

The Desolate Heritages

***“Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages.”
—Isaiah 49:8***

THE PROPHET ISAIAH PRO-claims the wonderful words of God that relate to this present Gospel Age. It is the ‘acceptable time,’ and the ‘day of salvation’ during which the followers of Jesus are being called and chosen for the great work of Christ’s future kingdom that is soon to be established over all the earth. God promises to care for his people in a very special way by helping and preserving them. This commitment was later confirmed by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the church at Corinth. He wrote, “We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted

time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)”—II Cor. 6:1,2

PREPARATION FOR DELIVERANCE

Paul's teachings were spoken in connection with our Lord's future kingdom and God's arrangements for a new and better covenant than the old Law Covenant established with Moses as its Mediator. He explained that 'The Christ' would share with our dear Lord Jesus as the Mediator of that covenant. "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament [covenant]; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." (II Cor. 3:6) This wonderful hope is in accord with God's promise as it was revealed to Isaiah. "I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles."—Isa. 42:6

ALL NATIONS TO BE BLESSED

Our loving Heavenly Father provided his beloved Son as the seed of promise for the ultimate blessing of all mankind under the administration of Christ's future kingdom. "That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." (Gen. 22:17,18) Paul also made clear the promise as it was given to the faithful members of 'The Christ.' He explained, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. 3:29

A DESOLATE INHERITANCE

In our featured scripture, Isaiah also spoke of the Heavenly Father's grand purpose for 'The Christ' to establish order and discipline over the earth and its people, which he refers to as the 'desolate heritages.' The word 'desolate' means to lay waste, and is an apt illustration of the death penalty imposed by God on our first parents because of disobedience, and the results of sin that have come upon the human family.

Isaiah further recorded God's purpose for his human creation and providing the means to take away the penalty of sin. "Behold, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him."—Isa. 24:1,2

POLLUTION

Man is responsible for polluting the earth. Isaiah pointed to the voice of God that proclaims the dreadful scene of pride and selfishness among men and his plan to bring this violence to an end. The prophet further wrote, "The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word. The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled [polluted] under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws,

changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.”—vss. 3-6

ABUNDANTLY PROVIDED

When man was created to live upon this earth our loving Heavenly Father provided all things necessary to sustain life. “God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.”—Gen. 1:29,30

Our Father also prepared the earth to contain the fundamental resources for man’s use and enjoyment. Chief among these were pure water, rich soil, and life sustaining air. The waterways contained fish, the forests yielded lumber, and man eventually learned to harness the power of electricity. Abundant mineral deposits such as copper, iron, silver, and gold were buried in the earth. Coal, gas, oil, and many other valuable commodities were also stored under the earth’s surface.

A RAVAGED EARTH

Fallen man has plundered, ravaged, and polluted the very resources that were provided for him. He has poisoned his own natural environment with noxious chemicals, insecticides, and a multitude of other dangerous substances to the extent that the

sustaining of life, as we have known it, is in many instances being threatened.

God's human creation has miserably failed in carrying out the destiny that was originally designed for him. After more than six thousand years of man's existence upon this earth, he has ravaged it to the point where, if not overruled by the powerful hand of a loving Creator, man would destroy himself. As evidence of this horrific fact, World War II was ended with the dropping of an atomic bomb on two of Japan's cities in which they were completely destroyed.

A TIME OF SORROW

Today, sixty-five years later, the destructive power of nuclear weapons has been greatly improved and, along with chemical and biological weapons, threaten mankind in ways never before contemplated. Our Lord described the time of his second presence and the closing features of this present Gospel Age as being especially marked by violence. "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken."—Luke 21:26

Jesus proclaimed that a time of great sorrow would be experienced over all the earth and its people. "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows."—Matt. 24:7,8

CUTTING SHORT THE DAYS

The Master further explained that the level of violence and desolation would be so overwhelming that the time would need to be shortened to save

the human family from destroying themselves. “In those days will be distress, such as has not been from the beginning of the Creation, which God created, till now, nor ever will be. And except the Lord cut short the days, no person could survive; but on account of the chosen, whom he has selected, he has cut short the days.”—Mark 13:19,20, *Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott*

