

LOOKING FOR A BETTER DAY

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During the past year, many things have happened which have been the cause or source of change. Some were for the better; some for the worse. We have seen and heard things, some we would like to remember and even hold on to and some we would dearly love to forget. There are others that although we would love to forget, yet, because of the impact they may have had upon our lives, we just can't forget.

No one likes hearing bad news, and yet, we have had lots of that. For example, we have heard of shocking revelations of immorality, impropriety in high places, travesties of justice, brutal murders, kidnappings, and crimes of all sorts. We have seen and heard about inhumane acts, indifferent attitudes, and unacceptable behaviors toward one's fellow man.

Heartless Horror

I guess topping the list would have been the horrific picture of the two planes flying into the World Trade Center in New York, with the thousands of lives lost, and all of the destruction that took place. Countless lives have been affected around the world because of the wickedness and hardheartedness of evil and ungodly men. It is chilling to think that mankind could be so hateful and so ruthless.

Socially, physically and in a general sense, changes have come to our world, and things will never be as they were prior to September 11, 2001. Of course, we cannot forget the impact on the economy of countries the

world over because of those events.

Natural & Manmade

There have been natural disasters, the likes of hurricanes, storms, flooding, etc. The destruction they brought, we are all wishing will not be repeated. Likewise, there have been manmade disasters, which have destroyed lives and left many in shambles. The plague of AIDS is making more and more inroads into the world's population. Wars in different places and many more things are happening. My, it sounds very gloomy, doesn't it? Do you know that all of those happenings are consistent with what we read of in the WORD of God?

Perilous Times

"But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come"
(2 Timothy 3:1).

Yes, this is what the word of God says will be in the last days. Perilous times will come. My message is not to scare you, but it is to help you to become more conscious of what is taking place, not only in the Caribbean but the world over. We are seeing the reality of what Jesus and the prophets spoke about.

I refer to Matthew 24:3-8, *"Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, 'Tell us, when will these things*

be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?' And Jesus answered and said to them: 'Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ', and will deceive many. 'And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.'"

His Protection

Let me say to you, however, despite the bad news, there is also good news, hence the reason we can look forward to "A BETTER DAY." This "BETTER DAY" I refer to will not cancel out the judgments which are to come upon the earth. The judgments of God are necessary, but for the child of God, God will be his shield, God will be his protector, and God will be his refuge. I am reminded of the children of Israel who were in Goshen, in the land of Egypt, in the midst of all of the plagues and disasters that were taking place. The death angel was on the rampage, but the children of Israel, though in the midst of it all, were covered and protected, because they had the blood applied as they were told.

"He who dwells 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 I will trust.' Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence. He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler. You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, or of the arrow that flies by day, Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday. A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you" (Psalms 91:1-7).

I believe the time has come when we must truly examine ourselves, examine our lives in the light of God's word, understand and believe what He has said and is yet saying to us. Men and women are fearful because of the pending judgment coming upon the earth and are looking for an escape route.

Ephesians 6:13, *"Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."*

The Secret Place

In light of the wonderful promises of Psalm 91, I find it hard to comprehend why the child of God should be in fear of those things which must come to pass. God has promised to protect us, *"...no evil shall befall us, no weapon that is formed against us shall prosper; He shall give His Angels charge over you to keep you in all of His ways."*

Listen, *"A thousand shall fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand, but it shall not,"* I repeat, *"it shall not come near you."*

By dwelling in the secret place of the Most High, that is dwelling in the very presence of God, there is nothing that can overpower us; no foe, no adversary can conquer us. We are told in Colossians, *"we are hidden with Christ in God"* (Colossians 3:3).

God is preparing a body of overcomers, which is His Church, which the gates of Hell shall not prevail against. Our responsibility is to totally give ourselves to the Lord, let Him be in complete control, so that as Paul said, *"It is no longer I, but Christ living in me"* (Galatians 2:20). Christ Himself demonstrated the power and authority He had when the mob came after Him but was unable to take Him. This we see in the Gospel of Luke.

Luke 4:28-30, *"And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they*

might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way."

They were unable to do any harm to Jesus; they had no power over Him. This is borne out wonderfully as Jesus Himself stated in John 19:11 when He answered, *"You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above."*

We must begin to possess our possession in Christ. We have to know what we believe and stand on what we believe. My prayer is that we would believe what the word of God says.

Psalms 91:8, *"Only with your eyes shall you look, And see the reward of the wicked."*

The psalmist clearly states, "He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High.....with his eyes he shall look and shall see the reward of the wicked." And, of course, that is the reason why judgment is coming on the earth. There is an overflow of wickedness, but I am thankful to God, *"where sin abounds grace did much more abound"* (Romans 5:20). There is a great spiritual move on, preparing the saints of God. They are the first- fruits company. They are the sons of God in the making, and they will do tremendous exploits, finishing the work Jesus began when He was on earth.

