

# Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the  
whole Counsel of GOD

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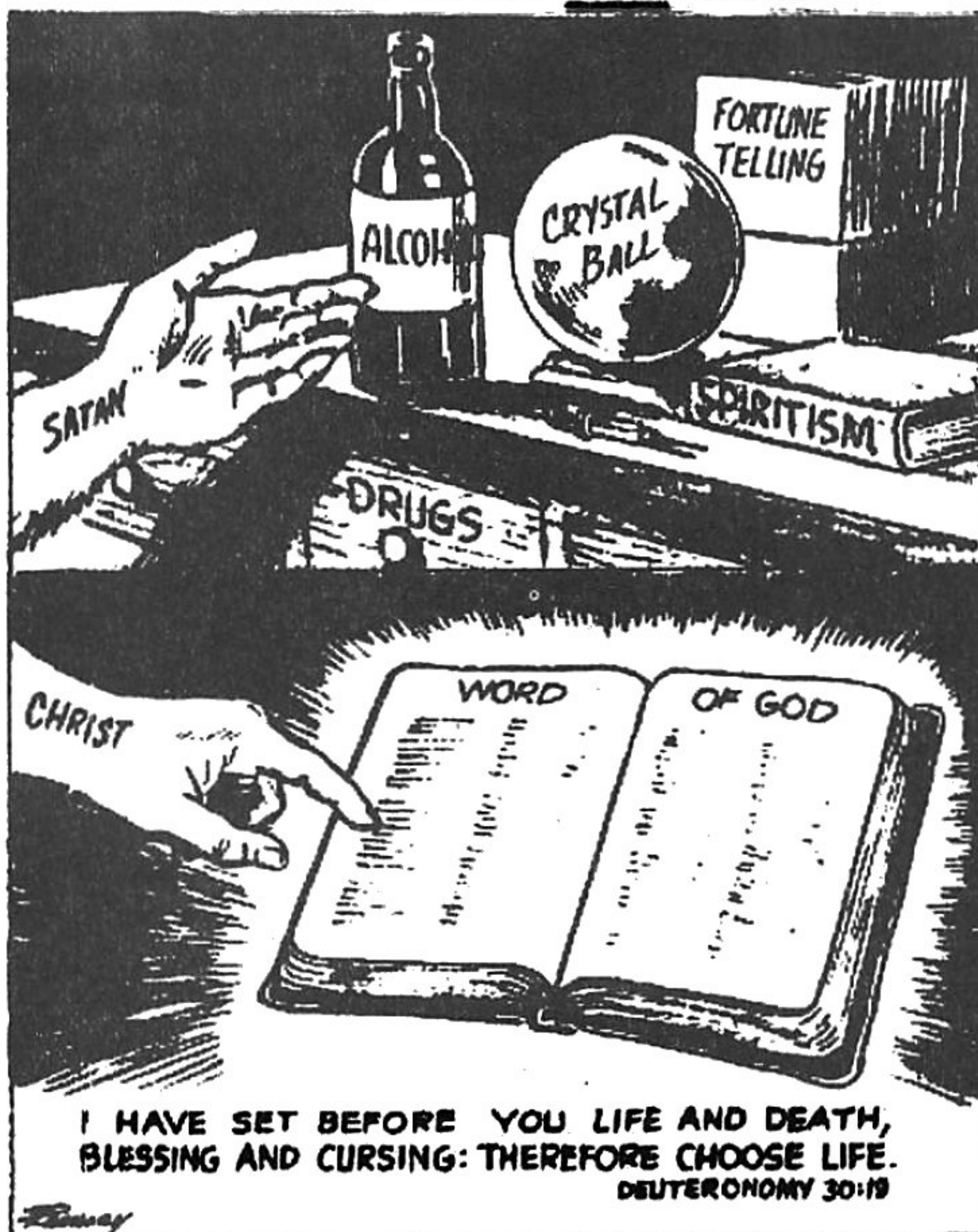
**I** have loved  
thee with an  
everlasting love:  
therefore with  
lovingkindness  
have I drawn thee.  
JEREMIAH 31:3.



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### WHERE DO YOU FIND YOUR FUTURE?



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**Editor: Gene Hawkins**





By Gene Hawkins

“**T**his know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud,... Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors,...Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof:...” II Tim. 3:1-5

Paul begins this description of the “last days” with a precise statement of fact. These days which mark the end of the Church Age shall indeed be “perilous times,” meaning that they will be “difficult, i.e. dangerous, or furious:--fierce.” Such an atmosphere has been with us for quite some time, but surely none can argue that various incidents have not only become much more intense and destructive as these last days unfold, but they are also escalating with great frequency. Paul’s use of the little word “For...” in verse 2 is very significant, for the verses which follow give us a detailed description of WHY these days are so perilous, and those reasons are found within the hearts of wicked men.

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All these characteristics have been in evidence for some time, but we would note in this article that so many of them are now emerging simultaneously. Some of the more prominent ones include the fact that men are “covetous,” as they know no restraint in their quest to gain unbounded political power. “Trucebreakers” is another very evident characteristic among the nations of our day, as men very well realize that so often their tentative agreements are no more valuable than the paper upon which they are written. Men also have absolutely no compunction about being “false accusers” or deliberately lying in order to achieve their own objective. “Fierce” is another key word of our day, and we would note that the phrase “...despisers of those that are good,...” has special application to anyone called Christian, for the reports we have heard indicate that they are the most persecuted group of people around the entire world.



The term "...incontinent,..." meaning "without self-control" is extremely evident world-wide, both in groups and individuals. Totally incontinent "lone wolf" individuals have committed themselves to execution-style rampages which have taken place in recent months, choosing churches as their targets in places like Charleston, S. C. and Sutherland Springs, Texas. Innocent children and teachers lost their lives when this same out of control attitude was manifest in Florida and Galveston Co. Texas. There was also the Las Vegas massacre in Nevada, which has been designated the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history. Loud outcries for gun control followed all of these incidents, but this same out of control characteristic was also manifest in those ungodly individuals who chose motorized vehicles as their weapon of mass destruction in France and New York. The problem here is not with the weapon, but rather lies in the incontinent hearts of men. We are most assuredly revisiting the days of Noah even as Jesus prophesied in Matt. 24, wherein, "... GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the **thoughts of his heart** was only evil **continually.**" Gen. 6:5 All of these are stark examples illustrating the fact that the hearts of men have descended to a point of being totally without restraint or conscience, resulting in unprecedented perilous times.

