

'For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.'

Matthew 24:7-8.

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Theme for 2020 – By the Mouth of ALL His Holy Prophets

July 24th, 7pm

Subject: The Testimony of Isaiah

Speaker: Ian Shaw

Autumn Conference – September 25th, 4pm and 7pm

Afternoon Subject: The Testimony of Daniel

Speaker: Stephen A Toms

Evening Subject: The Testimony of Jeremiah

Speaker: Paul Toms

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Watching and Waiting

LIGHT FOR PERILOUS TIMES

SCRIPTURAL

Reformed, Protestant, Puritan, Prophetical, Expository, Doctrinal

Volume 29, No 15

July-September, 2020

Quarterly, £5 per annum

**This magazine is issued by the
SOVEREIGN GRACE ADVENT TESTIMONY**

(Registered Charity No. 261489)

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The objects are:

1. To teach the nearing approach of our Lord's return. James 5:8
2. To hold forth the Truth and to expose and resist error. Jude 3
3. To note passing events in the light of 'the Scripture of Truth.' 2 Peter 1:19
4. To unfold the Word of God by comparing Scripture with Scripture. Acts 17:11
5. To encourage missionary endeavour, and all service for Truth. Acts 1:8
6. To comfort and strengthen those who seek to stand with the Lord, apart from abounding lawlessness. 2 Timothy 2:19
7. To call for separation from false ecumenism. 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

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Where is Europe Heading?

Part 3 - Militarily

By David McMillan

One of Hitler's purposes in World War Two was to unite Europe under his control and he set out to bring that about by force of arms. Today we give deep thanks that in the providence of God that wicked campaign was opposed and failed.

However, it is very interesting and even strange that just twelve years later, in 1957, another process of European Union was formalised but in this process the nations involved willingly and voluntarily gave up their borders, laws and sovereignty.

The Formation of the European Union

It would be profitable to take a moment to ask the question, how has this diplomatic attempt at European Union succeeded when war failed? The Bible has the answer to this question in such verses such as Revelation 17:17, where we are told, 'For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.' These words have their final fulfilment in a future day, and they speak of the ten kings that will rule over the European Union in its final formation. However, we are told that, 'God hath put it in their hearts.' This is the reason that many European nations today have now such a desire to be a part of the European Union. This is the reason why many of these countries are now possessed with what can only be called 'European madness' as they freely surrender more and more control to the European government. It is because the Lord has put it in their hearts; it is all under His Sovereign control and is part of His Sovereign purpose.

Former Prime Minister Gordon Brown

In May 2016, during the campaign leading up to the Brexit referendum, the former labour Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, who was a son of the manse, urged the electorate, especially the Scottish Labour Party supporters, to vote to stay in the EU. In the speech that he made, he was seeking to give an outline of what he believed to be the progress that Europe had made over the decades since the second world war and he said, 'We have beat our swords into plowshares.' Mr Brown was suggesting that we have given up war and now we are working to advance Europe by commerce, business and agricultural trade. The latter is particularly the industry that is suggested by the plowshare.

It is important to make it clear that the words that Mr Brown quoted from the Scriptures that day, which are declared in the Old Testament both by Isaiah and Micah, do not apply to any part of this present age (Isaiah 2:4 and Micah 4:3). They apply to the future time of the reign of Christ upon the earth.

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European Army

However, do not be deceived in any way into thinking because the ‘European Dream,’ as some like to call it, has come this far already, mainly by political and peaceful means, that there will never be a European Army or future European wars or conflicts in which Europe’s military will be involved, because nothing could be further from the truth. The Prophetic Scriptures make it abundantly clear that Europe will again be marked by military might and many details of some of the battles that will be fought by a union of European troops are clearly set forth in the Bible. Just think of Daniel 11; it is one of the most detailed and difficult chapters in the whole Book of Daniel. The significance of the detail is that it gives us a very full account of what can be described as the wars of the Antichrist. It is very interesting and instructive to note, in that chapter, the references that are made to ‘forces.’ Speaking of the Antichrist, we are told that he ‘shall assemble a multitude of great forces’ (Daniel 11:10). Here we are given some idea of the vast extent of his arsenal and military might.

