

HOPE

for a
Fear-Filled
World

Millions of young men fought and died in a global struggle which it was hoped would make an end of aggression and rid the world of fear. When the objectives of that struggle were announced, one of them was declared to be freedom from fear. It was a noble objective, but when the war which was fought to obtain it was blasted to a close by the dropping of those first atomic bombs on Japanese cities, it left the hearts of all filled with a more dreadful fear than had ever before been experienced by man. And, as though that were not sufficient to destroy faith in human objectives, the failure of every effort since to settle differences among nations, which, if not settled, will sooner or later lead to another global war, has caused that fear to increase.

And there is real cause for fear, for now the whole world knows that no nation can be

assured of immunity from destruction by nuclear warfare. The cities of the United States may well become piles of rubble similar to those which marred the beauty of much of that part of God's earth which is Europe.

And as everybody knows, while this in itself will mean a terrible loss of life, the aftermath of chaos would be still worse, for it would preclude the last possible chance the world has of even a partial recovery of economic stability.

NO EVIDENT SOLUTIONS

The fears of the world today are deeply rooted in the failure of human leaders to find workable solutions for the problems engendered by selfishness and hatred. There was a time — that is, prior to the First World War — when the wise men of earth were telling the people that the human race, by a process of evolution, were steadily progressing toward a higher state of civilization and that wars would soon become a thing of the past. The world is getting better, they said, and soon we will have a utopia of peace and goodwill, which has been the dream of the prophets and the song of the poets.

As proof that this bright outlook for the future was justified, we were reminded of the progress of

education and were told that an enlightened world would know better than to attempt the settlement of international disputes by means of war. We were asked also to consider the advancements in science, that this too would contribute to lasting peace among the nations. Furthermore, it was claimed that Christianity was making such rapid gains in the earth that soon the whole world would become so thoroughly imbued with the philosophy of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount that war would be impossible.

We know too well how all those and the many other claims that were made before the First World War have miserably failed. The horrible implications of these failures did not at first dawn upon mankind. The propaganda machines of the various nations engaged in the first global conflict saw to it that the minds of the people were turned away from the stark fact that a world had begun to come to an end. We were told, for example, that the war was caused by nations which were not ruled by democratic forms of government, and that in order to prevent another such catastrophe we must now wage war to the bitter end to make the world safe for democracy. This sounded good, because all would like to see the world safe for democracy, for, after all, democracy is the best form of government

known to man. But the world was not made safe for democracy. Most of the European world was, instead, made safe for dictatorship. The only real change which had been forced by the First World War was that hereditary ruling houses gave place to dictators; and these were quite willing to, and did, plunge the world into another war. The forces of democracy had actually lost ground as a result of the First World War, and, in the emergency, even these United States became threatened with dictatorship — at least, so said the politicians. In any case, the world was not made safe for democracy.

The forces of science, education, and religion have failed to prevent the second global struggle in one generation. We were told that in a world where there was no want and no fear, and where both individuals and groups were free to say and publish what they thought would be for the best interests of all, there would be no causes of war. So, through war, there was an energetic effort to make the world free from want, free from fear, and to give it freedom of expression along political and religious lines. It was a noble task, but it failed. Now, while we are enjoying a fitful, uncertain peace, it is a peace that is threatened on the one hand by the fact that so large a portion of the human race is slowly starving to death, and

on the other hand because so many nations have unstable economies after emerging from behind the iron curtain of censorship and continue to have suspicions and misunderstanding, which are the seeds of war. Meanwhile, fear grows apace, so that even the most fortunate of the nations are by necessity burdened with the maintenance of gigantic military organizations, in order, as they claim, to prevent war, or in case they fail in this, to be ready for war, when they can no longer hold out against its inevitability, occasioned by the fears and wants of a chaotic, starving world.

OUR DAY IN PROPHECY

While this time of fear and distress came upon the world unexpectedly and despite the claims of an ever-advancing civilization, it was not a surprise to careful students of the Bible; for throughout its pages God's inspired prophets had predicted it. The Prophet Daniel, for example, foretold this very era in human experience and described it as a "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." (Dan. 12:1) Jesus quoted this prophecy of Daniel, and explained that its fulfillment would be at the time of his Second Presence and the end of the age.