Another example of unrestrained and unreasonable response on the part of men is found in this headline from USA Today surrounding the Las Vegas tragedy. "**Outrage builds over MGM Resorts' decision to sue victims of Las Vegas massacre**" Then follows this explanation: "The suit filed against hundreds of the victims of the rampage Oct. 1 outside the Mandalay Bay hotel claims the entertainment giant has 'no liability of any kind.' MGM said in a statement the filing was meant to provide a "timely resolution" for shooting victims who sued or will sue in the aftermath of the attack during the Route 91 Harvest Festival. MGM said litigation filed against it "must be dismissed." We can hardly conceive of such callous insensitivity, but where money is concerned in our world, there is apparently no restraint in the hearts of men to pursue their desire and compulsion to preserve their own interests.

It also seems that some politicians are actually inciting an entire atmosphere of incontinence, literally encouraging and



specifically instructing their constituents to “Get right up in the faces of cabinet members wherever you find them and make your demands known!” Several incidents against government officials have since followed, and while some political leaders did decry such unprecedented incivility across the country, others seemed to either explain or justify such things as just “peaceful demonstration.” That term has literally become a “way of life” in this modern democratic world, but does God’s Word justify and promote such dissention? It seems that God defined “protest” as “murmuring” throughout Israel’s journeys in the wilderness, and there was always a price to pay for it. Israel surely murmured or demonstrated against God, Moses, and Aaron numerous times in order to “demand their rights,” but none of those were ever approved by God, and death as well as other consequences ensued in some instances. Mordecai is another who did in fact “protest” against the king, clothed in “...sackcloth with ashes,...” (Esth. 4) but it seems he did so with his eyes wide open, knowing full well that there would be consequences if he pursued his objective. We would point out here that God’s Way is to make an appeal to authority rather than gather large crowds to “demonstrate” and try to put pressure on government by swaying public opinion. Such appeal did work for Israel, as Moses interceded for them. It was also effective for Daniel and the three Hebrew Children in the first chapter of Daniel. Esther likewise reaped the benefits of appeal when she trusted God and went unto the King uninvited. Esth. 4

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Unrestrained and out of control demonstrations have taken place across America and numerous other places around the world for a number of years now, whereby law enforcement officials have been sorely pressed to preserve their own protocol in protecting themselves while trying to quell the violence of the protestors. Many of these demonstrations have targeted government authority and have been leveled directly against certain individuals, as in the recent marches in London against Pres. Trump. Jude describes them as those who “...despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.” Jude 8 The problem is that those who participate in such rallies really have no regard for The Word Of God, and therein lies one of the glaring problems of this modern day incontinence. Men simply do not care what God thinks of their thoughts and actions, but surely



this is one application of Paul's assertion in our opening text which describes wicked men as "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof:...." The power of godliness lies in the power of God's Word, but modern man simply wants nothing to do with It. He continues to ignore God's Word and dream about utopia, but that will not come until the unprecedented suffering of the tribulation period has transpired.

Leaders of certain nations could also surely be deemed "out of control." Assad of Syria, Kim Jong Un of N. Korea, and the leaders of Iran have most assuredly demonstrated such a trait. Assad has turned repeatedly on his own people and Iran has shown a continued willingness to pursue her own destructive measures almost completely motivated by her hatred for Israel. The world at large also continues to wait for Kim Jong Un to follow through this his commitments to denuclearize and though he has not fired any missiles recently, we simply do not know if his new and somewhat subdued behavior is something that will last.

6 This brings us to another simultaneous defining point of these end times, for Paul clearly declared that there will be "...trucebreakers,..." North Korea's Supreme Leader has fulfilled some of his promises in releasing prisoners, ceasing missile tests, and apparently destroying some testing sites, but there is no indication that the remains of American Soldiers killed in the Korean war have been returned. A meeting was scheduled to address that issue, but the N. Korean delegation simply did not show up. Late breaking news reports, however, have confirmed that at least some of these remains are indeed on their way back to American soil. We can only hope that the N. Korean dictator will also honor the other commitments he made to Pres. Trump in order that the entire Korean Peninsula will be de-nuclearized.

Ours is a day when men want everything instantly, but when multiple nations are involved that does not always happen. Whether Russia and China could speed up the N. Korean denuclearization process is rather unclear at this time. President Trump declared that many things were discussed during his recent meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Syria and Israel were both on that agenda, and we can only wonder if perhaps "reining in" Kim Jung Un may also have been included. One thing is sure; nations like Russia and China have their own



interests in the Middle East, and according to a headline from the Russian News Agency Pravda: **“China weaves financial web to oust Russia and USA from Middle East.”** Russia gained a tremendous foothold in Middle East affairs after Syria crossed President Obama’s “red line,” and America refused to do anything about it. Thus today, Russia has great influence in Syria. That fact has gotten the attention of Israel, as Haaretz.com published the following assessment by “Chuck Freilich, a senior fellow at Harvard’s Belfer Center and former Israeli deputy national security adviser. The U.S. is Israel’s strategic ally, but it has adopted a diminished role on issues of vital importance for Israel’s national security, making Israel increasingly dependent on Moscow. There have been conflicting reports so far regarding Moscow’s willingness to take Israel’s security concerns into account.”

Haaretz also published another view after the Helsinki summit by “Daniel B. Shapiro, Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies in Tel Aviv. He served as U.S. Ambassador to Israel, and Senior Director for the Middle East and North Africa, in the Obama Administration.... Israel is a small regional power, and all of a sudden, it found that it had a superpower operating in its backyard. Under such circumstances, Israel had no choice but to develop and sustain a productive dialogue with Russia, to ensure that Russia would not do harm to Israel’s security or curtail its freedom of action, as it surely could if it wanted to.” 7

Israel has long been concerned with Iran, and whether Russia allays her fears any more than the U.S. has done remains to be seen. Prime Minister Netanyahu produced evidence months ago proving that Iran was in stark violation of the Iran nuclear deal from which President Trump has since withdrawn. However, though Iran has suffered economically as reported last month in these pages, Israel has taken steps on their own to ensure their own safety and prevent Iran’s access to Israel through Syria. Haaretz again reports that the Wall Street Journal published **“New details on unprecedented Israeli strike on Syria-Iraq border....the aim of Israel’s attack hundreds of kilometers from its borders was to signal that it won’t tolerate Iranian attempts to establish a land bridge running from Iran through Iraq and Syria to Lebanon. Israel is concerned that Iran’s territorial control will allow it to**



transfer military hardware and personnel by road from Iran to Israel's border."