‘Shake Kingdoms’

When reading the Bible, it is important to keep in mind that most of the Old Testament characters are either a type of Christ or of Antichrist. When you consider many of those who are a picture of Antichrist you will see that one of their chief characteristics is that they were men of war. Nimrod ‘was a mighty hunter before the LORD’ (Genesis 10:9). Pharaoh came forth against Israel with all his chariots, horses and his mighty host (Exodus 14:7-9). Ahab died in his chariot when he foolishly went forth to reclaim the territory of Ramoth in Gilead (1 Kings 22:34-35). Many of these men were marked by their military prowess and so will it be with the Antichrist, the final leader of the European confederacy of nations. As Arthur Pink says in his book on the Antichrist, ‘before his exploits the fame of Alexander and Napoleon will be forgotten. None will be able to stand before him.’ He will conquer every army that stands before him so the cry of the nations at that time will be, ‘Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?’ (Revelation 13:4). In fact, Isaiah makes a staggering statement in reference to the scale of his military conquests because he tells us, ‘Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms’ (Isaiah 14:16). It should not be overlooked in this context that the name by which the Antichrist is most referred to in the Book of the Revelation is ‘the Beast.’ At least thirty-one times this title is used of him in contrast to Christ who is ‘the Lamb.’ Literally the name Beast means wild beast and it gives us a very clear picture of the blood-thirsty nature of Europe’s future leader.

Wars of Antichrist

Often well-meaning Christians state, the Bible has not much to say about the events that will precede the Lord’s return but how wrong they are in that assumption. In Daniel 11, we have set out at great length some of the future battles that will rage between those nations that will be found at that time in the eastern division of the European confederacy of nations. Consider carefully the words of verses 40 and 41, ‘And at **the time of the end** shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall

enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown.' We are specifically told that these verses refer to the time of the end, when Europe and its infamous leader will have great military might. We are told here of some of the great battles that Antichrist will fight and decisively win when he will be attacked both by the nations north and south of Israel. The most significant fact is that those European wars will culminate in the great battle of the ages, the most famous battle of all. That will be the last battle of this age and it will be between the forces of Christ and those of Antichrist!

Armageddon

This final battle of the ages is often described even by Bible teachers, as the battle of Armageddon but, be in no doubt, that title is not Scriptural. It is vital to see that the last battle of this age will not be fought at Armageddon and the Bible nowhere speaks about the battle of Armageddon. We often hear that term used, and the books and films of the secular world have done much to popularise the idea but that is only because they do not know what the Bible teaches. Let us establish the fact clearly. Armageddon is the gathering place of the armies, it is not the location of the final battle. In Biblical history some great battles are recorded that have been fought on the plain of Megiddo, or Armageddon in Northern Israel. For example, it was there that Deborah and Barak defeated the army of Sisera (Judges 5:19). Also, it was during a battle there with Pharaoh-nechoh of Egypt that King Josiah lost his life (2 Kings 23:29). Armageddon has been the scene of many great battles, but it is not the place where the last great battle will be fought. At that time, it will just be the location where the armies assemble. The Book of the Revelation reveals to us, 'For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty ... And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon' (Revelation 16:14,16). These verses teach us what place Armageddon has in the purposes of God at the time of the end and they show us unmistakably that it is just the gathering place of the armies. It is important in this context to point out that the word 'world' in verse 14 is the word for the Roman world. That means that the Antichrist will gather especially the armies from nations in the area of the old Roman Empire to this great battle.

The Place of the Final Battle

As we consider this future time and the gathering of such a mighty military force in the northern part of Israel, we must ask the question, why are they gathering there and what is their target? The answer is to march south some eighty miles to launch an attack on the city of Jerusalem because that great city will be the theatre of combat where the last great battle of this age will occur. The prophet Zechariah tells us plainly, 'For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle' (Zechariah 14:2).

Foreshadowings

Think of all the great military attacks on Jerusalem recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures. We remember that, in the days of Rehoboam, Jerusalem was attacked with a vast united, innumerable army made up of the Egyptians, Lubims, Sukkiims and the

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Ethiopians (2 Chronicles 12:3-4). Then in the days of Hezekiah, Jerusalem was surrounded by the Assyrians (2 Kings 18:17). These are all a foreshadowing of the last great European military offensive. There is even a great example in secular history, because what Titus did in AD 70, when he marched his Roman legions into Jerusalem and destroyed it, is also a foreshadowing of what the Antichrist will do just before the Saviour comes again.

