic bomb, Hitler and the unfolding events surrounding the extermination camps of the Jews.

No, I can imagine Sister Bodie, like everyone else in the *Grace & Glory* family, was taken aback by something they knew was coming. It surely stopped her in her tracks as the following personal notice in the October 1945 issue testifies: *We are missing him deeply, having been associated for thirty-five years in the work. It is surely a wrenching of our heart strings to let him go. His counsel and co-operation with me in our service for the Lord were outstanding. I can scarcely contemplate what it will mean to be deprived of his fellowship and companionship. The Lord will surely have to be more to me than He has ever been. He will have to supply all my needs in these respects; and be my Comfort and Stay in a greater measure than ever.*

14

I have come to believe that she wrote the words to the *Evening Chime* after his passing and it was a much needed source of therapy. She was able to remember and honor her old friend but I wondered at her poetic use of a chime and if there was a connection. Maybe an old grandfather clock there on the first floor. Perhaps being fond of its chime, he had oft remarked of the memories it stirred or maybe it reminded them both of their earthly families – having both been preceded in death by spouses and children.

A heavenly chime would have been the perfect imagery to greet Brother Copley as he left this world. As a metaphor in the song, the chime not only ushers in unspeakable joy but it erases the memories of life's sadness and all those *'little frets and worries that beset the ways of time.'* In the chorus of the song she gives the chimes scriptural source: . . . *from the Holy City Fair.*

We know from God's Word (*Revelation 21:9, 10*) that the City she is referring to is on that 'great and high mountain' that is ready to descend 'out of heaven from God.' It is a wonderful thing she meditated on, this idea that the Bride's future home called 'that great city, the Holy Jerusalem' is making its presence felt to departed full overcoming saints even before its consummation. It might not be with a chime but I bet it's glorious to behold.

I dare say that across the sphere of Christian Churches and their congregational music, it is only in the *Grace & Glory Carols* that you would find such a song. And really, only God knows what one hears when they go by way of the grave- and Brother Copley and Sister Bodie would probably agree it's not to be at the top of our discussion. It was just a special place and time that produced this couple and their song, and like them, we will keep listening for that trumpet and hold on to the same wonderful Hope- I John 3:3.

15 **W**e finish by telling you that we recently discovered a recording of *The Evening Chime* on vinyl. It was part of a collection of songs done by members of the Tabernacle in Kansas City simply called "*Songs of Grace and Glory*" It was recorded sometime in the early 60's and was obviously a labor of love to preserve our musical heritage.

Almost all the songs are from our *Grace & Glory Carols* song book and done mostly by choir and ensembles with a lone piano or organ. We have transferred this recording to CD and made it available for any of the saints of God who would like to strengthen their hope and anticipation of Christ's glorious and soon return.



*Were half the breath that's vainly sent
To heaven in supplication, spent
In praise to God, our song would be
"Hear what the Lord has done for me."*

THE LOVE OF CHRIST

Harriet Dring

“THAT CHRIST MAY DWELL IN YOUR HEARTS BY FAITH; THAT YE BEING ROOTED AND GROUNDED IN LOVE, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fulness of God”— Ephesians 3:17-19.

How little the world knows of Christ's love! Paul says that it passeth knowledge. There is so much knowledge in the world today, but very little love. God is Love, but people are not God-conscious. To begin to understand the love of Christ, one has got to be born again from above by the Spirit of God. Only as Christ dwells in our hearts by faith can we become rooted and grounded in love. In the above citation we see the Apostle Paul on bended knee, praying to God that the saints at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus, should be so rooted and grounded in love that they would be able to comprehend what is the breadth and length, and depth and height . . . and to know the love of God which passeth knowledge, that they might be filled with all the fullness of God.

16

FIRST, let us consider the BREADTH of Christ's love. Oh yes, it is wide. It reaches to every individual. Rom. 10:13 tells us that "whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved," Wondrous love! Wondrous grace! No one need be outside God's wonderful, "whosoever" salvation. The sad part of it is that many remain outside because of unbelief, or because they are too self-righteous to call upon Him for salvation.

SECOND, the LENGTH of Christ's love. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life"—John 3:16. The only begotten Son of God is the LENGTH of God's love to a sinful world. He couldn't go beyond that. The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin; but the blood of Jesus, God's Son, cleanseth us from all unrighteousness when we believe on Him for salvation. God's Son was the only One who could redeem mankind from sin, and "God spared not His only Son, but delivered Him up for us. all"---Rom. 8:32. Hallelujah!

