

# Grace *and* Glory

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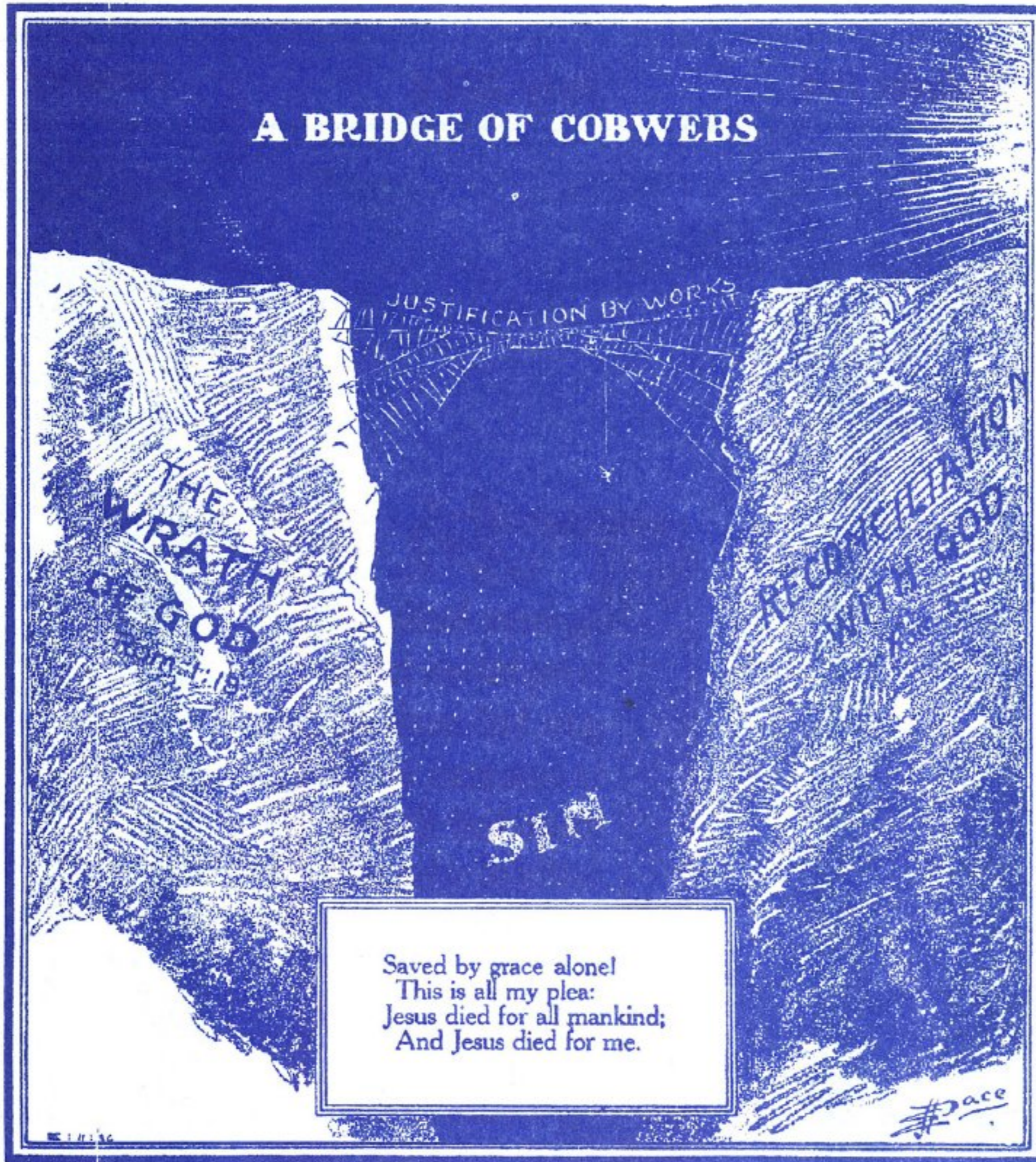


**T**here hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able.

I CORINTHIANS 10:13.

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Editor: Gene Hawkins



*“But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Matt. 24:37*

*“The earth also was corrupt (to decay, ruin, destroy, spoil, mar) before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his (God’s) way upon the earth.” Gen. 6:11*

*“So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns..... And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast....” Rev. 17:3,12*

3 **V**iolence, upheaval, corruption, and the lust for power, run like a giant thread through the above citations, and they are all extremely prevalent today, on a global scale. Jesus declared that such signs signal “the coming of the Son of man.” All these same signs tell us emphatically that the “day of man,” is just about over and will soon give way to “The Day Of The Lord.” God committed the governmental affairs of this world into the hands of men in 606 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar became leader of the first World Empire known as Babylon. Since that time each of the next three empires has become progressively worse and the final collapse of man’s reign is eminent. Men, as a whole, are doing everything in their power to prevent such a catastrophe, but to no avail. Time marches on, and with it comes even more corruption, violence and hatred, as men literally try to vaunt themselves as God. One man of sin will apparently achieve that goal, but it will be very short lived, as Jesus will become King of kings, and Lord of lords, thus officially inaugurating “The Lord’s Day.”

We know that eventually peace will prevail throughout the whole of this little earth ball, but at present it seems that there is absolutely no end in sight to the desperate condition of all mankind. Corruption, ungodliness, and violence have become “the norm,” for our world, and we note from the text in Gen.

6, that this is God's assessment. Many of God's people have decried the horrific present day lapse into unabated immorality and ungodliness, while much of the world has applauded such strides as being very positive. The gay agenda is highly commended for reaching a major milestone wherein men have finally achieved real tolerance and understanding of their fellow man, very much in line with the modern goals of humanism, where every man does "that which is right in his own eyes." Jud. 17:6

Violence and corruption have taken center stage in the entire world recently, and men are at a total loss as to what they should do. We believe that much of the upheaval in the Middle East today is directly because of the "ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet;..." Rev. 17:12 These are rulers who desperately want a place in the politics of this world but they rule over no specific country. Scripture also declares that these "...ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." Rev. 17:16 We are thus persuaded that these ten kings will wage "religious Jihad," against the false church, and those groups are gaining momentum daily across this region where the final battle of this world will be fought.

