

# Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the  
whole Counsel of GOD

Without Price Since 1910

'Loving His Appearing'

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Why word is  
a lamp unto my  
feet, and a light  
unto my path.

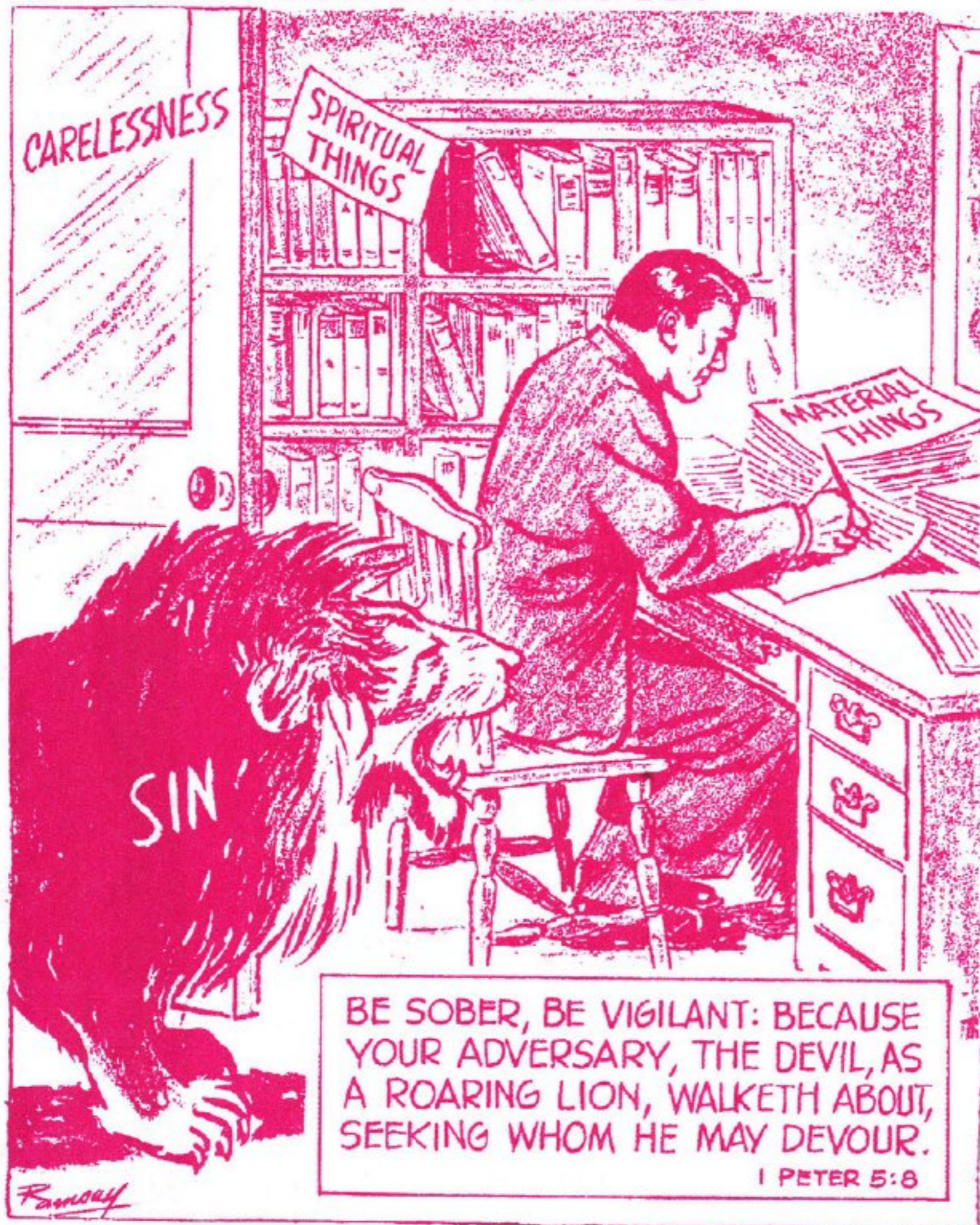
Psalm 119: 105.



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### LION IN A MAN'S DEN



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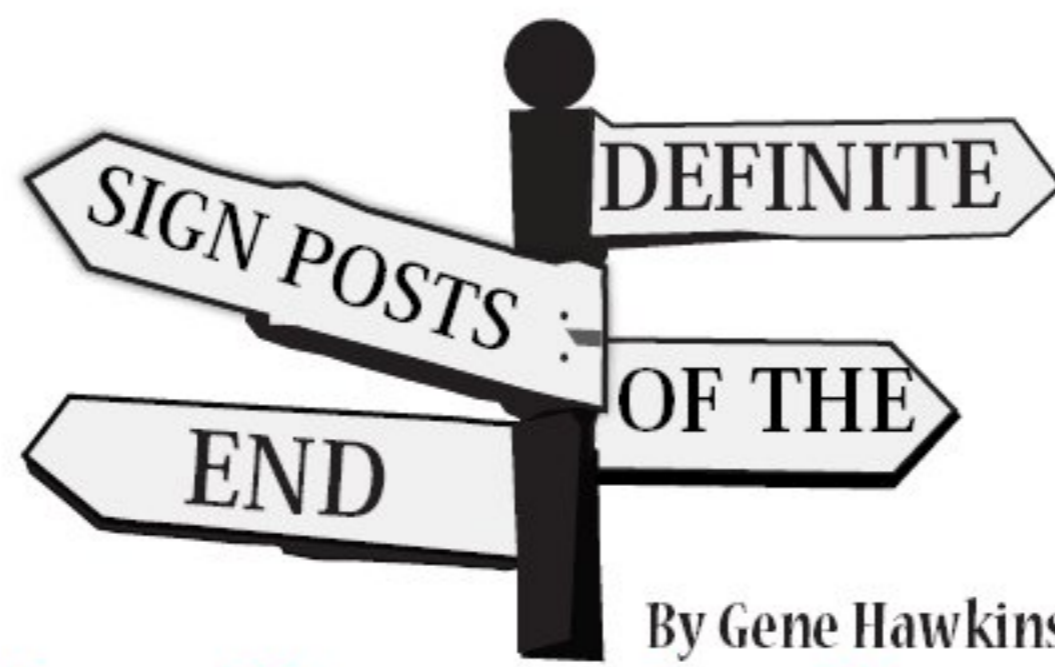
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Editor: Gene Hawkins



*“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” II Tim. 4:3*

*“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;” II Thess. 2:3*

3

Scriptural signs of the end time may be easily divided into four major categories. There are the supernatural phenomenon, as seen in Luke 21:25, which describe those things which are beyond the control of men, including such disasters as earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, mud slides, record high and low temperatures, etc. Secondly, gross immorality and violence, which Jesus defined as hearkening back to the days of Noah, and Lot, are prophesied signs of Jesus' second coming. Matt. 24:37, Lk. 17:28 Third are the political signs, as nation rises against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. Matt. 24:6,7 The fourth category, which is extremely deceptive, is religious, and described in part, by the citations recorded above. Bro. Jack Bannister declared some years ago that when all these signs begin to converge so that they are all manifest at the same time, that in itself, is a major sign of Jesus' second coming. We heartily agree with his assessment and it is easy to point out how we have been inundated with abundant material in all four categories in recent months and years.