Jesus outlined some of the details of this time

of trouble, saying that there would be upon the earth “distress of nations, with perplexity,” and that the hearts of the people would fail them for fear as they looked forward to the things coming upon the earth. (Luke 21:25, 26) Jesus’ reference to the fear that would fill the hearts of the people is sufficient to indicate that he was referring to the present time, for never before has there been such widespread fear on the part of the people, especially the leaders, as there is today. When Jesus said there would be upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity, he illustrated this thought by likening it to the roaring of the sea and the waves. This is a very apt symbol indeed of the restless, discontented masses of mankind today as they strive hopelessly to avert the havoc which they fear will be wrought by the onrushing tide of human selfishness implemented by the very science that at one time boasted its ability to lead the world into peace and goodwill.

The Prophet David also foretold this time in which we are living; and, like Jesus, he too likened the chaos of the world to the relentless lashing of the sea and waves, as the clamorous demands of men and nations strike out against the bulwarks of a civilization that was once thought to be impregnable. David’s prophecy is

addressed to those who have faith in the Word of God, and of those he declares, “Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.” — Ps. 46:2,3

“We will not fear,” declares the prophet. As Christians, we need not fear what is coming upon the earth; that is, we will not fear if we acquaint ourselves with the prophecies of the Bible and have faith in what they declare concerning today and tomorrow. The prophecies of the Bible contain the only genuine explanation of the cause of present world distress, and furnish the only hopeful view of the final outcome of this present dark period of fear. To know the plan of God pertaining to human destiny is to have peace and joy in our own hearts, despite the fear with which we are surrounded, and also be in a position to radiate comforting assurance to others. According to the Bible, what is to be the outcome of this tragic time of fear and distress? It has been said that this present time has a rendezvous with destiny. This is right, but God holds the controlling hand over that destiny, and the implications are so far-reaching that the imagination is almost

staggered when we try to grasp them. Briefly stated, the facts, as pointed out in the Word of God, are these:

We are reaching the end of an age in the plan of God. Yes, even more than that, we are reaching the end of the world. It will not be, as many once erroneously supposed, the end of the earth (Eccles. 1:4), but the end of Satan's rulership over the earth, which is to be supplanted by the rulership of Christ. We are now living at the time of his return and the preparation for the establishment of his kingdom.

THE SIGNS OF HIS PRESENCE

When Jesus foretold the characteristics of our day, declaring that it would be a time when the hearts of the people would be filled with fear, it was in answer to questions asked him by his disciples. Those questions were: "What shall be the sign of thy presence, and of the end of the age?" (Matt. 24:3) In quoting these questions we have used a correct translation of the Greek words used. In the *Authorized Version* of the Bible this passage is mistranslated to read, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" However, the disciples were not asking how they might know when

the time was near for Jesus to return, but rather, how they would know when he had returned.

The Master's answer to these questions furnishes the only reliable explanation of present world conditions and the only genuine hope of better days to come. It reveals that we are nearing the end of the present age and the time of his Second Presence. This, in turn, means that the time is near for the fulfillment of those many promises of God's Word which tell of the blessings of peace and joy and life which will be made available to mankind as a result of the coming thousand-year reign of Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

This does not mean that Jesus will reign on the earth as a man. His first visit to earth was as a human being, in order, as he explained the matter himself, that he might give his flesh in death for the life of the world. (John 6:51) But having provided the means of release from death by the sacrifice of his humanity on Calvary's cross, he was raised from the dead a glorious divine being, of the same nature as the Creator himself, "whom no man hath seen nor can see." - 1 Tim. 6:16

By an altogether too literal interpretation of some of the prophecies of God's Word, very crude conceptions of Christ's Second Advent

have been developed. It has been supposed by some that when he returned he would be seen as a man suspended in the skies, and simultaneously there would be tremendous upheavals of nature in the heavens and on earth which would dwarf in destructiveness anything man has ever been able to accomplish, even by the use of the nuclear bomb.