Total Salvation

I am appalled by the faithlessness of many believers who, though talking about the salvation there is in Jesus Christ, fail to accept the TOTAL SALVATION we have in Him.

Let us remember, with God all things are possible. There is much the believer can and must look forward to. Despite all the gloom that may be around us, a brighter day is coming, but only those who have prepared themselves shall see the brighter day. Those who continue to walk in their carnal and ungodly ways will find it most difficult because, for them, it will be a day of great darkness and terrible judgment as the wrath of God is outpoured.

No one has to be a partaker of the wrath of God and His coming judgment. Jesus made it possible for the "WHOSOEVER" who would genuinely call upon and believe in Him, to be saved. This is the promise He has given to all.

By believing in Him, it brings one such rest and peace not experienced before. It brings a freshness and cleanness to one's life that before knowing Him was non-existent.

You can start to experience that better day right now because Jesus is awaiting your call. Even those of us who are Christians, there are things we hold in reserve, things in our lives we have not totally surrendered to the Lord. We need to lay them down at the altar of sacrifice, give them over to Jesus Christ, and let Him handle those things that are holding us back. We need that total salvation which is for the whole man.

Those of you who do not know Him because you have not submitted your life to Him, you have not repented of your sins, how do you expect to enter into God's kingdom? You cannot get in on merit or in any works of your own. This is what He said to Nicodemus, *"You must be BORN AGAIN"* (John 3: 7). All must follow the command given to Nicodemus and there are no exceptions. This is imperative; there is no other way. What Jesus said in John 14 would become meaningful to you. It will be your experience and become your hope.

His Promise, Our Hope

John 14:1-3, *"Let not your heart be troubled; you 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 to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."

Let us all be a part of what Jesus paid such a high price for. Become a part or members of His body, and then we will be able to enjoy the mansions He has prepared for us. (I hope our thinking is not just materialistic, but rather looking to be dwelling in His presence).

There is so much to look forward to. Even though there is much anxiety in the hearts of many, we are living in what I would call challenging, but exciting times. To many, there is much uncertainty, but with God, there is nothing uncertain about the times in which we live. He has always known about them and told us about them.

Hebrews 4:13, *"And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account."*

Be Positive

I am all for being positive, but some only see that from a natural perspective. We need to take it into the realm of the Spirit. Let us be positive in our knowledge of God and His word. Let us be positive in our walk in the Spirit, let us be positive in our whole outlook to the kingdom of God and the eternal realm, pressing on toward the mark for the prize of the HIGH CALLING OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS.

Yes, my friends, A BETTER DAY IS COMING, let us look for and be prepared for it. God bless you all.

A Better Day Part Two

We Must Stand

In our last issue, we looked at some of the declarations and promises in the word of God, that if taken seriously, as believers in Jesus Christ, we will become a strong and mighty people in the Spirit; a people who would know our privileges, having a steadfast faith, increasing in wisdom and knowledge and being immovable; having been admonished, "Having done all, STAND." How should we stand? He said, stand fast. As one would say, hold on tightly; in that context, let me say to us all, stand tightly on the word of God.

As has been said, we should be looking for a better day, and it is coming. This is in no way saying we will from this moment on be enjoying bliss and happiness. God's judgment is coming upon the earth.

With great anticipation and expectation, I am looking beyond that awful time, into which I am sure, many of us are aware we are entering. God has made provisions for us; therefore, we should lay hold and not deny ourselves of our God-given privilege. At the same time, we should fortify ourselves spiritually, that we will not just be a conqueror, but more than a conqueror.

Furnace Experience

Many have gone through what I would call the furnace of affliction, and that was not of their own making but for the cause of Christ. By suffering with Him, we shall reign with Him.

Job, a man who loved and feared God, had his baptism of fiery trials and tribulations which God allowed in his life. Maybe you and I may have done what his wife told him to do, *"curse God and die"* (Job 2:9). Yet he maintained his sanity and integrity, held on to the God whom he knew would not desert him, and declared, *"Though He slay me, yet, I will trust Him"* (Job 13:15).

Yes, Job's suffering was hard, but God did not remove or hide him away. He had to, as we would say, face the music. At the end of it all, I am sure Job was a better man. His faith in his God was unshakable. He had greater

wealth, not only materially but also greater knowledge and understanding of God.

Putting it plainly, he became a more perfect man than he was before because of his tribulations. God knows just what is needed to bring man into the image and likeness of Jesus Christ, and if we will allow Him, He will get us there.