THIRD: The DEPTH of Christ's love, we find in Phil.

2:6, "Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God. But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Christ, who was equal with God in holiness, and glory and power, left the highest heights and descended to the lowest depths. Although He was a King, He came to earth as a Servant, taking upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh. In this guise He allowed Himself to suffer death at the hands of wicked men, even the death of the accursed cross. He was made a curse for us. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree"—Gal. 3:13. He could not get any lower than being a curse. What a depth! By becoming a curse, He took my sin upon Himself, thus making it possible to put His righteousness upon me. Glory to God!

17 FOURTH, what about the HEIGHT of Christ's love? The breadth and length and depth and height Redemption begins in heaven, the highest place, and it ends in heaven. Glory to God! Though Christ died. He rose again and became the Head of a New Creation. He ascended into heaven and God hath highly exalted Him, giving Him a Name which is above every name. The height of Christ's love is found in the Prize that He offers to those of His redeemed ones who will reciprocate his love in every way, by letting Him form His own Image in them. During this dispensation, the Holy Spirit is calling out, preparing, and choosing a Bride for the Son of God from amongst believers. Jesus as Bridegroom is the Prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus—Phil. 3:14 Paul's ministry was to present the Church as a chaste virgin to Christ—2 Cor. 11:2. Is it any wonder that he prayed so earnestly that saints should comprehend the love of Christ, that they be filled with all the fulness of God? Praise God, the Bride is making herself ready for the first Trumpet blast that will announce to her, "Rise up, my love, my fair one and come away"—Song of Solomon 2:10.

(Reprint June 1943)

* A smile is the same in every language and so is a frown or a scowl.

* As a lake without an outlet becomes stagnant, so also a life that is self-centered, bitter and unattractive.

REFLECTIONS

... From the Editor

“I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.” Prov 8:17

The subject of this entire eighth chapter of proverbs is wisdom. It is a direct personification of Jesus, “..... who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:” I Cor. 1:30 Thus, the Name of Jesus could be substituted every time the word wisdom is mentioned. There are many who have questioned God’s love for them over the years, despite the fact that such love motivated Him to give His only begotten Son for us, even while we were yet sinners. The text above tells us that love is reciprocal. God led the way in demonstrating its glorious attributes, but here it is very plain that Jesus loves those who love Him. Perhaps some who are struggling to believe that He no longer loves them should examine their own hearts and ask the question, “how much love is in my own heart for Jesus? This verse declares that loving Him more will produce even greater love for ourselves.

Some have declared that Jesus’ love for all men is exactly the same, but this verse seems to contradict that. The same contradiction is demonstrated by the relationship between Jesus and the apostle John. No less than four times the phrase; “the disciple whom Jesus loved,” or its equivalent, is found in the book of John. Some have said that John used those terms for his own benefit, but scriptural record does bears out the fact that, though Jesus did love all His disciples, He had an especially high regard for John. Though all the disciples could have, only John, leaned his head on Jesus breast at the last supper. Not only so, but even very forward and vocal disciples like Peter did not have the boldness, and liberty, produced by divine love, to ask who it was that would betray Him, as did John. He enquired into this matter with absolutely no thought of being reprimanded by Jesus. John 21:20

The scene at the cross also produced the confidence of Divine Love, this time from Jesus, as He looked down from the cross in His dying hour. “When Jesus therefore saw his mother,

and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.” John 19:26-27 Love was the motivation as Jesus committed His most priceless earthly possession into the hands of John, the beloved.

“I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me,” is revealed once again in John’s experience as He was given exclusive insights into the end time events found in the book of Revelation. Jesus trusted this disciple whom He loved and committed another precious possession into his hand. “What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches.....Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;” Rev. 1:11,19

Jesus also singled out another company of believers as having been specifically loved. The Philadelphia assembly heard these words of special reward when Jesus declared that He would make those of the synagogue of satan “...to come and worship before thy feet and to know that I have loved thee.” Rev. 3:9 No other Church heard such affectionate words and they are meant only for that group known as the bride of Christ. Loving Him, pre-eminently, in response to His matchless love for us, will also bring forth a most striking and glorious reward today!

GH

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BE STILL!