This issue will primarily focus on the religious signs appearing rapidly before us. We know that the world has turned a deaf ear to sound doctrine but the “falling away,” is very much found in the Church as a whole, which seems to have no intention of “contending for the faith,” as exhorted by Jude. Jude. 3

We were greatly grieved, and disappointed, and even sickened, as we saw this “falling away,” “displayed in living color” recently, by an extremely unexpected source. This was the video of a leadership conference hosted by Kenneth Copeland Ministries, and it was heart rending to watch and listen to such a display by those whom, we are assured, are filled with the

Holy Ghost after the pattern of Acts 2. We have long been highly critical of the “prosperity message,” promulgated by Bro. Kenneth and countless other ministries, but this video is, in present day vernacular, “over the top.” This information is, in no wise, secret for it is literally all over the internet both in print and video.

The first speaker was Tony Palmer, and we were under the impression that he was a **former** Catholic priest who had been born again and filled with the power of the Holy Ghost. He was, however, dressed in full priestly garb and his message was totally pro-catholic. His opening comments were based on the text from Malachi, and repeated in Luke, fulfilling the prophecy that John the Baptist should “.... go before him in the spirit and power of

Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” Luke 1:17 Based on the overall tenor of his message, the instruction was to go back to the “fatherly” wisdom of Catholicism. He made a play on the word “Catholic” meaning “universal,” insisting that we are all “Catholic,” that is, Christians having a universal commonality. He went on to repeatedly emphasize that “the day of protest, (introduced by Martin Luther) is over, because the Catholic Church has now seen the error of her way, and knows full well that salvation comes only by “grace through faith.” He then added his own “twist” to that very familiar verse and “anchor of salvation,” declaring that such grace has brought us “TO” good works, which is the very mantra of Catholicism. Even Jesus Himself, put works front and center when He wrote to the Church at Thyatira. (Catholicism) He identified Himself to this Church as “the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;” meaning that The Judge saw far below the facade of outward appearance. Jesus commended her, declaring that “I know thy **works**,...charity,...**service**, (official service, menial duties)...faith, and thy patience,...thy **works**;...the **last** (works) to be more than the **first**.”(works) Rev. 2:19 Five times, He notes these works, but there is no mention that they are works of faith, or good works. Though she is commended for “charity,” of which Catholicism loves to boast that she is the largest, she is not declared to have “works,” of love, nor works which have been ordained of God. Contrariwise, they are twice designated as “**thy** works,” and the next verse is a scathing rebuke of her “doctrine.”

“Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, **to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.**” Rev. 2:20

The very essence of Mr. Palmer’s discourse is that the day of protest is over and it is high time that we completely dispense with the “doctrine” that divides us. He repeatedly used the word “we” in his entreaty and we can only infer that, since his audience was Evangelical Charismatics, the “we” puts responsibility on these protestant protestors. Beyond the statement about Catholicism finally seeing the light, there was absolutely no indication that she should give up anything. This preacher indicated that there was only ONE point of protest, but other “experts” have indicated that the list of grievances which Martin Luther, (who was simply portrayed as a “disgruntled priest”) nailed to the door of The Church, numbered in the hundreds.

5 We would surely add a few protests of our own against the flagrant violations of Scripture, found in Catholic “doctrines,” which need to be renounced. One such error would be putting Mary on a pedestal higher than Jesus, calling her “the mother of God,” and insisting that she is a mediator to whom men should pray when God’s Word plainly declares: “For there is **one** God, and **one** mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;” I Tim. 2:5 Their reason for making supplication to Mary is appalling, insisting that Jesus would be far more likely to listen to the plea of His mother rather than that of “an outsider,” or common folk. What does this say about the inadequacy of the love and “compassion,” of Jesus, of Whom Paul asserts: “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; **but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.**” Heb. 4:15 The chief apostle to the Church, further defines Jesus’ qualification to be a mediator in Heb. 2:17. “Wherefore **in all things** it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.” Mary has absolutely no such qualification to be this mediator, and praying to her literally robs Jesus of the exclusive role which has been ordained only for Him!

There is also the matter of holding a “special mass,” for the dead, and the practice of “praying” a loved one out of

“purgatory.” Such masses, and prayers, also require a monetary fee, but insofar as even the existence of purgatory is concerned, which has been designed to literally hold men in absolute fear, let God’s Word answer. “**Today** shalt thou be with me in paradise,” (not purgatory) cried Jesus, in Luke 23:43. Paul likewise shouts, “We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be **present with the Lord.**” (in heaven) II Cor. 5:8

Catholics are also taught that a priest is to be called “father,” even in direct violation of Matt. 23:9. He must be revered, and held on a plane higher than ordinary men, having the ability to forgive sin. I am told by former Catholics that after the “confession,” the priest places his hand on the head of the offender and declares, “I absolve you of all sin.” Even the unbelieving, Christ rejecting, scribes knew “...who can forgive sins but God only?” Mk. 2:7 We are also told that “forgiveness of sins,” such as having a marriage annulled, along with sins defined by Catholicism as being either “venial or mortal” can also be accompanied by a “penance,” often including a sizable fee. Scripture doesn’t really distinguish between “sins” as to severity, but the coffers of the Vatican have been filled to overflowing from the practice. What a blow to the incalculable price that Jesus paid with His Own Blood, for the sins of all men on the Cross of Calvary, and such forgiveness is free for the asking! We would also note, as to the penalty for sin, that just partaking of the forbidden fruit was sufficient to warrant the supreme penalty of death upon the entire Adamic race. God’s Word declares “.. by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:” Rom. 5:12 If all sin is actually worthy of death, and only Christ can redeem us from it, how can men put a price on one sin above another?

And then there would be the protest against the Pope demanding worship, belonging only to Jesus, as men are required to bow down before him and kiss his ring. We realize that these examples come nowhere near addressing all the doctrines whereby this “prophetess,” has persisted “to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication,...” but suffice it to say that these represent her total disregard of God’s Word!

No, Bro. Palmer, I do not think that the day of protest is over, and it is the Word of God which is mounting that protest.

This man, whom we have no doubt, has been genuinely

7 saved and filled with the Holy Ghost, and with whom we have no problem calling “brother,” concluded his comments with excerpts from the real Lord’s Prayer, of intercession, found in John 17:21. “That they all may be one; ....that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.” He was followed by the image and voice of Pope Francis, who appeared before this leadership conference on another video reportedly hand delivered by Tony Palmer. It is noteworthy that Mr. Palmer identified the Pope as “an open charismatic.” Are we to assume that Pope Frances is filled with the Holy Ghost according to the pattern in Acts 2? His voice and demeanor of “syrupy compassion,” was also a plea for unqualified unity. He used the analogy of Joseph being reunited with his brethren, and it did not take a rocket scientist to figure out that the modern day “Joseph,” would be the Catholic Church who is just waiting, with outstretched arms, with tears, of compassion and forgiveness, running down her face, to receive these wayward protestant brethren who had maligned and abused her down through the ages. His “blessing” upon them, along with his own request for “their blessing,” was received with thunderous applause.

Next followed Bro. Kenneth Copeland who came to the podium and simply read those beautiful words from Eph. 4:13. “Till we all come in the unity of the faith,.....” His conclusion also was that we must have unity at all costs.

The unity proposed by these two charismatic brothers is a contradiction in terms. Bro. Tony completely omitted the verses which introduced Jesus prayer for unity, wherein He declared plainly, “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. **Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.** ....And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;” John 17:16-20 The little word “that,” in v. 21, which introduces Bro. Palmer’s text, “That they all may be one...” shows that these previous verses, emphasizing sanctification through “doctrine” and truth, are the very channel through which real unity comes. Yet this brother insists that such doctrine is divisive!