Now we see, however, that the prophecies which were used as a basis for this erroneous concept of the Second Advent of Christ are symbolically descriptive of the upheaval of man-made institutions which have formed our civilization. It is this that the prophecies describe as the end of the world — not the end of the earth, but what the Apostle Paul describes as “this present evil world.” (Gal. 1:4) Jesus referred to Satan, the Devil, as the “prince of this world,” hence the end of the world means the end of Satan’s empire, the end of his sovereignty over the minds and hearts of men. — John 12:31

Every Christian should be glad to note any evidence tending to show that the end of the world is near. All mankind will rejoice when they realize that Satan’s world has come to an end; for then they will have the opportunity of becoming citizens in a new world — not another

humanly-constructed civilization, but a new order in which the authority and the laws will be those of the kingdom of Christ.

The world that is even now coming to an end has never been entirely satisfactory, not even to those who have been most enthusiastic in their efforts to perpetuate its existence. True, there has been much good in it, but sin and evil have predominated. Sickness, pain, and death have been the dreaded heritage of all. Hatred and war blighted the happiness of the people and destroyed the peace of the nations.

Fear of worse things to come, both here and hereafter, has helped to rob men and women of the joy which temporarily, at least, might otherwise be theirs. Truly, as the Scriptures declare, it has been an evil world, and the more we study its characteristics the more we realize that Jesus knew what he was talking about when he declared Satan to be its prince.

Yes, we can all be glad that such a world is coming to an end, and that, as the Scriptures declare, its ruler is to be bound and finally destroyed. Jesus said that those living at this time who had faith in his Word, when they saw the things transpire which he foretold, should lift up their heads with hope and rejoicing, for the time of their deliverance, and the

deliverance of mankind, from sin and death would be near.

ENEMIES DESTROYED

In an inspired prophecy of Christ's kingdom given us by the Apostle Paul he declares that Christ must reign until all enemies are put under his feet and that the last enemy to be destroyed is death. (I Cor. 15:24-26) This indicates that one purpose of the reign of Christ is for the destruction of enemies — enemies of God, of man, and of righteousness. While death will be the last of these enemies to be eradicated by the rulership of Christ, other enemies will be destroyed prior to that time, and among the first of these are the selfish and sinful institutions of earth which stand in the way of Christ's rulership of justice and righteousness. The destruction of these implies temporary trouble and distress to the people who have been held in bondage by them. It is this that is described by the Prophet Daniel as "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation." — Dan. 12:1

In the prophecy of the Second Psalm, Jesus is referred to as the great king of earth whom God has appointed to rule. It was prophesied that before he began his reign in power and glory the nations of the world would be experiencing

a time of “tribulation” such as was not “since the beginning of the world to this time.” (Matt. 24:21) In connection with this foretold catastrophic overthrow of an order of things, this generation has already witnessed the destruction of many of the hereditary ruling houses of Europe, and the chaos in world affairs which has followed. In Jesus’ own prophecy of these events he declared that all the tribes of the earth would mourn because of his presence, and we see the beginning of this mourning today in all the countries of the world.

But we can thank God that this distress is only temporary. The return of Christ was designed to bring peace and joy and life to a dying world — and this will be the ultimate result. But to accomplish this, a new rulership must be established, and this calls for the overthrow of that rulership in which Satan has been the unseen and, in most instances, the unrecognized prince.

If you have ever wondered why the statesmen of the world, enjoying all the advantages of twentieth-century culture and education, have not been able to snap the world out of its tailspin toward destruction, the answer is found in the prophecies of the Bible. The answer is that a divine influ-

ence has intervened in the affairs of men in preparation for the establishment of a new order — an influence that is gradually being exerted through the invisible presence of the divine Christ.

But the overthrow of the institutions of sin and selfishness — those institutions which have fostered oppression and war — is only the beginning of the work of the divine Christ. It is like the surgeon's knife used to save the life of a dying patient. For approximately six thousand years the human race has been dying. Man himself has not been able to find a remedy for the poisonous sting of sin which is inflicting death upon all. Now Christ, the Great Physician, has come to change all this, and the first necessary move is to place mankind, the patient, in a new environment, and under just and righteous laws. It is the preparation for this that is causing the breakdown of human authority everywhere throughout the world.

