

BIBLE LIGHT AND TRUTH

Reflections on Scripture

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 6

DAWN CHRISTADELPHIANS

“SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS

RIGHTEOUSNESS” MATT 6:23

WHERE IS THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING?

Well summer is past, autumn came and now winter is drawing near. The harvest time came and went and the leaves have fallen from the trees. It brings to mind the words of Jeremiah who lamented:

“The harvest is past, the summer is ended and we are not saved”

These words Jeremiah wrote so long ago and yet they apply so aptly to us today. At the beginning of the year maybe we hoped that the Lord would return. Did this hope fade as the year passed and now the colder weather heralds the coming winter. It's possible for doubt to creep in as the days turn into weeks, then months, then years and our Lord still remains away. We must be on guard that we don't start to think as Peter warned:

“where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue the same as they were from the beginning of creation”.

There will sadly be those who do start to think in such a way. But, we must never forget the Lord will come, and soon!

In these last few years we have seen so many things happening in the world just as prophesied in scripture, that it seems unbelievable that any such thought should come into our minds. Yet

for the most of us life carries on as normal, the things we see become part of our normal existence and we easily become pre-occupied with the cares of life. But our lives should be filled with anticipation. They should be filled with preparation. They should be so filled with anxiously waiting the coming of our Lord, from day to day and seasons into seasons that we say with surprise, ‘The summer is ended and we are not saved’.

Are we really anxious for the Lord's return as we should be, or would we rather He wait until we finish the college course or get married or would it be a bad time for Christ to return now because we are building a new home or following a career. If this is what is happening in our lives, then its time to restore the right perspective. Let us consider our ways, are we now building the Lords house or our own? Is our spare time taken up with things we want to do or do we do Gods work? Jesus warned against us asking:

- “what shall we eat?”
- “what shall we drink?”
- “what shall we wear?”

We do need all of these things and God will provide if we wait patiently and trust him. But we need to seek the things of God first, His Word, His Kingdom and His glory.

Jesus tells us we should not worry ourselves with these things “For after all these do the Gentiles seek”. These things concern people around us, but we must be different. Jesus said:

“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.”

If we are wise and seek first the kingdom of God then we don't need to worry about the summers ending and not being saved, because faith tells us that we soon shall be. Faith tells us to use the time left profitably, not to waste time but rather as Paul exhorts, redeeming the time. That is using it wisely.

Preparing for the Kingdom and putting God first is not about ignoring our needs in this world, but rather having an attitude of mind that trusts in God, that puts Him first in our lives. It is an attitude that strives to put His word into practice day by day and develop a character pleasing to him - which is of great worth in His sight. It is walking in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus and responding to the love that has been shown to us.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

1Cor 15:58

A.P.



Commandments of Christ

In case of breach, to seek reconciliation and exercise forgiveness to the utmost extent. (Matt. 5:24; Matt. 18:35; Col. 3:13)

Breaches and differences are almost unavoidable. Sooner or later we will find ourselves at odds with brethren or sisters over something. We may have been at fault, or it may be entirely out of our control. But how we handle these differences is very much up to us. We could retaliate, hold a grudge, remain aloof or seek support from others. But this would be against the commandments of Christ.

Peter once asked Jesus how many times he should forgive, the answer?

“I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven” (Matthew 18:22).

This demonstrates the unlimited extent to which we must forgive others. Is this not the extent of the mercy that we seek from God. Just consider how many times we sin and need His forgiveness?

Thus in comparison to His mercy how insignificant is our forgiveness of others! Thus let us each strive to make our ecclesia's a haven from the world. As Paul writes:

“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.” (Ephesians 4:32).



Jesus said:

"I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

The View Beyond

Let us together climb the hill

And sit beneath the tress,

Let us together gaze upon

That which is to be.