It is quite clear that no nation can or will trust another. Scripture plainly states that men will break their agreements and they will pursue their own interests. We can only wonder if perhaps the atmosphere wherein Israel's peace agreement recorded in Dan. 9:27 will be consummated in an atmosphere of distrust even as is evident in our world today. It is said in these same reports published by Haaretz that Israeli P.M. Netanyahu is well aware of what kind of man Russian President Vladimir Putin is, yet the feeling is that Israel must act in order to defend its own security in Syria. According to Isaiah, the covenant to which Israel will agree with the antichrist in Dan. 9:27 is proclaimed to be "...a covenant with death, and with hell..." Isa. 28:15 We rejoice greatly that it will also be disannulled. "And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand;..." Isa. 28:18 However, that negation will only come after the horrendous difficulties of the tribulation period wherein Israel will learn the very painful lesson that their trust must be

8 in their Messiah, rather than in the nations. Until then, they will undoubtedly test and trust the waters of many nations trying to establish and ensure their own stability and security in a very volatile and uncertain region.

One more major characteristic found in the hearts of men, and which promotes these "perilous times," lies in the fact that men are "Without natural affection,..." II Tim. 3:3 It has been widely reported over the years that former Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir once said, "Peace will come when the Arabs start to love their children more than they hate us." Though some have disputed the fact that the former P.M. ever said this, the truth of this statement surely remains down to our day, and even some Palestinians have decried the fact that children have often been used as human shields for ungodly men and their purposes.

The hearts of most godly people are extremely grieved over the reports of violence, unrest, chaos, and the great tragedies brought forth by these perilous times, but we cannot, must not, succumb to it and sleep for sorrow as did the disciples just prior to Jesus' arrest. We must understand that God did not give us the signs of the end time to bring us to the point of grief and



despair, but rather they must be received for the purpose intended: harbingers of Jesus' Soon Return! Paul imparts to us some major exhortations designed for daily practical living during this Church Age, and one of them is especially applicable for this present hour. "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Rom. 13:11 Bless God, we do know the time! It is the time for Jesus to return for His own, and it cannot be a time wherein we give in to the sleepy condition descending upon this earth where men are so bowed down with sorrow that they are seeking any means of escape they can find. The apostle likewise warned Timothy that "...evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." However, his young son was not to be discouraged and dissuaded by such negative surroundings, but he must rather "...continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;" II Tim. 3:13-14 So let us also adhere vehemently to God's Word, and know without doubt that we have reached the point when "... he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Heb 10:37

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### *The True Vision*

Have you got the vision sure?  
Let no fleshly aim allure.  
Keep the goal steadfast in view,  
Pressing on, thy way pursue.  
To the world say one adieu.  
Loiter not; the loss is great.  
Run along, 'tis getting late.  
Soon the race will have been run,  
And the Judge will say, "Well done."  
Christ the Prize will have been won.  
Look not to the left, nor right.  
Speed thy going in the light.  
'Tis the last lap of the race.  
Ample is God's matchless grace.  
We shall see the Bridegroom's face.

Author Unknown



## **Spiritual Wickedness**

Walter Anderson

**“F**or we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” Eph. 6:12

Let us carefully consider several citations of the Apostle Paul: First, 1 Cor. 2:13, "Comparing spiritual things with spiritual." It could also be rendered, "comparing spirituals with spiritual. In the term "spirituals" there is incorporated in its meaning that which is only a substitute or imitation of the genuine spiritual truth. It may have some points of resemblance, but does not bear the stamp of Scriptural authority. The mature saint must constantly make comparisons of spirituals, for "If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth," saith the Lord.

**10** The spiritual warfare of the full overcomers is "against spiritual wickedness in high places." The evil of this spiritual or wicked spirit lies in the fact that it often attempts to seduce the saints into accepting a false imitation of what is really spiritual. Another admonition that is to be heeded today is found in Rom. 12:2, "Be not conformed to this age ;" that is, do not allow your mind or spirit to be led off into the spirit evil of this age. Paul adds more light for us in Gal. 1:4, "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age." The foremost evil of this age is its spiritual wickedness," which is controlled by the prince of the power (authority) of the air, for the whole world lieth in the wicked one. To fully overcome every wile of the devil is indeed a qualification of the full over-comer. During this age, Satan is masquerading himself as an angel of light —2 Cor. 11:14,15.

Brother A. S. Copley has written upon this same subject: "The tendency of the times is to make spiritual things soulish. Men worship soulishly, rather than spiritually. They harness divine things in man-made methods, and cause their flocks to walk as men."



In order for a better understanding of the subject of "spirituals," we may look at the history of the nation of Israel from the Old Testament. Turning to Joshua 6:3,4, we read of the Lord instructing Joshua upon the entrance of Israel into the land of Canaan, "And ye shall compass the city (Jericho) all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams horns; and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets." Here is plainly illustrated to us the present conflict of the Church. Through our identification with Christ, in His death, burial and resurrection, God "hath raised us up together, and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Our present spiritual position in the heavenlies is comparable to Israel passing through the river Jordan (death) and entering the land of Canaan.

A most formidable fortress city named Jericho, stood in the way of their occupation of the land, and of necessity had to be overthrown and laid waste before they could possess it as their inheritance. The name Jericho means "fragrance," as the world **11** appeals to the nostrils of the natural man. It is thus a type of the world which has been already judged at Calvary. "Now is the judgment of this world. Now shall the prince of this world be cast out." John 12:31 In the march of the Israelites about Jericho, one circuit each day for six days, and seven times on the seventh day, is pictured in graphic language a like encirclement of the earth as seen by the saints of God, with Christ in their midst and blowing their Gospel clarions.

This present day which is the sixth in God's calendar; the Church is still encompassing the world although it does not appear that the walls have fallen. This battleground is viewed from Paul in II Cor. 10:3,4. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh; for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty thru God to the pulling down of strongholds." The phrase "pulling down of strongholds" describes the real world rulers, or the powers behind the throne, who are named "the world rulers of this darkness." They are now being overthrown by mighty spiritual warriors of faith who wrestle with them in



the heavenlies. Today, the believer accepts God's judgment upon the world in faith. "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.

God honors obedience to His Word. "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days." Marvelous victory indeed! Likewise, with the anointed eye of the Spirit we can see the kingdoms of this world crumble in the seventh day under the judgments of God—Rev. 11:15.

A solemn warning is given to the Israelites in regard to their possession of any of the spoils of Jericho. "And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it"—Joshua 6:18.