Ray Quintana

“Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.” Ps 46:10

There are many good things with which we can involve our lives, but if they are not according to God’s will, they will amount to nothing. One of the conditions of really knowing God is stillness. This is not inactivity, but rather the stillness of the peace of God.

Ezekiel describes the living creatures as “...when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings.” Ezek. 1:24 Have you ever seen a bird land and keep flapping his wings? You see it lands and rests. To know God we must be still.

20

The first of all kingdoms in this world is the kingdom of the soul. No other kingdom can be truly prosperous in my life if my soul is a scene of discord. If the enemy causes me to take things into my own hands then he has robbed my treasury.

Do you know what God thinks of us? There was a story of a young girl, whose only knowledge was that of the streets. She was deserted by her family, and became a prostitute. A wealthy family took her in one day, clothed and fed her, and led her to Christ. They got her a job; and a couple of years later, the owner of the store fell in love with her and asked her to marry him. She said, “I cannot marry you until you hear my story.” So the store owner came to the place where she was living. The young girl went to the lady of the house who had taken her in, put her head on her lap, and began to tell this young man her story. While she told the story of her days on the streets, she would sob and shake uncontrollably. The entire time the young girl’s head was hidden in the lady’s lap. When she finally finished her story, the young man came over and reached down and picked her up and turning her to himself, he kissed her on the lips and said, “I love now like I never could have loved you before.” We might say, “Oh how could such a thing be that God could love the likes of you and me?”

Consider Jacob who doubts, yet believes! Many times Jacob’s faith was not perfect like Abraham’s faith. He is much like we are,

yet he does confide in God. There was belief and unbelief, fear and faith battling together in his soul. In Romans 7, Paul discusses this problem; there is the battle between the old and new nature in every Christian. It is in my flesh wherein sin dwelleth, but what must I do? You can't come in and take over my flesh or judge my flesh, nor can I judge yours. It is by believing God that our old man is dead, and that we are alive unto God. So was it with Jacob.

There are many things that Christians do, and places which Christians go, which they should not. It was so with Jacob. Jacob's faith, was resting upon the promise of God, but it was a struggling faith. So, Brethren, if your faith begins only as struggling faith, it is the nature of it to increase and grow till, at last, it comes to be victorious faith! Jacob failed to rise to the level of God's grace and many times was filled with fear instead of peace, expressing human legality by speaking of what he would do. Oh, how often we follow in his steps! Instead of resting in the goodness of God and appropriating His free grace, like Jacob, we are not still before God, and we miss what He has for us.

21

This account concerning Jacob begins in Genesis 27. His father Isaac was old, his eyes were dim, and he called Esau his eldest son. He wanted him to make savory meat. Rebekah heard what Isaac told Esau, and while Esau went to the field to hunt venison, she told Jacob. Rebekah never forgot the fighting experience that these two sons had in her womb. She never forgot what God told her, the elder shall serve the younger. God's purpose is always in the new creation. The blessings were Jacob's by promise, but she devised a plan of her own. God remained silent in all of this, but He used her plan to get Jacob to go where He has directed him. God also uses circumstances in our lives, even our mistakes, to direct us to His best. He did not reprimand either Jacob or Rebekah for what they did, but God blessed Jacob abundantly. He sees the heart. Notice her plan was to fix Jacob up so he looks, smells, and feels, exactly like Esau. Esau went after the wild venison. So she sends Jacob to the flock. He went after Christ. It does not take any great skill to catch this little defenseless domestic lamb. Jacob knew he was plain and Esau was hairy. My father may not be able to see very well, but he is going to notice that. But Rebekah says "don't worry; I will take care of it." Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, and this is exactly what Jesus Christ did, He came with

