

## The Third Angel

A peculiar people - A peculiar victory

"The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him." Habakkuk 2:20. . . .

This is a sacred day, this is a sacred place and there is a sacred presence here. Where is our thinking at this very moment? How are we relating to God at this very moment? Are we communing with him? Do we know?

There has been a great change, not for the better, but for the worse, in the habits and customs of the people in reference to religious worship. The precious, the sacred things which connect us with God are fast losing their hold upon our minds and hearts and are being brought down to the level of the common things. The reverence which the people had anciently for the sanctuary, where they met with God in sacred service, has largely passed away. Nevertheless God Himself gave the order of His service, exalting it high above everything of a temporal nature. {CG 540.3}

The bible records many great victories and great deliverances by Jehovah on the behalf of his people when they exercised faith in him and his power to save to the uttermost in any circumstance in his time and way. Time would not permit for even a careful and full consideration of even one such occasion. We have the Exodus and the red sea, Joshua and the fall of Jericho. David and the philistines in 2 Samuel 23 verses 10 and 12. Remember Hezekiah against the Assyrians in Isa 37 also found in 2kings, 19 v 35 and 2 chronicles 32. 21-22. And what a deliverance what a victory was given him. These are just a few. Indeed the word for today tomorrow and always is "The just shall live by his faith." Habakkuk 2: 4.

**And the apostle John echoes it triumphantly in IJn 5:4** For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith.

It is God's purpose to give his last generation who keep the commandments of God and keep the faith of Jesus a peculiar victory over the corrupt powers of earth. That means they must be born again and must live by the divine faith of Jesus. That peculiar victory will be gained through the power of God and will be had by a people who live by faith in God and God in them who take hold of God's promises and the wait for deliverance in God's time and way. A people whose experience is living by the divine faith of Jesus and by his divine mind. This peculiar people will be prepared through daily and habitual communion with God, they will be empowered by the Spirit of God in the final work of telling to the world the virtues of him who did call them out of real darkness into the heavenly light and then they will stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.

As we get into this study before we go to the greater light the bible we will take in comments by Ellen white the lesser light which points us at every turn to the greater light.

"For those who thus lay hold of the divine assurances of God's word, there are wonderful possibilities. Before them lie vast fields of truth, vast resources of power. Glorious things are to be revealed. Privileges and duties which they do not even suspect to be in the Bible will be made manifest. All who walk in the path of humble obedience, fulfilling His purpose, will know more and more of the oracles of God. {MH 465.2}

Now this further counsel, "There are stormy times before us, but let us not utter one word of unbelief or discouragement.--ChS 136 (1905). And further "The world is becoming more and more lawless. Soon great trouble will arise among the nations--trouble that will not cease until Jesus comes.--RH Feb. 11,

1904.

Consider this word by the apostle in (Rev II:18) And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth.

Ellen White a century ago wrote these words of warning, "The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude. The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones.--9T II (1909).

And the Apostle confirms it when he says in **1Th 5:3** For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

We are standing on the threshold of the crisis of the ages. In quick succession the judgments of God will follow one another--fire, and flood, and earthquake, with war and bloodshed.--PK 278 (c. 1914). This crisis is brought to view in various places but more prominently in Revelation.

The question then is who shall be able to stand? Do we have an answer? Do we know who shall be able to stand?

Now listen as Zephaniah to the last generation in particular, "The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers." "I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord: and their blood shall be poured out as dust. . . . Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land." Zephaniah I:14-18.

In view of what is ahead it must be that only a peculiar people with a peculiar faith can be given a peculiar victory. Habakuk gives us an idea of the peculiar preparation to be gained in daily overcoming all unrighteousness resulting in a peculiar victory. This is the divine counsel to his peculiar people looking by faith through apparent despair ending in the final peculiar and victorious triumph. Let's read it with faith, hope and thankful hearts.

He says, "O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy. God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mt. Paran. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had bright beams out of his side: and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting." "Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed." "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the

Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength." Habakkuk 3:2-6, 13, 17-19, margin. Yes brethren, this is what it means that the just shall live by his faith.

Inspiration writes, "We are on the very verge of the time of trouble, and perplexities that are scarcely dreamed of are before us.--9T 43 (1909).

