



Listen Up, Saints, Great days are upon us!

Dick York

No matter who is at the helm, no matter what the state of the economy, no matter the level of civility (or uncivility) in the public discourse, all things continue on the same downward spiral that we would expect in a world whose end has been so clearly defined in the prophetic word of God. To those whose hopes are in elected leaders or economic forecasts, life is a roller coaster ride, rising and falling with the prevailing circumstances which change from day to day.

Today, the streets of twenty-eight cities in nineteen states are filled with protesters decrying sharia law in America and their counter demonstrators, supposedly championing religious freedom and defending Islam, the fastest growing religion in the United States. Who would have thought, twenty years ago, that that barbaric religion, calling itself a religion of peace while fomenting violence and cruelty in every place it dominates in far-away lands, would be defended by many professing to be Christian in the streets of these United States. Interesting to say the least.

The cry for social justice has befogged the minds of many professing Christians today, and the illusion of making a better world has clouded the minds of many who equate the kingdom of God with a perfect natural world.

The progression toward the end of time and the unveiling of the eternal kingdom of God must include all that the apostles and the Lord Jesus declared, and we are watching it unfold exactly as Jesus and the apostles said it would. Some of it seems dark and ugly, and we wish we could make it go away by wishing it would get better; but Jesus told us it would come as it is coming and that we should confidently trust His promises and abide in the safety of the shadow of the Almighty until the storm is past and we see Him, the victor, face to face.

Two major negative movements (one religious, one political) are combining in a strange, unholy alliance to wage a war against whatever common sense, righteousness, decency and freedom might remain in this country. Those forces are Islam and Marxism: both deceptive, both deadly, both

spiritual. It will take more than the espousing of conservative principles, more than brilliant minds or strong characters to hold off the wounded carnivores that seek to devour the legitimate government of the land.

Jesus' prophecy concerning the end of the world makes it clear that false prophets will be a major part of what will befall us in the end time, and our experience to date would bear that out. Think about how influential religion has been in fomenting the lethal turmoil that has been unleashed in our present world. Although Jesus said that "the prophets were until John" (Matthew 11:13), since then there have been many who have come declaring themselves to be prophets and gaining followers enough to significantly influence the direction and instability of the world; most notable, of course, is Islam. With over 1.6 billion adherents today, it is the fastest growing religion in the world; and although it bills itself as a religion of peace, it subscribes to the most vicious doctrinal admonitions imaginable and has wrought indescribable misery on populations around the world in the name of Allah, the deity of choice of its false prophet, Mohammed.

Many who profess to be Christian have been deceived to believe that there is an affinity of sorts between Christians, Jews and Muslims because each of those religions is monotheistic and therefore subscribe to the same God thereby legitimatizing Islam. That is not the truth. The God of the Christian and the Jew is Yahweh (Jehovah). The God of Mohammed and his followers is Allah. These are names, not generic terms for God. The name of Abrahams's God is not Allah.

Many other false prophets have arisen since John, such as Joseph Smith, who is probably the most recognized in America. But not all prophets are recognized as religious. Karl Marx would classify as a prophet inasmuch as his insights into the future of socialism have been vindicated as its contagion has spread around the globe; until today not a single country has escaped its insidious influence. These two infections, socialism and Islam, have combined to be a formidable resistance to the efforts to bring this nation back to the principles upon which it was founded; and there is no reason to believe that they will relinquish their efforts or ease their resisting. Theirs is a war that they are determined to win at any cost. It is a war being waged by the forces of antichrist, which the Bible says will be successful until it matures to the state of global governance.

Well, that's not our problem unless we choose to make it our problem and allow ourselves to be distracted by it and distraught. Jesus told us these words,

Many false prophets shall arise and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations; and then shall the end come. (Matthew 24: 11-14)

Jesus also said,

These things have I spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. (John 16:33)

These, then, are the facts: false prophets will figure prominently in the events of the last days. Deception shall be the order of the day, so much so that even the very elect would be deceived if it were possible; and the saints will endure much tribulation in the world, something that so far has not touched us here in America to the degree that the church has felt it in other places. Those are the negatives for which the Lord has given us a heads-up that we might be neither surprised nor discouraged when it breaks upon us.