This warning has a like spiritual application. Beware of covetousness in *regard* to anything of the world. Any possessions of this earth must be held in faith alone. This is more fully explained in I Cor. 3:21-23. "Therefore let no man glory in men. **12** For all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." What an enormous wealth is ours in Christ!

Failure of Israel to keep the commandment soon appears, resulting in disaster and defeat for the entire nation. "But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing; for Achan, ... took of the accursed thing, and the anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel." One man, Achan "the troubler," is found possessing the accursed thing. Sister Mary M. Bodie writes concerning this: "This is all fragrant with instruction for us. Ai means 'a heap.' This connects, it with Jericho which we have just seen reduced to a heap. Now these cities represent the world, over which Satan rules, from two viewpoints. Jericho is the whole world, judged by God at Calvary; and Ai represents failure to carry His judgments out in practical life. Faith views the world a ruin, which apart from God's presence with us, we are unable to overcome. He refuses to go up with us and give us the victory unless we accept His judgment of the world and



actually devote it to death. We must count with God that we have been crucified unto the world, and the world unto *us*, or else the unjudged evil in us will soon have the ascendancy and we will be overcome as was Achan."

After being defeated at Ai, and suffering great humiliation, Joshua their leader rends his clothes and turning his face toward the ark exclaims, "O Lord, What shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies?" The answer follows: "Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them." All Israel is identified in one man's transgression, and we as a body of believers are identified in the failure of one of our members.

The offender must be found, so each tribe is brought forward to the Lord, and divided into their respective families, until the guilty one appears. Christ who is walking in the midst of the candlesticks, observes ail, Achan, "troubler" is on the spot. "And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done. When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them and behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it."

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He saw, coveted, took and hid a goodly Babylonish garment with the silver and gold. A Babylonish garment is also translated "a mantle of Shinar," bringing our thoughts back to the tower of Babel ("confusion"). Anything Babylonish is confusion and herein lies the seductive influence of a goodly Babylonish garment. The garment itself was composed of alluring colors, and exquisite design, making it most appealing to the soulish nature. Behind its beauty lay its sinister evil. It represented a false and counterfeit priesthood. The Levites from whom the lawful priests were taken to minister about the holy things of the Tabernacle, were authorized by Moses (a figure of Christ) to conduct the services and wore appropriate apparel for this office.

Likewise believers are constituted a "royal priesthood," ministering in true spirituals unto Christ, and given a true robe to wear which is the righteousness of Christ, and exhorted



to "put on Christ," as their genuine garment. Any substitute for this brings confusion and is classed as "spiritual wickedness." When any appeal is made to the religious flesh, or any material garment befitting the same, the old creation is recognized, resulting in a violation of Pauline truth. "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh (the old creation), yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more." II Cor. 5:15 In the cross of Jesus Christ, God pronounced judgment once for all upon the flesh. To deny this fact is a rank denial of the work of Jesus on the cross. Alas, some flesh is condemned today in its open evil, but that which is only pious and sanctimonious is spared like Agag, from the sword of the Spirit. In like manner many local assemblies identify themselves with unscriptural titles or slogans, giving of a decidedly Babylonish odor. Not only was the garment involved in the "accursed thing," but silver and gold as well. The root evil of this is covetousness, that is, to desire anything out of God's will. Together with this desire for a Babylonish garment is always another sin, "The love of money is the root of all evil."

14

May we all set our house in order, "for if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." Any meritorious recognition of the pious old man would consent to a false headship in the old creation, which would not be "holding the Head," Christ Jesus. If this is not judged, spiritual adultery is committed, bringing down God's judgment upon Achan's flesh.

Are we all standing together with Paul, and able to discern this spiritual Wickedness? As a body Of Pauline saints, we must ever "strive lawfully;" "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against, spiritual wickedness in high places (heavenlies)."

\* A heathen philosopher once asked a Christian, "Where is God?" The Christian answered, "Let me first ask you, Where is He not?"



**"AND THEY DECLARED THEIR PEDIGREES after their families by the house of their fathers." Num. 1:18.**

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature (creation) old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." II Cor. 5:17. The phrase, new creation, implies an old creation, or the first and material creation. The triune God was employed in that great work. **Elohim**, the Hebrew word for God in Gen. 1:1 is in the plural form and denotes three persons. **Elohim**, is in the dual form and indicates two persons. **El**, the singular form, denotes one person. The Hebrew word for create is in the singular number. Therefore, Gen. 1:1, "in the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth," indicates that three personalities, acting as one, wrought in the first creation. The word "person, or personality," does not mean a human person only, but any being, and may refer to Deity.

There is considerable difference between the words "create," "made" and "formed." The earth and all it contains was created; but buildings are made, or formed from material before created. Metals were created in the beginning; but from them, various articles are made, or formed, which we daily use. The word create is used with reference to the heaven and the earth in Gen. 1:1, and to the living creatures in v. 21 and to man in v. 27. "And God created great whales," etc. "And God created man in his own image; in the image of God, created He him; male and female created He them." Being created in God's image, or likeness, man has, therefore, a trinity of natures, even as God is a trinity of personalities. Man is spirit, soul and body. The spirit is the part of man which has a consciousness of God and which knows Him. "But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding" Job 32:8 "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?..." I Cor. 2:11. "There is a spirit in man; the spirit of man is the candle of the LORD." Prov. 20:27

The soul is that part of man which gives him self-consciousness. "How long shall I take counsel in my soul...?" Psa. 13:2 "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?..." 42:5 The body is the seat of the five senses — seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting and smelling, which convey to both soul and spirit a consciousness of the world around us.



God saw both Adam and Eve in His creation of man before they were separately made or formed. Eve was created in Adam. They were not made or formed at the same time, though they were created at the same time. "Adam was first formed; then Eve." I Tim, 2:13 Eve was in Adam before she was formed; and Adam was in Eve after she was formed. The man was made of dust; but the woman was made of man. Only God and heavenly beings saw what He had "created and made," or "created to make," margin — Gen. 2:3. The language concerning the beginning of Adam and Eve is beautiful. "And the Lord formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (lives, Heb.); and man became a living soul." Here the trinity of man's nature is expressed. "And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made (builded, margin) He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman because she was taken out of man." Gen. 2:7 and 22, 23 Not El, nor Elohim, but Elohim, three personalities of one nature, or substance, and one purpose, created and formed "one flesh," though two human persons of three natures.

