



The Sharon Star

A Call To Prayer And Fasting

June 2 - 8, 2002

By E. H. Wanagas

While we, as Brethren, gathered for a ministries meeting for a few days in January 2002, we all felt the urge of the Holy Spirit, and agreed unanimously, that we should call the whole church everywhere to a week of prayer and fasting June 2-8, 2002. In the meantime we again urge all local churches to have weekly prayer meetings with everyone attending as much as possible, to wait on God and seek His face in united prayer. Our enemy, the Devil, knows that his time is short and his defeat is at hand, so he has been trying the Church severely, - spiritually, physically, and some materially.

As we gather for prayer, let us seek God on these matters that confront us. Let us join together and pray earnestly that God will pour out of His Holy Spirit upon us all in a fresh and living way. Our meetings need that quickening of the Holy Spirit to stir up the gift of God that is within us and bring new life through the functioning of our ministries as members of the Body of Christ. We need divine guidance as never before at the end of this present age and the beginning of the new age, The Kingdom of God. So let us all draw nigh to God and humble ourselves and cry unto God with genuine repentance for the Kingdom of God is at hand.

Prayer and fasting is not something new; the Word of God is full of examples when people or nations were in trouble; a time of fasting was proclaimed, and

God heard and answered in miraculous ways according to His promises. Let us read a few of them.

Psalms 27:8 (When thou saidst), Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.

Isaiah 55:6, 7 Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake His way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Jeremiah 29: 11-13 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

Jeremiah 33:3 Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and skew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.

Isaiah 45:19 I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.

Isaiah 59:1, 2 Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: **But** your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he

will not hear.

H Chronicles 7: 14-16 If my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attend unto the prayer that is made in this place. For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever: and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.

Please read now the following:

2 Chron. 6:12-42- Solomon's Prayer.

2 Chron. 20: 1-22 - Jehoshaphat's

Prayer

Ezra 8:21-23 -Ezra proclaimed prayer and fasting

Jonah 3: 1-10 - the people at Nineveh proclaimed prayer and fasting.

We read in the book of Joel of the terrible destruction that had taken place, caused by the enemy and what was done about it.

Joel 1:4 That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten. Please read now verses 12-20.

Joel 2: 1 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;

v. 12 Therefore also now, saith the

LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning;

v. 13 And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

v. 14 Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him, even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God?

v. 15 Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly;

v. 16 Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of the closet.

v. 17 Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?

v. 18 Then will the LORD be jealous for his land, and pity his people.

v. 19 yea, the LORD will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen:

v. 21 Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things.

V. 22 Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength.

v. 23 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

v. 24 And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.

v. 25 And I will restore you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you.

v. 26 And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed. O HALLELUJAH!

Now read verses 27-32.

I feel so inspired by the Word of the Lord, I want to shout, HALLELUJAH!

Dearly Beloved, let us not count any sacrifice too great, in order that we might attain unto full sonship. A great cloud of witnesses are waiting and cheering us on.

Hebrews 12: 1,2 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

2 Timothy 2:11, 12 It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him we shall also live with him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him if we deny him he also will deny us.

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

Romans 12: 1,2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Matthew 7:21 Not every one that with unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Now, let us consider some things regarding prayer and fasting.

What Is A Fast?

To abstain from all foods, total fast. To abstain from certain kind of food. To eat very little or partial fast.

To abstain from pleasant foods.

Do not abstain from drinking water; drink generous amounts of water every day while fasting. Drinking plenty of water does not allow your stomach to collapse, will help to prevent dehydration, and helps to flush out the poisons from your body. Doctors and dieticians recommend drinking at least 6-8 oz. glasses of water daily, besides juices, coffee, tea, etc. While on a fast do not

drink ice water; that can cause cramps. During a fast drink water or other liquids at room temperature, warm or hot;; you may add a drop of lemon juice for taste. Exercise is important - not too strenuous. Get plenty of fresh air.

Some of the effects you may experience: Possible headache - which should disappear in one or two days. You may feel some temporary weakness. You may feel chilly - put on a sweater. You may experience slight cramps - which should subside. You may have some dizziness; get up slowly if you do - these things will subside in a few days. Each person's experience will vary somewhat.