Psalm 83

It is at that time that Psalm 83:4 will be fulfilled, 'They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.' This will be the evil desire and purpose of the Antichrist and his armed forces when they march upon Jerusalem. Just like Hitler and many others before him, Antichrist will want to exterminate Israel from the earth.

Revelation 19

The same event is spoken of in Revelation 19, where we are told, 'And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army' (Revelation 19:19). It is fearful to note that the Antichrist is, like Pharaoh in Egypt, so defiant that not only will he fight against Israel and 'make war with the saints' but he will also fight against the Lord Jesus Himself (Daniel 7:21; 8:25).

The First War

It is very significant that the first mention in the Bible of war is in connection with Shinar or Babylon, (modern day Iraq); which has ever been a nation that has been characterised by war (Genesis 14:1-2). However, not only has Babylon been involved in the first war mentioned in the Bible but so too will the future king of Babylon, the Antichrist, be involved in the final battle of this age (Isaiah 14:4). In that first battle in which the King of Babylon fought he did so in union with three other armies of which he was the leader. It will be the same in the final battle; the Antichrist will lead a confederacy of armies. If you think back to the Gulf war, the armies of many nations combined in a vast army to fight in Kuwait. Then the same type of military force was brought together again to fight in Afghanistan. There was a confederacy of nations fighting together, and we will see that type of confederacy in war increase and be repeated, especially in the Roman earth, until the last great military confederacy is formed, which will be the European confederacy, and their mission will be to fight against Israel (Psalm 83:5).

Divine Intervention

The Israeli army is a formidable force. You only have to think of their victory in June 1967 at what is known as the Six-Day War, but it is not the Israeli military who will defeat the army of Antichrist and win the last great battle. It will be the Lord Himself who will scatter this military force at His coming. When Israel came out of Egypt Moses told them, 'the LORD shall fight for you' (Exodus 14:14), and that is exactly

what the Lord will do for Israel at the end of the age. The prophet Zechariah, speaking of that time and of that battle said, 'Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle' (Zechariah 14:3). The Lord is coming to fight for Israel and that will be the greatest example of Divine intervention this world will ever have known; and at His coming Antichrist and his armies will be destroyed.

The Atomic or Nuclear Bomb

There is a very graphic description given by Zechariah of how the Lord will deal with the final European army, 'And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth' (Zechariah 14:12). Many well-meaning Bible teachers have suggested that this is a reference in the Bible to the atomic or nuclear bomb and its effects upon human flesh. This sounds very novel, but it is not what is being spoken of in that verse or any other of the Bible, because the Scriptures teach that the Lord will deal with this army and its leader Himself. This is another example of the importance of comparing Scripture with Scripture. The New Testament gives a very clear understanding of what the Prophet was speaking when it says, 'And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming' (2 Thessalonians 2:8). How will the Lord Jesus judge and destroy His enemies at His coming? He will do it with the brightness of His coming! In the previous chapter, Paul also warned that the Lord is coming, 'in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ' (2 Thessalonians 1:8).

What will be the end of the Antichrist, the one who with such defiance fought against the Lord? That is a very interesting question. The Bible records that in all history there were two that went to Heaven without dying; they were Enoch and Elijah. The doom of the Antichrist along with the False Prophet is singularly solemn because they both will be cast alive into Hell! (Revelation 19:20).

The Victory

These are fearful events but for the Christian there is no need for fear because men with their great armies and weapons of war will not destroy this world; not even the Antichrist with his great military might. God's purposes will not be thwarted or frustrated even by the most wicked leaders and the most vicious armies. In the Bible, the Lord has told us the end of the story and who the victor will be and this is what it says, 'And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war' (Revelation 19:11).

*(In the next issue of Watching and Waiting we intend to look at where Europe is heading **Spiritually**).*

The Testimony of Enoch

By Ivan Foster

(These are notes of a sermon preached at the monthly meeting of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony held on 24th January, 2020. The full message was recorded and can be downloaded from the SGAT website).

I must confess that I jumped at this subject when I was invited to speak this year. I have loved the verses 14-15 of Jude since ever I first read them. ‘And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.’

These words carry us back to the earliest days of this earth. Adam was still alive when Enoch preached this message. When we count the words written in the Bible about Enoch, we find there is not a great deal said about him. However, as is ever with the Word of God, very much is contained in the smallest statements. God calls His Word a seed. In every seed there are a million harvests and more!