God created the heaven and the earth, "not a waste," or "not in vain..." Isa. 45:18 Adam and Eve were made in the same way. **16** But God's handiwork was shamefully marred, no doubt by Satan, long after it had been created. Hence, Gen. 1:2 reads thus—"And the earth *was* without form, and void ; and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God moved (or brooded like a dove) upon the face of the waters." The same fiendish power also wrecked man by leading him to disbelieve God's Word. All God's first creations were glorious in the beginning. He pronounced His own workmanship "very good." Even Lucifer, before he became the devil, was beautiful and radiant. Ezek. 28:12-15 In a figure, in God's reckoning, Eve died with Adam (when he was put to sleep) and was brought forth in resurrection to be joined to him on resurrection ground.

### **The Pre-eminent Creation**

Christ The Last Adam, the Head of the new creation, was not created. He was made, or formed. "In the beginning WAS the Word; and the Word was MADE flesh and dwelt among us." John 1:1,14 "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, MADE of a woman, MADE under the law," Gal. 4:4 This fulfilled God's word to Mary — "That holy thing, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." Luke 1:35 When Jesus came into the world, He said to His Father, "A body hast thou prepared me:" Heb. 10:5 His glorious exaltation



as High Priest is expressed in Heb. 7:26 "...MADE higher than the heavens;" and in Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath MADE that same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ."

The Church was created in Christ; "for we are His (God's workmanship) created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them," and "in righteousness and true holiness." Eph, 2:10 & 4:24 Jesus Christ was the only true "Corn of wheat" in the world. John 12:24 If He had not died on the cross and been raised from the dead, He would have continued alone; but by means of His death and resurrection, God brings many sons unto glory. That one corn of wheat bears much fruit, even the salvation of all who believe on Him. As the woman is of the man (I Cor. 11:8), so The Church is of Christ. The body of the first Adam is natural; but the bodies of believers will be supernatural and spiritual bodies. We shall bear the image of the heavenly One. We who believe on Christ are in Christ and He is in us. We are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones (Eph. 6:30), even as Adam said of Eve in Gen. 2:23. At His coming, Jesus will "fashion anew the body of our humiliation, conformed to the body of His glory." Phil. 3:21, R. V. Then, as Eve was brought to Adam the first, perfect and beautiful; so will Christ the Last Adam present the assembly to Himself, glorious, not having spot, or wrinkle. Eph. 5:27 Meanwhile we who are in this tabernacle of humiliation do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, or completed sonship, the redemption of our body. Our bodies are still in the natural state cumbered with weakness, sometimes filled with pain, and subject to death: But when we receive our new creation body (the glorified body,) this will all be changed. The whole creation groans, waiting the manifestation at the sons of God. Rom. 8:22,23 We are unseen and unknown in Christ, even as Eve was in Adam before she was formed. 1 John 3:1,2

The word "Eve" means the mother of all living. She had dominion over the earth with Adam her husband. Likewise all those begotten of the Gospel, will be "made," "formed" with the Last Adam and reign with Him as kings and priests. At the first trumpet blast the full overcomers will ascend and meet Jesus in the air; then a little later the rest of the body of Christ will ascend also. We shall see Him face to face and be like Him. Rev. 22:4 "And every man that hath this hope set on Him, purifieth himself even as He is pure." I John 3:2,3



# REFLECTIONS

## REFLECTIONS

*... From the Editor*

66 **T**ake my yoke upon you, and learn of me;..." Matt. 11:29

"Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way:" I Sam. 12:23

The season of learning has begun again. When many of us were children that season did not begin until September, but there are many things which have drastically changed since that time. We fear also that the teaching has been drastically altered. Scripture is very clear that learning is imperative, but as Jesus stipulated, the greatest learning is to be of Him. The above citation from Samuel came to pass after Israel demanded a king, thus rejecting Samuel and his leadership. The record shows that God was greatly displeased and tried to comfort Samuel by declaring that, "...they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." I Sam. 8:7 God showed His displeasure by sending great rains which destroyed their crops and prompted the people to cry out to Samuel to "... Pray for thy servants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not:..." I Sam. 12:19 Thus the response of this beloved prophet to "... teach you the good and the right way:"

We fear that so much of the teaching emanating from schools today is nowhere close to being "...the good and the right way," because God and His Christ are simply eliminated. Paul likewise warned: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Col 2:8 The word philosophy has a negative connection to "sophistry" which means "plausible but fallacious argumentation." The apostle likewise warns of "...vain deceit..." or empty delusion and simple traditions of men, all of which are "...not after Christ." It would



be so refreshing today if those in authority would follow the example of Artaxerxes king of Persia, who charged Ezra "... after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not." Ezra 7:25 What a breath of fresh air it would be to hear men testify and teach of those things which pertain to Christ and God's Glorious Gospel of Redemption.

But alas, that is not what we hear in our world today where men seize every opportunity to denounce the very existence of God and His Christ. However, it is absolutely imperative that parents actively engage in teaching their own children "... the good and the right way." Paul instructed Timothy to, "... bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church." I Cor. 4:17 God likewise instructed Israel: "Hear therefore, O Israel,... that it may be well with thee,...Hear, O Israel:... thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Deut. 6:3-7 This pattern would surely eliminate a good deal of idle time for children of our day, and it must surely become the standard of learning for those who are truly separated unto God and His Ways.

19

GH

### **THINGS WE CANNOT DO WITHOUT**

1. Without shedding of blood is no remission--Heb. 9:22.
2. Without faith it is impossible to please God—Heb. 11:6.
3. Without works, faith is dead—James 2:14-26.
4. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord—Heb. 12:14.
5. Without love we are nothing- 1 Cor. 13:1-3.
6. Without chastisement we are not sons of God—Heb. 12:6-8.
7. Without Christ we can do nothing—John 15:5.



## *God's Creation*

Gene Hawkins

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Gen. 1:1

Many of our day in this modern scientific world often use the fact that this world is more than 6000 years old to justify and vindicate their claim that God's Word is untrue. Our hearts are burdened for young people going off to college, and even those in middle school and the lower grades, because so-called scientific evidence presented in many schools across this nation use the subject of creation to discredit the scripture and teach such theories as evolution, and the big bang to deny that God is the Great Creator of the entire universe. Our fear is that impressionable minds may be tempted by the enemy to conclude that since the Bible is wrong on this point, It may well be in error on other points of life. The fact of the matter is this: the Bible **DOES NOT TEACH** that this earth is only 6000 years old. Quite the contrary!

