

Choose Life

If someone had come to us two years ago and told us that we would soon face severe lockdown in our own homes, not be allowed out at all except to buy food, and a little exercise; that the hospitals would be overflowing with a highly infectious plague that would take millions of lives worldwide, and that Britain and the US, the most technically advanced countries in the world, would be the worst affected, we would have scorned that suggestion as an impossibility. But that is what my own family is experiencing at the moment back in the UK, several of them with the virus.

It grieves me to think of the threat to their lives and that I cannot even travel there if I needed to. I know that most people would deduce nothing from the above facts, but that is hardly surprising when the Bible tells us that the whole world is deceived, misled and diverted from the truth by the god of this world. 2 Corinthians 1:21, **‘In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.’** Revelation 12:9, **‘And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.’**

Sadly, that goes for the churches too; not one that I know of has had the courage to come out and explain to the public that we have brought this scourge upon ourselves. Hosea 8:7, **‘For they sow the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind. The standing grain has no heads; it shall yield no flour; if it were to yield, strangers would devour it.’** Shortage of food will come, but we are already suffering. The book of Hosea is directed at Israel, and especially Ephraim, not the land in the Middle East, but Israel or Jacob’s *descendants*, the US and Britain, and especially Britain, and to a lesser extent her ex-colonies.

They were chosen by God to be His examples to the world, and they did carry the Bible there, but then they turned from God to materialism and rejected His word, Hosea 5:11 ESV, **‘Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in judgment, because he was determined to go after filth.’** They have made pornography their idol and preached perversions to the world, all under God’s sign of the rainbow. We would think sacrificing babies to ancient false gods was an abomination, but both the US and UK have sacrificed even more millions of innocent babies in abortion, to their own selfish convenience.

God tells His faithful ministers, **“Cry aloud; do not hold back; lift up your voice like a trumpet; declare to my people their transgression, to the house of Jacob their sins,”** Isaiah 58:1. But there are few indeed who obey. Today we are suffering the natural results of our wrong choices, perhaps because the Chinese, like ourselves, chose to

ignore God's food laws and consume flesh God warned us is unclean. We would be hypocrites to condemn them, after our own Christmas pork and prawns, the flesh of scavengers God designed and made to clean up our pollution, but God warns us clearly throughout Deuteronomy 28 that we can choose blessings or cursings, according to our right or wrong choices, and we are paying a heavy penalty.

We should be able to deduce from all this that despite Satan's evil influence, God still maintains overall control of that which is allowed to occur to mankind. Psalm 91:10, 'Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place— the Most High, who is my refuge—no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent.' Those who live their lives according to God's words need have no fear of covid, which is not to say we should not follow medical advice, including quarantine, which is of Biblical origin and invention.

Sadly, as one of His ministers who has studied His word for over 50 years, I know that almost all those who claim to be Christians do not obey His commands. They may have read over them, but they prefer the soothing, easy way preached by their faithless ministers, and the few who do open their Bibles, and they *are* few, do not carry out what they read, for that would make them different from the rest of their friends. Matthew 7:13-14, "Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few."

My mother was a gentle, caring Christian, a Methodist and regular Sunday keeper who would help anyone. When I learned that God required more than that; that I would need to follow Jesus and keep His Day as "Lord of the Sabbath", Luke 6:5, she said, "That seems such a narrow way." She was right in that His way places keeping his Laws above *physically* serving others. We must do that, but the *spiritual* service of God comes first, actually living by His Commands, otherwise, when we are judged, Christ will say to us, "And then will I declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness." Matthew 7:23.

No wonder that in the last page of the Bible, Revelation 22:12, Jesus says, "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work." People misunderstand grace. We can't earn our way into the Kingdom of God by our keeping of God's Law. That is required, but we all sin, and fall down from time to time. All we can earn is death. **God looks on our hearts**, and when we fail, and if we repent, through Christ He forgives us, washes us clean again, and counts us as Holy.

However, if our hearts are *not* right, if we have never struggled to overcome our weaknesses and sin by trying our best to keep God's commands in his word, (Don't confuse that with what your church may teach) God will not open our minds to His Truth. We will be set aside for the *Second* Resurrection, to avoid the unpardonable sin.

I have seen vast crowds, beyond counting, waving their arms and praising Jesus, convinced that they have God's Holy Spirit and are 'born again.' They have not and they are not, simply because they do not obey ([Acts 5:32](#)) and are still physical ([1Corinthians 15:50](#)). Many are 'good people', like my mum. Some may even keep the true Sabbath, but place the teaching of their church before the words of GOD! When presented with those words, I have heard them say, "But that's not what we believe!" How true that is!

The consequence is, though they would not believe it, that they have no relationship with the One who will **return for His Bride**. They do not understand the significance of the Firstfruit Harvest in Israel, which pictures the First Resurrection, and its difference from the Second Resurrection, pictured by the much larger, late summer harvest there, because they do not keep the Holy Days God's word commands, which were kept, as we can read in the New Testament, by Jesus Christ, His disciples, and all the New Testament churches, even those of the Gentiles!

Unless we have that direct, obedient relationship with our Saviour, we do not have the qualifications required of those who will take part in the First Resurrection. Revelation 14:4, '[It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb.](#)' The defiled are not spiritual virgins; they followed the false teachings of their churches, rejecting the pattern and example of their Saviour, claiming that they need not follow in His steps, because He was a Jew, cf. I Peter 2:21, '[To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.](#) NIV.

Consequently, most claiming to be Christians have no understanding that the First Resurrection is the very small Firstfruit Harvest of Christ's Bride, chosen by Christ from the relatively few faithful to his teaching, pattern and example! They alone are qualified to help Him rule and teach the remnant who will remain alive after the coming Great Tribulation.

God is the Master family planner, and the vast majority of mankind, who never understood the Truth, will be resurrected in the Second Resurrection and taught the Truth by the many who are converted during the Millennium, by those in the Firstfruit Spiritual Harvest!

So, we can choose to obey God now, and reap the almost unimaginable reward of becoming part of the Family of God, the very few with the Father's name written in their foreheads, (Revelation 14:1-5) who will **ever** gain that close marriage relationship with Jesus Christ, or we can, by deception and neglect, choose the wide road, as we saw in Matthew 7:13, where the word "destruction" does not imply annihilation, but,

“HELPS Word-studies,

Cognate: 684 apóleia (from 622 /apóllymi, "cut off") – destruction, causing someone (something) to be completely severed – cut off (entirely) **from what could or should have been.**”

The wide road leads only to the Second Resurrection and judgement, via the horror of the Great Tribulation. Don't throw away God's most precious gift by choosing lawlessness. That **special** reward will never be offered again, even if most will repent after the 'Second Resurrection'!

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