the clothing of Esau. He came in the likeness of sinful flesh. She put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck: Jesus put the skins of the goats upon His hands in the likeness of the works of the flesh. He who knew no sin was made sin for us. And upon the smooth of his neck; Jesus took the place of all sinful humanity and made His neck to be like the rebellious stiff neck of Esau. Jacob had already bought the birthright with the red pottage, so Christ bought the birthright with His own blood there at the cross of Calvary for us. He went through this to purchase the inheritance for us. Then Jacob said to his father, I am Esau thy firstborn; this is exactly what Jesus did, He assumed all the responsibilities of the first born old creation. Isaac asked his son, "how is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son?" "And he said, because the Lord thy God brought it to me." It was Christ that brought Himself. God indeed had provided a lamb. Jacob went near to his father; and he felt him, and said, "The voice is Jacob's voice; God heard the voice of His Son, but the hands are the hands of Esau. God saw Christ as a sinner there on the cross of Calvary and He judged Him as such, as an evil doer. Isaac blesses Jacob with irrevocable blessings. God never reprimanded Jacob or Rebekah for their plan, because He saw their heart. God doesn't focus on our faults, He sees the heart. He will use your circumstances to get you where He wants; Esau protested, "Jacob took my birth right", but Esau willingly **sold** that birthright for a bowl of soup. Paul declares in Heb 12:16 that many Christians today are selling their birthright for a bowl of the world's soup. They will not lose their salvation, but will suffer the loss of their inheritance because they have despised their birthright. Esau intended to slay his brother. These words of Esau were told to Rebekah. Who told Rebekah? The only one that can read the heart, God! She told Jacob you will have to go away; your brother seeks to kill you. She then tells him to flee to Laban her brother and tarry with him a few days, until your brother's fury turns away. Those "few days" became about 20 years. We must be still and know that He is God! Then God tells Jacob something that is for us today in Gen. 28:15 "And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. God says, "That good work which I have

begun, I'll do it!" We know that the land is Israel's and not ours, but God invested all He had, His Son, in the new creation, so He will keep us in all places. After 20 years with Laban, it is time for Jacob to return to the land of Canaan. Jacob got in the way many times because he was such a go-getter; he was not still before the Lord. He was filled with his own self effort and many times credited himself for making his own way. God overlooks this, He saw Jacob's heart and He knew that He could lead him in the overcoming way. The promise was in His seed and you my friends that are born again, have the same seed within you. Gen. 32:9 "And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee:" Jacob is on the right course, crying out to God. He thinks Esau is coming after him. When we have to face up to our old nature, we also get on our knees. Jacob says, "You told me to come here." He is holding on to God's Promises just as we do. Faith reminds God. It doesn't mean that God has forgotten, but it shows God that we believe His word. Jacob rose up that night, and took his family and passed over the Jabbok. Jabbok means, he will empty out, and God will also empty us out, of our own resources and strength. We must realize we can't do it; we need God more today than ever before. Jacob wrestled all night, telling us that it takes some effort to get into the word of God. It takes some wrestling, which shows that we are interested in what we're wanting. Many today have the same experience that Jacob did in Gen. 34, for he has settled in the wrong place and hasn't gone as far as God wanted. Dinah the daughter of Leah, went out to see the daughters of the land. Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, and lay with her, and defiled her. Dinah means judgment and when we settle somewhere short of where God wants us, our judgment will be defiled first. We will begin to compromise with the people of the land. Hamor wanted to do the right thing and marry Dinah, but God does not want his people unequally yoked. This is the Christian who fellowships with error or untruths. Jacob stayed here a short time and Dinah was defiled. Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite wanted the blessings

of Jacob, which is all the flesh wants from the new creation. If we give into the flesh, we will sacrifice our judgment. What is the flesh and Satan trying to get us to do? Sacrifice truth! How did Balaam defeat the children of Israel? He could not curse them, but he got the children to intermarry. What brought Solomon down? It was all his strange wives and giving into idols. If we sacrifice the truth for an error, then our judgment will be compromised. Satan was trying to weaken Jacob and defeat God's plan and purpose for him. He would hinder the fact that "in thy seed" shall you be blessed. Jacob was vital to God's plan, which included himself, and his children, and we are too! God uses the circumstances in our lives and Jacob's life to get him to go where God wants him to go. God's plan was not to set up their household among the heathen. They were to travel to where God wanted them to go. If God could only use the good things in our lives, He wouldn't have very much to work with? God said to Jacob, "Go up to Bethel, the house of God, and dwell there." Ge 35:2 "Then Jacob said, put away the strange gods, and be clean, and change your garments: They had been defiled from the short time in Shalem and had idols in Jacob's house. What if Jacob would have stayed there permanently? If we are not yielded to God, idolatry will creep in. If you start listening to error you are going to start believing it. This is why there is so much media advertising today. If published enough, people will believe it. Those that remain in certain religions and feel they can change it are wrong. It will eventually change you. Then change your garments, put on the new man. They gave Jacob all the strange gods, and all their earrings; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem. Their ears were tuned to these idolatrous gods. Jacob hid them under the oak figurative of being buried with Christ. There are many points of growth in Jacob's life; God appears to him and us with a deeper revelation. So it is imperative to be still before God so that we hear the depth of truth. May it be our one and only desire Phil. 3:10 "that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Faith gives the soul a view of God, and teaches the soul not to dishonor God by unbelieving thoughts. May we cry out, I want to know