The text read by Bro. Copeland also declares “Till we all come in the **unity of the faith,**” that is, the doctrine of The Word of God. The verses, immediately preceding these words,

describe how Jesus was raised from the dead and gave the gifts of “apostles;....prophets;..... evangelists;....pastors, and teachers;” all of whom have one thing in common: publishing the Word of God! Eph. 4:11 How can “**the unity of the faith,**” ever be achieved if we follow the exhortation of these men to simply ignore or dispense with “the faith” or “doctrine,” of God’s Word which sanctifies all of us unto Him? If we are all sanctified unto Him, “through the truth,” we will automatically be unified with one another. That is, sanctification through truth or “doctrine, will literally “PRODUCE” such unity. Paul wrote the same message to Corinth. “Now I beseech you, brethren, ...that ye all speak the same thing, and **that** there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” I Cor. 1:10 Speaking the “same thing,” the same “doctrine” of scripture results in unity!

It is so grievous to see that these two men, who promote the infilling of the Holy Ghost, simply ignore the primary purpose for which He was sent. “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, **he will guide you into all truth:** ...whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.. he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.” John 16:13,14 8

Furthermore, their pleas to flee into the arms of Catholicism are a direct contradiction to Jesus warning, “...Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins,....” Rev. 18:4 The word “her,” is a reference to the woman depicted in Rev. 17 – 18, and the only religious entity, (woman) who has the world-wide influence, political clout, and prestige described in these chapters, along with dominion around the world, of which Catholicism boasts, is the Catholic Church. This verse plainly tells us that there are saved people in the Catholic Church, for He calls them “my people,” but they are exhorted to “COME OUT OF HER...!”

The aforementioned video concluded, as Bro. Copeland complied with Pope Francis request for blessing. He then quoted Rom. 8:26, “because sometimes we just do not know how to pray.” “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” He interpreted this as meaning that to pray in the spirit, one must pray in tongues; .....which he did.

But, Paul also wrote this instruction in I Cor. 14:16 on the



subject of tongues. “Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?” Since there was no interpretation of what Bro. Ken said and, in view of the theme presented throughout this conference, I personally, could in no wise, say a loud “Amen,” and join in with the loud praise, lifting of hands and rejoicing which followed.

II Thess. 2:3, quoted at the beginning of this article, plainly states that the “falling away,” will culminate with the revelation of the man of sin, that is, the antichrist. This man will not actually be revealed, and come to power for his 1260 day reign, until 250 days prior to the middle of the week. However, the “falling away,” has already most assuredly begun, and unless we, even as individual warriors, follow Jude’s admonition to “earnestly contend for the faith,” rather than denying the doctrine that has been given us, we will most assuredly be caught up in this web of deceit. Paul likewise warned that we must “...not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.” I Thess. 5:6 Jesus also cautioned, at the very beginning of His discourse in Matt. 24, “Take heed that no man deceive you.” V. 4 Furthermore, we are assured that only our love for the truth will guard us against the rampant deception of these end days. “.....because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause (because they received not the love of the truth) God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:” II Thess. 2:10 Only the truth, the doctrine of God’s Word, which the aforementioned men are so willing to sacrifice for unity, can actually preserve and protect us from the rampant deception currently sweeping every sector of this world.

Such deception is most assuredly not confined just to the religious world. Political unrest around the globe is rampant because nations simply cannot trust one another. Paul warns of those in “the last days,” who would be “...covetous, boasters, proud, .....trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, (out of control) fierce,....” all of which can be most aptly applied to current national leaders. II Tim. 3:2,3 Space does not permit a lengthy discourse on the current, and very volatile, situation in Ukraine, but we offer this brief update. Vladimir Putin, as predicted by most world leaders, had no intention of stopping his assault after Crimea, and he certainly does manifest

all of the above mentioned traits of the last days.

His aggression is in direct violation of the “Budapest Memorandum On Security Assurances, signed by the Russian Federation, the U.S., and the United Kingdom, on Dec. 5, 1994 in Budapest, Hungary. This memorandum included security assurances against threats or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine. Ukraine accepted that agreement, in exchange for surrendering the world’s third largest nuclear weapons stockpile between 1994 and 1996.

It has made no difference that the U.S., Canada, and the U.K. have all accused Russia of breaking this “truce,” or memorandum. Israel has also been taken to task by the U.S. because she was not present to vote for sanctions against Russia in the U.N., the reason being that Israel fears Russian retaliation through Iran. Israel has also made it clear that she simply does not trust the U.S. to help in the Iranian threat, and is ready to “go it alone,” if forced to do so. Such fears would be well-founded, for America has repeatedly shown that she will not come to the aid of those in crisis. Senator John McCain is incensed because the U.S. has refused to supply even arms and intelligence to the people of Ukraine, choosing instead to impose somewhat “toothless” sanctions against Russia. Israel has also been repeatedly rebuffed in obtaining action against Iran’s nuclear program.

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It seems that no nation on earth can, in any wise, trust another, and though reports indicate that Russia has relented, in Ukraine, world leaders have no confidence in Putin abiding by the recent Geneva agreement.

The good news is that we can most assuredly trust God’s Word which declares plainly “Behold I come quickly!” and “Look up for your redemption draweth nigh!” We cannot ignore the present conditions of an apostatized world, as though they did not exist, but we need not be a part of it. We cannot force men to accept God’s Word, but we can make that decision for our own lives, and personally claim Jesus’ Words in John 17. “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth..... That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us:.....Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me:.....” V.16, 17, 21, & 24.

# Dwelling In Cieled Houses

Albert Harding

*“THUS SPEAKETH THE LORD OF HOSTS, THIS PEOPLE SAY, THE TIME IS NOT COME, THE TIME that the Lord's house should be built. Then came the word of the Lord to Haggai the prophet saying, is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore, thus saith the Lord, Consider your ways: Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but have not enough ; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put in a bag with holes. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways. Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and will be glorified, saith the Lord.”*  
*Hag. 1:2-8*

11

We wish to draw attention to a fact of which very few of God's people seem to be aware, and to warn some of a condition that will cause them inestimable loss, unless they consider and mend their ways before it is too late. And it is all set forth in our text, but indirectly, and in mystery, or symbolic form.

The words quoted, though containing the symbolic teaching to which we refer, were not of course addressed directly to the Church, but to members of the nation of Israel, and at a time when efforts were being made to rebuild the temple. Fifteen years before this, 50,000 Israelites returned from captivity and began to build the city. But soon the people began to attend to their own affairs. The city was still largely in ruins; the foundations of the Temple were laid, but the Temple was not built. The evidence is that the people were putting their own affairs ahead of God's.

And as Jesus says in Matt. 24:37-39 and Luke 17:26-30 a somewhat similar (though not exact parallel) condition will prevail in the days of His second coming; which, by the way, is now very near. Though much "religion" will exist, and many will PROFESS to be Christians, people will be occupied with and concerned about their own private and personal affairs, such as eating, drinking, marrying, giving in marriage, buying, selling, planting, building and so forth, but will have little or no concern about God's affairs and things of eternity and the world to come. They will even be indifferent to and scoff at the warnings uttered by God's prophets concerning the days of vengeance that are so soon to

come upon all the world. And many will be utterly neglectful of, and totally indifferent to, that greatest of all human needs—their own salvation.

