

# SEED & BREAD

FOR THE SOWER    ISA. 55: 10    FOR THE EATER  
BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

## THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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## AT SUCH A TIME

We live in a time when a great tornado of iniquity is sweeping over mankind. Everyday the news media gives us the harrowing details that demonstrate the fact of this. All of us are living and acting in the actual period that Paul described, as the "**perilous times**" that would come (2 Tim. 3:1). These times of ferocity are here in all their stark and horrendous reality. "**Evil men and seducers**" have waxed worse and worse. Now they dominate the world scene. Present conditions can well be described by using the words of the prophet Isaiah: "**Judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey**" (Isa. 59:14, 15).

The words that form the title of this study were written by the great King Artaxerxes in a letter of encouragement to Ezra the priest, in which he said: "**Perfect peace, and at such a time**" (Ezra 7:12).

In view of the violent and seething times in which we now live, this is what I would like to say to everyone who reads these lines. However, to speak such words to many people would be nothing more than expressing a platitude, unless there is a foundation in the life of the reader on which these words can be laid. This king knew Ezra's relationship to God, his knowledge of "the God of heaven," and the relationship that the people of Israel (Ezra 7: 12-28) bore to Him. One can only make a statement such as this to those who are giving God due recognition when they consider the forces that bear upon their lives. God is in their thoughts. They are not giving Him some minor place. Therefore, before I say: "Perfect peace, and at such a time" to anyone I would like for there to be some indication in their lives that they have followed the directive that declares: "**Acquaint now yourself with Him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto you. Receive I pray you the instruction that comes from His mouth, and lay up His words in your heart**" (Job 22:21, 22).

The words, "**Be still and know that I am God**" (Psalm 46: 10) mean nothing

whatsoever to the average professing Christian of today. Nevertheless, the knowledge of Who God is, what God is, and the understanding of His present purpose (what He is now doing), is the true foundation for serenity, assurance, confidence, and perfect peace, even in the perilous times in which our lot is now cast. Acquaintance with and submission to the Deity will allow us to say with Jeremiah:

**This I recall to my mind, therefore, have I hope. It is of the LORD's great love that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is Thy faithfulness. The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore, will I hope in Him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD. It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.** Lamentations 3:21-27.

The careful study of God's Word will certainly bring the conviction that we are living in the concluding days of God's long administration of grace. This conviction does not come from reading the newspapers and interpreting as "signs of the times" all the distressing reports of events that are taking place among nations. It is not based upon the foolish myths that earthquakes and rumors of war are signs of the end. The Lord said these would come to pass, but stated also that they are not signs of the end (Matt. 24:6). The conviction that we are living in the concluding days of God's long display of grace is founded upon the specific declaration of God's Word as to what the general characteristics of humanity will be in the last days, what features will be prominent among men. We know from God's Word what the character of humanity will be. The indicators of this "syndrome of the last days" are given in 2 Tim. 3: 1-8. There are twenty-one of them and they are all manifest in an unusual way today. We are greatly distressed by them, but we are not greatly surprised when we see these twenty-one features so prominent among men.

For over 1900 years God's sole method of dealing with the human race has been gracious. The result of this long display of unmerited favor is the conditions we see on every hand today. As already said, this does not surprise us since we know that long ago God said: "Let favor (grace) be shown to the wicked, yet will they not learn righteousness" (Isaiah 26: 10). However, before Isaiah made this unqualified statement, a declaration he received from God, he said: "**When your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness**" (Isa. 26:9).

This communication from God will never be understood or appreciated by those who think that *judgment* means punishment. I challenge anyone to produce a single Biblical passage where the Hebrew word *mishpat* or the Greek words *krima* or *krisis* mean punishment. It is beyond my understanding how anyone can say that *judgment* means punishment in view of the beautiful passage found in Psalm 19:9-11: "**The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired**

**are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is Thy servant warned, and in the keeping of them there is great reward."**

In view of these truths it is evident that the best thing that God could do for mankind today is to reveal and establish His judgments in the world. And if this seems like unrealistic, wishful thinking, let it be known that such an action is set forth in Scripture as a definite promise from God. Note this in the following passages:

**Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still.** Psa. 76:8.

**He is the LORD our God: His judgments are in all the earth.** Psa. 105:7.

**I will make My judgment to rest for a light of the people.** (Isa. 51:4).

It should be noted here that in the first two passages cited above, God is speaking of the future but using the present tense in doing so. (See Issue No. **SB121**).