IN THE LAST DAYS

The only ones who as yet know the meaning of what is occurring in the earth are those who by faith are prepared to accept the testimony of the Word of God. To these the prophecies of the Bible are as a beacon light telling them

that, despite this darkest of all periods man has ever experienced, a glorious new day is about to dawn. This will be a day in which the blessings of health, joy, peace, and life will radiate from the presence of Christ, the new king, that glorious, divine ruler prophetically described as “the Sun of righteousness,” who will “arise with healing in his wings.” — Mal. 4:2

Eventually, however, and not long hence, we believe, all mankind will begin to realize that there is a power being exerted in the affairs of men which supersedes that of humanly-constituted governments. This will become apparent through the continued failure of human efforts to reestablish any permanency of peace and security among men.

The rulers of the world today still imagine that they are more or less the masters of human destiny, that their wisdom and the impressive strength of their armies will be able to impose peace upon the nations. God’s way of establishing peace is still scorned by the wise of the world. But as all their efforts continue to end in failure, gradually they will begin to look up to a higher authority for help. This, which is still a future development in the momentous time in which we are living, is described by the Prophet Micah as follows: “In the last days it

shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it.” — Mic. 4:1-4

This is a very comprehensive and reassuring prophecy which, in the light of current events, will soon be fulfilled, to the everlasting joy of all mankind. First, notice the time identification: “In the last days it shall come to pass.” This prophetic expression, the last days, does not refer to the traditional crack of doom, nor to the destruction of this earth, nor to the end of human existence on the earth. It does have refer-

ence to the last days of Satanic rulership over the people, the last days of sin and death, the last days of war, and the last days of all those evils which have plagued the human race from the days of Eden until now.

THE PRESENT TIME

We are even now living in the beginning of these prophetic “last days,” and have already witnessed the destruction of some of the evils which have afflicted most of the nations. The hereditary ruling houses of Europe, which oppressed the people in the name of God (but by their actions gave every evidence of being inspired by the Devil), have already come to an end. And as the divine purposes progress in these last days, we will eventually witness the end of totalitarian dictatorship, whether communistic, fascist, or otherwise. We will also see the last of war, and the last of the blighting fear which now fills the hearts of the people.

Yes, the last days foretold in the prophecies are a glorious time in which to be living, and ere long it shall come to pass, even as the prophet has declared, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and people shall flow unto it. The mountain of the LORD is the

kingdom of the LORD. Daniel, in the second chapter of his prophecy, symbolically depicts human rulership over the earth by a glamorous, humanlike image, and the end of this rulership is pictured by the destruction of this image. The instrument of destruction is shown to be a stone, which ultimately grows until it becomes a great mountain which fills the whole earth. In his interpretation of this wonderful prophecy, Daniel tells us that this mountain which fills the whole earth is the kingdom of God.

The Prophet Micah describes this mountain, or kingdom of the LORD, as the mountain of the house of the LORD. This house of the LORD is God's ruling house, made up of those whom the Scriptures identify as his own family of sons. Jesus is chief among these, and together with him will be those who have accepted the invitation to suffer and die with him. To these the promise is given that they shall live and reign with him. The Apostle Paul reassures the followers of the Master on this point, saying, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." — Rom. 8:16, 17

Miracle-working divine power guarantees the success of this new government. Satan thought he had killed Jesus, the Prince of peace and King of kings, but divine power raised him from the dead. Those who have suffered and died with him are raised from the dead in what the Scriptures designate, the “first resurrection,” that they might live and reign with Christ. — Rev. 20:6

In a prophecy descriptive of the victorious rulership of Christ’s kingdom, Isaiah tells us that “the zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.” (Isa. 9:7) When we consider that the power of God has already raised the King of kings from the dead and that divine power is likewise used to restore his associate rulers to life, can we doubt the ability of the LORD to fulfill all his good promises through him? Surely not!