20

We have seen and heard various documentaries and films which present some rather elaborate and complex schemes trying to explain how a day of creation cannot be the same as the 24 hour day in which we live today. They do so in an effort to reconcile the six days of creation with the time demanded by science to produce the fossils and other elements found in this earth which insist that our world must be millions or even billions of years old. We would highly disagree with that theory. Genesis 1:5 clearly states that “... the evening and the morning were the first day,” after God had spoken light into existence, and the same declaration is made of the second through the sixth days which followed. The term “evening and morning” is also used in other parts of the scripture to indicate a 24 hour day, and suggesting that such a day could indicate thousands of years actually robs God of His Power and Ability to produce results in a moment of time as He has been so wont to do down through the ages.

The answer to the time discrepancy regarding creation is found in verses one and two of Gen. 1. “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form,



and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep....” God most assuredly “... created the heaven and the earth,” Period! He did not however create it “...without form and void,...” as asserted in v. 2. Isaiah plainly proclaims: “For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it **not** in vain, he formed it to be inhabited:...” Isa. 45:18. The word “vain” here literally means, “to lie waste, a desolation, empty place, **without form.**” It is exactly the same word translated “without form and void,” in Gen. 1:2, and Isaiah then says emphatically that God did not create it in such a fashion but that He formed the earth “... to be inhabited,” and indeed it was, with all the prehistoric creatures which left the age old fossils found even in our day.

Hebrews 11 holds the key to understanding this great mystery of God’s creation. “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen....Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” Heb 11:1-3. This chapter plainly teaches that “... without **21** faith it is impossible to please him...” V. 6. Verse three asserts that through faith we also “understand that the worlds (ages) were framed (to complete thoroughly, adjust) by the word of God...” Then we have these glorious words: “...so that the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear,” meaning simply that God took absolutely nothing and made something out of it. It is imperative that men understand how this last phrase beautifully describes what God did in Gen. 1:1, but it **CANNOT APPLY** to the six days of creation found in the first two chapters of Genesis, for God **did not** take nothing and make something out of it during that creation week.

“...And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” Gen. 1:2. “And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.” V. 6-7. Notice the fact here: God did not create the waters out of nothing on this second



day of creation. Those waters were already in existence! God simply took what was already in place and divided it to suit His Own pleasure. This same pattern is repeated in verses 9-10. "And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good." Not only were the waters already in place but the land also which had been completely covered by the waters, is now commanded by God to come forth as "...dry land." He did not create something out of nothing at this juncture. That had been done perhaps billions of years ago when "...God created the heaven and the earth" in verse 1. It is quite evident here that both the waters and the land have been recycled.

22 The third day follows exactly the same pattern. "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, **whose seed is in itself, upon the earth:**... And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good." V. 11-12 The seed of the grass, the herb, and fruit tree, are all "... after his kind..." and once again were already a part of the earth. They were not created anew out of nothing, having been submerged in the waters and dormant in the earth since the time of the aforementioned first creation.

Contrast, however, God's creation in verses 14-16. "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night;...And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth:... And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also." Here it seems that God did create something out of nothing, but His recycling pattern is once again found when "...God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their



kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good.” Gen 1:20-21 Some scientists have long insisted that certain land creatures had their origin in the waters. These verses seem to prove them correct for we plainly read that the waters brought forth “... the fowl that may fly above the earth...and every winged fowl after his kind.” We repeat that those creatures were already there from some previous time rather than being formed out of nothing on this fifth day of creation.

God’s creation continues in the second chapter of this book with the details of His crowning creation --- man. “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” V. 7 We must again, consider the facts. Adam was not a part of the first creation, but the dust from whence he was formed most assuredly was. Thus Adam did, in no wise “evolve” over eons of time, for God took the dust that was already at His disposal and fashioned him in a moment of time to His Own good pleasure. Eve was then created from a rib, stemming from the same dust as that of Adam.

23

Further evidence of God’s “recycling program” is found in these instructions given to Adam and Eve. “And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth,...” Gen. 1:28 He issued exactly this same blessing and command to Noah after the flood. “And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.” Gen. 9:1 If God told Adam to “replenish” the earth, it must mean that the same earth had, at one time, already been “plenished” or populated, and that is indeed His message conveyed through Isaiah, “...he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited:...”

“Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made....” Gen. 3:1 Here is another fact in regard to God’s re-creation. He created Lucifer the son of the morning, who was most assuredly a part of the first creation of Gen. 1:1. He is identified as “...that old serpent, (or that serpent of old) called the Devil, and Satan,...” in Rev. 12:9, in reference to this present text. The point here is that Satan had already



fallen. God did not create him here in the Garden Of Eden. We have long asked the question, "how old is Satan?" If men can ever answer that question, they will then discover how old the earth is, for they were both created at the same time. We should in no wise be confused, surprised or offended when men offer scientific evidence in producing genuine fossils and "footprints" of prehistoric creatures such as dinosaurs dating back millions of years. Though scientists cannot agree on which dating method is correct, it makes no difference. All their conclusions point to the fact that these relics may be millions or even billions of years old. Such things do not disannul God's Word, they simply confirm that the Bible had it right all along. Men prove with their own so-called expert scientific tests "...that the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear," and show unequivocally that God did indeed make something out of nothing long before their testing methods were even discovered!

24

"By faith we understand,..." that God created the worlds out of nothing, but men of this world are devoid of faith. They are, however, still without excuse directly because of creation. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,... **Because** that which may be known of God is manifest in them; **for God hath shewed it unto them.** For the invisible things of him (when He created something out of nothing) from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:" Rom. 1:18-20 These verses inform us that God will use creation as the very basis for judging ungodly men due to their unbelief. It matters not that they try to get rid of God by denying the truth of creation, they are still "...without excuse..." because His work from billions of years ago stands as stark and irrefutable evidence that God is God, and all their scientific finds do nothing but prove it.

Natural creation is but a type or pattern of God's spiritual creation in our lives today. "In the beginning God created..." and the same pattern applies to us. God created Adam sinless but not holy and thus it was but a short time before the first man



fell and can be likened unto the earth which was "...without form and void." There is a bit a change here, however, because God did not try to "recycle" the Adamic nature which was corrupt. He rather brought forth a new creation, the very nature of Christ Jesus, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. In other words, Adam's fall did not catch God unawares. He already had a plan, not only before Adam fell, but before he was even created. Paul plainly declares that, "...we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works,..." Eph 2:10 Furthermore, we are exhorted to "...put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph 4:24 God did not "repair" Adam, He rather clothed him with the righteousness of Christ symbolized by shedding the blood of the animals in the Garden of Eden and clothing the sinful couple with their skins. There is no record that they ever hid from God again because of their nakedness, and we too have been clothed forever with the righteousness of Christ.