So it is with God’s precious Word. Psalm 33:6 states: ‘By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.’ Even ungodly man acknowledges that the Universe is without boundary and we believe it all came about through the Word of God!

What is said about Enoch is small in volume yet mightily abundant in beneficial and blessed information.

I would like to highlight that best-known statement of scripture regarding Enoch. **‘Enoch pleased God.’** We find this truth regarding Enoch in Hebrews 11:5.

What a statement this is! I would like to make it the basis of our study. May we learn how it was Enoch pleased God and thereby how we may please God, for what pleased God some 5000 years ago pleases Him still today and will for ever.

In my daily Bible reading some time ago (it was last month), I read these words in John’s second epistle, verses 4-5. ‘I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had **from the beginning**, that we love one another.’

I thought to myself as I read the words that the directive given of God as to how we ought to walk dates back to ‘the beginning’ of the revelation of God to mankind. God’s Word is unaltered and unalterable!

How foolish and wrong are those who try to tell us that God has some new revelation for us, different from that which is found in His Word! The prophet Isaiah said: ‘The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the Word of our God shall stand for ever’ (Isaiah 40:8). ‘Change and decay in all around I see,’ said the hymn-writer, but the great exception is the Word of God. It shall ‘stand’ for ever!

Enoch Pleased God by Walking in Obedience to His Word

This distinguished him from all around. The world was walking away from God. 'And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually' (Genesis 6:5).

1. That it is stated that Enoch walked with God suggests that others did not! Undoubtedly, the spirit of Cain was what motivated many back in those days. Rejection of God's way of salvation, murder, polygamy and slaughter were already common (Genesis 4). There was no written Word in Enoch's day but an oral testimony of what God had revealed to His people was available. Adam would have been able to relate what he knew of God's will, though his knowledge had been greatly reduced by his fall into sin. However, he had received instructions from the Lord following that dreadful event. He was instructed in how dreadful his sin was and the dire consequences that had thus befallen all his offspring. He would also have been instructed in the means of salvation through the promised Messiah, and how that God was to be worshipped through the expression of faith in the promised Messiah, that faith being manifested by the offering of a lamb.

This oral testimony of God's will was rejected even as the inspired, written Word of God is rejected today.

2. Enoch was saved at the age of 65. 'And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: and Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters' (Genesis 5:21-22). How often the birth of a child brings home to the sinner that God is merciful, and the Author of life.

It would appear that as Noah was warned of God 'of things not seen as yet' (Hebrews 11:7), even so Enoch was warned of that same event for he named the child born at the time of his conversion, 'Methuselah.' According to many, the name means 'when he dies there shall be an emission,' or a sending forth of waters upon the earth to destroy it.

An essential aspect of walking with God today is our believing and acting upon the warnings of a coming judgment upon this earth. 'But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?' (2 Peter 3:10-12).

We must also warn our children and so teach them that daily they are reminded of this truth! How many Christian parents ever would act, when naming their children, as did Enoch. Yet this is part of pleasing God today!

3. Enoch walked with God for 300 years amidst increasing wickedness. What we read in Genesis 6, was surely beginning to show itself before Enoch was translated. 'And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every

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imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually ... And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth' (Genesis 6:5,12). What the Lord sees as sin, man does not!

This tells us that even in the midst of great sin and rebellion we may walk with God. As Joshua and Caleb feared God and followed Him wholly, even so may we find grace to live in victory and faithfulness to God amidst today's apostasy.

Enoch Pleased God by Contending with the Rebels of His Day

Jude says of Enoch: 'And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these' (verse 14). We may easily identify who is referred to by the word 'these.' The reference is to those 'certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ' (verse 4).

Jude traces their pedigree in the subsequent verses. This spirit of apostasy in the days of Jude had manifested itself amongst the angels, Cain, the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Hebrews in Egypt, Korah (Core), Balaam and in the days of Enoch.

1. Enoch preached against these apostates. This surely is a rebuke against those 'evangelicals' who remain silent in the face of today's apostasy or, worse still, associate themselves with them in cooperation and fellowship!