God, if by any means! The sick oyster makes the pearl, not the healthy one. So, the child of God brings forth gems of pearls in the prayers of affliction, which are more pure, brilliant, and sparkling than any produced in times of joy. God can make the gnat and the fly to be a greater trouble to Egypt than the greatest storm. Thank God for the little. Put the little into His Hand; it is nothing for God to work in the little, for the great is little to Him. There is not much difference, in our littles and our greats to the infinite mind of our glorious Savior Jesus Christ. Cast all on Him who numbers the hairs of your head, and suffers not a sparrow to fall to the ground without His decree. There is many a knot we seek to untie, which were better cut with the sword of faith. May we end our difficulties by leaving them with Him. Take our guidance from His Word, waiting upon Him in prayer, we need not fear.

But you say, I can do so little in this time of difficulty. If you see no way of escape, does it mean that there is none? If you see no help, is it to be inferred that help cannot come? If it was needful for your help, the squadrons of heaven would leave the glory land to come to your rescue, no matter if you are the least or the poorest child of God. So, be still, be obedient, trustful, and patient. It is ours to obey, and His to command; it is ours to perceive, and His to perform no matter how bleak the circumstance. So be still, and peer, into the distance, and see Jesus watching over you. Use the eye salve of faith; wipe your eyes with the softness of His gracious promises. He will bring us through! "Goodness and mercy shall follow you all the days of your life, and you shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." "For He that keepeth thee will not slumber." I pray that the Holy Spirit may cause us to be still long enough for the arrow of His grace to hit its mark. Be still! Know that I am God!



*O my friends, draw close to Jesus.
He will calm thy stormy sea.
Hou will find repose and comfort
If you to His Bosom flee.
Let no obstacle prevent thee,
Be it sea, or mountain high.
If you seek HIm with a true heart
You will find Him by and by.*

Anon

THE SERFDOM OF LOVE

“AND he that was dead came forth bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go”—John 11:44.

Lazarus, coming out of the grave in resurrection, represents the new creation that came out of the tomb with Christ when He arose, the first-fruit of redemption. But while it is true that all men have been provisionally loosed from sin and death by Christ's death and resurrection, yet they must hear the declaration of their emancipation in the power of the Spirit and come into the practical experience of loosing.

The details of the bound hands, feet and mouth, rendered inactive by grave-clothes, speaks of the results of death that are upon men until loosed by the Gospel. Some Christians even are still bound as is evident. Their feet are not yielded to God to walk in His will and render service to man. Their hands are tied. They have not yielded to the Spirit to serve in newness of life. Their mouths are still bound with grave-clothes. They have not been loosed. They are tongue-tied, never found praising God, or witnessing to Jesus and the redemption which He purchased on the cross. The word of their emancipation has not been heard by them. Their ears are dull of hearing. They are still living on this side of the grave, walking as men, not as Christ, walking in love Eph. 5:2. The liberty of the Gospel they do not understand. If you tell them of their freedom, some will say, It is not possible to so live; others affirm that it is lawlessness.

We read recently of three kinds of dogs, whose manner of acting give us an illustration of the points which we are stressing. And while dogs in Scripture always refer to the old creation, yet we may use them in this application and not offend. One dog is free. He does what he wants and goes where he wills. No collar encircles his neck and never a leash, chain, or rope holds him. Nobody owns, him; no one cares what he does. He has no home and no master. He is lawless. Poor dog!

The second dog is always tied. Rarely is he allowed to run. He has a collar, a chain, a master and a home. He gets the scraps which the family has left over. He must eat that, or go hungry. He cannot do anything he wants except bark, sleep and growl, which

latter he does a plenty. He is cross and peevish, a dog under law. Poor dog!

The third dog is not tied, though he has a collar. No chain holds him; but he has a master and a home. He can do what he wants, and roam where he will; but you seldom find him out of his own yard. Sometimes when the lawless dogs come scampering in, he plays around with them and may be runs out with them ,as they go elsewhere—but all at once, he stops! Ah! He remembers his master. He loves him and he may be out calling for him; for he cares for his dog.