Jesus emphasized that it was to be through the ‘chosen’ ones that the days are cut short. Wilson has included an Interlinear Translation of the Greek text in his Bible for the students’ reference, and the words ‘on account of’ have been translated from the Greek word *dia* which means ‘through.’ The word *Diaglott* is composed of two Greek words, *dia* and *glossa* meaning tongue. The roots of each of these words are found in English. For example, ‘diameter’ defines a line drawn through the center of a circle, and ‘glossary’ is a list of specialized words. In Matthew’s Gospel (24:22), he used the same word *dia* when recording Jesus’ teaching.

The Heavenly Father has been calling and selecting the special class of chosen ones during this present Gospel Age. ‘The Christ’ will be composed of the Head—our Lord Jesus—and the 144,000 faithful members of his body. When this number has been completed they will be exalted to power and authority as the ruling body of Christ’s future kingdom. Together they will share in the great work of blessing the whole human family. Jesus promised, “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”—John 14:3

DESOLATION IN THE GULF

At the time of this writing, more than two months have passed since an explosion occurred on the Deepwater Horizon drilling platform located several miles off the coast of Louisiana. Since that time, extensive efforts have been underway to plug the oil leak a mile below the water's surface. Crews have also been busy cleaning up the sickening mess of poisonous sludge that continues to destroy ecologically fragile areas, and the livelihood of many people living in the Gulf States.

Several attempts to cap the well have ended in failure. To further emphasize the seriousness of the situation, we quote in part from a report submitted by Terrence Aym of Republic Broadcasting Network, pointing out the potential danger this poses in the Gulf of Mexico and beyond. Aym said, "Disturbing evidence is mounting that something frightening is happening deep under the waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Warnings were raised as long as a year before the Deepwater Horizon disaster that the area of seabed chosen by British Petroleum (BP) geologists might be unstable, or worse, inherently dangerous.

"The same methane that makes coal mining operations hazardous and leads to horrendous mining accidents deep under the earth also can present a high level of danger to certain oil exploration ventures. Some geologists rang the warning bell that the Deepwater Horizon exploratory rig might have been erected directly over a huge underground reservoir of methane gas.

"Documents from several years ago indicate that the subterranean geologic formation may contain

the presence of a huge underground lake of methane gas compressed by a pressure of 100,000 pounds per square inch that could be released by BP's drilling effort to obtain the oil deposit. Current engineering technology cannot contain gas with that much pressure. By some geologists' estimates, the methane could be a massive 15 to 20 mile toxic and explosive bubble trapped for eons under the Gulf sea floor. In their opinion, the explosive destruction of the Deepwater Horizon wellhead was an accident just waiting to happen. According to worried geologists, the first signs that the methane may burst its way through the bottom of the ocean would be fissures or cracks appearing on the ocean floor near the damaged wellhead. Evidence of fissures opening up on the seabed have been captured by the robotic submersibles working to repair and contain the ruptured well. Smaller, independent plumes have also appeared outside the nearby radius of the bore hole itself.

"According to some geological experts, BP's operations set into motion a series of events that may be irreversible. Step-by-step the drilling team committed one error after another. Congressmen Henry Waxman and Bart Stupak, in a letter sent to BP's CEO Tony Hayward, identified 5 missteps made by BP during the period culminating with the explosion. Waxman, chair of the Congressional energy panel and Stupak, head of the subcommittee on oversight and investigations, said, 'The common feature of these five decisions is that they posed a trade-off between cost and well safety.' The two Representatives also stated in the 14-page letter to Hayward that 'Time after time, it appears that BP

made decisions that increased the risk of a blowout to save the company time or expense.’

“Called by some insiders investigating the ongoing disaster a perfect storm or catastrophe, the wellhead blew on the sea floor catapulting a stream of mud, oil, and gas upwards at the speed of sound. In describing the events that transpired in a matter of seconds, they note that immediately following the rupture the borehole pipe’s casing blew away, exposing a straight line 8 miles deep for the pressurized gas to escape. The result was ‘cavitation,’ an irregular pressure variance sometimes experienced by deep diving vessels such as nuclear submarines. This ‘cavitation’ created a supersonic bubble of explosive methane gas that resulted in an explosion killing 11 men and completely annihilating the drilling platform.

