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God's Word for Today!

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THE BIRTH THAT PROMISED TRUE PEACE ON EARTH

T*HIS* is the season that we celebrate the birth of Jesus who was born in a manger some 2000 years ago. This babe was sent of God to become the world's Savior. The angels announced his birth to the shepherds keeping watch over their sheep in this way:

Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people: for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord . . . Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men. (Luke 2:10,11,14)

In this season filled with hope and joy we must take the time to soberly ask, where is the peace and good will towards men promised so long ago? It is God's truth that sets us free (from all fear) as Christians. Therefore, our object will be to shed some light upon this important question.

Each day seems to be moving us further and further away from this promised peace as terrorism increases all around us. Not only is escalating terrorism becoming a worldwide anxiety—but people themselves are feeling terrified just thinking about what is coming. *"Men are fainting from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world..."* (Luke 21:26) Random—yet seemingly well calculated—terrorist attacks appear to be giving the "weak" power over the "strong." Uncertainty seems to be the call of the hour!

WHAT IS TERRORISM?

TERRORISM is motivated by sociological or religious reasons—as opposed to criminal violence used to get money. Terrorism is aimed at civilians and is designed to inspire fear—as opposed to guerrilla warfare against military targets. Terrorism might be defined as being carried out by "sub-national" groups—not by the army of a country. Terrorism is designed to influence a wider audience beyond the victims of the violence itself. In a sense, terrorism is like theatre. Some have argued, "One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter." In principle, then, terrorism might be defined as, *"The weak say[ing], I am strong"* (Joel 3:10).

Although a "war on terrorism" was declared after 9/11, some have pushed to change the mission name to the "global struggle against violent extremism." Billions have been "invested" to "stop the terror." In any case, terrorism has not stopped; instead it has escalated.

As Christians, are we surprised? Do we have reason to question God's promise of world wide peace? No! The fact is our Lord told us that this time was coming when *"Men would faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world..."* (Luke 21:26)

TERRORISM AND THE CHRISTIAN

WE have no need to fear the terror by night (or day)! Why? Because the Christian *"abides under the shadow of the Almighty."* (Psalm 91:1) Under this condition—full of faith—we need not fear as our neighbors might for what will be happening next. Why do we have this assurance? Because the Christian's peace is not based on "homeland security," but in the security of God's will for him. Does the Christian feel that God will always miraculously protect him from physical harm? Not necessarily. But Christians know that Almighty God is in control of their lives and is not only all-loving, but all-wise and all-powerful.

Is this a selfish, self-centered love for themselves and their families? No, not at all! Christians who know God's plan for mankind realize that although a great trouble is prophesied at the end of the Age—beyond this trouble lies God's peaceable Kingdom. The establishment of this Kingdom among men, in the hands of our Lord Jesus and his Church, is the most momentous event of earth's history. This is the very reason we pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven". And praise be to God, this prayer that our Lord instructed us to pray will soon to be answered!

WAITING FOR THE END OF TERRORISM

IT'S a comfort for Christians to know that Jesus told his followers that when he would come at the end of the Age,

the nations would be in "perplexity" (Luke 21:25) and that at this time "Men would faint from terror..." (vs. 26). That word "perplexity" comes from a Greek word meaning, "no way out." In other words, man has no solutions. So when Christians see these fearful things happening in the world, what are they to do? They are to rejoice! Why would they do that? Because these are the indication that our deliverance is coming soon.

"When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." (Luke 21:28)

And when the Christian church (the sons of God) is completed (redeemed), then we have reached the time of the world's blessing, the very day they've been waiting for.

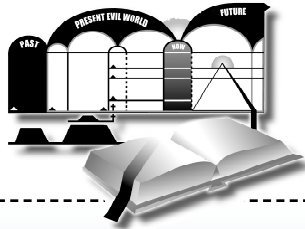
"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now . . . The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed." (Romans 8:19, 22)

Yes, people and nations are waiting and hoping for something better; they're scrambling for solutions to make "peace on earth." They're waiting for Jesus with the "sons of God," to come and bless them. This is God's plan for man, though they don't know it yet. But when that time comes . . .

"It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." (Isaiah 25:9)

In this blessed season we celebrate Jesus' birth, which took place long ago in a manger in Bethlehem. This babe was sent of God to become the world's Savior. His birth is God's assurance that terror will be eradicated and true Peace on Earth and Good Will towards Men will be fully established. All faithful Christians can rejoice in this promise because we know that all God's promises will come true!

Would you like to know more? *Send for the free booklet about **GOD'S KINGDOM.***



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