The dog turns and retraces his steps, though' the lawless dogs are bounding on and urging him to come. He is free, yet a slave. His master's voice, oh, he hears him calling. He runs, bounding up the lawn to his side. He feels his hand 'upon his head. He is so glad that he did not go farther with those homeless curs and cause his* master sorrow and trouble in looking for him. He has such a good master to feed and care for him.

Do you read the lesson? Is the illustration plain? Christians, who know the truth of liberty, are not lawless, yet they are not under law. They are under the law of love—infinite, divine love to Christ. His will is their delight. His voice a joy to hear. They want no other freedom than liberty to do His will. They follow where their Master calls. They know His voice, and a stranger they will not follow —John 10. They are free, yet at the same time slaves, slaves to love.

Anonymous

For Simple Things

I ask Thee, Lord, for simple things ----
A humble, honest heart that sings,
And work to do that vision brings.

Someone to love, and to love me
A modest home, a book, a tree,
And deep, abiding faith in Thee.

I ask Thee, Lord for simple things,
For simple things in life, have wings!

Elizabeth Beck Davidson

ISAIAH

Gene Hawkins

Chapter 5

This fifth chapter of Isaiah corresponds with the book of Deuteronomy. It lives up to its name, which means “the second giving of the law,” for this fifth book of the Bible, reiterates the truth given in Exodus, wherein The Law was issued from Mt. Sinai, after the first generation of Israel had come out of Egypt, and crossed the Red Sea. Deuteronomy gives that same law to the second generation, since the first has now perished in the wilderness.

Isaiah five records the fact that Israel now displays a disregard for that same law. Verse 24 states it thus: “Therefore as the fire devoured the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: **because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.**” Israel has continued in such unbelief, even down to this present day, but that was not God’s intention for them even as Isaiah declares in the first verse of our text.

“Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard.” This seems to be a song unto The Lord concerning His Own beloved, Israel, His vineyard. That vineyard refers especially to the ten tribes. Verse 7 states that “.... the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant:...” Though most men today use the term “Jew,” in reference to anyone of Israel, the word actually refers to those of Jerusalem, or Judah. Thus God here refers to them separately, that division having begun following the reign of Solomon when God appointed Jereboam as ruler over the ten tribes, Israel, and Solomon’s son Rehoboam, was given charge of Judah, which included the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin. It is rather interesting that of all the kings who reigned over the ten tribes, before Assyria took them captive, there was not even one which was godly. Judah could boast of only seven, before they fell before Babylon. After the captivity, only the history of Judah is resumed.

Our current verse here in Isaiah now singles out the ten tribes as the subject of this song, declaring that “....My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill.” This is what God

intended for Israel as a nation, and by the time this prophecy is fulfilled, there will be no division of “twelve and two.” Israel will be one nation, gathered together by God, indeed a very fruitful nation. That has not happened, even at this present time, but such fruitfulness will be greatly manifest in the millennium when she is restored, and becomes the “head and not the tail...” of the nations. Deut. 28:13

“And he fenced it,” cried Isaiah, meaning that God separated and chose this nation for Himself long ago. He severed them from the rest of the nations “...gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.” God gave this vineyard very specific, and loving, attention, planting it with the Choicest Vine, Christ Himself. He built a tower of protection, even the Word Of God spoken by the prophets, down through the ages, for their own protection. The winepress is a reference to Calvary, the basis of redemption for Israel, as well as for all mankind. Israel, however, did not WANT to be separated. They rather demanded that Samuel “...make us a king to judge us **like all the nations.**” I Sam. 8:5 God had them under His very unique order at that time, and they were diverse from all other nations, but they grew tired of that separation, much like the Church today. God intended for the Church to be absolutely separated from the world, but guess what? The Church also wants to be more like the world all the time, and is following exactly the same pattern and path that Israel took.

God intended that His vineyard should be fruitful, and it was, but “...it brought forth wild grapes;” or that which is of the flesh. Despite all His Care, Israel simply did not live up to God’s expectation and provision.