IN THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAINS

Let us take further note, therefore, of what has been promised. The Prophet Micah declares that this ruling house of God shall be established in the top of the mountains, or kingdoms — that is to say, it will occupy a controlling position in the affairs of all nations, for, as Isaiah states, “Of the increase

of his government and peace there shall be no end.” — Isa. 9:7

“And people shall flow unto it,” continues Micah’s prophecy. Human experience thus far has been that when imperialistic governments sought to extend their spheres of influence over other nations, many fled for refuge into other countries. But it will not be so in the case of Christ’s kingdom. As the people learn of its extending power they will, as the prophet declares, flow into it.

Giving us further details along this same line, the prophecy continues, “And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,...and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.” By the time this portion of the prophecy is fulfilled, the nations will have learned the futility and folly of their own ways. Failure having attended their every effort to save the world from chaos and ruin, they will then be ready to look to him alone who can provide the solution, even Christ, the one who by that time will be recognized as the rightful king of earth.

And when the nations are willing to learn the LORD’S ways and apply them, what will be the result? It will be a most happy result, for the prophecy declares that they will beat their

swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks, and that they shall learn war no more. Human wisdom has always contended that the only way to keep the peace is to be prepared for war, but this order will be reversed by earth's new king, for as the nations come under the hallowed influence of the kingdom laws, the resources of the earth, which formerly were diverted to provide the sinews of war, will be used to supply the people with the necessities of life.

Neither shall they learn war any more! Think of the far-reaching changes in human outlook and experience these few words imply! They do away with peacetime conscriptions and wartime drafts. They assure the mothers of all nations that they will not be raising their sons to be used as cannon fodder. They do away with militarism in all its ugly forms. They take away fear from the hearts of the people, for all realize that when the nations no longer learn war, they will not engage in war. Thank God for a program of education which omits from its curriculum the strategy of war!

UNDER VINE AND FIG TREE

Because the people will then learn and practice the ways of peace and righteousness they will have economic security. This assurance is given us in that beautiful picture of every man sitting under his vine and fig tree. This is just another way of saying that under the administration of Christ's kingdom the resources of the earth will be available to all and that the rights of all to share in those resources will be guaranteed by the laws of the divine kingdom. Because this will be true, the prophecy adds, "And none shall make them afraid." Thank God for this assurance of freedom from fear.

None shall make them afraid! Fear of aggression haunts the minds of all people today, and this fear is not limited to the possible or threatened aggression of nations. Economic aggression, with its resulting price gouging, inflicts equally severe suffering upon the masses. So fear, engendered by man's inhumanity to man along many lines, continues to destroy the heritage of peace and joy which is the right of every human being, whose original parents were created in the image of God. Under the laws of Christ's kingdom that right will be restored, for then none shall make them afraid.

DEATH DESTROYED

As beautiful and reassuring as the prophecy of Micah is, it does not present the full plan of God pertaining to human destiny under the rulership of Christ. A world without war and the fear of war would be a vastly better world than the one that is now coming to an end. And if we added to this the certainty of economic security for all, we would have a world of the sort that philosophers have dreamed about but could never establish. However, there would still be other fears, as well as sorrow and pain and death.

Yes, there would still be the fear of death, and because of the grotesque teachings of the Dark Ages, there would be fear of what lies beyond death. There would still be the need for hospitals and doctors and morticians. But thank God for the other promises of his Word which assure us that even sickness and death, with all their attendant evils, are to be destroyed by the reign of Christ.

We have already noted Paul's assurance of the destruction of death in the kingdom of God. Now note the prophecy of Isaiah 25:6-9. In the prophecy, even as in the prophecy of Micah, the kingdom of the LORD is symbolized by a mountain, and we are told that in this mountain,

death will be swallowed up in victory, and that “the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces... And it shall be said in that day,” continues the prophet, “Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him,...we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

This hope of salvation for a dying race is referred to by the Apostle Peter in the New Testament. In Peter’s prophecy, he tells of the purpose of Christ’s Second Advent, that it will bring about what he describes as “times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:19-21) We are indeed glad for the information that the second coming is not to result in the destruction of everything, including the earth, but rather, the restitution or restoration of all things. This will mean restoration to health for the living, and also the resurrection of the dead.