Consequently, as what is sometimes called "Noah's Flood" came when it *was* least expected, and took away all who were not in the ark; and as fire and brimstone came down from heaven upon Sodom and Gomorrah, destroying all the inhabitants thereof; only Lot and his family escaping; so when people least expect it, sudden destruction will come upon this world; and together with His mighty angels, Jesus will be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. I Thess. 5:3; II Thess. 1:7,8

It grieves us, as we consider the sad and needy, though self-satisfied, "Laodicean" condition of the world as a whole, and especially that part known as Christendom, is in today. And we pray to God, asking Him to cause people to repent and call upon the name of the Lord, that they may be shown mercy and grace, and be saved while there is yet time. For the day is very near when Jesus will come with clouds, not to save, but to execute judgment and wrath; when every eye shall see Him and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Rev. 1:7

12

But to return to the instance recorded in our text, and the occasion of the words contained therein, we see this. As is often the case, when some project is proposed or in progress, the people did not want to take part in the work, but were concerned with their own affairs, and wanted them to be taken care of first. So they sought refuge in what seemed to be a rather convenient excuse: The time is not come to build God's house.

But God heard what they said, though it was not addressed directly to Him, and may not have been meant for His ears. Indeed, the people may have overlooked, or forgotten or not realized that God hears every word that men say, whether addressed to Him, or not. For all things, even those that seem to be hidden and secret, and actually are hidden and secret in man's estimation, are laid bare and exposed to His all-seeing eye. Heb. 4:13

We understand of course that in their literal sense neither the charge that God brought against those Israelites, nor the warning and instructions He gave them, have any direct reference to the Church. How could they, seeing they are addressed to an earthly people, and the

city referred to is an earthly one and the Temple a material one, and seeing that the country in which they are located is not ours?

For ours is a HEAVENLY country and city, and the Temple of which we are God's helpers in building and of which we are members, is a SPIRITUAL OR SUPERNATURAL ONE.

It is the symbolic (not the literal) meaning of our text that concerns the Church. But we must not allow ourselves to think because of that, that it is inconsequential and of little or no import. God forbid! For the condition portrayed is a serious one; and to neglect it will cause eternal and inestimable loss. In fact, we may safely say that the symbolic meaning is more important than the literal, even as spiritual fornication and adultery are far more serious and detrimental than the physical.

The truth portrayed in our text might well be considered in connection with that which Paul gives us in I Cor. 3. Namely, that all Christians who corrupt or defile God's holy temple by building the wrong kind of materials on the one true foundation, which is Christ, will suffer loss; though they themselves will be saved, yet as by fire; whereas those who obey Paul's instructions, and take heed how they build upon that foundation, will receive a reward. As it says there, everyone's work will be tested—BY FIRE—and those whose works are burned will suffer loss, but those whose works abide or stand the test will receive a reward. So let us continue with our text, and learn what it meant for us, or as much thereof as we can. Amen!

It is evident, that at the time God spoke to those Israelites by Haggai, some of them were concerned about having houses to dwell in themselves, but showed little concern whether God had a house to dwell in or not. God's reproof does not mean however that He objected to their having homes to dwell in. That is inconceivable. He is not that kind of a God. The truth is they were self-centered and were putting God and His affairs in the background of their thoughts and intentions.

And for a people whom God had chosen to be His own from among all others, and whom He had redeemed and taken to Himself, as a man takes a woman to be his wife, and for whom He cared, as a loving and Faithful Husband, and to whom He had given a wonderful and holy law, by which they might be governed, and an unbroken line of kings, and a priesthood, and many wonderful and extraordinary promises, such an attitude seems far from becoming.

But such is the wickedness and hardness of the human heart that men soon forget the benefits that are bestowed upon them, especially those that cost them nothing, and will even forget their benefactor; especially when circumstances and environment do not exactly suit or please them. They forget even when God Himself is their benefactor. And yet how good to them God was. His watchcare was infinite, loving and constant. And just as soon as they called upon Him, He delivered them out of all their distresses, even though they themselves were to blame for their troubles. "Oh that men would praise the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works unto the children of men." Amen!

### **Now For The Spiritual Application**

It is a sad commentary on the Church's supposed obedience to the Word of the Lord that, despite the love-inspired and earnest plea of our beloved brother and apostle Paul, many Christians are still far more concerned about, and interested in, and occupied with, their own spiritual houses (that is, their own particular denominations) rather than God's house or Temple.

14

Saddened by the news that there were contentions among the saints in Corinth, in whose salvation he himself had been instrumental, under the Mighty Hand of God, Paul was stirred into activity on their behalf, and so sought to warn them, lest they should be turned aside from going on with and in Christ, and should therefore fall short of obtaining God's best in the glory land and not win the victor's crown. I Cor. 1:10-12;9:24

We share Paul's feelings, in some measure at least, as we consider today's outwardly divided condition of the Church and wish, as he did, that we could do something to remedy it. And we agree with all who believe and are convinced that Christians should (and could) all be united. Much as we wish we could, however, we cannot agree with and take part in the efforts that some are putting forth to establish or make unity and to reconcile the many differences in both doctrine and practice that exist.

For though we recognize and respect the serious-mindedness, sincerity and earnestness of those who put forth such efforts, and undoubtedly desire nothing but the glory of God and the good of His people, we see by the Word of the Lord that our efforts, and those of other Christians also, should be directed toward KEEPING, not making, unity. Eph. 4:1-6

Before anyone can direct his efforts toward that end, however,

he needs to see that despite outward appearances, unity **ALREADY EXISTS**; and that can be seen only with the eyes of **FAITH**. And faith must of course be based upon, and rooted in, the Word of God, if it is to be real and living. And that word says that "God hath tempered the body together," and that all its members "Are builded together for a habitation of God, through the Spirit." I Cor. 12, Eph. 2

So instead of endeavoring to **MAKE** unity, we must believe that unity **ALREADY EXISTS**, despite what our eyes can see, and our senses can feel; even when variance in doctrine, whether, right or wrong, seems to raise a barrier or partition between ourselves and other members of the Church, which is the Body of Christ. Then, as we are instructed in Eph. 4:1-6, we should endeavor in love to **KEEP** the unity that God Himself has made in Christ.

As a matter of fact, efforts that we put forth to **MAKE** unity will only end in failure and frustration. They may seem to succeed for a while, and we might therefore feel that we have done the will of God, but disunity will follow sooner or later, because we do not have the power, and certainly not the authority, to make unity. Besides, ideas as to how it shall be accomplished, and even as to what **really** constitutes unity, are so numerous and varied, that it is impossible to either correlate or reconcile them.

As the result of our efforts, outward unity may exist for a while, because certain ideas are in control, and others are dormant. But sooner or later these dormant ideas will assert (or re-assert) themselves and demand recognition, and probably with greater fervency than before, and the unity that seemed to exist will be shattered, and we shall be disappointed.

Not until all human ideas are dead, or held in the death state by our reckoning, that we died with Christ on Calvary's cross, and Christ alone is in control, and absolutely, can there be true unity of mind, judgment and speech among us. So let us accept the unity that God has made in Christ, walk in the light of it ourselves, and in love endeavor to guard, preserve and defend it in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen!

Is it not true, however, that, despite Paul's loving and earnest plea and his explicit and clearly stated instructions, many Christians are more zealous for their own houses (denominations) than they are for God's house? Are they not more ready to keep their own denominations intact than they are to keep God's

house, intact? True, many want and are zealous to see others saved, filled with the Holy Spirit etc; and we must give them credit for that; nevertheless, is it not their own denominations whose membership they seek to increase? And do not many take pride in and boast of the "bigness" and importance of their own denomination, and consider one that is not so big as of less importance? Sad to say, the fact that others may be just as surely saved, washed in the blood of Jesus, and members of His Church as they are themselves, seems to be of minor importance to many.