We can rest assured, His judgments will someday permeate the earth. He will bring forth judgment to the nations (Matt. 12: 18). This is one of the great features connected with His divine assumption of sovereignty. All that is now needed to make it a reality is a divine word spoken in heaven. This is truly our finest hope in this day of almost universal darkness.

There is today all over the world a vast amount of fear, anxiety, and apprehension because of the conditions that now exist. Millions of people are now feeling the scourge and sting that events have brought upon them. **"The dark places of this world are full of the habitations of cruelty"** (Psa. 74:20). There are fears of monetary and economic crashes that would make all currencies valueless. A nuclear confrontation seems almost inevitable in view of the continuing international armament race. There is a juggernaut of crime, immorality, corruption, and degeneracy in motion that nothing can stop. It is eroding the quality of life, destroying youth, ruining homes, breaking up families. And while the naive cry out that this can all be stopped by a modification of political conditions, a new set of leaders in Washington, London, or Paris, perhaps such as the election of a Christian president or prime minister, they are totally deceived. This flow of iniquity with all the related suffering it brings will never be stopped by the handfuls of sand that men may throw at it. It will go on until God Himself intervenes to stop it. It cannot be turned back save by His mighty hand.

The present state of things in the world has brought many into a state of despair, despondency, depression, and hopelessness. When this occurs in the lives of believers in Jesus Christ it shows that they have been overwhelmed by the devices of Satan and have become blind to the values we have in Christ. He is no longer recognized as their Peace, their Joy, their Hope, their Shield, the "Lifter-up" of their heads, their Sustainer, their present Salvation.

All who are taught by the Word should know that it is in a time of abounding and unparalleled iniquity that divine intervention takes place. It is at a time when nations are in turmoil, when war threatens, when all governments are trembling on the brink of collapse that God assumes sovereignty and imposes His government upon the earth. This is declared in many passages.

Consider Psalm 92:6, 7 as a pertinent example: **"A man that is senseless cannot realize this, and a dullard cannot know it: When the wicked spring up like the grass, and all the workers of iniquity have blossomed, it is that they may be destroyed forever."**

This is what we are witnessing at the present time. A million separate events every day cry out in unison telling us that the workers of iniquity are flourishing as they never have before. Evil men and seducers have waxed worse and worse until now they are in full bloom. Since no force has succeeded in stopping them, their increase and development could mean the end of humanity, inasmuch as the means of destruction is in their hands. But this will not be. For when we see this distressing condition, it is simply things coming to a head so that the wicked and the workers of iniquity can be dealt with by divine action. Jehovah will act, and the result is declared: **"For, lo, Thine enemies, O LORD shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered"** (Psalm 92:9). **"The righteous shall see it and rejoice: and all iniquity shall stop her mouth"** (Psa. 107:42). May God speed the day!

We must always keep in mind as we see the deplorable conditions that now exist that it is: **"When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him"** (Isa. 59: 19). This description of the success of the enemy is so applicable to the present time, that we cannot refrain from saying: **"It is time for Thee, LORD, to work: for they have made void Thy law"** (Psa. 119: 126).

That God's intervention comes in a time of unusual iniquity is plain from Psalm 64. There we read of "the secret counsel of the wicked" and "the insurrection of the workers of iniquity." A description is given of the character and magnitude of their iniquities, and as we read of these we can naught but say that it describes accurately the works of men at the present time (See Issue No. **SB053**).

The "insurrection of the workers of iniquity" increases in intensity every day. But it is at such a time as set forth in this psalm that **"God shall shoot at them with an arrow, suddenly shall they be wounded."** This corresponds with 2 Tim. 3:9 which declares: **"They shall proceed no further: for their dementia shall become obvious unto all."** Think upon the magnitude of this event. What a work! What a hope! So to all who know the Lord this I say: "Perfect peace, and at such a time."

**End Issue No. SB124**