

MSB227

MORE Seed and Bread

BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

Otis Q. Sellers, Founder - David R Hettema, Director

GOD'S NEXT MANIFEST ACT

by John C. Ribbens

Presently **Man's Day**, dating back to Noah, is nearing its end. About 2000 years ago, the angel of the Lord came upon some shepherds abiding in the fields keeping watch over their flocks by night. His message to them was, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior which is Christ the Lord (Luke 2:10-11). No greater message has ever been proclaimed to mankind. More than a mere title, this designation speaks of the One whom Scripture declares, ". . . for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed, the Christ (the Messiah), the Savior of the world" (John 4:42).

This world of ours is indeed in great danger. On every hand we see evidence of violent behavior in men, as well as crime, rampant disease, disintegration of the family structure, national conflicts, etc., all of which confirm the fact that we are now living in the closing days of the dispensation of the grace of God. Paul confirms this in his concluding epistle saying, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come" (2 Tim. 3:1). These are described in that passage (2 Tim. 3:1-7) as times of recurring peril when men shall be self-lovers, blasphemers, covetous (money-lovers), boasters, proud (arrogant), . . . traitors, heady, high minded (conceited), lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. These are typical of the social conditions which are prevalent in the earth today. Paul continues, Now as Jannes and Jambres (pharaoh's wise men) withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate (worthless) concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further, for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was (2 Tim. 3:8-9).

This is a guaranteed promise of divine intervention in the affairs of men. We know that, Ye, and all that will live Godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived (2 Tim. 3:12-13). This is precisely what is happening today. For the past 2000 years of man's history, every act of God has been one of love and favor to the undeserving (called "grace"). God has permitted all men to walk after their own choice. God has been writing a record of the grace inherent in His character. If God cannot act in grace, He will not act at all (active and passive grace). .But there is a destined limit to God's present purpose.

The psalmist David asks, Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy. Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; for the insurrection of the workers of iniquity: who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words: that they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not. They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares in secret; they say, Who shall see them? They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart is deep (Psa. 64: 1-6).

Note, these are the kind of men who prey upon the innocent. They are treacherous men who work in secret, thinking they will not be detected, but God knows who they are.

The Psalmist goes on to say, But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded. So shall they make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away (Psa. 64:7-8). This is the arrow of truth from God. They are exposed and destroyed by God. Their ways are condemned by their own tongues, and others clearly discern their waywardness and avoid them. These are men who perpetrate lies and are guilty of deceiving innocent men. They ask, how could they have been so incredibly wrong? I believe many of these men are guilty of lying in regard to who Christ is. They both reject the deity of Christ and deny the inspiration of the Word of God. Divine intervention brings with it the promise of the enlightenment of mankind.

The billions of people on earth now living in ignorance and darkness will be enlightened by God. The prophet Isaiah declares, Behold My servant,

whom I uphold; Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth. I have put My Spirit upon Him: He shall bring forth judgment to the nations (Isa. 42:1).

Nations today are in great desperation. The problems facing mankind today are insurmountable, though men continue to try to solve them. The great promise of God is that He "will bring forth judgment," giving men direction and instruction to guide them. His judgment is not punishment, but rather His righteous order in which men will have to walk.

God will continue to teach men by a prolonged process of making Himself and His order known to them. God's purpose is not to strike men down. The prophet says, He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench: He shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, until He have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for His law (Isa. 42:2-4). This is the gracious work that will lead men into a knowledge of God. Proverbs says, "To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity" (1:3) and "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (1:7). Today darkness covers the earth, but God will change all that. The next thing for men on earth is the enlightenment of mankind. We read in John's Gospel a message of great hope for all men which says, Nevertheless I (Jesus) tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the comforter (paraclete) will not come to you (John. 16:7). Jesus said this to His disciples after being with them for about three years of His public ministry. Soon He would die on the cross and rise from the dead, and return to the Father. Now He was giving them these words of encouragement. They reveal what God has planned for mankind. Jesus went on to say, And when He is come he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on Me, of righteousness because I go to the Father, and ye see Me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged (John. 16:8-11). The word "reprove" (Gk.-elenko) means "to enlighten," and is rendered "convinceth" in John 8:46 where Jesus asked, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" The obvious answer is no man. Also in John 3:20 Jesus declared, "For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds be reprov'd." One chief purpose of light is to make manifest and to reveal, or hence to enlighten, or to make the facts known.

This is precisely what God has planned for the future of this world. He will yet make plain to the mind of each person what sin is. The word "sin"

(Gk.-amarta) means "missing the mark," as in the transgressing of defined limits. Sin is a failure to believe the record that God gave of His Son. This time will be training in righteousness, and His judgments are His righteous order in the earth, with Satan's influence greatly limited. The enlightenment of mankind will place every individual under a new accountability and responsibility. No man living in the Kingdom of God will misunderstand what sin is in the sight of God. Once God intervenes on behalf of mankind we will see drastic changes in the earth. These changes will have a profound effect on the life of every living being.

The psalmist David declares, Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations He hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; He burneth the chariot in the fire (Psa. 46:8-9). This symbolic language tells us that all weapons of mass destruction and the capacity to produce them will be eliminated. Finally, the constant threat to the destruction of human life and property will be gone. The Psalm goes on to say, Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen (nations), I will be exalted in the earth (Psa. 46:10). This is God's irrefutable promise to all men. Isaiah expands this message to clarify it this way, And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it (Isa. 2:2).

The government of God will then be supreme over every government and lesser authority on earth. The visible symbol of that government will be in Jerusalem, and all nations will assemble there by means of their representatives to obtain the blessings of the Kingdom. It is there that the out-called (Gk.-ekklesia) of God are gathered. Isaiah goes on to say, And many people(s) shall go and say, Come ye, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:3). Jerusalem, today, is occupied by Jews, Christians and Muslims of foreign, Palestinian, and Arab extraction. In the Kingdom of God, the Jews will be there and it will be the capitol city of the world. Isaiah goes on: And He shall judge (set the order) among the nations, and shall rebuke (enlighten) many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more (Isa. 2:4).

Under divine government, nations will submit to the government of God. Nations now in rebellion will become submissive to God. The Psalms declare: His name (His reputation) shall endure forever (in respect to the eon), His name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in Him: all nations shall call Him blessed (exalted). Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who only doeth wonderful things. And blessed be His glorious name for ever, and let (cause) the whole earth to be filled with His glory; Amen, and Amen (Psa. 72:17-19). These blessings defy description, but the total realization of them are contingent upon the fulfillment of the prophecy of Habakkuk, "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14).

Isaiah further declares, Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it (Isa. 40:4-5). The glory of the Lord is the recognition and esteem due His name, in view of all that He is, and all He will yet accomplish on behalf of men and this world. This will be a time of universal blessing for every man, woman, and child.

END

ISSUE NO. 227
Published Mar. 31,1998