But if you, dear reader, want to belong to a BIG church, one that has a LOT of members, be content to belong to THE Church; the one which is The Body of Christ. That is the biggest Church there is. It has more members than all the others put together. No man can number its members; they are all over the world; and in heaven too. As a matter of fact, it is the ONLY Church that has, or ever will have, members in heaven. It is also the only one that has its roster there and the only one that will survive and emerge victorious in the battle with death and the grave, because it is the only one that has the Lord's guarantee that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. To belong to another will eventually result in loss, and belonging to **that, AND ANOTHER**, puts you under obligation to be loyal to TWO CHURCHES. That is impossible, because interests and aims are bound to conflict in some way or other, making it necessary to choose between the two. And you can cleave to only one. Besides, denominational ties limit one's liberty to some extent, and are hard to break. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Amen!

And by having a prescribed constitution and a set of rules and regulations, and requiring adherence thereto in order that people may be accepted and recognized as members, does not denominationalism erect a fence around its members, and shut out people who see no reason for binding themselves by subscribing to a constitution and agreeing to obey a set of rules and regulations? **Indeed** it does! What then? Aren't denominations "CIELED HOUSES"? Indeed they are. And are not many of God's people DWELLING in them, spiritually speaking, yet have little or no concern about GOD'S HOUSE? And when Christians are on both sides of the fence, some on the inside and some on the outside, does not denominationalism separate Christians and thus cause DIVISIONS in



the Body of Christ? Indeed it does.

Furthermore, under the principles of denominationalism, Christians are received as members by other Christians ONLY if they belong to the same denomination. But according to the Word of the Lord, they should receive one another simply and solely because they themselves are received by Christ. Rom. 15:7 The Lord has not granted His people authority to require anything of other Christians ere they will receive them. The mere fact that HE has received a person should be — and IS — sufficient reason for other Christians to receive him to the glory of God.

Jesus is coming soon!

*(Reprint 1952)*

### ***IT'S LATER THAN: YOU THINK.***

17 On a brass Plate in an old Chinese garden, resplendent with red and white flowers and twining vines, are the Chinese characters which, interpreted, read “Enjoy yourself, it’s later than you think.” This sage epigram has been used in many places and by many individuals, changing trends and circumstances of their lives — at times turning them from things that seemed very important to things that were very important. Because of the suggestion, many a man has placed first things first, just prior to the too-late-hour.

History is repeating itself. Long, long ago a man called to the passing multitude while he built an ark according to Heaven’s specifications. He proclaimed, “It’s later than you think; come, enter the ark of safety.” The storm clouds are already overhead. They are reaching the saturation point and are preparing to rain destruction. The stage is set; the drama is about to begin. The Lord is calling, “Come thou and all thy house into the ark. The door is still open, but it’s later than you think,”

--Selected--

# REFLECTIONS

## REFLECTIONS

. . . From the Editor

*“Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies: I flee unto thee to hide me.” Psa. 143:9*

It is quite certain that, at one time or another, every Christian has claimed the privilege of these words. All of us have undoubtedly felt as David did when he “....said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.” Psa. 55: 6 There is surely that time in our experience when we just want to “get away from it all,” and while the psalmist sought the glorious refuge provided, he also shows us that there is also a path to its enjoyment. He was of like passions as we are and his cry was also “Hear me speedily, O LORD:...” the reason being that my spirit faileth:...” We are oft persuaded that we cannot go any further and we too request that The Lord “....hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.” Psa. 143:7 However, our training must continue as we learn that God has reasons for not always accommodating our desire for “instant deliverance.” “Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.” V. 8 Our path today is most assuredly one of learning, and while we desperately want to be delivered, the grace or “lovingkindness,” along with “trust” or faith along the way, is invaluable to our spiritual growth and development.

David follows this same pattern in Psalm 17 when he cried out “Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings.” V. 8 This is a wonderful place of care and tenderness, wherein David wanted to be protected and guarded as the tender “pupil,” or apple of God’s Eye. However, this plea is really the consummation of several requests which begin in V.5 “Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.” This is also most important for us, for this man is asking that God would direct the “timing” in his path. It is alright to “hold up,” or delay my goings according to Your Plan. Faith next springs to the fore, for “I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O

God: incline thine ear unto me, and hear my speech. Shew thy marvellous lovingkindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee from those that rise up against them.” V. 7-8 These words bespeak glorious confidence in God’s faithfulness, grace, and power, giving David the boldness to cry out, “Keep me as the apple of the eye,.....”

A glorious and intimate “hiding” place is also found in Psa. 27:5 “For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.” Trouble likewise brings us to this “pavilion,” and “secret place of his tabernacle,” and it is known in the N. T. as the throne of grace. It must not be to us only a temporary place of refuge, but rather a way of life. “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Heb 4:16 The very troubles, which seem to abound today, are designed to hide us in this treasured “secret place of his tabernacle.”

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# SEPARATIONS

*Sharon Townsend*

*"I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham....." Ex. 3:6*

**G**od did not say "I was" but "I am" the God of Abraham, and this patriarch had been dead 400 years. The young mother in our meeting, who had been a witness and a blessing to so many, has gone home to be with the Lord, and while the separation may be painful, it is not permanent. He IS just as much her God today, as He was before this separation.

We have thought much of separation over the past several months and know that God can use them not only to bring about His purposes in our lives, but also for Himself. For example, when Jesus hung on the cross, there was a horrendous separation ----- for a time, as Father and Son were severed from One Another while Jesus endured awful pangs of outer darkness. When Jesus cried out "My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me" the pain of that separation was, oh, so very real! However, the result of it is that God now has many children and sons (as we allow him to work in us). And as far as his children are concerned, we will NEVER experience the separation Jesus felt on the cross, for God will ALWAYS be Father to us.

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There are many examples of separation found in scripture, such as Joseph, who was, for a time, separated from his family. Genesis 37-50 The end result proved to be the means by which God delivered an entire nation. During this separation, God began to work His purposes in the hearts of his brothers. One specific change came in the life of Judah. Though he, at one time, would willingly have killed his half-brother Joseph, he was transformed into one who was now willing to lay down his life for Joseph's brother Benjamin. He would take his place, in order to spare his father the grief of losing his youngest son, even as he had lost Joseph. Gen. 44:33,34 A separation had taken place in the heart of Judah. This same spirit sprang forth from the line of Judah as The Lion of the tribe of Judah – Jesus - willingly laid down his life for all.

Abraham, the great-grandfather of Joseph, also experienced numerous separations in his life. His journey with God separated him from the very things in which he trusted, and admired. His country, his father's house, and his kindred were all left behind.

These separations did not take place overnight nor were they easy. But God in his mercy and grace took him forward one step at a time. Abraham surely felt the “sting” of such losses, and one of them seemed to have affected him very deeply. It is at this very time, however that God spoke directly to him. “And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot (his nephew) was separated from him, **Lift up now thine eyes**, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: ...the land, (country) which thou seest to thee will I give it and to thy seed for ever...” Genesis 13:14 Abraham not only became a father, but through these separations God gave to him and his kindred an entire country, which is yet to be fully possessed. When there was no other direction for him, except to look upward toward the LORD, he heard, saw, and experienced wonderful things.

Ruth, the Moabitess, likewise CHOSE separation – from family, country, culture and even of “good things,” should she have remained in Moab. Remember the words of Naomi to her daughters-in-law? “And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. The LORD grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept.” Ruth 1:8-9 We have no record of it, but surely the LORD did deal kindly with Orpah, wherein she did find rest and a new husband. Ruth on the other hand chose separation from it all and, in time, found rest in the house of Boaz, a beautiful type of the Lord Jesus as Kinsman-Redeemer. She also gained a prominent place in the lineage of Jesus.

