



As It Has Been, So It Will Be

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Ever see a piece of fruit that looked wonderful until you cut inside, only to find it spoiled? External appearances are not always representative of what is under the surface. So it is with Believers today; what is seen in public may not be what is done in private, and increasingly, more church leaders are taking their people into a compromised version of Biblical faith. Unfortunately, Barna polls have confirmed over decades that the majority of Believers are still Biblically illiterate and so, ill-equipped to recognize a spin or slide away from the integrity of the Word. The old “frog in the kettle” analogy can no longer be used as a warning but more as descriptive of what has occurred.

This is not a new story, but a part of the repetitive history of mankind, which those who do study the Word will recognize. Just as is seen so eloquently in Judges, we live in a cycle of blessing, becoming complacent, then defiant until serious suffering occurs, only to turn, repent and receive blessing again. This is true on an individual level as well as nationally.

This cycle is inextricably tied to the behavior of leaders as the majority of people will follow without consideration of what they personally know. I have called them the “go along to get along gang.” In their desire to be like other nations, Israel, too, sought a king though God warned them of what a human king, unlike Him, would do. Of the 19 kings of northern Israel, and the 20 kings of southern Judah, most chose to walk in wickedness as their fathers; only 8 in Judah ever honored our Elohim. Some wholeheartedly brought reform and return to Him while others only took tentative steps in that direction, but their obedience prolonged their time in the Promised Land for Judah. Thus, many people today still confuse Judah (Jews) with being all of Israel, which they are not. We do know that Israel is our God’s timepiece, the apple of His eye and thus the indicator of where we stand in history.

The pattern of faithfulness, falling away and restoration holds from Adam and Eve who became poor, blind and naked—and knew it-- in their rebellion to become like God all the way to the last assembly of Laodicea who lived the high life and didn’t even know they were poor, blind and naked and in need of Him. These are physical pictures of a spiritual truth which is playing out today. One way to interpret the seven assembly’s messages is through the ages. Study it yourself, and see the parallels with our generation today. (See article on this topic on SAM website.)

We live in an age of apparent prosperity, and like Israel, especially in America, many have believed that God would never allow anything bad to happen here. Pleasant on the surface, much of the underpinning that has preserved this nation, has nevertheless been removed or neutered, as Biblical values have come increasingly suspicious, and viewed as dangerous, even fanatical. Those who hold to them were once revered though now reviled.

There has always been a tipping point in matters of national and spiritual soundness. If evil was moving, and stopped prior to gaining a stronghold, restoration could be made, though with great sacrifice. Many are familiar with Isaiah 11, which tells of the Branch/Rod from the stump of Jesse, who will rise up to bring restoration but few know that it was in response to what is described in previous chapters, the wickedness of the Branch/Rod of Assyria. A Messianic prophecy! The Word also tells us that just as at the time of the flood, and again at the Tower of Babel, the presence of evil at times required His direct intervention.

Here we stand today at the brink of another—the final?—direct intervention. Once again the prosperous people are lulled with appearances and easily deceived with smooth words while the core of strength and goodness has been steadily eroded. Maintaining daily normalcy causes most to deny what has been happening, and indeed what WILL happen.

If they know the Word and the Character of our God, they know that He is returning soon. He will not leave us orphaned! As thorns and thistles are used as an agricultural analogy for corruption, so are they a metaphor for wickedness that creeps in and subsumes goodness. 2 Samuel 23:5-7 relates that when there are thorns and thistles that have overrun the land, they can no longer be touched by human hands, but require the iron rod and fire of The One Who alone can destroy them. Thorns and thistles are also metaphorically connected with the “kings of the earth,” who desire their own power and destroy the earth. Is it coincidence that our Messiah will return with an iron rod and fire in His eyes to deal with evil?

When this happens, He will already know those who have trusted in Him and despite the judgment of the nations, they will be kept under His wings, which represents His prayer shawl, IF they have honored the ways of His Father which He specifically taught was necessary. They are one. He taught only what the Father taught. Like the parable of the 10 virgins, all knew He was coming, but only 5 knew how to prepare so that He would receive them. Which group will you be in?

Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, not our version of it. In these days of increasing darkness, our only Hope is Sure and Certain, if we cling to Him and His ways. Once again, the message given to the disciples by Messiah just before His death is salient and urgent today. ***Watch and pray!***

SAM has been focusing on these “watch and pray” points for about 3 years. We have a prayer poster reminder for you [upon request](#). Perhaps you will find them of value and encouragement as well.

He is Coming, Indeed!

Look for similar studies and materials at our website, www.set-apart-ministries.org