Gold, that precious metal most of us have a liking for, is quite different in appearance when it comes from the soil or rocks or from wherever it is found. There is nothing beautiful about it. But in order for it to become pure and beautiful, as the finished product, it must go through a very fiery process which helps to purge all of the dross, thus leaving the pure gold, shining and beautiful.

Should we then wonder why we have our fiery trials and our tribulations? God is bringing us forth as pure gold, which is the end result.

Mediocrity is not the thing God is interested in, but rather in perfection, and His Son is the standard acceptable to Him. As someone has said, "If you can stand the pull, He will pull you through." We shall arrive in the state of being like Him.

1 John 3:2, *"But we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him."*

Tribulations Warfare & Glory

In our fear of what is coming in the form of judgment upon the earth and the hope of some to escape it, we are forgetting that tribulation has its place in God's plan and purpose.

Romans 5:3, *"And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance."*

The word *perseverance* means, "steady persistence in a course of action, a purpose." The King James Version puts it this way, *"And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience"* (Romans 5:3).

God is not creating a body of weak and spineless sons, but instead, SONS who would be OVERCOMERS, who would rule and reign with Christ. If we would examine the life of Jesus we would find He did not run or hide away from His trials and tribulations, but He faced them. By so doing He overcame the world, the flesh, and the devil and became the Author of eternal salvation (Hebrews 5:9). By His grace and power, we too must overcome.

We are being prepared for the kingdom, Matthew 11:12, *"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force."*

This passage of scripture in no way is telling us to become violent, using guns, knives, or other destructive man-made weapons. Instead, we must arise in the realm of the spirit and confront our adversary, Satan, casting him out from where he is usurping authority. Again, I want to emphasize this cannot be done carnally; a spiritual battle is what we as believers must wage which will only be won as we equip ourselves spiritually.

2 Corinthians 10:4 (KJV), *"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds."*

I wish to refer to a passage of scripture in which we see the carnal man in operation.

Acts 14:19-22, *"Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he*

departed with Barnabas to Derbe.” Strengthening the Converts. “And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, ‘We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.’”

This scripture gives some insight into the hazards faced by the apostles as they endeavoured to proclaim the word of truth to unregenerate but religious men in that country. With Paul stoned and given up for dead, to those who perpetrated the crime, no doubt they thought they had won and gotten rid of the man who had enraged them. This could have discouraged Paul, but instead, he continued to be bold and did not water down the WORD; but he was determined that the saints be strengthened. He told them then, what many today would not like to hear. He knew it was of paramount importance for them to know what they would have to face, bearing in mind what he encountered. It was not a scare tactic, neither was it to discourage them. It was necessary for them to know the truth and be able to face the reality. He wanted them to be strengthened and encouraged rather than giving them false hope.

By letting them know it was through much tribulation they would enter the kingdom, Paul was being a good, faithful, and uncompromising minister, teaching and preparing the saints, by which their faith and commitment would be strengthened.

As ministers of the gospel, we too must be uncompromising and establish the church in the truth. God will hold us responsible if we do otherwise.

Romans 8:18, *“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”*

Although we do not cherish the thought of suffering, (and frankly, I do not think there is anyone who would relish it) yet it is clear, the benefits far outweigh the anguish of the tribulations we would have endured. There is nothing that can be compared with the glory that will be ours.

God’s master plan is incomparable. At present we see in the mirror darkly but praise God, when that brighter day dawns totally upon us, it will be all light. We shall know just as He is known.

Another verse of scripture which I think should be a source of encouragement to us is found in 1 Peter 5:10, *“But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.”*

See God’s wonderful plan. Think of it, we are called to His eternal glory. When do we enter there? After we have suffered a while. This is the manner in which our perfecting, establishing, strengthening, and settling will come about.

Can we now say to God, Father, you have made a mistake. I can’t face up to this kind of tribulation? This is what John says in 1 John 4:4, *“You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.”*

God’s Abundant Grace

The Apostle Paul had many struggles in his life and here is what he said.

2 Corinthians 12:7-9, *“And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”*

God did not remove the thorn from Paul nor Paul from the thorn, but the Lord told him, “My grace is sufficient for you.” That is what we need. The grace of God will see us through, whatever the circumstances.

Revelation 17:14, *“These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.”*

Yes, friends, A BETTER DAY is coming, a day we can look forward to. But NOW we must begin to appropriate what God has declared, not looking for a sudden quick fix, but to be an overcomer. Let us have His word in our mouth and His Spirit in our hearts to be counted among the ELECT of God. Yea, the SONS of God are shining in the brightness of A BETTER DAY. ✝

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