2. The preaching of Enoch was most plain! He called them 'ungodly' or ungodlike, which means 'those destitute of any likeness to God.' He spoke of their ungodly deeds and lives. He condemned their 'hard speeches' against Christ. The untameable tongue (James 3:8) is the chief weapon employed against Christ and His Word and His people!

3. He plainly declared their coming judgment. 'Behold, the Lord cometh ... to execute judgment upon all.' I have no doubt that he spoke plainly of the Lord 'sending forth waters upon the earth to destroy it' and explaining that the flood would be but a foretaste of a future and eternal judgment.

Enoch Pleased God by Prophesying of the Second Coming of Christ

Let every supporter of the SGAT note this and take heart!

1. I think that we can rightly conclude that the number of the faithful was small in the days that led up to the flood. Approximately 1000 years passed from the conversion of Enoch and 700 years from his translation, until the flood came. It is likely that when Methuselah died in the year the flood came, he was the last of the believers on the face of the earth with the exception of Noah and his family. I believe that likewise we are destined to live in a day in which the number of the faithful will decline greatly! Remember what the Saviour said, 'And shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?' (Luke 18:7-8). That is an ominous statement of which we need to take heed! Yet, dear Christian, what an honour to be one of this small band!

2. It was God's means of encouraging His saints in the time of trouble to have His servants preach of the Second Coming. That glorious event has ever been the hope of the Church. 'For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ' (Titus 2:11-13). The people of God need to be taught to 'look' for the 'the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ'! What a dreadful tendency there is amongst us to forget. Every Communion Table is a testimony of our forgetfulness.

How much the Church today needs the message of Enoch preached amidst the sneers of those who profess Christ yet belittle the plain teaching of the Bible on the return of Christ!

3. In these days when the return of Christ is openly denied, it pleases God to hear it preached. 'Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation' (2 Peter 3:3-4).

Here is the spirit of the world today and it has 'infected' so many of God's people! While they may not deny the truth of the return of Christ they deny what the Bible says about that imminent return. Instead of believing the simple truth of what God says they substitute 'spiritualisation' which, in truth, denies the reality of the Second Coming as it is set forth in Holy Scripture. The whole matter becomes a vague and mystifying event about which no one can really be sure of any element of it. That is, in effect, to deny the Second Coming!

The Lord Jesus Christ 'is coming again' and He shall come again 'in like manner' as He was seen to 'go into heaven' (Acts 1:11). Zechariah, some 2500 years ago, said: 'Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee' (14:3-5). The circumstances prevailing in Jerusalem at the time of the Saviour's return were set forth by Zechariah in the chapters 12-14. The glorious event has been long-planned and long-revealed to God's people but sadly, unlike Enoch, so many today are slumbering and sleeping and carelessly disregarding this glorious and wonderful and long-awaited event!

Dear Christian, seek to emulate the great man Enoch in these matters and thereby fulfil your highest calling – pleasing God!

Great Powers at Work in the Last Days

By John Douglas

Many recognise that as the years slip away, the signs of the end-time age must inevitably appear. Sometimes slowly with little observation, in other cases with drastic measures affecting the nations, these alterations take effect.

Looking over the entire stretch of time, especially from the late 19th century until now, significant changes may be noted. The map of the world has been changed, radically changed in some places, in this time-span, all within the agenda which God has set invisibly, inexorably into operation, moving on toward its inevitable consummation.

Often I think of the holy words of the apostle, 'the mystery of iniquity doth already work.' On occasions — unseen, then at other times, by public display, this 'virulent plague' we may call it, must, and 'doth already work' (*Greek: Energeo*).

This word 'energeo,' from which we get 'energy' in the English language, occurs about twenty-one times in the New Testament and is in a few places paired with 'effectually,' or a similar expression.

In Matthew and in Mark it is used in the setting of display, the showing forth of the mighty works of Christ. What then may be said, of the great imitator, the antichrist, who in time to come must replicate in his depraved performance the mighty works, in his case all done to exhibit his innate and awesome wickedness? He imitates the mightiness, but has none of the good.

In Paul's epistles, it should be noted, 'energeo' appears in Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians. In every epistle a mighty power is at work, whether it is of God, in holiness or in supreme good; or on the other hand, the menacing display of power, the hideous work of sin and the devil in the world.