Sometimes separations are the result of bad choices. Even in these situations God can still use them to bring about his purposes, and The Samaritan woman at the well is a prime example. John 4:4-42 The Samaritan people were disdained by the Jews, and this woman was not highly regarded by her own people. She had had 5 husbands and the man she was living with at that time was not her husband. Because of her lifestyle, she was certainly separated from the moral women of her day and I doubt there was any respect given her from anyone else. But it is this very separation that put her in the right place ----- **to meet Jesus**. After meeting him, both her life, and the lives of others, were changed. “Many Samaritans from the town believed in him because of the woman's testimony.....” John 4:

39. God is NOT defeated by mistakes in our lives.

The Apostle Paul also experienced separation as he went into the deserts of Arabia, after his conversion, for a period of about three years. Gal. 1:14-18 He was separated from other saints, as well as other “preachers,” at that time. The end result of that separation produced a unique message for this Church Age that is so great it can perfect a people to reign with Jesus as a bride. This message can take a “child” of God and transform him into a “son.”

Then there is the separating He brings forth in our lives. “For ye were once darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.” Eph. 5:8 Notice how we are taken from what we **were** (darkness) to who we **are** (children of light in the Lord). Then we are told to walk as a child of light. It is when we really begin to see who we are now, a child of light in the Lord, that we can walk as one. (My feet have a tendency to walk in the direction, my eyes are looking.) A beautiful example of this is shown forth by the Shulamite in the S.O.S. She asserts in Ch. 1:5 “I am black, but comely,.....as the tents of Kedar, (black-skinned) as the curtains of Solomon (which were undoubtedly very beautiful). This analogy beautifully portrays the two natures in a believer. She really was “comely” as a new creation in Christ Jesus, but in her thoughts and eyes, she was still “black.” So a process of separation begins in her thoughts. She knew what to do and begins to look for her Solomon even as we look toward Jesus. She hears what he has to say, even as we listen for the voice of our Lord. Did Solomon point out the blackness? No! Instead he drew her attention away from herself **altogether** and focused on His assessment of her. “...O , thou fairest among women...” It is quite clear that this young woman really blossomed in Solomon's presence when her eyes and ears were tuned in to him only, for she fervently announces “I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.” S.O.S. 2:1

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The last separation we would consider is found in I Thess. 4:16-17 “....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.

Won't that be a wonderful separation!

# The Preacher

Carson Richards

**“HOW THEN SHALL THEY CALL ON HIM IN WHOM THEY HAVE NOT BELIEVED? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a Preacher?” Rom. 10:14**

Who is that fellow? He has been around for some time, some version or other of him. He is considered by many a “character”; by others a “lazy lout”; by others a “sky pilot” denoting his impracticality, yet others say he is a hypocrite; others an impostor; some few consider some type of his group a holy man, and a very few see him as a called messenger of the living God.

23

Poor fellow! Before we relegate him to the scrap heap, let’s look at something about his origin and who he is. He does have something to do with things God-ward, religious things, good or bad. However, for the benefit of those of us who believe the Bible is the Word of God, let’s see a bit of what it says about “the preacher.” There are three Greek words referring to the “aggelos,” messenger, from which comes the word, “angel” also. The thought in two words is apparently to proclaim or publish “good tidings.” The other word of the three conveys the idea of “heralding as a public crier,” says one scholar. We get from these roots then, the general idea of what it is to preach. Biblically, it is to proclaim a Divine message.

Now for some examples, let us look at some Bible preachers. Noah is the first one we find actually called a preacher, yet even he is termed so, as late as the time of Peter, “....a preacher of righteousness.” II Peter 2:5 His message was righteousness. Elsewhere we read he “found grace in the eyes of the Lord,” Genesis 6:8. Then he must have declared a Divine “by-grace righteousness.” Undoubtedly that is preaching at any time. Noah nailed away on his ark and preached for over a century, we believe. He lived in an age which is a proverb for evil, for Christ pointed to its wicked example.

Even before Noah, however, we read of another preacher, though not called so in so many words. Enoch was his name. Jude says he “prophesied,” Jude verse 14. He said, “....Behold the

Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints." Prophesying is also described as "speaking by Divine inspiration," so Enoch must have been a preacher. He had a good message: the coming of the Lord!

Afterward, wise Solomon was called "the preacher" throughout the book of Ecclesiastes, Though he must have been a different type, he had some Divine Wisdom in his words.

As we follow the preacher down through the Old Testament, he seems represented by the prophets, though they didn't always have good tidings. They did, however, have a divine message. So, though the preacher has a history, he must more completely be a New Testament individual.

Looking at these New Testament preachers, we find our Lord Jesus Himself described as such. In Ephesians 2:17, we read he "preached peace" to all mankind. Are we not getting at the core of the thing now? The preacher is a man with a message — God's message, the real Biblical preacher, that is. Christ is the sum and substance of the message — His full work on Calvary and His full life is the real preacher's message to mankind. Christ was the leader of this line, so it's a worthy line of humanity.

To go further, we see the leading messenger of God for this entire age, from the spiritual standpoint, that is, the apostle Paul, called a preacher. "Whereunto I am ordained a preacher and an apostle (I speak the truth in Christ and lie not) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity." Praise God therefore that God chose a preacher to give out the full results of Christ's redemption for man, from Satan and sin's bonds, and that this preacher spoke "the truth" in Christ. Amen! This is a commendable and veritable quality of true God-called preachers.

Passing the word on down, we hear, the aged Paul, about to go above, saying to his spiritual son, Timothy, "preach the Word", II Tim. 4:2, and this command has not been revoked by the Chief Preacher now in Heaven, our Lord Jesus Christ. Evidently preachers were to follow on to the coming of Christ, for "Preach the Word" was God's own command.

Alas, my friends, there is no way out; the preacher is God's own product, so will stay with us until his words are fulfilled in the coming of Christ. He is a necessary part of our existence, as nec



essary as the food we eat and the clothes we wear. Make no mistake about it! God is just suffering this race of men to complete His redemption purposes, and so men have to heed Paul's request, "... indeed bear with me," II Cor. 11:1. Yes, whatever we think of him, the preacher is here to stay. As we once asked an elder saint, "Why does God still call preachers amidst such coldness?" The answer was to the point — "He wants a testimony." And so it goes, wanted or unwanted, usually the latter, received or rejected, loved or despised, this old boy (or woman, too) will be about until all is fulfilled up on heaven's avenues. Like the poor: he will always be with you.

Sometimes it isn't clear what constitutes "preaching." Often it is considered one has to raise his voice well up, in intensity and volume, to be a preacher. Maybe 'tis so. Real Spirit-filled preachers give evidence of inner moving, sometime in their career. They are of a different type from other people, though the genuine ones aren't the "lords" over laity, but under shepherds to the Chief Shepherd and "your servants for Jesus' sake," II Cor. 4:5. The preacher has definite dealings with God, and definite attacks from Satan. He is "of like passions with you," Acts 14:15, so has finally to obtain real spiritual conquests, in his own life. However all this comes from God and God reserves the preacher's training to Himself. He, after all, is responsible for him, and the preacher is responsible to God.