Your tongue will become coated and your breath get bad. Brush your teeth and the top of your tongue more often. Shower or bathe more frequently. Hunger usually leaves after two or three days. Don't think of food any more than you have to. Let us not confuse hunger with just a craving. Stay away from fast food counters, bakeries, deli's. This will help us not to get a craving for food. Let us pray for our wives and mothers who still, no doubt, will have to prepare meals for

the children. You can work normally while fasting; you don't have to go to bed. Keep active with a good positive attitude.

Anybody can fast, but to a sincere, committed Christian, prayer and fasting go together, and you can expect spiritual strength and awareness. A man or woman who has a spouse who is not a believer, should discuss this experience with them and respect the other's views; they may support you in it, or a partial fast may be in order. Anyone who is under a doctor's care should discuss this with their doctor. Most medication is taken with food, so this may require a partial fast only. If you are unable to fast because of the above mentioned conditions, you can still pray and intercede before God. Let's not make excuses. Reasons must be valid.

Please read: Rom. 8:26, 27 - The Holy Spirit helps us. Jude 20 - Build yourself up. I Cor. 14:14 - Spirit prayeth.

Fasting is not - starvation or a hunger strike. Fasting is not- bombarding heaven and making demands. Fasting is not - securing some special position with God or pulling strings.

Fasting is for: Examining ourselves, Judging ourselves in the light of God's Word and will, but not for self-condemnation.

Prayer and fasting is for humbling ourselves before God, seeking God,

drawing nigh to God, overcoming the carnal nature, basking in His presence in divine fellowship and communion with God.

John 3:30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Matthew 4:4 But he answered and said it is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

We so often put so much stress on food and eating - but I wonder if we help to dig our graves with our teeth. Be very careful not to get carried away with food fads and diets. Anything taken to extremes is dangerous. Asking God's blessing on our food is extremely important. The greatest essentials to life come in this order # 1 Air, #2 Water, #3 Sleep, #4 Food. Food is last on the list.

Let us all guard against becoming extreme or fanatical. We must have a right attitude and balance in all things. Jesus Christ, our Elder Brother gave us the right instructions in regards to fasting, in his **Sermon on the Mount**.

Matthew 6: 16-18 "Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward, But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face. That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

Please read now: Luke 18: 9-14.

I Corinthians 7: 1-5 - Apostle Paul's instruction for married couples during the time of prayer and fasting.

Here are a few more scriptures you can read for yourself in regards to prayer and fasting.

Exodus 34: 1-35 - Note v. 28 The account of Moses receiving the Ten Commandments 40 day fast.

Dan. 9:1-4, Dan. 10:3-14 Regarding Daniel, 2 Sam. 12: 1-23 - David's fast didn't help because of his sin. I Kings 19: 1-8 - Elisha's fast when in trouble. Acts 13: 1-4 - The brethren at Antioch prayed and fasted before setting men in their ministry. Acts 27 - The account of Apostle

Paul in a ship in a violent storm. See vs. 33-37 Acts 14: 19-23 - The brethren set elders in every church, prayed and fasted before leaving them. Matt. 4: 1 -11 - Jesus, our Saviour and our example, fasted forty days and nights while being tempted by the Devil. Luke 2:36-38 - Anna, an elderly widow and prophetess prayed and fasted in the temple; she spoke of Jesus to them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. Mark 9:14-29 - Jesus heals the demoniac son, after his disciples could not cast out the evil spirit. Jesus told them why in v. 29 - This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting. Mark 2: 15-20 - The disciples of Jesus were not required to fast while He, the Bridegroom, was with them, but He said that they would fast after he left them. This applies to us today.

BREAKING THE FAST

Breaking the fast properly is very, very important! A fast of more than seven days is very difficult to break properly and so the process is very important and cannot be overemphasized. If you wish to avoid any adverse circumstances after your long fast (more than seven days) please use good common sense. You may get along fine during your protracted fast, but have uncomfortable physical difficulties while breaking the fast, which practically in all cases can be traced to impatience to begin eating the usual portions and more.

The longer the fast the more care and time it takes before getting on our regular diet again. Our stomach has to be broken in gradually again. We all know that this is only good common sense. After the hunger returns (not craving) you should use only fresh acid fruit juices. Fresh tomato juice without seeds is good. Use grape juice from fresh grapes without skin and seeds, apple juice and other fresh juices that have agreed with you before you began fasting. Sauerkraut juice is very good for the second or third meal (not too much) after the fast is broken; it will help to regulate and assist the elimination to get started.