The reference in 2 Thessalonians 2:7, which I have quoted above in relation to wickedness, may be contrasted with 1 Thessalonians 2:13, (chapter 2 in each epistle) where 'energeo' is translated 'effectually worketh.' In this instance, it is the Word of God, whose mighty influence — sometimes hidden, sometimes openly displayed, which is powerfully at work in the believer.

All the references to 'energeo' deserve closest and prayerful attention:

For example, in Ephesians 2:2, the devil is 'now working' (*energeo*); he is now working energetically, **effectually**, even mightily, in the ungodly. That he is 'now' working shows he is present at this moment in the world, and definitely is not in the bottomless pit. The programme within which he is presently working, as Ephesians puts it, is in parallel with the mystery of iniquity, which also, as Thessalonians reminds us, doth ALREADY work. There is an evil compatibility in this.

In Ephesians, the emphasis is mainly on the moral and spiritual corruption of society. There he is showing his total wickedness in men.

In 2 Thessalonians 2, prominence is given to his anti-Theocratic revolt, leading the world into open rebellion against God and against Christ, even against all that is called God. There the Man of Sin is showing '**himself**.' He sees himself as GOD.

How thankful we are to know the Lord is going to return in the fullness of His Divine Glory. The vile work of that wicked one will not continue, for the Lord will 'consume (*him*) with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy (*him*) with the brightness of His coming.' 'He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.' (2 Thessalonians 2:8; 2 Thessalonians 1:10).

(The above was part of a personal letter sent to the editor, who looked up 'energeō' in 'Young's Concordance' and found the study so interesting that he considered it would be profitable to share Mr Douglas' remarks with readers of this magazine).

The Coronavirus - A Comfort for Christians

By David McMillan

A Christian lady who had been caught up in an earthquake was asked afterwards if she had been afraid. 'Not at all,' she replied, 'it is only a little message from my Lord to remind me that Jesus is coming very soon.'

The outlook of that wise-hearted believer sets us, as the Lord's people, a very good example of how to view the crisis that is taking place at present all around the world.

Matthew 24

Matthew 24 is one of the great prophetic passages of the Bible and verse 7 teaches, 'For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.' In this verse we have one of only two mentions to be found in the New Testament of pestilences or fatal epidemic diseases and notice that it is spoken of in the plural. How relevant and instructive these words are to us in the days in which we live, when the whole earth is being drastically affected by the Covid 19 virus.

Characteristics of This Present Age

It is important to understand that when the Lord Jesus spoke of such fearful events as 'famines, pestilences and earthquakes,' He was not teaching that when these things happen His return was about to take place imminently. That is a mistake that is often made by Christians when reading these words. The Saviour very clearly stated, 'all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet' (Matthew 24:6). What the Lord Jesus is teaching us here in this chapter is the state of the world during the whole period

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between His Ascension and His Second Coming. What that means is that these are the type of events, including pestilence, that will characterise this long period of time, that has now already stretched for almost two thousand years.

‘The Beginning of Sorrows’

It is important to notice how the Lord Jesus Himself describes these types of events in verse 8 of the chapter because He says, ‘All these are the beginning of sorrows.’ Consider the words carefully because He teaches that these events are not the end; they are only the beginning. In other words, they are just an example of what is yet to come but in a far greater measure – especially what is to come in the final years before the Lord Jesus comes again, through what is known as the Great Tribulation.

Future Judgments

If you read carefully passages such as Revelation 8 and 9 you will learn about the sounding of the last seven trumpets that herald in, at the time of the end, seven great judgments upon the earth. Also, study closely Revelation 15 and 16 where we are told of angels pouring out the last seven devastating plagues from the seven vials. In those chapters you will get some idea of the awful judgments that will be delivered upon the earth at that time, and of the vast loss of life that will occur. Note particularly the very sobering fact recorded in Revelation 9:15 and 18, ‘By these three was the third part of men killed;’ which either refers to a third part of the nation of Israel or a third part of those people in the area covered by the old Roman Empire.

Great Comfort

There is no denying that these are very fearful and distressing facts and events. However, for the Lord’s people there is a great comfort and hope for us even amid all the darkness, and that is the Truth that all these unprecedented events remind us that Jesus is coming again.

‘See That Ye Be Not Troubled’

Let me encourage you with the Word of the Saviour because even as He was warning of the dark days and events that the future would hold, He gave this message of comfort and reassurance to His people, ‘See that ye be not troubled’ (Matthew 24:6). It is important to ponder those words prayerfully as you consider the current events around you.