4

America was abruptly introduced to Al-Qaeda on Sept. 11, 2001 when the Twin Towers in Lower Manhattan were toppled by the ill fated jet liners. Life in this country and around the world has not been the same since. Today there are multiple terrorist groups, all wanting a "state" of their own and all practicing "Jihad" (holy war) trying to promote Islam and Sharia Law. The U.S. has a rather long list of terrorist groups world-wide, but no less than 20 such groups are directly associated with the Mid East. A few of the more prominent ones are: The Taliban, Al Qaeda, Hezbollah, Hamas, Palestine Liberation Organization, Palestine Liberation Front, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and Islamic Jihad Group. The latest group to gain world-wide attention is ISIS, The Islamic State of Syria and Iraq. This is a group which split off from Al Qaeda earlier in the year and, according to Lignet News, "accuses al-Qaeda of being insufficiently jihadist and fundamentalist, and is leading by example." Oklahoma Senator Jim Inhofe exclaimed that ISIS "are really extreme terrorists,.....so extreme that they are criticized by al-Qaida." Lignet further reports that "Al-Qaeda is likely to see more defections as ISIS

becomes more successful.” This same news source seems to be very adamant in declaring just how dangerous and power hungry ISIS is in establishing a foot-hold in this very strategic area. We know that America is directly affected by this insurgence into Iraq, especially by virtue of the fact that they have taken control of Iraqi oil fields, but the following article describes how multiple **Middle Eastern** countries are directly affected by this new aggressor. “The only thing that is clear in Iraq is that the feckless Western powers are effectively out of the game and have no idea what is happening there. In other words, there has been a complete failure of intelligence and policy preparation for the new civilian stewards of Iraq.

Every country in the Middle East is affected by this development. Iran is in a position of great perplexity. ISIS threatens its relations with Shiite forces in Syria and Lebanon and its communications with Hezbollah. It is possible that Iran, perhaps with the cover of a formal request by the government in Baghdad, will intervene militarily to drive ISIS back.

5           The Iraqi Kurds are the only other military force in the region capable of taking on the ISIS fighters. Its army (Pesh Merga) is well trained, well equipped, and most important, highly motivated. ISIS has avoided confronting the Kurds since its setback in Syria.

The Saudis and the Gulf states also have a dilemma. On the one hand they are loath to support an insurgent movement with the power of ISIS, but on the other hand, in their confrontation with Shiite Iran and Shiite-dominated Syria and Iraq, they may be tempted to consider ISIS an ally. So far the evidence suggests that at least Kuwait and Oman have opted to accommodate Iran, and the Saudi foreign minister has issued an invitation to his Iranian counterpart to visit Riyadh.

There is no reason to believe that ISIS, if successful in declaring and defending an “Arab emirate” in eastern Syria and western Iraq, will stop there. This kind of momentum is hard to rein in once it has developed sufficient velocity, and it is developing that velocity now. Thus, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, and Israel may well have to confront ISIS in one form or another sooner or later, and there is no indication that they are prepared for it.

Libya, in the throes of ultimate disintegration along with the Maghreb in general, may also have to face an ISIS threat.”

Newsmax also reports that some U.S. politicians “slammed President Barack Obama Thursday over the swift upheaval in Iraq,

charging that his decision to withdraw troops in late 2011 had enabled violent Islamic militants to seize two cities in a move to **establish their own state** in Iraq and Syria.

The Palestinians also want their own “state” in Jerusalem. Thus, we have at least two terrorist groups, at this present time, who have “no kingdom as yet,” but they are most assuredly seeking to gain such status. Undoubtedly there will be more who may emerge just as quickly as ISIS to achieve their goals, and we may be confident that any such efforts will be accompanied directly with some very violent activity.

We have seen repeatedly in these pages that change, in governments around the world, is one of the major signs that precede the coming of Jesus. Many have condemned the Iraq war as being completely illegitimate and unnecessary, but when viewed through the lense of God’s purpose and perspective, other pieces of the end time puzzle are beginning to take shape. Daniel plainly tells us that “God...removeth kings, and setteth up kings:...” Dan. 2:21-22 It was God who determined that the “butcher of Baghdad,” who used weapons of mass destruction on his own people, should be removed, and He took the necessary steps to accomplish that. Egypt likewise saw a long standing ancient Monarchy come to an abrupt end when Hosni Mubarak was deposed. Libyan dictator Gaddafi was likewise toppled and the entire world continues to wonder why Bashar al-Assad, the ruthless ruler of Syria who followed the same pattern as Saddam Hussein in executing his own people en masse, has remained in power. The “natural conclusion” for this, is undoubtedly due to the fact that there was absolutely no reprisal against him after he repeatedly crossed the “red line,” imposed by the U.S. Instead, the Arabic News Agency Al-Akhbar reported in the English version of The Taliban New York Post that **“All the cards are in Bashar al-Assad’s hands.”** This headline is in reference to the ISIS’ invasion of Iraq, along with Mr. Assad’s recent triumph in the June 4, 2014 Syrian presidential election. This is yet another example of the fact that It is God Who determines government leaders and, at least for the moment, He still has some purpose for this very wicked man.

The Taliban also won a major battle recently when the U.S. released five of their top generals from Guantanamo Bay. Former Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, according to the New

York Post, vehemently asserted that “These five guys are not a threat to the United States. They are a threat to the safety and security of Afghanistan and Pakistan. It’s up to those two countries to make the decision once and for all that these are threats to them. So I think we may be kind of missing the bigger picture here.”

This is not the message reported by NBC News in regard to one of these detainees. “After arriving in Qatar, Noorullah Noori kept insisting he would go to Afghanistan and fight American forces there,” a Taliban commander told NBC News via telephone from Afghanistan. The Wall Street Journal also reported that “U.S. intelligence officials predicted that two of the detainees freed from Guantanamo Bay in exchange for the release of Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl from Taliban captivity would return to senior positions in the militant group.”

7 The point here is that these terrorist groups will continue in their “Jihad” until God ultimately destroys them according to the record in Rev. 17. We would hasten to add that the events of this entire chapter will not take place until the latter part of the tribulation period, and that these ten kings will reign only “one hour,” (a very short period of time) with the beast.” V. 12 However, we see the active formation of these “ten kings,” taking place right before our eyes. Most commentators are adamant in the opinion that the release of these five Taliban Jihadists was an extremely unwise thing to do, but once again, we must remember that God is the one orchestrating all these “end time players,” and He will use even the foolish decisions of men to accomplish His purposes.

“For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.” I Thess. 5:3 This verse has long been used to indicate that there could be a time of relative peace and prosperity just prior to the “sudden destruction,” of the tribulation, but in view of current events and the exact context of scripture, we feel that is highly unlikely that any semblance of peace will be attained before the bridal company is transported to glory. Unrest prevails in every part of the world, from Ukraine, to Afghanistan. From Africa, to Syria, and on to Iraq, and Israel. In fact, there is no country on earth which is free of major unrest, and as noted above, these terrorists organizations, some of them world-wide will continue their endeavors to establish a clear political presence wherever they can find it. All of them do

want “a kingdom.” Add to that the scriptural context; that the aforementioned peace and safety will not truly come to pass until AFTER Jesus has been seated on His Throne. The events of Rev. 4-5 must take place before the Judge can begin opening the book containing the seven seals of judgment recorded in Rev. 6. The first seal releases the “white horse,” of peace and safety ridden by the antichrist. This rider “had a bow; (but no arrows) and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.” V. 2 We are certain this freedom of the “arrows” of destruction whereby the man of sin will conquer through diplomatic “peaceful means,” will be extremely short lived. It will end abruptly as the “red horse,” of judgment emerges after the second seal is opened, for “power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth,…” V. 3,4 Some insist that these seals have already been opened, but that cannot be, for Jesus has not taken His throne as yet. The bridal company, pictured by the four living ones and twenty four elders must arrive in heaven before that Great Event occurs.