We shall not dwell on the false preacher, the counterfeit, or everything that bears the libel, "preacher." We refuse to receive all such under our heading, as we believe God does too. Withal, though, surely the real preacher is a spiritual person with a spiritual utterance from the Father of Spirits, the living God. Our man, or woman, in question is a collective figure. He is a fellow with many units making up his composition. The Chief Preacher has His full message to give out, and He chooses many and varied types to proclaim it. Often they are the "foolish" and weak things of I Cor. 1. As one man of the world called a Christian, by asking about another, "Why would God call such a dumbbell?" So you see God has His own ideas in choosing His preachers. Remember the Lord wants to be the center of attraction in this business, not the preacher. As Preacher Paul said in a citation above, "We

preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus, the Lord." This is a rare item, too, in religious activity. Such creatures are not found too frequently. There are many "big preachers" who talk of Christ but add a lot of "preacher" to the message also. It is a common temptation. All in all, though he is usually just an ordinary fellow, the part of the preacher that preaches, we say, is supernatural. Ah! There is the rub, as is said. Men refuse to accept the supernatural coming from the ordinary, and the preacher goes unheeded, but God does not change His Ways of working.

Then, we repeat, the preacher is an absolute requisite for this life and age. He is God's chief instrument to get out His Word and purpose. He seems to be a distinct instrument from, Apostle and Teacher. He is often declared to be another thing, from the many other, just as needful and good, members of Christ's Body, The Church. Forgive us, but it has to be said. No one will have all that glory we think and sing about up there, without this much-maligned or mocked fellow, "the preacher." So let's suffer him, bother him, peck at him, if we must, but once in a blue moon it might not be out of order to love him a bit. Poor old preacher, God made you, and the day wilt come when you won't be sorry either!

26

*(Reprint 1952)*

### **The Empty Pew**

The empty pew has an eloquent tongue. Though its message is unpleasant, it is one that all may hear. To the preacher it says, "Your sermon is not worth while." To the visitor it whispers, "You see, we are not holding our own." To the treasurer it shouts, "Look out for a deficit." To the stranger who is looking for a church home it suggests, "You had better wait a while." To the members who are present it asks, "Why don't you go visiting next Sabbath, too?" The empty pew speaks against the service. It kills inspiration and smothers hope. It dulls the fine edge of zeal. The empty pew is a weight. The occupied pew is a wing. "Thou wilt be missed because thy seat will be empty" I Sam. 20:18

—Selected.

# ISAIAH 19

*Gene Hawkins*

“The burden of Egypt. Behold, the LORD rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it.” V. 1

27 This chapter forms a beautiful correlation with the book of Psalms. Psalm 18:10 describes The Lord in language similar to that of verse one, here in our present chapter. “And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.” Furthermore note the reference to “Zoan” in the following verses. “Surely the princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish: how say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings? The princes of Zoan are become fools, the princes of Noph are deceived; they have also seduced Egypt, even they that are the stay of the tribes thereof.” V. 11,13 Zoan means to “strike tent,” or to move tents. It shows the insecurity and ever changing conditions found in Egypt. It was also a fortified city in Egypt, and is contrasted with Hebron in Num. 13:22. “And they ascended by the south, and came unto Hebron; where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the children of Anak, were. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.)” Hebron, the place of genuine communion with God is here presented in direct contrast to Zoan, which seems to be directly associated with the counsel given to Pharaoh, but the text in Numbers indicates that Hebron came first, having been built seven years prior. The lesson here is that God’s counsel was freely available, but soundly rejected by Egypt, and has thus been greatly seduced.

Psalm 78 likewise depicts the relationship between Zoan and Egypt. “Ps 78:12 Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan. He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and he made the waters to stand as an heap. How he had wrought his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan:” Psa. 78:12,13,43 Dividing “the sea,” is a clear reference to Israel’s miraculous exit from Egypt through the Red Sea, after God had “wrought his signs,” and judgments upon them because of Pharaoh’s unbending heart. The same rebellious characteristics are manifest in political leaders today, and most Bible Scholars have consistently accepted and taught that Egypt is typical

of the world as a whole. Thus all these references to Zoan and Egypt describe the attitudes generally held by the national princes and leaders of this entire earth. These same traits are graphically displayed in Psalm 2. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision." V. 2-4 This is the same attitude Moses and Aaron encountered when they came to demand of Pharaoh, "let my people go." Isaiah 19:11 describes his counselors as "brutish," (stupid, or foolish, destructive as fire eating) and that is surely the summation expressed by Egypt, both in the Psalms, and Isaiah 19.

The opening verse of this chapter follows the pattern seen previously in Moab, and Damascus and means exactly the same thing. Doom is also prophesied for Egypt, and it will come swiftly for "the LORD rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt." That "cloud" is symbolic of the redeemed saints of God, associated with Christ in pouring out judgment upon the world. Hebrews 12:1 describes the worthies of faith as "a cloud of witnesses." The cloud which "received Jesus out of their sight," (Acts 1:9) was undoubtedly believers in their glorified bodies. Revelation 10:1 likewise describes Jesus as "clothed with a cloud" indicating those who surround Him in judging the world even as Paul declared "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" I Cor. 6:3

This verse further asserts that He "...shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence,..." The judgments which fell upon Egypt, when the children of Israel were expelled, were a direct blow against the gods of Egypt. Likewise, the religious gods of this world will be annihilated when He comes again as is clearly seen in Revelation 14. "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, ... And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, ....." V. 14-18 Jesus is again associated with "the cloud" here and this time the judgment, pictured by the "sickle," is against the religious gods of

the world because the basis of their judgment comes from both the temple and the altar. Isaiah's conclusion, here in verse 1, is that "the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it." The same fate awaits those of the end time who have trusted in the gods and counsels of Egypt. Men's hearts will again "be failing them for fear," (Lk. 21:26) when the sickle of judgment is wielded.

Not only so, but ".....I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom." V. 2 This language is very similar to that in Matt. 24 where Jesus describes the condition of the entire world during these last days. "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:...." Matt. 24:7 All this turbulence will end with the battle of Armageddon, but we note here in Isaiah that God is the One Who creates the atmosphere wherein these nations turn on one another. He is the Great Orchestrator of end time events, and prophesies clearly that the very "spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof; and I will destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards." V. 3 The "heart" of Egypt which "shall melt in the midst of it," and the "spirit of Egypt" which fails in this verse, are exactly the same thing. God will eventually reduce the desire and will of the entire world to absolute nothingness, to the degree that they simply will not have the heart to resist Him. He will destroy any "counsel" they may have, reminiscent of Psa. 2. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD,...." Psa. 2:2 Despite the fact that this counsel comes from the wizards, charmers, and familiar spirits of Satan, symbolic of the ungodly tactics of the false prophet, with all his signs and lying wonders, God will still have them in derision. Psa. 2:4

The rule of the antichrist is next prophesied. "And the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts." V. 4 This man of sin will be given 1260 days to rule Egypt, or the world, as he sees fit, and he will establish one world government with himself as the supreme ruler. He will be both fierce and cruel and any who would dare resist him, refusing the "mark of the beast," will be destroyed.

"And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall

be wasted and dried up." V. 5 These waters are a reference to the "religious waters," of the tribulation period when all refreshing spiritual waters will be completely eliminated, or turned away, (V.6) due to the state of darkness ushered in by both the false prophet and the False Church. Revelation 16:4-6, which especially describes the judgment on the great whore, records it thus: "And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy." Isaiah likewise records these same polluted waters. "And they shall turn the rivers far away; and the brooks of defence (fortified) shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither. The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, and be no more." V. 6-7

The results of these waters continues in our next verse. "The fishers also shall mourn, and all they that cast angle into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish." V. 8 The mourning of the "fishers," could certainly be literal due to the actual corruption which will be found in the waters at that time. In fact Rev. 8:8-9 gives this graphic description of the pollution created in that day. "And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; And **the third part** of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died;...." However, the waters, here in Isaiah, especially refer to the religious fishers of men, who will be totally ineffective due to the absence of truth engineered by Catholicism and the false prophet. This spiritual lack continues as we read, "Moreover they that work in fine flax, and they that weave networks, shall be confounded." V. 9 The flax is representative of man's efforts to establish his own righteousness by the works of his own hands, and these also shall be confounded, because only the Truth of God's Word can produce the righteousness which God demands, and for which, He alone has provided.