Faithfulness of the Saviour’s Words

There are many today who are very troubled about the future effects nationally and internationally of the coronavirus, but the Saviour teaches that as Christians we should not be troubled. Let me tell you why you should not be troubled. It is because this virus pandemic should remind you of your Saviour and of what He said when He was here on earth. It should further remind you of the truthfulness and faithfulness of the Words

of Christ and of the Bible as a whole (remember the coronavirus is a fulfilment of what He said would take place). The current pandemic should especially remind you of the blessed hope of the Christian – the glorious Truth that Jesus is coming again for His people (Titus 2:13). The Lord Jesus said, ‘And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh’ (Luke 21:28).

Confession and Prayer for Church and Nation

By Anne Steele

See, gracious God, before Thy throne Thy mourning people bend;
’Tis on Thy sovereign grace alone our humble hopes depend.
Tremendous judgments from Thy hand Thy dreadful power display;
Yet mercy spares this guilty land, and still we live to pray.

Great God! And why is Britain spared? Ungrateful as we are;
O make Thy awful warnings heard, while mercy cries, Forbear!
What numerous crimes increasing rise through this apostate isle!
What land as favoured of the skies, and yet what land so vile!

How changed, alas is truth divine, for error, guilt and shame!
What impious numbers, bold in sin, disgrace the Christian name!
Regardless of Thy smile or frown, their pleasures they require;
And sink with gay indifference down to everlasting fire.

O turn us, turn us, mighty Lord, by Thy resistless grace;
Then shall our hearts obey Thy Word and humbly seek Thy face.
Then should insulting foes invade, we shall not sink in fear;
Secure of never-failing aid, if God, our God, be near.

Called Home

Mr Peter Frederick Robbins was called home on 9th January, 2020, age 93. He has been a loyal supporter of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony and from time to time has taken the chair at our monthly meetings. He has introduced various friends to these meetings and has also helped by giving lifts in his car to the gatherings. For some years,

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he worked for the Trinitarian Bible Society and was definite in his support of their endeavours to spread uncorrupted versions of Holy Scripture. In recent years he ministered at Bethlehem Chapel, Richmond until his physical condition prevented this.

Mrs June Mary Fleming, widow of the late Mr Hillis Fleming passed away on 25th January, 2020, age 81. She had trained with the Faith Mission and both she and her husband had served the Lord in mission work in Africa. They later accepted responsibility in various Free Presbyterian Churches including Dungannon, Mount Merriem in Belfast, and Liverpool before retiring to Wales. Mr Fleming spoke on the S.G.A.T platform from time to time.

Mr Harold Usher Evans went to be with the Lord on 9th February, 2020, two days short of his 97th birthday. For over twenty years he had faithfully supported the Gospel witness at Rhiwderin Free Presbyterian outreach in South Wales. He loved the preaching of God’s Word, evidenced by the efforts he faithfully made to be amongst God’s people, even attending a time of prayer just days before his death, despite his advanced years. He enjoyed reading and had a great passion for Mr B W Newton and Dr S P Tregelles, amongst others. ‘Watching and Waiting was amongst the magazines he faithfully perused.

Richard Monteith

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT: Legislation came into force in May, 2018 regarding information kept on database. We confirm that the record we hold of names and addresses of our friends is NOT passed to any third party but is merely used to send ‘Watching and Waiting’ and occasionally other small items of literature. Should any friend wish us to delete their details from our records, kindly let us know and that will mean that you will not be sent the magazine, etc.

S.G.A.T. Meetings: God willing, meetings of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony will continue during 2020. The theme for this year is ‘**By the Mouth of All His Holy Prophets.**’ We trust that friends will be interested in this chosen theme, and we would like to see others come to our meetings, which we expect to hold on the fourth Friday of each month except August and December. The Autumn Conference is in September, when we have an afternoon meeting at 4.pm. in addition to the evening meeting. All evening meetings are at 7.pm. Details of the meetings for this Quarter are given on the back page but so that you can insert the dates for the remainder of the meetings in your diary and arrange to be present, we give particulars which are as follows:

- October 23.....The Testimony of Micah *David McMillan*
- November 27.....The Testimony of Joel *Richard Monteith*