When God delivered Israel from Egypt, He brought them 8 out with a “Mighty Hand,” against a “hail of proverbial bullets.” Will Jesus do the same thing in the end time as He literally, and secretly, snatches away His Chosen Dove into the throne room? How much worse will conditions in this world get, before we are finally translated to glory. Scandals continue to rock this country bringing great distress and privation to many people. Peace in any sector of the globe is extremely elusive. Thus it is not likely that we need to wait for any semblance of peace to signal the coming of Jesus. If He will appear, as He did to Israel of old, in a time of urgency and unrest, it seems that conditions are extremely “ripe” for it, even at this present hour. Thus, even as Peter warned, and exhorted, in light of eminent and severe judgment, “Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.” II Pet. 3:11 This Apostle, like Paul, would keep our eyes on the heavens, “Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God,…” V. 12 That day will emphatically, and ultimately, be a day of devastating judgment in both heaven and earth, but for us, it will be a day of deliverance. So, in the midst of all the turmoil, corruption, unease, uncertainty, and heart-ache, which will prevail from now till the tribulation is over, let us apply



our hearts “to all holy conversation and godliness,” as we look steadfastly into the heavens longing for Jesus return. This state of righteousness is actually achieved directly BECAUSE of that longing for John likewise proclaims “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” I John 3:3 Our “conversation” (manner of life) must be “in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:” Phil. 3:20 Now, more than ever, we must claim this glorious promise. “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” I Thess. 4:13-18

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### **Why Preach the Second Coming?**

1. It leads to preparedness. — Luke 12
2. It centers the mind on heavenly things. — Phil. 3:20; Titus 2:11-13.
3. It comforts those who mourn. — I Thess. 4:13.
4. It furnishes a strong incentive for holy living. — I John 3:3.
5. It creates willingness to suffer for Christ. — I Pet. 1:7

# *The Radical Gospel*

Ben Morgan

I Thessalonians, written by Paul, is a wonderful book which mentions the personal pre-millennial second coming of Christ in every chapter. The first chapter presents a view of second-coming converts. Some get saved and they trust in Jesus as their Savior. Then, if they are fortunate enough to be instructed that the Lord is coming back, that truth will make a difference in their life. Every part of the truth makes a difference in our lives. For instance, if we have never been taught about the second chapter of Acts, chances are we will never know very much about the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

So this first chapter, shows that second-coming converts “.....turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven.” V. 9,10 Then in the second chapter, we have second-coming preachers and every verse, features come characteristic of Paul’s ministry. Verse one declares: “For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain,” so he was an effectual preacher. Verse 3 informs us that he was an honest and sincere preacher. “For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:” Every verse tells us something about his ministry that is wonderful.

10

Chapter three of this book refers to Jesus’ second coming, with instruction to warriors, because they were faced with afflictions. V. 3 They endured tribulation in verse 4, and temptation in verse 5. Such a test was in regard to their faith as the apostle “...sent to know your faith,...” And he’s talking to them about their faith, verse 2, “concerning your faith.” Verse 6 asserts that “Timothy brought good tidings of your faith,” and verse 7 Paul declares that “We were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith.” Verse 8 concludes that it is all about standing “fast in the Lord.”

Chapter 4 announces second-coming walkers. Do you know what Enoch was doing when he got translated? He was walking with God, then he was gone. We too are going to be walking, if we’re alive, and hopefully we’ll all be walking in the light as He is in the light. Or, like those seven walks in Ephesians: walk circumspectly, walk as children of God, walk not as other

Gentiles walk.

The fifth chapter proclaims second-coming watchers. “Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.” What does a second-coming watcher look like? Jesus said in Mark 13 “Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.” He repeatedly emphasized the word “watch.” What does it mean to be watching? How does that look in our everyday life? This fifth chapter of I Thess. explains that, for it portrays a second-coming convert, preacher, and especially, the watcher.

11

Verse 16 exhorts, “Rejoice evermore.” This is the first thing he mentions here, and it could surely be called “normal” behavior in the eyes of The Lord. However, if we behave “normally,” in His Eyes, we will probably seem “abnormal” to a lot of people. In fact I think we will see a little more than that. Dwight L. Moody said that if you’re a normal Christian, most people will consider you to be radical, so I’ll use that word “radical.” So “rejoice evermore,” would be **radical expression**. How many of us express our joy? We may have it, but the Lord wants us to express it, doesn’t He? I was reading back in Job where the Lord was asking Job, “Where were you when all of the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” Creation apparently was just finished, and what did the angels all do? They said “Hallelujah, Hallelujah!” We too are to “rejoice evermore.” The Lord surely has a lot to say about our joy. Many people think that, to be a Christian, you must be long-faced, but John 14:21 declares: “Hitherto you have asked nothing in My name; ask and you shall receive that your joy may be full. These things have I spoken unto you that My joy might remain in you and that your joy may be full.” Peter says “Whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.” I Pet. 1:8 Is that our experience? I believe the Lord wants us to be like that.

Proverbs 8 presents a marvelous picture behind the

screen, while Jesus was still in His pre-incarnate existence, and we read, “Then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.” V. 30 In God’s presence the Father and the Son were rejoicing. Jesus was God’s delight; God was His delight. And the Psalmsist says “In Thy presence is fullness of joy.” So when the Lord comes, am I going to be having a long face, feeling sorry for myself? Or am I going to be in joy, rejoicing all the time, praising God.

Next we are to “pray without ceasing.” This is **radical communion or conversation**. The Lord wants us to pray, and Jesus had a lot to say about prayer. In fact, Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane three times. He prayed all night before He chose His disciples; He was praying on the Mount of Transfiguration and as He prayed the face of His countenance was altered. His first words, on the cross, was a prayer: “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” His last words, on the cross, were “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” It seems that He was always constantly in prayer. He said in, Luke 18:1 “And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray.” How do I measure up on that? I’ll tell you one thing, if I’m praying when the Lord comes I will not be out scolding somebody or telling somebody off, will I? I had rather be praying.

Paul next exhorts: “In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” V. 18 This would be **radical appreciation**; giving thanks. I know I’m not thankful enough; I have lots to learn about thanksgiving. I read an interesting story about Matthew Henry. He came home one day and told his wife, “Oh thank God I got robbed.” She said, “What’s wrong with you?” He said, “Well, I thank God that it was me that got robbed and not you or some of the rest of the family.” And then he said, “I thank God that although he got all of the money I had, I didn’t have very much money.” He said, “I thank God that although he got all of my money he didn’t hurt me,” and then, among other things, he said, “Last of all I thank God that he was doing the stealing and not me.” So we can find a lot of ways to thank God. Lord, help us to be thankful. Thankful; giving thanks always for all things. I have trouble with my knees; I’m going to get some new ones one of these days, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. “In everything give thanks: for this is

the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

And then, we read “Quench not the Spirit.” V. 19 This would be **radical submission**. It is good for us to learn to yield to the Spirit of God, isn’t it? “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” Ephesians chapter 5 says “Grieve not the Holy Spirit of promise.” In Acts 7 what did Stephen say to those people around him? “Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.” We can resist the Holy Ghost, and we can grieve the Holy Ghost. Here Paul says “Quench not the Spirit.” This is a whole subject in itself, but the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” The first three, love, joy, and peace are especially ministered unto God. Who are the second three for? That is, who receives the benefit of longsuffering, gentleness, and goodness? People! The last three - faith, meekness, temperance - are for us. Faith so we do not trust ourselves; meekness so we will not have a big head, and temperance so we can control our tongue. Thus we need The Holy Spirit, all the time, in our lives. We need Him to understand the Scriptures. I was filled on a Saturday night. I had never been in a Pentecostal meeting before in my life. And I just thought, I wish this could happen for everybody. I was so shy I was even afraid of my own shadow, but after I was filled, I was hugging strangers that night. It was a whole new concept when I got the Holy Spirit, and I am still not afraid to speak with tongues. Paul said “I thank my God that I speak with tongues more than you all.” Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!

“Quench not the Spirit; despise not prophesying.” Prophesying means that the Word of God is going forth, whether by “forth-telling” or “fore-telling” - it could be both, or either. When Agabus bound Paul’s garments around him, he plainly informed him what would shortly come to pass. Despise not prophesying. Sister Gloria McDaniel happened to have three boys. They are all grown now, and she is with Jesus. Her youngest boy, Tim, had a terrible skin disease; blisters all the time. When she went down to Oklahoma, where she was from, a little Indian Sister came up to her and said, “Sister, I don’t know you, but you can feed your son anything you want to from now on.” She came back to Kansas City and attended Sister Foster’s meeting. They prayed for him that Sunday night, and on the way home, she said

Bill “look, look at Tim’s skin, there are no blisters!” She went and told all the neighbors that were about to put her in jail because she did not go to a doctor. God moves in strange and mysterious ways, doesn’t He?

“Prove all things;” V. 21 I call that **radical investigation**. We need to study the Scripture. We had a Sister in the meeting that asked a lot of questions and she said, “Well, I think there are many ways to God.” I tried to tell her that if there is no purgatory in Scripture you leave it out. Prove all things.

“Hold fast to that which is good.” V. 21 This would be **radical appropriation**.

“Abstain from all appearance of evil.” V. 22 So that would be what? **Radical separation**. There are some things we should not meddle around with. We must be separate from it. “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and I’ll be a Father unto you and you’ll be My sons and daughters.” II Co 6:17,18 The Lord will separate us from everything that is wrong, if we are willing to be separated unto Him first.

And then, “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly.” This is **radical transformation**. Do you want the Lord to transform you? Someone said once, “I’m not all I would like to be; I’m not all that God wants me to be, but thank God I ain’t what I used to be.” Let the Lord transform us. “Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Rom. 12: 2 II Corinthians 3:18 likewise confirms, “But we all with unveiled face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord.” How are we transformed? As we look at Jesus we are changed from glory to glory. The more we see Him, the more we are transformed into His likeness. Charlie Riggs, was a preacher from Arkansas who went to hear Billy Graham. He came home after he got saved and a couple of weeks later, Charlie’s wife said to him, “Charlie, you’re a brand new man. You have completely changed in two or three weeks.” Is it not amazing that God can transform us? We do not have to have a nasty attitude; we do not have to be lazy. I came from Arkansas, and in Arkansas when you walk, you walk easy; when you work, you work easy. When you sleep, you sleep easy, and when you sit down, you go to sleep. I was born in Arkansas, but bless God I’ve been born again. I’m a new creation, and the best is yet to come!

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and

I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” V. 23 That is **radical preservation**.

Finally, “Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.” This is **radical persuasion**. Are you persuaded, or are you on the fence? Paul said, “I am persuaded;....” Several times he said that, but one prominent example is found in Romans 8:38-39. “For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

(Ed. Note: Bro. Ben preached this message at the 2014 Carbondale, Kansas Fellowship Meeting. It has been transcribed from an audio CD and edited for print.)



### HE IS COMING

Oh the day is surely breaking,  
While the earth is fairly quaking.  
And the sinners are all shaking;  
For the Lord is seen a coming in the  
clouds.

As the lightning quickly flashing,  
So His steeds are seen a dashing,  
And old Satan’s teeth are gnashing:  
For the Lord is seen a coming in the  
clouds.

And the saints are truly prancing,  
While their hearts with joy are dancing  
As they at the King are glancing;  
For the Lord is seen a coming in the  
clouds.

—Mary **M. Bodie**

# The World Diagnosed

Anon

"The world is 25,000 miles around and 8,000 miles through and as to its weight figures have staggered and fallen in attempting to express it, but the Apostle John had the thing summed up when he said, 'All that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life,' and anybody else who will make a careful survey will find that John's statement is correct. Of course, John's summary is in a spiritual sense and we have drawn this comparison only to show how a world so big has so little in it.

"The word world here must be understood for it stands for that whole order of things in the human race which is estranged from God, and which is hostile, both to Him and to His people. Its natural enmity and its inherent opposition to God are its essence. This is the world we are not to love. It is the things of the world, its lawlessness, its lust, its pride, that bring upon its devotees their trouble. 16

"As we read the reports of human doings in the press, we behold distress, degeneration in high places and low. The upper world concealing what the underworld is revealing. Lawlessness and lust, lies and license abounding.

"We behold sharks and shysters, human slavery and white slavery. Prostitution is found to be an institution and gambling the graft of gentlemen. **Investigation** is suppressed and moral laws are transgressed. Dirty divorce decrees and shameful society scandals are the startling facts filling many a life. It is against these things the apostle makes exhortation, 'To love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.'

"Our hearts go out in many an ache unto those who are trying to satisfy the longings of a human soul from a source less than God Himself. All are sin sick and some are sick of sin and for all the sin sick and those sick of sin there is remedy and deliverance in Christ."

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\* My Son, if God has called you to be a missionary, your father would be grieved to see you shrivel down into a king—Spurgeon.



# THE DIVINE NAMES

Thomas P. John

The Holy Names of God, as found in Scripture, are a source of Comfort and Rest to every believer and they are the sweetest names I have ever heard. The saints of old understood this, "The name of Jehovah" said they, "is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it and is safe." Prov. 18:10 "The name of the God of Jacob defend thee." Psalm. 2:1 " \_\_\_ this is my Name for ever. " Ex. 3 :15

The Bible gives them in the following order:

1. ELOHIM, Gen. 1:1 Mighty Ones (Creators).
- 2 JEHOVAH, Gen. 2:4 Eternal (Everlasting).
- 3 EL ELYON. Gen. 14:20 (Most High).
4. JEHOVAH-JIREH Gen. 22:14 (Provider).
- 5 SHADDAI, Ex. 6:2 (All-sufficient).
- 6 JEHOVAH-NISSI, Ex. 17:15 (Protector).
7. JEHOVAH-SHALOM, Judges, 6:24 (Peace).
- 8 JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH, Ezek. 48 :35 (Presence).
- 9 JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU, Jer. 23:6 (our Righteousness).
- 10 ABBA FATHER, Romans 8:15 (Paternal freedom).

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## WATER

Margaret Keener

In a wilderness He found me—  
Desert land of barren waste—  
Nothing there for my refreshing,  
Naught found I my thirst to slake.

As I languished—faint of thirsting-  
Life's mirages seemed to mock  
When I saw my smitten Savior.  
Water poured forth from the Rock.

Clear as crystal—flowing freely  
From eternal throne above;  
Cleansing—ever satisfying,  
Boundless as My Savior's Love

# REFLECTIONS

. . . *From the Editor*

“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:32

Freedom! What a glorious word! America celebrates it around this time every year as she commemorates July 4<sup>th</sup>, her Day of Independence from England. It all started with the Pilgrims who sought The God Of Truth, for the freedom to worship Him. God granted their desire, and in the beginning, this nation truly did honor Him, declaring that we are “one nation under God,” and “In God We Trust.”

Today, however, those things seem to be a very distant memory, as this nation as a whole, along with the world at large, is trying everything in their power to eliminate the Truth of God. Scripture counters with “let God be true, but every man a liar;....” Rom. 3:4 The context of this verse indicates that men can deny God all they want to, but it changes absolutely nothing insofar as His Existence is concerned.

Many quote the above verse as “the truth shall SET you free,” but it is rather Truth that MAKES us free. Some would love to be “magically” “set free” or delivered in a moment of time, but learning truth is a process. Thus, we are MADE free as we learn the truth of God’s Word by experience. Jesus said “.....I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” John 14:6 We learn Him by spending time in His Presence.

Furthermore, men are in great bondage directly because they refuse the Truth of God’s Word. The world will not change in this matter, but we, as individuals, can experience complete freedom from sin, the flesh, the devil, and the world as God makes us truly free through the dynamic operations of the Word of God.

Romans 8 presents a veritable clinic of truth which will make every believer completely free from the bondage of sin. “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Rom. 8:11-13 Not only is the Holy Ghost termed the “spirit of truth,” (John 14:17) He is also a dynamic power Who will literally empower these mortal bodies to “mortify,” or make to die the operations of sin which are inherent in them. If we allow this “spirit of truth,” to “dwell in you,” He will take all the truth of God’s Word and bring total and complete freedom to every area of our existence. One day, this same power will “.... change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” Phil. 3:21 THAT IS ABSOLUTE TRUTH!!!

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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

19 The book of Romans **in Spanish** is now printed and ready for distribution. Please order from:  
David Cloud, P.O. Box 181, Pharr, Texas 78577

### **FELLOWSHIP MEETING Grace Christian Assembly**

625 McDonald Rd.

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July 12th beginning at 10 A.M.

For Further information please contact:

Pastor David Hintz (913) 651-2888

### **Labor Day Meeting**

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Gospel Fellowship, Grandview, Missouri

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Services begin at 7 P.M. Friday Eve.

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Lodging also provided

For further information please call

(816) 618-3306

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## *A FATHER'S GIFT*

John F. Ney

What must I do to receive the Holy Spirit? The answer to the question, "what must I do to be saved?" has been proclaimed with no uncertain sound by many. Multitudes know, without uncertainty in their minds, and without a doubt in their hearts, that "salvation is of the Lord," that salvation, is a Person even Christ Jesus, the Gift of God to a lost world and the answer to the question is, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts 16:31.

The way to receive a gift is to accept it. A gift is a gift, something absolutely for nothing. My knowledge of the value of a gift increases my desire for it; but the giving of a gift depends wholly on the giver. He cannot receive anything for it. If he does, it is no more a gift. If I do not know the person who has promised a gift to me, I may doubt his promise, or the value of that gift which he has promised. If my father would say, "John, come over tomorrow, I have a very valuable gift for you." I would be there, "Johnny on the spot" to receive it, even if I did not know the nature of the gift; because I know him to be honest.

Now, is the Holy Spirit a Gift or not? Did not Jesus say to His disciples? "And I will pray the Father, and He shall **give** you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you?" John 16, 17. And did He not say, "I send the promise of my Father upon you?" Luke 24:29. Did the Father keep His promise to His children (those disciples to whom Jesus was speaking and others)? Did He give the other Comforter as a Gift? or did He torture them a while, by having them fast, pray, agonize and groan, trying to make themselves worthy of Him?

Now some teach their experience instead of the Word of God, which no doubt all of us have been guilty of sometime in some measure, and say, It is much harder to receive the Holy Spirit than to receive

salvation. This is not Scriptural, nor logical. It ought to be easier to believe a promise from a Father than from a Judge, Who is a Stranger to us, and Whose laws we have been violating. The sinner has no Father to come to. He thinks of God as a Judge, standing over him with a club, a God that demands justice. He would like to run away from Him if it were possible. Now it requires a revelation from God for a sinner to believe, that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Surely, God has to present His Son to the sinner, who is under conviction by the power and love of the Holy Spirit, and enable him to believe, though with a trembling heart, that reconciliation has been made.

21 What, then, must I do to receive the Holy Spirit? Believe on the Lord Jesus as "as the Scripture hath said." John 7:37. Yes, "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified.) The apostles were not trying to crucify themselves; but "were continually in the temple, *praising and blessing God*" (Luke 24:53), waiting for the "not many days hence." Acts 1:5. "And when the day of Pentecost (fiftieth) was fully come," the Spirit came. The Father did fulfill His Promise. Peter knew that it was the promise of the Father that had come. He could say to the bewildered multitude --- "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." Acts 2:33. The apostles did not preach on the Holy Spirit; but they preached in the Holy Spirit. (Jesus had told them before about the Spirit's work). Neither exhorted they them to seek the Holy Spirit. They preached Christ in the power

of the Spirit as the Scripture set Him forth and those who believed on Him, "as the Scripture hath said," were scripturally filled.

Peter did not have to speak on the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The Spirit was speaking for Himself. He only pointed the hearers to Joel, saying, "*This is That,*" and went on preaching Christ. At the house of Cornelius, Peter opened his mouth and preached Christ unto them; but he did not leave Him in the grave. It was too much for the Holy Spirit. He cut Peter's sermon short and fell on all them which heard the Word. The Jews were astonished that the Gentiles also received the Holy Spirit; "for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God." Acts 10.

Paul came to Ephesus, "and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, unto John's baptism." To be baptized unto John's baptism was not believing on Jesus "as the Scripture hath said." His baptism was saying that Jesus was not yet glorified.

22

That those disciples had not received the Holy Spirit made Paul know that they had not been baptized in Jesus' Name. Believers were filled with the Spirit, in those days, without tarrying, after the Spirit had descended. The people received Him by faith.

Water baptism had not become a mere form in those days like it is now. For one to be baptized, especially a Jew, in the Name of that despised Nazarene, was a proof positive, that he believed that Christ was risen from the dead. To be baptized, they were boldly declaring Romans 10:9. "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." That is why Peter could say emphatically, to the multitude who were pricked in their heart, when they inquired, "Men and brethren what shall we do? Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost." I believe those three thousand souls that were added unto them, received the Holy Spirit. That was all that was needed in those days

to be filled with the Holy Spirit ---- to believe on Jesus, "as the Scripture hath said." Has God changed His way of filling folks with the Holy Spirit? Is the Holy Spirit still a Gift, and that to God's children? Thank God, He is the same!

Many seekers for the Spirit are where those disciples were at Ephesus, only they have heard that the Spirit has been given. They are obeying shadows and types, by which they are saying that they do not believe that Christ has fully justified them. Of course there is no real faith. And other seekers are Galatian believers in some measure; they are fallen from grace. They endeavor to crucify themselves. They think they have to attain to a certain stage of crucifixion before they can be filled. The Holy Spirit is a Gift from the Father and His main work is to glorify Christ. Do not think that the Spirit approves of anyone trying to fix himself up to receive Him. That is robbing Christ of the glory due to Him for the work He has already done on Calvary.

23

When a sinner who has no religion (not a backslider), comes into a meeting where they really believe on Jesus "as the Scripture hath said," and gets saved it is so easy for him to be filled with the Spirit. Jesus said on one occasion, "If ye then, being, evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: "how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" Do you really believe that God gave His only begotten Son and that you are justified from all things? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also "freely give us all things?" God is more willing to give than we are to receive. Someone says, "I have to wait to learn some lessons." If we have lessons to learn, can we not learn them more quickly by having the Spirit of Truth on the inside rather than on the outside? Yes, there is one lesson we learn, that we are mighty slow to believe God, and that is that the Holy Spirit is the Father's Gift, and cannot be earned, any more than salvation.

\* The Name of Jesus gives us our divine authority over Satan, but the Holy Spirit is our divine enabling.

## The Dove and the Tongues

W. Dayton Roberts

ONLY TWICE IN THE SCRIPTURES DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT ASSUME VISIBLE FORM.

When Jesus was ready to open His public ministry, He went down into the waters of the Jordan to be baptized by John, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove, and a voice said from heaven, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

The public ministry of the apostles was also initiated with a visitation of the Holy Spirit. But this time He came in the form of visible fiery tongues, distributed over the heads of the disciples in the Upper Room. We usually read "tongues as of fire" with the emphasis on the last word — "fire." It is a case of mistaken accent, however. They were not tongues of fire (i.e. flames of fire,) they were "tongues as of fire" (i.e. fiery tongues). The word "tongue" is the important one. Why so?

The two symbols — the dove and the tongues — are the key to an understanding of Christ's mission and of ours.

24

The dove is the emblem of peace, of reconciliation, and bespeaks the purpose of Christ, who being the Eternal Son of God became man in order to save mankind and to reconcile sinful man with A Righteous God. Christ's was a ministry of propitiation and expiation — pacification (if rightly understood). He came to break down the wall of separation between a Holy God and rebellious man. He came to lead the way into the Holy of Holies — to penetrate within the veil — to lead men back into the presence of God through faith. He came to *give* His life a ransom, thus to redeem the lost ones. *He was* the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29 "God ... hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ ... for He hath made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." II Cor. 5:18, 21

The dove of reconciliation therefore becomes the perfect symbol of the perfect work of Christ.

When the Holy Spirit chose to symbolize to the disciples and to the whole world at Pentecost the nature of their Christian ministry He chose the form of tongues. Why? Because the ministry of the apostles, and their successors, and of all Christians, is a declaratory ministry. Christ performed the work of reconciliation



— ours to proclaim it so that all may know and believe, and believing, have life through His Name. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors ...." II Cor. 5:19,20.

The words "preach," "witnesses," "declare," "gospel," "tidings," etc., figure largely in the commission and explanation of the apostolic task. It is essentially declaratory — a proclamation that there is power in the blood, life in the Son, salvation in the Name. How better symbolize this ministry than by fiery tongue?

Notice also the number of the symbols.

There is one dove. Christ's work is unique. It was a once-for-all ministry. But the tongues are many. There are as many tongues as there are disciples. We are all elected into this ministry. "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:38.

This is essentially a Protestant viewpoint and does not concur with the Roman Catholic interpretation of the "power of the keys." Romanism views the apostolic task as a sacramental one in which the apostles, as the vicars of Christ, continue His high-priestly ministry. Thus the Roman cleric hears confession, forgives sin, imposes penance, and offers daily the sacrifice of the Eucharist.

While we reject the teaching of the Catholic Church regarding the sacramental character of the apostolic mission, perhaps we should at the same time point out that there rests upon the evangelical Christian a responsibility beyond the mere telling of the Gospel. It is easy to fall into the error of thinking that our responsibility ends with the scattering of the seed. **Sowing** is basic, but it implies the need of **cultivation**.

God's purposes are fulfilled in the repeated miracle of the new birth. But the new life in Christ must be cultivated and nurtured into maturity, that it may reproduce more after its kind. Thus seen, the proclamation of the Gospel is not the end, but the means to an end. "These things are written (we might just as well say 'proclaimed') that ye might believe, and that believing, "ye might have life through His name."

In order to declare effectively the good news of salvation, we find the Spirit raising up gifts other than oratory among the

disciples (cf. Eph. 4:11) and using them all in the disciplined "Community of the Spirit" which became known as the Church.

The Church was organized almost before Peter finished preaching at Pentecost: "They that gladly received his word were baptized and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine (teaching) and fellowship (communion), and in breaking of bread (ordinances), and in prayers (worship) ... And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 2:42, 47 "And all that believed ... sold their possessions and goods and parted them (stewardship) to all men, as every man had need." Acts 2-44 45 "And at that time there was a great persecution against the church ... at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad....Wherefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere-preaching (evangelism) the Word." Acts 8:1, 4.

And so, in the apostolic community, every hearer became a teller; every receiver, a giver; every learner, a teacher. "And with great power gave the apostles witness." Acts 4:33) This was the apostolic church.

We return then, to Christ's mission and ours.

What was Christ's mission? Reconciliation.

What is our mission? Reproductive declaration: i.e. declaration of the Gospel in such a way that it takes root in the hearts of hearers and develops them into more "declarers."

This is the message of the Dove and the Tongues as of fire. (Reprinted by permission of Converted Catholic Magazine.)

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\* Here is the way to get rid of your duties —discharge them.

\* Many people spend years **getting everything** to begin living; but, just at that time ,they have the misfortune to die.

\* There are no victories without conflicts, and no rainbows without a cloud and storm.

\* It is better to be silent and be thought a fool than to speak up and remove all doubt.

# The Cross

Mary M. Bodie

“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” I Cor. 1:18.

27 Around the Cross—a little cross, on a little hill, in a little city, in a little country—around that Cross revolves all of God's great wonderful purposes for the universe. Without the Cross there would be no perfection anywhere. God could do nothing for mankind without the Cross. The Cross has bridged the gulf between God and man, and has made everything possible that God has planned. How wonderful is that Cross! It stands out before all the world. But people have forgotten that Cross. They have forgotten that Jesus is the one who died on that cross. He may be forgotten now, but He won't be forgotten for long. He is coming into this scene one of these days, the greatest of all monarchs, the King of all kings and the Lord of all lords. He will soar thru the air like an eagle. He will show who He is. He did not show His power when He was here before. He came un-honored and unsung, but when He comes again, the whole universe will be praising Him. He deserves the praise of all the human race. Let us praise Him now.

I want to talk about this Man, and what He wrought thru the Cross. First, the Cross is the place of Acceptance. We have an illustration of this in Abel: "In the process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering. But unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect. ..." Gen. 4:3-5. That is a little type of the Lord Jesus Christ in His death. And that is the place of our acceptance. We bring the Lord as our offering, and God accepts us in Him. Cain brought of his own works, but Abel was wiser and brought of the firstling's of the flock, and the blood and he was accepted.

Second—the Cross is the place of Security.—Ex. 12. Israel was being persecuted in Egypt, and God was delivering them. He gave them instructions to put the blood of the slain lambs

upon the door-posts of their houses, because He was coming in judgment and wrath upon Egypt to slay all the firstborn. This was the way of escape, and thus we escape the wrath of God by applying the blood to our hearts. God has undertaken for all mankind. When His Son was here the antitype of this lamb, He was without blemish. He was taken out from among the people; and was kept up for almost four years before the people, answering to the four days the lamb was to be held. The devil had a chance to watch Him, and accuse Him, but He was found without blemish. He was tested to the uttermost by God and man, but was found perfect. He was the perfect offering of God. Four persons at His death acknowledged that He was without blame.

Third—the Cross is the place of our Substitution. This is seen in Gen. 22, and is a most wonderful pen-picture of Christ, that Lamb of sacrifice: "And the Lord said, Take now thy son thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven. ... Lay not thine hand upon the lad; neither do thou anything to him; for now I know that thou fearest God ...." Isaac found a substitute in the ram that was caught in the thicket, but Jesus had none. He took our place on the Cross. He is our Substitute.

Four—the Cross *is* the place of Identification. We are identified with Him forever. We are always accepted in the Beloved. "I was crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Gal. 2:20. Our identification is two-fold. We were identified with Him in His death, and also in His resurrection. We are now alive forever.

Fifth — the Cross is the place of Victory over the world: "But God forbid that I should glory, *save* in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world"—Gal. 6:14. This is a double crucifixion. We are crucified to the world, and the world to us. We are dead to the world. If you have never gotten there, do it now. It is wonderful. We can get to the place where we don't care for its baubles, its foolishness, for we become dead to

it. A dead man does not see or covet anything. If we can use some of the world for the Lord, that's all right, but we want nothing for our pleasure or aggrandizement. We do not feel at home around worldly people and places. We formerly had fellowship with those of the world, but not anymore. Our worldly friends notice the difference too, and cannot understand.

Sixth—the Cross is the place of Victory over Satan as seen in Col. 2:13-15. Thank God, we now can have victory over the devil! Christ triumphed over him on the Cross. When He arose there was the devil and his imps marshaled together against Him, to keep Him in the grave, but Christ went up to heaven. That meant that all men everywhere had been redeemed. It was the signal of the great and wonderful victory over the world, the flesh and the devil. How did He do that? Thru that little cross, despised and rejected, on a little hill. God chose little things to show the greatest 'thing that was ever wrought. There was victory for the universe in that little cross. We have the privilege today to shout the victory of that cross! Some people say, "I cannot believe that I may be saved by a man who died 1900 years ago on a cross." YES! that is the only way. The things that man despises, God uses. He can make something out of nothing. People want to be something. But God lets us be knocked down, stepped on, counted as nothing, and then raises us up and uses us.

The Cross was the most despised death, and yet Christ took that place. Oh, friends, what victory we have thru the Cross. He put an end to sins and put an end to us, and brought out a wonderful new creation. He freed us from sin and death and the devil. We cannot be bothered with the little things of this earth. Men are trying to make this world a better place in which to live, but we take no interest in that, for we have been delivered from the world. We are independent of the world, the devil and the flesh. God has made provision thru the Cross for all this victory, even our perfection. There will be nothing lacking when we are manifested as sons of God in glory. Let us yield to the Lord now, and be perfect in our relationship to Him.

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\* Some folk boast that they are very broad-minded. They overlook everything wicked that they do.

## ISAIAH 21

Gene Hawkins

“The burden (doom) of the desert of the sea.” V. 1

This chapter of Isaiah corresponds with Ecclesiastes, wherein the major theme is recorded as “Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.” Eccl. 1:2 Isaiah 21, records the “vanity,” or emptiness, which the nations will discover in the end time. This is especially illustrated by “the desert of the sea,” which, according to V. 9, is a reference to Babylon. “...Babylon is fallen, is fallen;...”

Solomon’s record from Ecclesiastes continues to describe the emptiness of the world with these words. “What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?” V. 3 “Under the sun,” is another key phrase in Solomon’s lament, and the first few verses of our current chapter reflect the tremendous futility of life among the nations, as represented by Babylon, in this present world “under the sun.” Verse 1 continues, “...As whirlwinds in the south pass through; so it cometh from the desert, from a terrible land.” These words actually foretell the impending demise of Babylon, that once glorious, glamorous, and powerful empire which took even Judah into captivity, but will shortly be deposed by Medo-Persia.

Isaiah describes his own experience as he says “A grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous dealer (Babylon) dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth....” V. 2 This is what Babylon had become and the treachery affected Isaiah’s own people, for whom he was greatly concerned. The spoiler which “spoileth,” however is a direct prophecy of Darius the Mede who will soon spoil Belshazzar, King of Babylon. This was the message given to Daniel, when he interpreted the “handwriting on the wall,” at the great religious feast held by Belshazzar. This man, and his kingdom, had been “weighed in the balances and found wanting.” Judgment was both swift and sure, for “In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom,....” Dan. 5:27-31 Isaiah further announces Babylon’s demise with this invitation for the second world empire to come forth. “.....Go up, O Elam: (part of Persia Dan. 8:2) besiege, O Media; (country of the Medes) all the sighing thereof have I made to cease.” The domination of Babylon over the Jews has come to an end

as God has made their “sighing....to cease.” Cyrus, the King of Persia, will actually give the Jews liberty to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple, but their deliverance has already begun.