"And they shall be broken in the purposes thereof, all that make sluices and ponds for fish." V. 10 Once again, these words could also be taken very literally due to the total pollution of the

waters at that time, but it is also very much parallel to the religious devastation described above wherein it is quite evident that any spirituality among men is woefully lacking.

“Surely the princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish: how say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?” This verse also seems to reinforce the fact that Pharaoh’s counselors are to be blamed for this present devastation. He basically asks them; “Where did you get your credentials? How can you declare yourselves wise when all this “fallout” has occurred.” We would reiterate that the word “brutish” means stupid, or foolish, with the insinuation that it is destructive or fire eating. It bespeaks the fact that the spirit of those counselors, who advised Pharaoh in that long ago day when Egypt was destroyed by the ten judgments of God, will also be the destructive force of the end time. Thus God continues to ask, “Where are they? where are thy wise men? and let them tell thee now, and let them know what the LORD of hosts hath purposed upon Egypt.” V. 12 That is, let those counselors give the true report of what God has purposed to bring upon the world. Of course, that cannot do that because they are simply ignorant of such purposes.

God continues His assault upon these advisors announcing that “The princes of Zoan are become fools, the princes of Noph are deceived; they have also seduced Egypt, even they that are the stay of the tribes thereof.” V. 13 Deception and seduction, are still the order of the day and these princes are labeled fools because of it. They were supposed to be the “stay,” or the strength of Egypt’s tribes, but they have proven to be absolutely worthless because they have published lies rather than the Truth of God. Scripture plainly declares that when men do not receive truth “God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:...” II Thess. 2:10-11 Thus, Isaiah also declares that

“The LORD hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof: and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit.” V. 14 I Kings 22 presents one example of how God has used the lies of men to accomplish His purposes. “And the LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramothgilead? ... And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him. And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will

be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets,....” I Kings 22:20-23 Confusion, uncertainty, and total chaos will also be the order of the day for Egypt in the end time, and God, Who cannot lie, (Tit. 1:2) will use the Satanic lies of men to accomplish it.

The doom of Egypt continues as the prophet now describes the desperate economic condition which will prevail at that time. “Neither shall there be any work for Egypt, which the head or tail, branch or rush, may do.” V. 15 We would reiterate here that Egypt is symbolic of the entire globe, and as we see in our own present time, the economy of the world as a whole, is reaching an extremely critical state, and no nation on earth will escape the effects of it. This economic collapse will also contribute to the anxiety pictured in our next verse.

“In that day shall Egypt be like unto women: and it shall be afraid and fear because of the shaking of the hand of the LORD of hosts, which he shaketh over it.” V. 16 This very familiar phrase “in that day,” again comes to the fore, and this text informs us that fear will be a great part of the climate which will prevail in the last days. Egypt is likened unto “women,” whom God created as “the weaker vessel.” Our world seems to ignore that fact, but it is true nevertheless. God created both the man and the woman with their respective characteristics and here Egypt is seen as a woman filled with fear and dread, even as Jesus described, “Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.” Luke 21:26

There will be a multitude of things causing fear for the world “in that day,” and though world leaders of our day would scoff at such a thing, God will use the nation of Israel to further terrorize the world. Isaiah declares plainly that “...the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt, every one that maketh mention thereof shall be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the LORD of hosts, which he hath determined against it.” This statement seems almost preposterous at this present time for though Israel has been a thorn in the side of the nations for hundreds of years, she has had to defend herself against them for self preservation. The prophet declares here, however, that “Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt,” or indeed the world. There will come a day when this little nation,



who rejected and despised their Messiah, will finally accept Him and become an absolute terror to those around them. The nations will be forced to bow before them and acknowledge their King. Isaiah continues, announcing that, "In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the LORD of hosts; one shall be called, The city of destruction." V. 18 Does the "language of Canaan" literally mean Hebrew? We are not told, but it is quite clear that it will be the language of The Lord. These next few verses clearly indicate that the nations of the earth will have a change of heart before God. We know that Israel will bow down before Him, as they finally accept Him Whom they had pierced, but from this report, the other nations, that is, "sheep nations," who will be spared, will also follow that same example. There is one exception recorded here; namely, that of the "five cities in the land of Egypt," which "speak the language of Canaan,....one shall be called, The city of destruction." Could this possibly refer to Rome, the seat of the Great Whore, the center of idolatry, which will be annihilated? We are confident that that is exactly the case.

"In that day shall there be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the LORD." V. 19 Thus the spiritual restoration of Egypt continues here, as those left in the world, after the massive destruction incurred during the tribulation, will bow to the new regime of King Jesus, and the new "religious order." The "altar to the LORD," symbolic of Calvary, is in the forefront, and "a pillar," of protection will guard their border. Verse 20 informs us that the same pattern which Israel followed will also be employed for the nations who also cry out unto The LORD for deliverance. "And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the LORD because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them." V. 20 Not only so but "...the LORD shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the LORD in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the LORD, and perform it. And the LORD shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the LORD, and he shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them." V. 21-22 Once again, God's dealings with Israel also sets the precedent for the rest of the world. Just as God had to humble the Jews with these mighty judgments of the tribulation and the oppression of the nations and the antichrist, He will likewise use the same punishing Arm to smite the nations, or Egypt, and then

“heal it.” These verses clearly tell us that “he shall be intreated of them,” meaning that they will cry unto Him for mercy. Sometimes people ask whether or not there will be some saved during the tribulation. God’s promise has always been; “whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Acts 2:21 There will be those who will call on Him, specifically, because those judgments are coming upon them, and though many will be martyred because they have believed, they will be saved for eternity. The “reward” of such martyrs is described in Rev. 14:13. “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth:...” The blessings for those who “endure unto the end,” of the tribulation period, and “shall be saved,” (Matt. 24:13) that is they will be preserved alive, is found in these words. “In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.” V. 23 This “service” is unto The Lord, and both the Assyrians and Egyptians are now united in this endeavor. Their warring days are over, and peace has come between them as they become united in serving Him. Egypt seems to represent the great culture of the world, while Assyria, which was a part of the Babylonish Kingdom, bespeaks religion. By the time this prophecy is fulfilled, both the culture, and religion of the world, will belong to The LORD. Also, “In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land:” V. 24 This is quite a contrast to the existence of these three today. Israel is considered, at best, just an appendage to the world, and many of the nations are determined to eliminate them altogether. “In that day,” however, Israel is defined as a “third,” along with these other two. We might think, from this, that these other nations will be on equal footing with Israel after the devastation of the tribulation is over, but Isaiah’s final words in this chapter most assuredly emphasize that Israel has been separated into a very special place. “Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.” V.25 The “people” of Egypt who are claimed by The Lord, are those who have accepted His redemption. The religious faction, figured by Assyria, is the work of His Hands, as contrasted with the religious works of the world. But Israel is defined as “mine inheritance.” Israel has finally come to the fullness of God’s purposes for them as a nation. They are put on display as His Inheritance, as the centerpiece of His dealings with all the nations, indeed, His Own Chosen People.



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