If the fast was seven days or less, it can be broken with whole fresh fruit, without seeds or skin, for two or three meals, and light soups the second day. The third day take green cooked vegetables, and very gradually ease into your diet from there. Even a fast of two or three days will prevent one from sitting down to a regular meal if you wish to feel comfortable. Breaking a fast should be considered as part of the fast, and it

should take approximately the same length of time to break the fast as the fast itself.

Remember -Drinking plenty of water is always important; also exercise and fresh air.

Now that we are back to our normal diets - there is another very important fact to remember, and that is TEMPERANCE, which is one of the fruits of the Spirit recorded in Gal. 5:22-25. I hope and pray that this time of prayer and fasting will also help us to bear much fruit because of our intimate union with Jesus Christ the Vine. (Please read John 15: 1-17).

There is another most important fast recorded in Isa. 58: 1-14. This fast is even more important than the abstaining from food fast. This fast is not an off and on fast, but a continuous fast. I pray that the abstaining from food fast and prayer will cause us to enter more fully into this fast of Isa. 58, and bearing much fruit as described in John 15.

I will never forget the results of prayer and fasting in 1947-1948 and prior to those dates, which brought about this present move of the Spirit of God in North Battleford, Sask. Canada. I was very honored to be present then, and to see the Holy Spirit move on to this present day. God is still moving us on from glory to glory and from victory to victory. This move of the Holy Spirit has spread all over the world and is continuing to grow. We are looking forward to the future with excitement, hope and cheer. Greater things are yet in store for them that love Him. Let us press on to the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, the Captain of our salvation. Praise His Wonderful name!

HEAR THE TRUMPET

Hear the trumpet sounding all ye soldiers of the cross,

Sounding from the mountain of our God; it is time to waken out of slumber and of sleep,

For our redemption now is drawing nigh,

Seethe evil forces now arrayed against the church,

Put on your armor and be brave and strong.

Christ will give command,

His kingdom is at hand,

Let us begin to sing the victor's song.

(E.H.W.)

**The booklet, "The Move of the Spirit of God" may be obtained from: Global Missions Inc., Box 934, North Battleford, Sask., Canada, S9A 2Z3.*

Looking For Better Day

By Crafton Lewis

During the past year many things have happened which have been the cause or source for 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, some we would dearly love to forget, and some, although we would love to forget, yet, because of the impact it 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, travesty of justice, brutal murders, kidnappings and crimes of all sorts. We have seen and heard about inhumane acts, indifferent attitudes and behaviour toward ones fellow man.

Heartless Horror

I guess topping the list would have been the horrific picture of the two planes flying into the New York World Trade Center, 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 will never be as it was 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 there will not be a repeat.

Likewise, there have been manmade disasters, which have destroyed lives and even left many in shambles.

The plague of AIDS is making more and more inroads in the world's population, wars in different places and much more happening. My, sounds very gloomy doesn't it?

Do you know that all of those happenings are true to the WORD of God?

Perilous Times

NB. Please note, scriptures are taken from the NKJV.

2 Tim. 3:1 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:

Yes, this is what the word of God said would be in the last days. Perilous times will come.

My message is not to get you scared, 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 what Jesus and the Prophets spoke about and seeing its reality.

I refer to Mat 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 BE'1"1'ER DAY".

This "BE'1"1'JR DAY" I make reference 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, God will be his refuge. I am reminded of the children of Israel in Goshen, in the land of Egypt, where in the midst of all of the plagues and disasters that were taking place, where in that said land the death angel was on the rampage, 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.

Psa 91:1-7 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.

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.

Eph 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."

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, that as Paul said, "its no longer I, but Christ living in me." Christ Himself demonstrated the power and authority He had when the mob came after Him, but were 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 Jesus 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.

Psa 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 to the earth. There is an overflowing of wickedness, but I am thankful to God, "where sin abounds grace did much more abound." 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 a believer who, though talking about the salvation there is in Jesus Christ, fails 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 maybe around us, a brighter day is coming, but only those who would have prepared themselves shall see the brighter day. Those who would 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, terrible judgment as the wrath of God is outpoured.

No one has to be a partaker of the wrath, the coming judgment of God. Jesus made it possible for the "WHOSOEVER" who would genuinely call upon and believe on Him, they shall 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 ones life that 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 Chris-

tians, there are things we hold in reserve, we have not totally surrendered our lives to the Lord. We need to lay them down at the altar of sacrifice. Give them over to Jesus Christ; 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 other way." This is what He said to Nicodemus "You must be BORN AGAIN. 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. (Hope our thinking is not just materialistic, but 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 knew and knows about them and told us about them. Heb. 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 unmovable; 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 enjoy bliss and happiness and a God forgotten judgment that is coming upon the earth.