This liberation seems to be something with which Isaiah was unfamiliar as his personal testimony continues in verse 3. “Therefore are my loins filled with pain: pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth: I was bowed down at the hearing of it; I was dismayed at the seeing of it.” This is none other than the pains and fears of uncertainty, for it seems that Isaiah simply did not know exactly what awaited his own people. This prophecy is yet future to his day, but like Daniel, he had a tremendous burden for the Jews. Daniel also saw the coming Medo-Persian Empire and was greatly distressed because, though he knew the 70 year captivity of the Jews was over, he could not see actual signs of their release. Dan. 9:2 The prophet was looking for the total liberation of the Jews, but after seeing the vision of the coming regime change in Dan. 8, and hearing the decree “shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days,” Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days;...” Dan. 8:26,27 “Shutting up the vision,” actually means that much of what was shown to this beloved prophet, would not happen until the end time. However, Daniel still knew that the 70 year captivity was over, and, as noted, he saw no signs of his people returning to Jerusalem. Thus the reason for his intercessory prayer of intercession in Dan. 9:3-19.

Isaiah likewise, asserts that “My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me: the night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me.” V. 4 The following words seem to be what **he would** have said to the rulers in Babylon, had he been given the opportunity. “Prepare the table, watch in the watchtower, eat, drink: arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield.” These are the words of one preparing to defend themselves in battle. “...Anoint the shield,” means that they put oil on a shield of protection in order to try and deflect the arrows that would strike it. However, the next few verses clearly indicated that Babylon will fall regardless of any attempt to preserve it.

“For thus hath the Lord said unto me, (Isaiah) Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth. And he (the watchman) saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels; and he hearkened diligently with much heed: And he cried, A lion: My lord, I stand continually

upon the watchtower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward whole nights: And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.” V. 6-9 These verses describe an army that is much inferior to Babylon. The watchman “...saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels,” rather than a host of horsemen, along with armaments drawn by war horses. This inferior host is followed by “a chariot of men and a couple of horsemen,” showing that which is even more inferior than the chariots of asses and camels. Note also that even though this watchmen is at his post “continually upon the watchtower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward whole nights:” judgment still marches on. Though greatly inferior to The Mighty Babylon, this upstart Medo-Persian Empire attacks as “A Lion,” symbolic of the unrelenting devastation leveled against this once glorious kingdom.

The next words of the prophet are apparently addressed to the Jews. “O my threshing, and the corn of my floor: that which I have heard of the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you.” V. 10 The word “threshing,” means “downtrodden people.” Israel is the “corn of my floor,” expressing the fact that this chosen people is still the treasure and fruit of The Lord, even though they have gone through this “threshing” process, of being trodden down by their enemies. Isaiah simply relayed this message, from The Lord, in an effort to encourage those who had indeed been downtrodden by Babylon.

“The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?” V. 10 The word “burden,” once again, means doom, and this time the doom is pronounced against “Dumah” which is a reference to Edom, the possession of Esau associated with Seir. Gen. 32:3 This seems to be the children of Esau crying out “Watchman, what of the night?” Esau is typical of the flesh and is here representative of those nations wondering how long this night of trouble will last. Isaiah is the “Watchman” and they are looking for an answer, for the time then present, in view of all the changes which have come to pass. The fall of Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon had to have sent shock waves through the entire region, but all these happenings are prophetic. Thus this enquiring cry out of Seir, represents the end time nations who will also want to know how long this nighttime of tribulation will last. Time



wise, Babylon will fall around the middle of the week. Rev. 14:8 This long night of tribulation will actually not end until the Battle of Armageddon takes place. Isaiah's answer also declares that "...The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come." V. 12 The Watchman declares that "the morning cometh," but it cannot be the "morning" when all devastation is past because he also informs them that "the night" is yet ahead of them. The morning indicates that there may be some semblance of a respite for them, but the depths of darkness are still ahead. Such will be the case in the end time. The most devastating part of the tribulation will occur after the middle of the week. This coincides with the 1260 day reign of the antichrist which is also called the "time of Jacob's trouble." Jer. 30:7 It will be so severe that Jesus said "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Matt. 24:22

33 Isaiah's final message to these enquirers is "if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come." The message is simple. Enquire of The Lord that you may return and come to Him. The same invitation is given which has been available since the beginning of time. "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Acts 2:21 Though men may "call on the name of the Lord," during these very devastating days of tribulation, it will be under threat of death and many of them will be martyred for it. Nevertheless, the invitation still remains for all those who would avail themselves of it.

The last portion of this chapter also continues with the same theme of hopelessness outlined in Ecclesiastes. "The burden (doom) upon Arabia. In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies of Dedanim. The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented (preceded) with their bread him that fled. For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war." V. 13-15 The scenario here is, once again, symbolic of the fact that all nations will experience great difficulty in the end time. It follows the same pattern as noted in V. 12 where "the morning cometh, and also the night." Arabia is doomed yet "the traveling companies of Dedanim," seemed to find some sort of lodging. Dedanim are the descendants of Ham through Cush and Dedan, and were closely related to the

Canaanites. The inhabitants of “Tema” are said to have preceded the fleeing companies of Dedanim providing them with bread and water. Both Tema, and Kedar (V. 16) are sons of Ishmael, and are representative of the “religious” element which prevails in the Middle East down to this present time. Tema may have provided a short respite for Dedanim, but that does not stop the doom of Arabia from falling on them. “For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Within a year, according to the years of an hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail.” The “glory of Kedar,” which is undoubtedly the claim of Ishmael’s descendants to “their rights through Abraham,” is here brought to nought. So will it be in the final days of tribulation. All those Palestinian Nations, along with the religious factions and terrorist organizations, who boast in being sons of Abraham, and claiming their inheritance because of it, will pay the price for trying to annihilate the true recipients of the Abrahamic Covenant: Israel. Today Ishmael is clamoring for this inheritance but this chapter closes announcing clearly that “.....the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished:.” The reason is simple: “for the LORD God of Israel hath spoken it.” V. 17

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Some folk think they can earn eternal life, but that is impossible. Life is always received, either in creation in the natural or the spiritual birth. In neither case is it earned. Think upon that for a moment and see at what conclusions you arrive.

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Some folk live all their lives in the society of the unforgiven: others break into the society of the forgiven, the haven of the weary and heavy-laden.

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God does not reveal what man can discover thru thought and toil. It would not be good for him. But on the other hand what man cannot discover—the infinite riches of His Word—He reveals.



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