David also understood perfectly the creative power of God. "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psa. 51:10 This plaintive cry came forth after David's sin with Bathsheba, and his subsequent repentance. It does not mean that he was pleading for salvation, but rather that God would finish creating His Own purpose within his heart. Our lives follow exactly the same pattern as the seven days of creation. The first step is "let there be light..." signifying the new birth. Then follows five more days wherein God continues to create the fullness of Christ and His purposes in us before His final rest is achieved. 25

God does have one final act of creation both for heaven and earth and for us. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea." Rev. 21:1 It is quite plain from the outset here that God will not use "recycled" material when He creates a new heaven and a new earth for "...the first heaven and the first earth were passed away;..." It is also rather interesting that "...there was no more sea," which was a major component in the 7 day creation of Gen. 1-2. Spiritually speaking, it means there will be



no more flesh, sin, and wickedness for "...the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." Isa. 57:20

Isaiah also concludes that God will not re-use existing materials when He once again creates heaven and earth. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." Isa 65:17 Apparently, He will again use the original pattern of making something out of nothing.

There will also be a final creation of a glorified body for the people of God, though according to John, it is unclear exactly what that body may look like. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: ... Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." I John 3:1-2 Evidently John also wondered what the final state of this body should be. Many have contemplated over the years whether  
26 or not this body will be "recycled," that is, will we have the same body in heaven that we possess at this present time? We are much persuaded that, because Jesus' glorified body still had the nail prints in His hands and feet, along with the rift in His side, this same mortal body will also give way to immortality. Paul likewise declares: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,... for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." I Cor. 15:51-52 The word changed seems to indicate exactly that, rather than a complete re-creation. Likewise the apostle asserts that, "It (this present body) is sown a natural body; it (this same body) is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." I Cor. 15:44 We heard a statement some years ago as one made this comment: "I surely hope that I do not have this body in glory." Such an assertion can be dangerous because it means that we may not have really accepted the body which God has given us, and if we do not, we may be prone to become bitter over the way He has made us. We would note also that it is this body which has been so very faithful in carrying or



housing the new man and fulfilling all God's purposes in ministry. Should not that body be rewarded for such faithfulness, rather than just being cast aside as some old shoe? John declares that we simply do not know what the new body will look like but we do know "... that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Paul agreed with this assessment as he wrote to the Philippians. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, (body of humiliation) that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, (body of glory) according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Phil. 3:20-21

There are many things about the future which we may not know, but of one thing we may be absolutely certain: The very God of the universe is exactly the same Great and Wise Creator Who is in charge of creating in my life, both now and for eternity and we can trust Him implicitly!

27

### THE RICHER SACRIFICE

Isaac Watts

Not all the blood of beasts  
On Jewish altars slain  
Could give the guilty conscience peace,  
Or wash away the stain.  
But Christ, the heavenly Lamb,  
Takes all our sins away.  
A Sacrifice of nobler name  
*And richer blood than they.*

\* Everybody is willing. Some willing to work, others are willing to shirk.

\* It is better to look forward and prepare than to look backward and despair.

\* He that is smallest is still the tallest if he touches God by faith.



### Three Excuses

**"**And they all with one consent began to make excuse...." Lk. 14:18.

As they did in Jesus' day, so they do now. Sinners give flimsy excuses for not accepting Christ as Savior; but no saved person receives them. Likewise, many saved persons file excuses for not receiving the Holy Spirit according to Acts 2:4.

One excuse is that the Holy Spirit was given only by the laying on of apostolic hands, and there are no apostles today. Read your Book again, brother. Who laid hands on the 120? Ananias was not an apostle, nor prophet; yet Saul received the Spirit when he laid his hands on him. Acts 9:17,18. And who laid hands on Philip and Stephen to receive the Spirit, before they were thrust forth as evangelists? Poor excuse indeed. In the last twenty years, thousands have received the anointing with the Spirit without anyone laying on hands, unless it was by some other lowly Spirit-filled saint:

28

Another excuse is that the Holy Spirit may be received without speaking in tongues. Strange that anyone should try to slip through in this manner, since every case recorded in the New Testament spoke in tongues. And if there were no distinct, differentiating sign of the Gift of the Spirit, each one might produce any evidence suitable to himself, even as some assume to do today. Thank God, speaking in tongues is that unanswerable, distinct, differentiating, scriptural phenomenal sign which satisfies the Lord and the saints.

Another excuse is that Pentecostal people are ignorant and fanatical and do very unwise things. That is partly true. Some of us are not educated; neither were the apostles, and neither are we all uneducated; but we know the Lord and His mighty power. Pentecostal people are not all fanatics. Some individuals and some assemblies are as sane and sensible as any folks under the sun. Preachers and bishops might learn much of the Scripture from hearing their testimonies. My friend, are not some of the church people ignorant? Are not some of your preachers very unwise? Kettle better not call pot black.

Anon



## ISAIAH 61 ~ II PETER

**“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;” V. 1-2**

This current chapter of Isaiah primarily proclaims great blessing for Israel, but also announces the above mentioned “... day of vengeance of our God:...” in the midst of it. Peter’s second epistle to his Hebrew brethren corresponds with it, and follows the same pattern wherein he too proclaims those same momentous days of judgment, along with the glorious deliverance and restoration awaiting this chosen nation. “For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell,... And spared not the old world, but saved Noah... a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;... turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes... And delivered just Lot,... (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:” II Pet. 2:4-9 Peter further describes God’s onslaught against wickedness, and subsequent blessing, with this account. “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” II Pet 3:10-13

**29**



There will be tremendous devastation during this "...day of vengeance of our God..." but Isaiah primarily concentrates on the deliverance and restoration of which Peter also proclaimed. Scripture is very clear that the "... new heavens and a new earth..." will not fully come to pass until after the millennium, but the glorious atmosphere of peace and utopia, which will prevail during Christ's thousand year reign will begin when Jesus sets up His Kingdom following the devastation of the tribulation period.