The mindset of the world and the unconverted professing Christianity is pictured in Isa 56:12 Come ye, *say they*, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to morrow shall be as this day, *and* much more abundant.

Therefore it is written in Rev 18:8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong *is* the Lord God who judgeth her.

Zephaniah, speaks of the results of continued apostasy and the judgments that are to fall upon the impenitent, and also points those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus to a peculiar victory ahead.

"Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you. Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." Zephaniah 2:13. Yes brethren this is the peculiar preparation for the peculiar victory unto a peculiar people in a moment from now.

Consider this inspired thought, "The consequence of sin, as seen on the cross of Calvary, would break a heart of stone, did the sinner but contemplate the scene. It is in this contemplation that a hatred of sin is born in the heart, and the Holy Spirit works at the same time to inspire hope through the plan of salvation. How much easier would it seem to the human mind for God to have destroyed out of the world the creatures he had made, and so put an end to sin! But the Lord chose the costlier plan. He gave his Son for the sins of the world; for though he hates sin, he loves the sinner." "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The gift of Christ to the world shows the exalted character of the plan of salvation. {YI, December 30, 1897 par. 5} Where is our view brethren? Where is my contemplation?

Let the student take the Bible as his guide and stand firm for principle, and he may aspire to any height of attainment. All the philosophies of human nature have led to confusion and shame when God has not been recognized as all in all. But the precious faith inspired of God imparts strength and nobility of character. As His goodness, His mercy, and His love are dwelt upon, clearer and still clearer will be the perception of truth; higher, holier, the desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought is transformed by intercourse with God through the study of His word. Truth is so large, so far-reaching, so deep, so broad, that self is lost sight of. The heart is softened and subdued into humility, kindness, and love. {MH 465.3}

Brethren we have come to the moment to do what the prophet Isaiah wrote centuries ago for us today. He says, Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you. Isaiah 35:3, 4. Now isn't that a word to take hold of brethren? I say yes and forever.

Now watch this word from Zephaniah again, "Behold, at that time I will deal with all them that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven away; and I will make them a praise and a name, whose shame hath been in all the earth. At that time will I bring you in, and at that time will I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I bring again your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord." Zephaniah 3:19, 20, R. V. this is a peculiar victory brethren. And our God will sing that chorus which says "here are they".

"Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing." Zephaniah 3:14-17.

And the word of peculiar hope continues in (Isa 11:11) And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

(Isa 11:12) And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

(Isa 11:13) The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.

(Isa 11:14) But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil them of the east together: they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them.

(Isa 11:15) And the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make *men* go over dryshod.

Brethren let us take this word of comfort with us through the lunch break, it will help us, "Then are they glad because they be quiet" (Psalm 107:30). Why? silence in the soul makes more distinct the voice of God. "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him" (Psalm 37:7). He is guiding you and I into a harbor of a gracious and a peculiar victorious experience.

Oh he has swallowed up death forever is this comforting word in Isa 25: v 8 He hath swallowed up death for ever; and the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the reproach of his people will he take away from off all the earth: for Jehovah hath spoken it.

And so in Isaiah 25: v 9 the prophet beholds the Lord of glory descending from heaven with all the holy angels, to gather the remnant church from among the nations of earth, he hears the waiting ones unite in the exultant chorus singing, "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."

And the apostle Peter almost two thousand years ago wrote the words of hope to this generation. He wrote,

(1Pe 2:10) In the past you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; then there was no mercy for you, but now mercy has been given to you.

(1Pe 2:11) My loved ones, I make this request with all my heart, that, as those for whom this world is a strange country, you will keep yourselves from the desires of the flesh which make war against the soul;

(1Pe 2:11) Dear friends, you are foreigners and strangers on this earth. So I beg you not to surrender to those desires that fight against you.

This word belongs to those who are victorious now and on the way to that triumphant peculiar victory.

What a salvation is revealed in the covenant by which God promised to be our Father, His only-begotten Son our Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit our Comforter, Counselor, and Sanctifier! Upon no lower ground than this is it safe for us to place our feet. {HP 137.5}

1Co 15:57 but thanks to God, who gives us the victory by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rev 15:2 And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, *and* over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

God wants us to think of ourselves the way he thinks of us. Let's do it brethren and let God have us as his people.

A peculiar people with a peculiar victory indeed. To God be the glory.

Yours for a peculiar victory

P L Blackman

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