Then with eyes of faith behold

The morning mist depart,

There spreads before, in vast array

As at creations start,

The dawning light, then day and night

Of years that are to be

Of men and women, with breath of life

Bearing the image of HE,

Who sees us on our hill top rise

Awaiting the time to come,

Of peace and love in Christ's just reign

When all his will be done.

Bro L. Tomkins

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON.....

..... "there we sat down" "and hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof" (captives in Babylon, Psalm 137)

Nebuchadnezzar became King of Babylon in 605 BC, after the death of his father, Nabopolassar, who had seized most of the Assyrian Empire, including Nineveh (on the river Tigris). The new king soon set about rebuilding, extending and beautifying the city of Babylon (on the river Euphrates). The land between the rivers, known as Shinar, was an extremely fertile area, being irrigated by canals and producing cereals, fruit, and vegetables of many kinds.

The city of Babylon itself had been built of BURNT BRICK, made from the plentiful local clay; this process originated when the city and tower of Babel (BAB-ILI = the Gate of the God) was built. (Genesis ch 10). Nimrod, whose city

was Babel, has gone down in history as being the first Canaanite to build WALLED cities with GATES (like Jericho).

Babylon, under Nebuchadnezzar, became a very large city, across both sides of the river, joined by an arched bridge; it was described by Herodotus, the Greek historian, as being 15 miles square, with walls 300ft high and 80ft thick (comparative English measures), with 100 brass gates; enclosing parks, temples, palm groves, orchards, palaces, a ziggurat built to honour the god Marduk (Merodach), and the famous Hanging Gardens.

The Babylonians were skilled workers who constructed the famous main gate, built 575 BC, and dedicated to their goddess, the ISHTAR GATE, which was made of blue-green glazed brick and decorated with coppery bulls and dragons. (The Ishtar Gate was removed by archaeologists in the early 1900's and rebuilt in the Pergamon Museum, Berlin, Germany.)

And Nebuchadnezzar said, "Is not this great Babylon?" The first Judean captives were taken to Babylon in 597 BC when he attacked Jerusalem; Jehoiachin surrendered and was taken together with all the royal household (including Daniel and his 3 friends), the king's and temple gold, the craftsmen, the smiths, the men of war: altogether many thousands of people. (1 Kings ch 24v10-16) One of these was EZEKIEL who says he was with the captives by the river Chebar, an irrigation canal from Babylon to Erech.

Many more captives were taken in 587 BC when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem. He took Zedekiah away, and took the gold, silver and brass from the temple to Babylon. He burnt Solomon's temple and the king's house.

Great Babylon did not last; the Persians demolished most of it. The Bible prophecies said it would remain a ruin; and so it has been.

Sis D. Oakley

PUTTING GOD FIRST

GOD will have no regard for those who forget Him or neglect His commandments: those who sink into a state of self-service, who live exclusively for their own comfort and well-being, who let God slip from their practical recognitions; His word from their studies; His honour from their concerns; His commandments from their lives, will awake to find that where life and death, and men, and angels, and heaven and earth, were powerless to interpose an obstacle between them and the friendly regard of the Almighty, their

own folly has done it without further remedy.

God is love; but our God is also a consuming fire. He will not be mocked; He will not be put off with fag-ends of our service (Malachi 1:13). He demands the whole heart and the whole life; and he is not his own friend who refuses the call: for there will come a time when the man who has served himself will find he has served a master who can only pay him at last with tribulation, and anguish, and death; while the man who obeys the Divine call will at the same

period discover that in making God his portion he has secured the joyful eternal inheritance of all things.

Bro Robert Roberts



MATTHEW 22:37

SELF EXAMINATION

Questions to consider:

- Do I have sufficient faith in God so that when trials come I can humbly submit, realising that "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth."
- Do I support the public proclamation of the Truth as much as I possibly can realising that it is an important work in God's service?
- Do I sincerely believe that all is open to the eyes of God and govern my life accordingly?
- Do I sufficiently humble myself in the Truth?