Thus, Isaiah begins this chapter shouting "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek;..." We immediately recognize these words as the text which Jesus read when He began His earthly ministry in Luke 4:18-21, following His "anointing" on the banks of the river Jordan and His subsequent temptation in the wilderness. It presents an outline of what He would accomplish, beginning at the time then present, for "... he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Luke 4:21 The fullness of these provisions, however, will

**30** not be completely consummated until the millennium.

His first priority is to "... preach good tidings (gospel) unto the meek..." emphasizing the fact that God's Word must also be pre-eminent in ministry today. David exclaimed "I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for **thy truth**: for thou hast **magnified thy word above all thy name.**" Psa. 138:2 God's Word is responsible for all the glorious blessings outlined in this proclamation. It is a message that will meet the need of the "...meek..." or needy one, and it will "... bind up the brokenhearted,..." Jesus was also sent "... to proclaim liberty to the captives,..." and He would implement such freedom as He demonstrated the power of God's Word among them. He would also set the captive free from any bondage by "... the opening of the prison to them that are bound;..."

The next facet of His ministry surely reaches down to our day and includes the aforementioned prophecy of Peter, for Jesus was sent "... To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD,..." This will be a time of great devastation for some, but as Peter



declares, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:" II Pet. 2:9 He also plainly instructs us that, "... the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night;... Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,... Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God,..." II Pet. 3:10-12 We are looking for that glorious day of deliverance, but Isaiah makes it very clear that, "... the day of vengeance of our God;..." will most assuredly come to pass. It is rather interesting, and significant, that Jesus omitted these final two "promises," in His announcement that "...This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Such a reference to judgment would have been out of place at the beginning of an age wherein the fullness of divine grace must prevail.

This brings us to the final strain of this verse, which seems to introduce the tremendous blessings encapsulated in the rest of the chapter, for Jesus was sent "... to comfort all that mourn;" He did that at His first advent, but He will especially render such comfort during the days of tribulation after Israel has accepted Him as their Messiah! Israel will be preserved during the awful 1260 day reign of antichrist, but such devastation will give way to "... beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified." V. 3 This small fledgling nation will be reduced to ashes, but will also experience glorious beauty which will be found only in Christ. The joyous oil of the Holy Ghost, which was so prominent in the early days of The Church Age, will also prevail when Jesus establishes His Kingdom in the Millennium. This will follow the tremendous state of mourning and heaviness which became a way of life during the tribulation. Not only so, but this entire nation will become an extremely strong nation "... called the trees of righteousness,..." indeed a nation that has been eternally "planted," by The Lord, and one which will truly glorify Him for eternity.

Isaiah continues to describe Israel's marvelous restoration



proclaiming that "... they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations." V. 4 Who can even begin to imagine the devastation that will be caused by the nuclear holocaust coming upon this world? However, Isaiah informs us that the repair shall include "... the desolations of many generations." Israel will be at the very epicenter of all the destruction which will be caused by the nuclear holocaust prophesied in Revelation, but much of the damage which requires the massive rebuilding program described in this verse is blamed on the unbelief, and rebellion, of past generations. That is, the tribulation is actually an expression of God's displeasure with Israel from ages past. However, when Israel as a nation accepts their Messiah, those infractions will be cast behind God's Back, as far as the East is from the West, and the way will be paved for the glorious restoration herein recorded. There must be a time of re-building, but according to the following text, it will be much more than that of cities.

32

"And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers." V. 5 Israel has been the doormat for countless nations throughout their history, but now there is a decided change, even as noted in our previous chapter. "For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." Isa. 60:12 Not only will the land and cities of this Chosen People be restored, but they will hold a major place of prestige throughout the entire world. Nations who once forced them into servitude will now "... feed your flocks... be your plowmen and ... vinedressers." Israel will truly be the head of the nations, "... and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath;..." the reason being that they have finally hearkened "...unto the commandments of the LORD thy God,..." Deut. 28:13

That fact also brings forth the next advantage enjoyed by restored National Israel. "But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast



yourselves.” V.6 God’s purpose for this people as outlined in Ex. 19:6 will finally be brought to fruition: “And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation...” The Gentiles were never an “afterthought,” insofar as God’s purposes are concerned. He always intended that all men should be given the opportunity for salvation, even as Peter declared: “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, ...but is longsuffering... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” II Pe 3:9 He has also ordained that Israel as a nation should be His world-wide evangelists, “... the Priests of the LORD:...” and indeed “...Ministers of our God:...” to the Gentiles. Therefore they shall “... eat the riches of the Gentiles,...” even as God’s ministers today are to be nourished by those whom they serve. The results of such a ministry will most assuredly become a matter of boasting for Israel and, as is indicated by the following verse, it is “payback” time for Israel.

“For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.” V. 7 Israel has been repeatedly humiliated by these same nations, but for that; they are to be rewarded double, and “... everlasting joy shall be unto them,” even through these Gentile Nations. Israel shall dwell safely in their own land, and none shall take it from them as is the case today. God says here that, “... they shall possess the double,...” an indication that they will finally possess all the land promised by the Abrahamic Covenant.

“For I the LORD love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.” V. 8 One of the very reasons for Israel’s newfound prosperity is that the LORD loves “judgment,” a reference to His justice and righteousness in punishing the nations which have so bitterly opposed His Chosen People. He also declares that “... I hate robbery for burnt offering...” Israel was supposed to have been such a burnt offering unto the LORD, but these same nations robbed Him of that, due to their severe maltreatment of a nation committed to their care during the times of the Gentiles. God’s new order will now change that. He will



direct Israel's "... work in truth and I will make an everlasting covenant with them." That covenant must include the provisions of both the Abrahamic, and Davidic Covenants, and both are assured in Christ because Israel, as a nation, is now a new creation as the next portion of our text gloriously proclaims.

34 "And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the LORD hath blessed." The Apostle Paul beautifully defines, "... the seed which the LORD hath blessed," in Gal. 3:16. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Thus Israel will discover and experience the reality of this "Seed," when they too become a new creation in Christ Jesus! Then follows their glorious paean of victory! "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." V. 10 National Israel will rejoice only in the Lord, knowing that He alone hath gloriously delivered them. They will have finally learned that true righteousness in Christ is their clothing rather than struggling with the tenets of the law to produce it, and the reference to the bridegroom and the bride undoubtedly refers to the fact that Israel will finally become the wife of Jehovah.

"For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations." V. 11 This chapter of restoration closes with the assertion that God will finally receive His Own bountiful harvest of righteousness. It follows the same pattern as that which Paul described for the Church. "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." I Cor. 3:6 Israel as a nation will spring forth in righteousness and praise for the Lord, and will then be a mighty witness of His Power and Might before all nations of the earth.





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