The next address is to Judah. “And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?” V. 3,4 It seems that God is calling on Judah to “judge” or evaluate His dealings with their sister, Israel. This is undoubtedly because Judah will also go into captivity, having committed the exact same offenses as Israel. There is no recorded answer from these men of Judah, but the conclusion must be drawn that God is in no wise responsible for these “wild grape” results. He did everything in His power to bring this

nation to fruition, but their own choices prevented it. He has also made every provision for the Church; having given it the fullness of Paul's gospel, and all the provisions Calvary even as He did Israel, yet the wild grapes of the flesh are clearly manifest.

Having received no answer to His query, God continues; announcing His Own intention. "And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down:" V. 5 God surely can "...do what I will with mine own,..." (Mt. 20:15) and thus made the decision to remove the protection which Israel had enjoyed. The devastating consequences of their unbelief continue, asserting that ".....I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it." These words must undoubtedly refer to Jerusalem as well as Samaria, the capital of Israel, for they seem to portray the conditions of Jerusalem after the Babylonish captivity was over, as Ezra and Nehemiah returned to built both the temple and the walls. They are also prophetic of "end time" Israel when devastation will be rampant. Jerusalem was indeed laid waste by Nebuchadnezzar and it will happen yet again, literally. However, the spiritual application is also true. There are those of Israel, such a "Jews for Jesus," and other messianic groups, who do recognize Christ at the Messiah, but national Israel is still very much in unbelief and "laid waste" spiritually just as the ancient city became desolate. There is no spiritual "pruning and digging" underway in Israel today. Neither do we see the "rains" of spirituality descending upon them. Those rains will eventually come, as prophesied in the 2nd chapter of Joel, and then the "desert shall blossom as the rose." Isa. 35:1 Those blessings, however, are not in evidence today. Thus the end time will also produce the literal devastation depicted by this chapter.

God called on the "inhabitants of Jerusalem" to issue their verdict in V. 3, and now verse 7 declares that He is looking for "... judgment," meaning the decisions to do what is right. Instead of that, "oppression," or "a scab" is manifest. He was also looking for "righteousness," but instead found "...a cry." It was not a cry of righteousness, but rather a "shriek," signifying a call to gather or assemble. The next verse indicates that this could not be a righteous gathering, for God proclaims "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no

place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!” V. 8 The Septuagint clarifies this portion as follows: “Woe to them that join house to house and add field to field **that they may take away something of their neighbors:** Will ye dwell alone upon the land?” V. 8 The inference here is that political leaders assemble to simply take away what they want. In other words, they are actually confiscating these houses and fields for their own gain. Governments have done that down through the years, even in our own country, and there may be even yet more of that as we hear of making the rich pay just a little bit more to fund various government programs. God says “Woe unto them,..” that engage in such practices. The latter part of V. 8 records the purpose for these woeful deeds; “.....that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!” The Septuagint says “Will you dwell alone upon the land?” It means that those who have been “robbed,” will cease to exist. These who have “added to themselves,” will now “dwell alone,” for they have eliminated everyone else. Following the plan of “taking from the rich,” will simply deprive them of being able to contribute to the good of anyone else.

31

Verse 9 continues the same refrain as we read: “In mine ears said the Lord of hosts,.....” The Septuagint says it thus: “For these things have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.....” Does God simply ignore it, when these leaders confiscate all of that substance, and wealth to themselves? No, He does not! There is most assuredly a consequence for such actions and men will be accountable before God. This verse further stipulates that “..... of a truth many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair, without inhabitant.” The Septuagint translation is; “For though many houses should be built, many and fair houses shall be desolate, and there shall be no inhabitants in them.” Though there be much building and even “great and fair houses,” no one can afford to occupy them, for their sustenance has been taken away, and they cannot pay for them. Thus desolation ensues, and according to verse 10, gets even worse.

“Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah.” Consider this rendering from the Septuagint: “Where ten yoke of oxen plough, the land shall yield one jarful. And he that sows six homers shall produce three measures.” This simply means that the stolen land that

they are sowing is not yielding. They have ten yoke of oxen, and expend both time and energy to bring forth a crop, yet receive nothing from their investment. The very land is rebelling against them. “And likewise the seed of an homer shall yield only an ephah.” All of this taking from “their neighbors,” in order to enrich themselves, is simply not working. It does not accomplish what they thought it would, and the whole country is devastated by it.

