

Quietly Waiting on the Lord

“It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.”
—***Lamentations 3:26***

AS WE ENTER ANOTHER new year, our attention is once again drawn to the ever increasing level of anxiety, apprehension, and fear that is prevalent in nearly every segment of our present world. The statesmen, political and religious leaders, and financiers struggle to find solutions to the seemingly endless barrage of perplexing and distressing problems that confront all the nations as the drama of the closing scenes of this present Gospel Age unfolds.

Furthermore, the vast majority of earth's people go about their daily lives paying little heed or attention to the true meaning celebrated during the recent holiday season of our Lord Jesus' earthly ministry, or his sacrificial death on their behalf. Neither do they consider the wonderful promises of our loving Heavenly Father and the blessings that are being prepared for their ultimate reconciliation. We believe that Christ's kingdom will soon

be manifest to the sin-sick and groaning human creation. Thus does mankind continue to wait for the long-promised and future kingdom of “The Christ” as the only solution to the violence, corruption, and death that marks our day in prophecy.

THE PRESENT GOSPEL AGE

We are now living during the closing years of this present Gospel Age. Since the First Advent of our Lord Jesus two thousand years ago, the divine purpose and program has been to call and select from the fallen human creation a little flock of faithful followers of our Lord Jesus. These are invited to share with him in his heavenly glory. They will also share in bringing the blessings of life and truth to all mankind under the administration of Christ’s future kingdom. This is a very special class of Christian people as shown in the prophecy of Isaiah. “Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.”—Isa. 43:7

The Prophet Isaiah used the word “called” in this scripture to identify those Christians who have responded to this wonderful invitation from our loving Heavenly Father. If faithful to their High Calling in Christ Jesus, they will share with him as members of his bride. They will inherit the divine nature and will dwell in the spiritual home that Jesus has been preparing for his bride during this present Gospel Age. As recorded by John in his gospel, Jesus explained to his disciples, “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go

to prepare a place for you. And 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. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.”—John 14:1-4

THE DIVINE PROGRAM

The Apostle Paul proclaimed that those who are being called out of the world during this present Gospel Age are being called to share the same glorious nature and inheritance as was offered our Lord Jesus during the time of his earthly ministry. This is explained in his letter to the church at Rome. He wrote, “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.”—Rom. 6:3-5

When the divine program during this present Gospel Age has been accomplished, and the full number of the called ones is complete, the faithful followers of Jesus will all be brought together in the first resurrection. “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”—Rev. 20:6

THE PROMISED SEED

At that future time, the faithful will share with our glorified Lord as members of “The Christ,” the

promised seed, that will bring blessings of life and peace to all the families of the earth. From the scriptural account, we read, “The angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: 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. 22:15-18

In his letter to the brethren at Galatia, the Apostle Paul explained the meaning of the promised seed of Abraham. He said, “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” (Gal. 3:16) “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” (vs. 29) “When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”—chap. 4:4-7

This blessed work will take place under the control of Christ’s kingdom and the terms of the New Covenant that will be established on the basis of truth and righteousness. The divine purpose is to

make reconciliation possible for the entire sin-sick human family. Everlasting life will be offered to all who are obedient to the divine law. The New Covenant will be established under the direction of “The Christ” and will introduce to the human family the necessary provisions whereby they may attain everlasting life on a perfected and glorified earth.

WAITING WITH HOPE

In our featured scripture, the Prophet Jeremiah brings to our attention the need to “hope and to quietly wait” for the salvation of the Lord. God’s plan of redemption and reconciliation will take many years to accomplish. This means that we must put our trust and confidence in our loving Heavenly Father, and meditate on the promises and precepts of his wonderful Word of Truth.

The prophet used the word “hope” in this scripture which suggests being in expectation of something. The word also carries the thought of having confidence and trust. We look forward with much anticipation and joy to the future kingdom of our Lord and Savior. We have complete confidence and trust in the promises of God that are near at hand.

Thus did the Psalmist David write, “Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.” (Ps. 31:24) The Prophet Jeremiah said, “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.”—Jer. 17:7,8

QUIETLY WAITING

To wait “quietly” means to do so peaceably and with tranquility. The Lord’s consecrated people enjoy an inner peace that only comes from having faith in the saving blood of Christ, and confidence in the promises of God. The Apostle Peter describes one who has this Christian trait as possessing a meek and quiet spirit. He said, “Let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”—I Pet. 3:4

To wait for something with much anticipation requires patience. In many circumstances, it includes the ability to bear our trials or difficulties calmly and without complaint. The Prophet Isaiah caught the true spirit of Christ Jesus when he addressed the attitude of patient endurance that we all need. He said, “Therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him.” (Isa. 30:18) Isaiah again spoke of the wonderful spirit that marks the true disciple of Christ Jesus, when he wrote, “They that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.”—chap. 40:31

CONFIDENCE AND TRUST

From the Psalms, we also read, “Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.” (Ps. 25:5)

Again, it is written, “Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.” (Ps. 27:14) Thus does the Holy Spirit of God teach, “Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.” (chap. 37:7) “Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.”—vs. 34

A most outstanding example of putting our complete trust and confidence in our Heavenly Father’s unlimited power to lead us, is dramatically shown in the experiences of his typical people Israel. When Moses was instructed by God to lead his people into the waters of the Red Sea, he was preparing the way for them to cross safely to the other side. From the scriptural account, we read, “Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.”—Exod. 14:13,14

Concerning our need to be patient and to quietly wait on the Lord, the Apostle Paul reminds us, “Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”—Rom. 15:4-6

PATIENT ENDURANCE

Thus does James admonish, “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”—James 5:7,8

As the Lord’s people are patiently waiting for Christ’s promised kingdom, they are cautioned to not be over anxious because of the passing of time, nor to question in any way the methods God chooses relative to the outworking of his ultimate plan and purpose. We know all things are in his hands, and we are to remain full of hope and trust that in his abundant mercy and wisdom, he will in due time bring righteousness and blessings to all the families of the earth.