“With the emerging evidence of fissures, the quiet fear now is the methane bubble rupturing the seabed may explode into the Gulf waters. If the bubble escapes every ship, drilling rig and structure within the region of the bubble will be in danger. If the huge methane bubble breaches the seabed it will erupt with explosive force. A gas gusher would surge upwards through miles of ancient sedimentary rock, layer after layer and past the oil reservoir. It could explode upwards propelled by 50 tons psi, burst through the cracks and fissures of the compromised sea floor and rupture miles of the ocean floor.”

A POSSIBLE WIDENING DISASTER

The potential of a widening disaster is also confirmed in a News-4-Us report (July 1, 2010) under

the heading “New Evidence Suggests the Oil Spill in the Gulf Could Only be the Beginning.” Quoting in part from the article, we read, “Could it be true that the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico is only the beginning of what is being touted as possibly the worst possible natural disaster known to man? New evidence was unearthed during the week by United States scientists that indicate the warnings which surfaced as long as a year before the British Petroleum (BP) Deepwater Horizon catastrophe occurred may well be true.

“Unknown to the majority of the public, this particular area that was chosen by (BP) geologists has been described as unstable and even dangerous due to the possible super-sized methane beds embedded deep in the earth’s crust. Some geologists believed this to be so and voiced their opinions early on, but to no avail. Now twelve scientists from Texas A & M University, who have been running tests in the area within a 5-mile radius of the drill site, have found high levels of methane under the seabed. In some pockets of the ocean the concentrations of methane gas levels are up to 100,000 times the norm or even more.

“The effect of these levels of methane gas under the ocean can be devastating, as it depletes the oxygen in the water, and at these levels scientists say they could create a dead zone. Oxygenated water is crucial to sustaining marine life and in some close by areas of the well site it has dropped by 30 percent. As carbon dioxide is a by-product of breathing in air, so methane is a natural by-product of a breathing, living ocean that is filled with life. Science has since proven that where higher

concentrations of methane gas exist, there is a common side effect which occurs. The smaller microbes outgrow the marine life dramatically and end up consuming much more oxygen.

“Another factor that could contribute to positive signs of a large methane gas reservoir would be cracks or fissures appearing on the ocean bed near the capped well opening. The appearance of these cracks is now becoming evident from footage sent up by the underwater robots working on the damaged well. Fissures of gas eruptions entering the ocean are also being reported further along the outer radius of the drill site. Scientists are still studying the numbers on the data they have collected over the recently completed 10-day research expedition. More available facts should come to light soon.”

WAITING ON THE LORD

The psalmist wrote, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah. 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. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.”—Ps. 46:1-11

Human efforts will surely fail if left in the hands of fallen, selfish men. However, we need not fear that the wonderful words ‘Be still, and know that I am God’ are true and will soon come to pass. Readers of *The Dawn* magazine know that our Heavenly Father has all matters concerning the earth, its people and their eternal welfare under his loving control. We trust that he will not allow his human family to destroy itself. His watchful eye and powerful hand will deliver them from all potential dangers and he is ready to quickly act on their behalf. This is true whether in connection with nuclear warfare or through the destruction of the earth and its environment by way of pollution on a scale never before contemplated.

Because of our understanding of God’s Word, we are assured of Christ’s coming kingdom that will bring peace, blessings, and life to a poor and groaning human creation. Nearly six hundred years before the birth of our Lord Jesus, Ezekiel recorded the prophetic words of God concerning the marvelous and pure waters of life that are associated with Christ’s future kingdom.

“He said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river. Now when I had returned, behold, at the bank of the river were

very many trees on the one side and on the other. Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh.”—Ezek. 47:6-9

“And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.”—vs.12

Many centuries later, and after our Lord had finished his earthly ministry, John the revelator received the wonderful promises of God as confirmation of Ezekiel’s prophecy. “He shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.”—Rev. 22:1-3 ■