



September 25, 2005

### *Great And Sore Troubles*

Speaking of a perilous time that would come on the nation, Christ described the effect these things would have on people. “*And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; 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 21.25-26). Christ spoke of the destruction that would come on Jerusalem and the nation. As these things came about there were those who would be overwhelmed with fear. The world has always been in a state of change. Conflict, disaster and unrest have marked each and every age. In spite of this the word of God remains, to comfort, console and provide hope. This has been the message of God to all who will believe and serve him in spirit and in truth. There are many who think that there will come a time when such things do not occur but this is the natural state of the world and of human nature. God provides us a way to settle our minds and emotions, telling us that we have an eternal home that he will give us.

The psalmist writes, “*Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto thee! Thou, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth.*” (Psm 71.19-20). God indicates here that there are going to be troubles as long as we live in this world. We are reminded of the power of the Lord as he cares for us, even in the midst of problems and tribulations. This is something that is overlooked. Too many times we find people who will pursue things that will make them feel good for the moment, and then spend their lives in pursuit of those fleeting seconds. The servant of God is assured that even in death God will revive us if we have been faithful. To that end we work to reap that home where such things do not invade. Trials in the world, and in our own lives remind us that we are temporal beings in this place. The Psalmist tells us, “*But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more. My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof.*” (Psalm 71.15).

We have no way of knowing how long our life will last, or how it will end until that time comes. God has given us his word to warn us, guide us, prepare us and give comfort in the presence of danger and trial. We may not understand why some things happen. God has the power to put an end to all suffering and trouble and yet things happen that we try to attach meaning to and sometimes, mistakenly, interpret as being the will of God. God did not spare his own son from the torment and humiliation of being put to death as a common criminal, crucified with thieves, publicly ridiculed even in his last moments before his great sacrifice was completed.

The trials of Job are described in great detail as Satan destroyed his possessions, family and sense of security. God then appeared to Job and spoke to him in a way that we need to learn from. From a whirlwind God commanded Job, “*Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.*” (Job 38.2-3). In the presence of God, Job humbled himself, bowing to the authority and presence of his maker. We also need to be strong, to stand in the strength which God gives through his care, his blessings and his promises. We may not be able to understand why some things happen, and the only answer may be that they indeed have been permitted to occur. Regardless of this we need to remember that, like Job, we will stand one day before Christ and God in judgment to give an answer for the lives that we have lived. Those who fear, do so because they do not have the hope within them of God's promise. Trials allow us to consider our selves and to be joined to God if we have not obeyed him.

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