THE MERCIES OF GOD

The words of our featured scripture were written many centuries ago by Jeremiah as he sat weeping and lamenting over the plight of his people Israel. They had been disobedient to God and his commandments, and were experiencing the rod of his wrath regarding their actions. The nation of Israel had been especially blessed by God, and yet they had not heeded his Word.

Their special status in God’s arrangements is confirmed by the Apostle Paul, who wrote, “Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.” (Rom. 3:1,2, *New American Standard Bible*)

Paul also explained that the people of Israel served as a type to illustrate the ultimate plan and purpose of our loving Heavenly Father. “Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.”—I Cor. 10:11, *NASB*

MOVED BY GOD’S SPIRIT

In the context of our featured scripture (Lam. 3:26), we catch a glimpse of the Holy Spirit of God as it moved the Prophet Jeremiah to write and confess the innermost hope that filled his heart. Recalling the wonderful mercies of God of which he spoke, we, too, should never be consumed with doubt or fear. We must be filled with hope and the manifestation of true joy as we quietly wait upon the infinite wisdom of our loving and eternal Heavenly Father. God is an inexhaustible fountain of mercy, and the Father of mercies.

The Apostle Paul expressed this thought and wrote, “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.”—II Cor. 1:3-5

Thus did Jeremiah write, “This I recall to my mind [make to return to my heart, *Marginal Translation*], therefore have I hope. It is of the LORD’s mercies 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. He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him. He putteth his mouth in the dust; if so be there may be hope.”—Lam. 3:21-29

OUR DAY IN PROPHECY

Students of the Bible point out that the Scriptures indicate we are now living in the latter days of this Gospel Age. Therefore, prophecies that were written many centuries ago concerning the time in which we are now living are being fulfilled. One of God’s prophets of old was Joel, who was moved by the Holy Spirit of God to point forward from his time to the events of our day. These significant events would mark the closing features of the present Gospel Age.

Thus the Prophet Joel wrote, “Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand; A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.”—Joel 2:1-3

In this scripture, Joel uses symbolic words and phrases to describe the divine judgments that our Heavenly Father would permit to remove the present world order. Although there have been noble attempts to provide for the people, in many instances these arrangements have been based largely on the pride and selfish principles of fallen men. Therefore, they must first be removed to make way for the future King of Righteousness. The “day of the LORD,” of which the prophet spoke, refers to God’s great day of vengeance upon the unrighteous institutions of men.

The Prophet Daniel also spoke of the closing events of this Gospel Age. He said, “At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.” (Dan. 12:1) Jesus referred to Daniel’s prophecy and added a further and important dimension to it. He said, “Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.”—Matt. 24:21,22

CONFIDENCE AND TRUST

As students of the Bible, we are not alarmed by these prophetic events, but continue to hope and quietly wait on the Lord. We are students of prophecy and are watching for the fulfillment of these

foreshadows that were written by Joel, Daniel, and others of God's prophets of old. These prophecies serve to identify the chaotic events of our time, and serve as evidences that our Lord is now present and that his kingdom will soon be established over all the earth. Thus do we see the present world order disintegrating to prepare for Christ's glorious kingdom.

This kingdom will be administered under the authority, guidance, and command of "The Christ." It will consist of our glorified Lord Jesus as the Head, and the 144,000 members of his faithful followers, as the typical body. Their commission is to establish the righteous kingdom that will ultimately bring blessing to the whole human creation.

CHRIST'S KINGDOM

Herein lies the thread of hope and promise that points down the stream of time, and to the long-promised salvation of the Lord. Christ's promised kingdom will bring peace and blessing to all mankind during his kingdom of righteousness. We believe this will soon be made manifest when the present order of man's rule is set aside, and our blessed Savior will exercise his great power over all the earth, its institutions, and its people. At that time, all men will be given ample opportunity to learn the ways of truth, and to obtain everlasting life on a perfected earth with its new divine arrangement. To obtain life, the people must put their trust in our loving Heavenly Father, and obey the laws of the kingdom.

THE GROANING CREATION

This is made clear by the words of the apostle who wrote, "The earnest expectation of the creature

waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.”—Rom. 8:19-25

THE NEW YEAR

As we prepare for the incoming new year, let us do so by abiding in the admonition of the Prophet Jeremiah, who wrote, “It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.”—Lam. 3:26 ■

“Sing praise to the LORD; tell the wonderful things he has done. Be glad that we belong to him; let all who worship him rejoice. . . . The LORD is our God; his commands are for all the world.

“He will keep his covenant forever, his promises for a thousand generations. He will keep the agreement he made with Abraham and his promise to Isaac. The LORD made a covenant with Jacob, one that will last forever.”

—Psalm 105:2,3,7-10, Good News Bible