

2009 Winter Newsletter
Detroit Bible Students
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The Calm After the Storm

“For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory saith the LORD of hosts.”

Haggai 2:6, 7

The winter holidays are behind us. For many, those holidays were not the carefree, joyous celebrations of the past. Many families faced the holidays jobless and in jeopardy of losing all they have gained. Foreclosures have multiplied as people are unable to support the homes they have acquired in better years. For businesses, these holidays were not the wind-fall at the end of the fiscal year and many companies are on the verge of failure.

Now a new year has dawned amidst fear and uncertainty about the economic climate of the nation. Those who have not already lost their jobs are facing shortened work weeks, pay

cuts, possible termination. The news is full of reports of stock market disaster and government efforts to bail out the faltering banks; to shore up the troubled automotive companies whose failure would ripple across the whole economy and affect so many. If there is any hope out there, it is that a new president can turn the tide and things will come to some level of normalcy.

Whether or not Mr. Obama will be able to turn the tide and help the nation is a matter of great concern for all. Will he be able to launch a plan that will heal the country's ills? With all the best intentions, is the matter truly in his

hands? Is there any hope? Does the Bible give us answers to our present dilemma?

The Scriptures tell us of a glorious kingdom to come on earth that will be ruled by the "King of Kings." The words of the great Hallelulah Chorus from Handel's "Messiah" taken from Revelation 11:15, echo in our ears: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." It is this kingdom for which Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven." (Matt. 6:10) It is this kingdom that Jesus preached during his earthly ministry, going everywhere "preaching the gospel of the kingdom." (Matt. 4:23; 9:35)

The question that presents itself is this: Is the kingdom Jesus preached something future, or did it begin in his day? Was it only a good hope that God's will would be done on earth even and it is done in the heavenly courts? Has God failed in converting humanity to Himself? Do the various denominations of Christendom with their conflicting creeds represent God's Kingdom or is there something yet to come? Can we know what God's plan is for man? Why is the world in so much distress? Has God forgotten us?

In the 24th chapter of Matthew, Jesus gave a synopsis of the events that would intervene before he would return to set up his kingdom. Verses 4 through 13 are a brief history of the Christian era with its wars and famines, pestilences, false prophets, deceivers, abounding evil and persecutions of the followers of Jesus. Verse 14 tells us that however the times, "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." When this time comes, it will be accompanied by a great time of trouble such as was not known in any other generation. (verse 21) The prophet Daniel also spoke of this time of trouble in Daniel 12:1-4 which would be accompanied by a great increase of knowledge and much running to and fro. In another place (1 Thessalonians 5:1-5) this trouble is

described as the labor spasms of a woman giving birth.

With this knowledge in hand, we can look back over the past century and see how clearly the events in the world fit the descriptions given. We are a global society now. What affects one part of the world affects all. There has been a phenomenal increase in man's knowledge and we enjoy inventions and conveniences unheard of in the history of man. In the last century and a quarter, the world has progressed from the invention of the light bulb to personal computers; from the invention of the telephone to cell phones; from the invention of the automobile to an international space station.

Man's political experiences in the twentieth century have come in spasms of trouble with periods of easement between. The year 1913, had been declared International Peace Year but 1914 saw the first great spasm of trouble with World War I, "the war to end all wars," Then came the Great Depression, World War II, the Cold War, Korea, Vietnam, the Middle East wars and terrorism. Interspersed with these were revolutions, regional genocides, and civil wars affecting nearly every continent.

Crime, catastrophic diseases, droughts, famines, fires, typhoons, hurricanes, tornadoes and floods regularly contribute to the misery of man. A Christmas tsunami in southeast Asia killed over 200,000 people. Global warming and the present threat of world-wide economic collapse loom over humanity, and militarily, nations have the means to destroy all flesh with nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

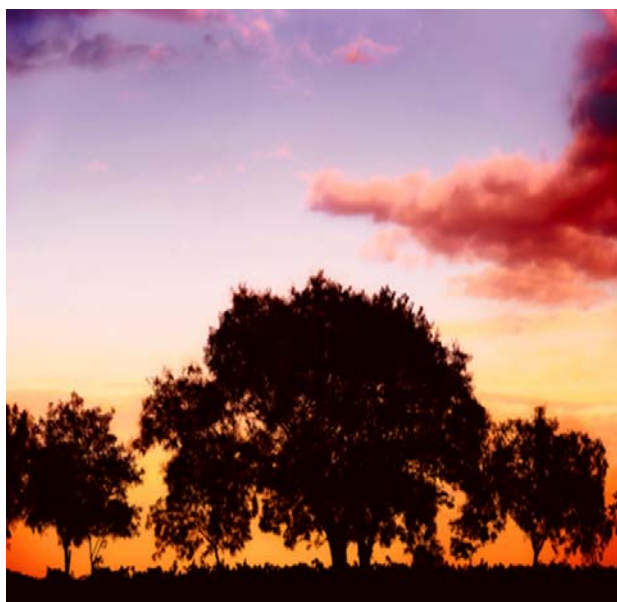
What a bleak prospect! No wonder the scriptures say that "men's hearts [would be] failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth..." (Luke 21:26) But the comforting thing in all this is that God foresaw it and has a plan to end it. The world is not on a downward rollercoaster ride with no hope. God *is* in control. And once the world has realized that they are powerless

to effect their own salvation, God will step in and bring “the desire of all nations.” (Haggai 2:7)

The trouble now seen in the world is an evidence that we are on the brink of the time when God is ready to set up His Kingdom in which peace will reign and man will not want. In this Kingdom, the graves will be emptied of their captives (John 5:28,29) and “the ransomed of the Lord will return with songs and everlasting joy will be upon their heads.” (Isaiah 35: 10)

Whether the current trouble is the final spasm or whether the world will once again slip into a period of quiet, we can only wait and see. Whatever Mr. Obama can or cannot do will be determined by God’s time clock. The matter is not in the hands of man, but whatever may yet come, God’s plan is set and the outcome will be glorious.

“Weeping may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning.” (Psalm 30:5)



Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay--not even the fear of such things.

Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth’s society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete. Revelation 21:1-4; Isaiah 35; Micah 4:1-4; 1 Corinthians 15:20-26; 2 Peter 3:13

Do you have questions? Would you like to react to any of the ideas presented in these papers or in the booklets offered. Email us at detroitbible@wowway.com or call 248-399-8843

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