



CROSS CURRENTS INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES

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Dear Prayer Supporter,

Today I reflected on prophecies of our Lord Jesus Christ concerning future events.

It was in His Olivet discourse that Jesus addressed a threefold question posed to Him by His disciples (MATTHEW 24:3). In the overall sweep of things we could say that the first question pointed to the **Immediate Future**, the second to the **Intermediate Future**, and the third, to the **Ultimate Future** on planet earth before Jesus comes to establish His millennium Kingdom.

The Immediate Future

The first question the disciples asked was: *When shall these things be?* Their question was prompted by the prediction of Jesus concerning the magnificent Temple in Jerusalem from which He had just departed. Of this Temple, Jesus said: *There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down* MATTHEW 24:1,2.

Incredibly, these huge stones—each from 10-12 feet in length—were cast down by Titus and his invading Roman army in A.D. 70. So this first prophecy has already been fulfilled exactly as our Lord predicted.

The Intermediate Future

The next question was: *What shall be the sign of Thy coming?* This event awaits future fulfillment. The answer Jesus gave to this enquiry is found in MATTHEW 24:36,44. *But of that day and hour knoweth no man . . . Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.*

It was of that awesome day that the Apostle Paul later wrote: *For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord* 1 THESSALONIANS 4:16.

God does not judge a believer's sin twice over! The sin of the believer was dealt with at Calvary. And this was a Finished Work! Believers are assured that when Christ died on the Cross He endured the entirety of God's judgment for their sin. "Amazing love, how can it be that Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?"

Because of such wondrous love, all true believers will hear the clarion call of the glorified Christ: *Come up hither* REVELATION 4:1. After that *shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be* MATTHEW 24:21.

Recently Dorothy and I conducted Bible studies for a small group of Russian immigrants in our home-base area. In answer to their question, and to illustrate the imminence of the coming Tribulation, I asked them to imagine that as the sun was about to set they were approaching a great forest which embraced dark undergrowth. Long shadows would already be cast on the ground from the towering trees before them. These shadows, I suggested, were but a small indication of the impending darkness in the forest. Nobody knows how long those shadows may be, nor how dark they may become before the Church is called up *hither*.

The Ultimate Future

When referring to the *end of the age*—not the end of the world—the Lord Jesus told of events that will climax the present day of Grace. These include • Spiritual Delusion • Political Confusion • Agricultural Devastation, and • Biological Desolation. Today these realities are ominous shadows of the fast approaching Tribulation period.

- **Spiritual Delusion** *For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many . . . And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many . . . If any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there: believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect* MATTHEW 24:5,11,23,24.

The apostle Paul later amplified this salutary warning about forthcoming delusions by explaining its root cause: **Because they receive not the love of the truth** (i.e., the love of Bible doctrine) *that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie.*

2 THESSALONIANS 2:10,11

It is important to note that Paul did not say "a" lie, but **THE LIE** referring to a personage—the Antichrist. This counterfeit Christ is described as a "White Horse" REVELATION 6:3. Delusion indeed! The conquering Christ does not appear on the world scene until *after* the seven year Tribulation period. At that time the triumphant entrance of King Jesus, also riding upon a "White Horse," will herald the coming of a one thousand year period of universal peace and prosperity (*see* REVELATION 19:11). Yes, **peace** at last!

Realizing the great delusion that is presently sweeping the world, it behooves us all to devotedly *love the truth* (i.e., Bible doctrine). As you will have read Dr. Stephen Olford's comments in the Foreword of *Food for Faith*, the Word of God must be **appreciated, appropriated, and then assimilated!**

- **Agricultural Desolation** *What shall be the signs . . . of the end of the age?* Another answer given by Jesus is that *there shall be famines* MATTHEW 24:7.

Those who have never traversed the dusty roads of a famine-stricken countryside can never fully understand its devastating effects. Even television shots can never convey the absolute horror of famine conditions. Starving children; dead cattle lying in fields; the furtive eye of a farmer gazing into a cruel cloudless blue sky as the relentless sun casts its shimmering heat upon cracked, parched ground. Dorothy and I will never forget such memories of famine in Africa.

And we read that there will appear *a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand and a voice from heaven said a measure of wheat for a denarius, and three measure of barley for a denarius* REVELATION 6:5. This Black Horse will herald that period of time when one week's wages will only be sufficient for one day's food.

- **Political Confusion** Yet another sign given by Jesus is that *Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars . . . For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.* In the hour in which we live, wars involving

"nation against nation" have moved to coalition against coalition—or, if you like, "kingdom against kingdom." However, man's fragile coalition building of today holds no guarantee of peace and security for tomorrow!

And there went another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another and there was given unto him a great sword REVELATION 6:4. And some believe that this Red Horse rider may soon appear in this strife-ridden, war-torn world.

- **Biological Desolation** Another prophecy of Jesus in the last days was that there will be *Pestilence* MATTHEW 24:7. Recent Anthrax scares send shivers down the spines of many people. Though we may be in the evening shadows of the day of Grace, the forest of *pestilence* in its full-orb horror—whatever pestilence that may be—still awaits a Christ-rejecting world.

This will be in accord with the day of judgment when the *Pale Horse* whose name is *Death and Hell* appears: *And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the field* REVELATION 6:8. How terrifying!

But in His longsuffering, God still extends His day of Grace for you and me to rescue the perishing; to care for the dying; to snatch them in pity from sin and the grave; to weep over the erring one; to lift up the fallen; to tell them of Jesus the mighty to save.

CCIM News from Myanmar & Africa

You may remember how last year God opened the door for CCIM to print and circulate *Your Quest for God* and *Food for Faith* in Myanmar [Burma]. It all came about through a friend who now serves with his wife as visiting missionaries to that country. They recently shared:

The English editions of Food which CCIM paid for are now printed and being circulated as an "aid" in teaching the English language to Buddhists.

The Burmese copies of Food have been translated and printed and are being well received among the 8.7% of the Christian population.

At the time of writing, the translation of Quest into Burmese has also been completed. It is now on the printing presses and will be a "tool for evangelism" through the national churches. The cost of Quest in Burmese has yet to be determined and will be billed to CCIM.

Please join us in prayer for this wonderful opportunity to reach precious lives through CCIM literature. To help in your prayers—Myanmar has a population of over 45 million people. The average annual income is only 8% of the USA. Buddhism is the religion of about 83% of the population. A military dictatorship, closely identified with communist China, is the national political authority.

We will devote a future Prayer Letter to update news about CCIM's involvement in Africa. Suffice it now to say that presently—and as the Lord provides in the future—CCIM's African ministry has extended from Kenya to all across the African continent.

In July—the Lord providing and enabling—Dorothy and I plan to return to Johannesburg. There, it will be our privilege to minister to all of the African Directors of Trans World Radio. These national leaders will be gathering first for a spiritual conference with Dorothy and myself and then for the dedication by TWR's President/Chairman, Dr. Thomas Lowell, of the new TWR African Regional Offices.

Please pray as CCIM's books and AIDS tract are translated, printed and distributed to many African countries—as well as to elsewhere around the world. Through **your partnership** with CCIM these projects of faith become possible. Thank you so much!

Gratefully, in His love,

Richard & Dorothy Bennett