Verses 11 and 12 address religious rebellion. “Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them!” The harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts:....” but notice “...they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands.” The wine along with the musical instruments in their religious feasts, are manifest, but God is left out of it. They have indeed the “...form of godliness,..” but they deny the power thereof, (II Tim. 3:5) and as we read here “Woe unto them.... ”

“Therefore, my people are gone into captivity.....” V. 13 The conduct of V. 8-12 resulted in captivity for both Samaria and Jerusalem, and the entire nation is set for the same fall, in the end time. However, Israel will not be the only one taken captive in these end time events, for the greed and religious rebellion manifest in Israel, is also found rampant among the nations. There are none excluded because the old man, is the same, in both Jew and Gentile. Isaiah also lists the cause as being “....because they have no knowledge:...” The fact is that they have ignored the knowledge of the truth. Once again, this chapter corresponds with Deuteronomy, which speaks of the second giving of the Law. Israel, however, ignored that message, despite God’s warning of the consequences, which are listed in Deut. 28. The entire chapter records the blessings for obeying God’s law, and lists the calamities which will prevail, if that law is broken.

Some of the consequences for transgressing against God’s decrees are fulfilled in the next few verses. They have, in reality, elected to “have no knowledge,” and thus “their honorable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.” V. 13 Deuteronomy warned that “....thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron. The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from

heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.” These honorable men are going hungry, for despite all of the lands that they have, their crops are not forth coming due to drought, resulting in verse 14. “Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth....” Hell here, simply means the grave, or death, which has occurred because of the horrendous rebellion they have promoted. “.....And their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.” That is, their only hope or rejoicing, is death.

“And the mean man (common man) shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled.” V. 15 This is exactly what God did with the Babylonian captivity; and it will happen yet again in the great tribulation, before this nation is finally humbled to the point of trusting Him.

“But the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment.....” Despite all the foregoing acts of rebellion, unbelief, ignorance, and subsequent judgments, God is still God, and will be exalted in judgment. The God of Whom we speak here is none other than Jesus, Who will be crowned King of kings, and will reign as God Almighty for 1000 years. V. 16 This verse continues, describing a “..... God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness.” These previous verses indicate that men have not done that, as they have displayed all manner of unrighteous acts, contrary to God’s law. Despite such things, however, He will still be proven “righteous,” even in the judgments which He has brought upon this world in fulfillment of His Word.

“Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat.” V. 17 Once again, the Septuagint casts some light on this portion. It reads: “And they that were spoiled,....” which seems to refer back to those in verse 8. The leaders had confiscated their lands, spoiled them, devastated them, and might have thought, that they had gotten away with it. Such is surely true in our day. Oftentimes men think, there will be no consequences for their actions, that no one is watching, but that is not true. God defends His own, and there are times when He does indeed restore that which was lost. That seems to be the essence of V. 17. “.....they that were spoiled shall be fed as bulls, and lambs shall feed on the waste places of them that are taken away.” “Them that are taken away...” are those that were taken away in judgment, for God has destroyed them

and given these things back to the needy, or unto these weak, frail, dependant lambs. He is feeding them, and they are taking the waste places, feasting as “strangers,” on “the places of the fat ones,” who were removed.

The next few verses are a striking example of the poetic style employed by Isaiah throughout this book. “Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope.” V. 18 Sin and iniquity are likened unto that which fills a cart, and men are simply joined to it as with a rope. Such sin and iniquity lies in their attitude toward the Word of God. They say “..Let him make speed and hasten his work that we may see it; and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!” These wicked men would have God give account of Himself. They are not actually anxious to “see” His work in their lives, or to “know” His counsel, that they might be changed by it, but rather seem intent on changing His instruction to them, for we read, “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil.” Reasoning men have been tied to this “cart” of sin for years, as they have tried to justify themselves by twisting and manipulating the scripture, purporting It to say just the opposite of what God declared.

34

This path invokes yet more “woe,” as verse 21 announces, “Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes.” We are reminded here of Rom. 1:22, “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools;” and there is a woeful penalty for that. One great problem in our world today, is that men no longer measure their lives and conduct by the Word of God, but rather by the standards of society, which seem to constantly change in accordance with their own fleshly desires. When men refuse to use God’s Word as the standard of righteousness, they will keep going farther and farther away until, as we find here, they “call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! V. 20 Their values are just exactly opposite of those which God ordained, and He says “Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! V. 21 God would have them know that regardless of their own fleshly assessment, they will be rewarded according to His Measure, rather than their own.



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