Then there are the positives: He has overcome the world and has given us a specific work to do in this time of world-wide strife. "This gospel of the

kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations." And it is promised that when this has been done, the end will come.

Somehow we have managed to convey to today's church in America that this great achievement will be accomplished without any amount of special effort or concentration on the part of the majority of the members of the body of Christ because salvation is freely given to us without works. This has been interpreted by many to mean that there is really nothing for us to do other than to enjoy the benefits of the salvation we have received by grace. Perhaps we have overlooked some important, if obscure, admonitions that appear in scripture, such as Paul's instruction to the young churches at Lystra, Iconium and Antioch where he went "confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

As interesting and even captivating as current events might be, they are also deceptive, making it seem that somehow we should be involved with saving our nation: giving money to advance political agendas; propagandizing for social programs or campaigning for candidates.

Of course we do have a responsibility to pray for those the Lord has placed in authority (1 Timothy 1-3). But our resources and our energy should not be diverted from the one thing that God has commissioned His church to do, preach the gospel to every nation; then shall the end come. Our hope is to see the kingdom, not preserve the world. How devastating it will be when we stand to give an accounting to the Lord, to learn that our good intentions and our resources were expended on that which He had not told us to do, while His commission was left in the hands of a small minority.

To many of the saints it seems redundant and even insignificant when they hear the call to obey the great commission: to preach the gospel to our neighbors; to show up for prayer meeting; to consider God's call to give up important ambitions to be a missionary to some foreign place. In the face of all the important, interesting and challenging things the world offers – like founding a company or becoming a champion, making a fortune, becoming famous for something, or getting a degree – surrendering to the call to obscurity, perhaps poverty and maybe suffering, doesn't have much appeal.

That is true until we begin to see Jesus and

hear His voice. That changes everything. With the perspective of eternity in view riding the world to its conclusion, everything ends in a crash and a ball of fire. The things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal. "Heaven and earth shall pass away," Jesus said, "but my words shall not pass away." Standing with eternal priorities in a temporal hostile world is what God is calling us to. "And Jesus said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me." (Luke 9:23)

So when you watch the news tonight and you hear one more time how evil the left says the right is and how bad the right says the left is and you are vexed by the innuendo, lies and injustice and wonder whether you should be confident or fearful, remember that all nations shall ultimately fall for a time under the global rule of antichrist; and what you are watching is the progression toward that end.

But your hope is not in any of that. Your hope is in the purpose and promises of God.

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he will deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth by noon-day. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most high, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. (Psalm 91:1-10)

It is time to get our priorities right, saints. Remember what Jim Elliot said before he laid down his life for the Auca Indians in Ecuador. "**He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.**"

Our turn!



SFMI Update

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The world has no single economy. And even though there seem to be many different economies (some strong, some weak) and many currencies (some treasured others almost worthless), they are principally one. Their currencies are diverse. It is what drives every facet of the economy; it is what man works for; it determines one's net worth; it opens doors of opportunity; establishes one's social status and even determines political power. The love of it is also the root of all evil.

The kingdom of God also has its own economy, a much more stable one that is not dependent on the rising and falling of the markets or the whimsical whims or the forces that destabilize the value of currencies. The currency of God's economy is faith in the promises of God who cannot lie.

When we were citizens of the world, we were blind without recourse to this world's economy. Many of God's people have not yet realized that in being born again and being made citizens of the kingdom of God that we are actually called into His kingdom and glory (1Thes. 2:12). Could that mean that we are made eligible to partake of the economy of that kingdom? Is there something that Christians should be aware of that is not commonly understood? Is there a practical side to faith that defines "deliverance from this present evil world?" (Galatians 1:4)

CORRECTION NOTICE

In the last issue of the Update, we introduced you to His Vision Mission in Ghana under the direction of David Kangni. We want to encourage you to pray for and keep yourself informed about that work in Ghana, but we need to make a correction concerning the website address. The new address is www.hvmghana.com. Please go there and keep up to date on the work of His Vision Mission in Ghana.