The second presence of Christ is already resulting in the destruction of this present evil order of things preparatory to his rulership of justice and love. But this is the destruction merely of the selfish institutions of men. The human race, the living and the dead, if obedient to God’s laws, are to be restored to that which was lost because of sin. Man did not lose a

home in heaven, but on earth. The earth was made for man, and when man was created he was given dominion over the earth. But this dominion, and his life also, were lost as a result of sin. This lost paradise is to be restored, and it is this work of restoration which is described by the Apostle Peter as “times of restitution of all things,” He declares that this grand purpose of God had been foretold by his holy prophets since the world began, one of the examples of this prophetic testimony being God’s promise to Abraham.

Another of these prophetic utterances descriptive of restitution blessings coming to the people under the administration of Christ’s kingdom is that which has already been quoted — that blessed promise that death will be swallowed up in victory, and that the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces. Think of the change in human experience that will be! God will wipe away the tears of the people by removing the cause of their sorrow; and think of the many causes of sorrow there are in the world today and what it will mean to all mankind when these are removed!

THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS

Another of God's prophets, in describing the times of restitution, declared that "the desire of all nations shall come." (Hag. 2:7) All nations desire peace; they desire security against aggression; they desire prosperity for their people; and the Prophet David declares of earth's new king, Christ Jesus, that "he shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor." — Ps. 72:4

In another restitution promise, the Prophet Isaiah declares that then — that is, during the reign of Christ and his church — "shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing." He also says that the "eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped." (Isa. 35) This, doubtless has reference to those who are blind and deaf to the things of God. Of these there are millions, for the Apostle Paul tells us that the god of this present evil world, who is Satan the Devil, has blinded the eyes of all who believe not, and thus has prevented them from knowing and loving and praising the true God of love. -11 Cor. 4:4

Another of God's prophets, describing the blessings of restitution from still another

angle, says of that thousand years of Christ's reign that then the knowledge of the glory of the LORD shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. (Hab. 2:14) No longer will the people worship a diversity of gods and sponsor conflicting religious beliefs. On this point another prophecy declares that God will "turn to the people a pure language [or message]," and that they will "call upon the name of the LORD to serve him with one consent." (Zeph. 3:9) Then the people will be free to worship and serve the true God of love with their whole heart and with true understanding.

In the Book of Revelation we have another wonderful promise of the blessings that will come to the people during the reign of Christ. It declares that then "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." — Rev. 21:4

It is difficult to imagine a world in which there is no death, but God has promised that it shall be so, and we believe it and take courage. If such a promise were made by one less powerful than God we might be justified in doubting. But the Creator is able to fulfill such promises, for he is the fountain-source of life. "In him we live, and move, and have our being," declared

the Apostle Paul. — Acts 17:28

We do not understand what makes us live, and what gives us strength to move, but God does, and he is abundantly able to give life everlasting to all who will obey the laws of Christ's kingdom. And it is just this that he has promised to do. It is for this purpose that Christ returns and establishes his kingdom. The Scriptures state, however, that any who, under the favorable conditions of that time, refuse to believe and obey will, as Peter puts it, "be destroyed from among the people." (Acts 3:23) Everlasting life will be given only to those who qualify through belief and obedience.

A MESSAGE OF HOPE

And this is the glorious hope which can now be held out to the people of a distressed and fear-filled world. It is a glorious hope, and in proclaiming it we are following the suggestion of the prophet when he wrote, "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you." — Isa. 35:4

One of the descriptive names given to our day in prophecy is the Day of Vengeance. It is a time when God's righteous anger is being

manifested in the overthrow of age-old systems and institutions of sin and oppression. While fear and distress are experienced by the people as a result of the uprooting of this present evil world, the ultimate purpose of God is to save the people from sin and death through the establishment of Christ's kingdom. Hence we can say to the world today, to this fear-filled world, "Fear not," for divine intervention in the affairs of men will soon bring peace and health and life — yea, the opportunity for everlasting salvation — to all the families of the earth.