With great anticipation and expectation I am looking beyond that awful time which, I am sure, many of us are aware we are entering into. God has made provisions for us; therefore, we should lay hold and not deny ourselves of our God-given privilege: at the same time, fortifying 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, the magnitude of which, maybe you and I may have done what his wife told him, "curse God and die." 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." 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, greater knowledge and understanding of God. Putting it plainly, he became a more perfect man than he was 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 ap-

pearance 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, which is removed, thus leaving the pure gold, shining and beautiful.

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

Mediocrity is not the thing God is interested in, but 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 being like Him. I 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.

Rom. 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." In the old KJV, it puts it this way,

Rom 5:3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

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. By his grace and power, we too, must overcome.

We are being prepared for the kingdom, Mat 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 Cor. 10:4 KJV For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through

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.

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 in regard to 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 and thus 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 scare tactics, neither was it to discourage them, but it was necessary for them to know the truth and be able to face the reality. That in itself should give them the strength and encouragement needed 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.

Rom 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 any one 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. O! God's master plan, it is incomparable. At present we see in the minor 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 Pet 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 awhile. 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:

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; here is what he said.

2 Cor 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."

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.

Rev 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**.

A Place of Protection

By Andy Snoke

Mat 23:37 *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, his name was Death; and Hades followed part of it, and the night in like manner. that killeth the prophets, and stoneth with him. And there was given unto them And I saw, and I heard an eagle, flying in them that are sent unto her! how often authority over the fourth part of the mid heaven, saying with a great voice, would I have gathered thy children earth, to kill with sword, and with famine, woe, woe, woe, for them that dwell on together, even as a hen gathereth her and with death, and by the wild beasts of the earth, by reason of the other voices chickens under her wings, and ye would the earth. of the trumpet of the three angels, who not!*

Jesus cried out to Jerusalem, and *that had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.* desired to cover them with His protective grace, but they would not allow it. *And the first sounded, and there followed hail and fire, mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of the earth was burnt up, and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.*

Jesus spoke of a day when men's *And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; and there died the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, even they that had life; and the third part of the ships was destroyed.* hearts would be gripped with fear. Luke *And the third angel sounded, and there fell from heaven a great star, burning as a torch, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of the waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.* 21:26 *men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world: for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.* Today, we hear *And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; that the third part of them should be darkened, and the day should not shine for the third* the word "terror" as never before, and truly the multitudes go about their daily routine wondering what may happen next, and to whom.

There is no fear in Christ. There is a secret place that is beyond the tribulation of the world." *Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself for a little moment, until the indignation be past. "* *Is 26:20.*

True, according to the Holy Scriptures, there is a time of great sorrow and tribulation coming upon the inhabitants of the world. And if we were to simply read the scriptures at face value, the book of Revelation could cause us great fear.

Some of the things that the world has yet to see according to the book of Revelation are:

Rev. 6:8 *And I saw, and behold, a pale horse: and he that sat upon him,*

However, according to scriptures, there are the glorious "called out ones", a first fruits company of believers that are destined to escape the tribulation that we just read. *Psa 91:5-7. 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 at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, And ten thousand at thy right hand; But it shall not come nigh thee.*

The good student of the scriptures should read the entire chapter of Psalms 91. It is a chapter of victory and escape from the terror that will grip the world. A child of God can literally be in the midst of tribulation, yet escape it altogether. Isn't that what happened to Noah? The entire world became victim to the Great Flood of judgment, except for the 8 souls that were safely in the Ark.

In fact, the Lord used the story of Noah just as he closed His discourse concerning the end of this age. *Mat. 24:37-42 "And as were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in*

marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall be the coming of the Son of man. Then shall two men be in the field; one is taken, and one is left: two women shall be grinding at the mill; one is taken, and one is left. Watch therefore: for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh. "

I don't believe that He necessarily meant that two men would be in a field, and suddenly, zap! One is evacuated to heaven while the other remained. But rather, just as He related the historical story of Noah; one would

be taken in judgment, and one would be protected. Psa 91:1-3 *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of Jehovah, He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in whom I trust. For he will deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, And from the deadly pestilence.*

There is a place of complete protection in Christ. Let us place ourselves in His complete care. John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful.