

DESTINY BULLETIN



A commentary sent to the supporters of the ministry of Christian Destiny.

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Dear "Special Friend" of Christian Destiny,

August 2000

In his day, Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse said, "We are living in the strangest days that man has ever known. The world has passed through terrible times before, but never has the whole earth been so bound together in its wild plunging through one catastrophe and another as today. There have been wars down through the ages, but never wars that have touched so many nations as the conflicts through which we have passed in this generation. There have been political crises, but not on a scale that touched all of the continents. . ."

"Thoughtful Bible students agree almost universally that we are living near the end of the age and that at any moment the outline of prophetic events preserved for us will begin its course of fulfillment. The world will then rush rapidly through all of the scenes of history which God has written in advance."

Those words are more applicable today than ever. Cynics will protest that we have always seen wars and rumors of war and they are correct. However, the background against which these ever-more-ferocious conflicts take place is different today, and that difference should cause us to take careful notice.

If we are to know where we are in history, we are enjoined in Scripture to keep a careful eye on at least three important areas of the world. We should be careful observers of some simple things comparing them to the teaching of the Word of God. What should we observe?

WATCH ISRAEL. In its ongoing desperate attempt to establish a "positive" legacy, the current U.S. administration continues to be in the forefront of helping to bring international pressure upon Israel in an effort to force their participation in some sort of nebulous "peace process." By backing these so-called peace agreements, the administration continues to show its disdain for the Jewish people and a near total lack of understanding and disregard for America's historic role in supporting the Jewish state and people. Unfortunately for everyone concerned, there also happens to be a sizable portion of the Israeli populace--as well as many within their government--who seem to be willing to go along with almost anything for the sake of "peace." In our opinion, the slogan "peace at any cost" is a good way to get oneself killed! And the idea--if one can call it that--that Israel should feel obligated to give away parcels of its land for a promise of peace from its enemies is so asinine as to be almost beyond belief! "Land for peace" just will not work! (It seems ironic to note that in an article in the magazine Israel Today, it was recently reported that as of the end of 1999, Prime Minister Barak had "approved more than 3,100 housing starts in the West Bank since taking office in July, more than his hawkish predecessor Benjamin Netanyahu approved in an average year.") If and when any peace agreement is signed, don't be fooled into believing that it will bring peace to the Middle East. We know from the Scriptures that true and lasting peace will only come after the Prince of Peace--the Lord Jesus Christ--returns to set up His earthly kingdom.

In the meantime, we should continue to “*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem*” (Psa. 122:6).

WATCH RUSSIA. Most of us were caught completely by surprise a few years ago when the former Soviet Union--Russia and all of its satellite countries--began a rapid dissolution before the bewildered eyes of an onlooking world. And even though the Russian motherland has continued its slow disintegration since the dismemberment of its “Union of Soviet Socialist Republics,” a somber warning is definitely in order. Russia may be down, but let us not harbor the delusion that she should be counted out. Russia continues to produce nuclear submarines and other weapons and has a sizable military force--all complimented with a vast arsenal of nuclear warheads, fully armed and capable of delivering a mass destruction that the world has hitherto only dreamt of in its worst nightmare. Is there coming a day when Russia will again play a major center-stage role in world affairs? Beyond a shadow of a doubt, there is! The Bible speaks of a time “*in the latter days*” when Russia and its hordes, with an “*evil thought*,” will be moved by the hand of the Lord to invade the land of Israel. Their subsequent overwhelming and consummate defeat will be so obviously supernatural in character that anyone who cares to “see” will understand that it was God Himself who defeated them. There will be no other logical explanation for their defeat. And why does God move his hand against “*Gog*” and “*the land of Magog*”? So that in showing His supernatural protection of His people Israel He might be glorified in the eyes of all the world: “*Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord*” (Ezek. 38:23). Incidentally, the Bible also speaks of God sending “*a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles*” (Ezek. 39:6). This passage leaves a person very thoughtful indeed. So keep watching Russia. And keep your eyes on Putin as well. Those who know their Bibles will understand the prophetic significance of the events that are certain to unfold there in the coming days.

WATCH EUROPE. With the introduction of the European currency--the “Euro”--Europe continues to move inexorably towards its goal of continent-wide political and economic unity. How soon might we be to the day when a man steps up to the microphone and says, “I have a plan!”? Yes, “the man with a plan”--the Antichrist--could even today be waiting in the wings for just the right moment so that in God's timing he can be ushered in to world leadership. Even while Europe, with high expectations, marches unrelentingly towards its date with destiny, the whole world looks on in breathless anticipation of what appears to be unstoppable events now leading to global unity. We do well to remember concerning the Antichrist that “*all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*” (Rev. 13:8) and “*If any man worship the beast...The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture...and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb...for ever and ever*” (Rev. 14:9-11).

Considering the concerns of our world, many are asking the question, “Is there cause for encouragement in times like these?” “What is the motivation that should keep us going as we labor in such a problematic generation in our world?”

The answer is a marvelous one. Happily, the Bible says to us all, “*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord*” (I Cor. 15:58). By using the word “*therefore*,” Paul is pointing back to at least five tremendous reasons for us to be motivated to

outstanding pursuits for Christ. What are those reasons? Among them are the following:

We should be motivated . . .

1. Because of the Gospel. This chapter says, “*For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures*” (I Cor. 15:3,4). The Gospel is the message of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. It is the amazing announcement that by believing that Jesus is the Son of God and that He died and rose again for our sins, we have everlasting life. In a world of many confusing ways of salvation, this truth should produce a thrilling result in each of us. It tells us the way to heaven and the way to get others there as well. To forget the Gospel is fatal amnesia.

2. Because of the continuing gift of grace. Paul, despite his many talents and abilities said, “*By the grace of God I am what I am*” (vs. 10). Happily, in life we have not only “grace for saving” but also “grace for living.” We are not saved by keeping the law of Moses nor are we kept by keeping that law. Each day of our Christian lives God pours upon us numberless blessings. These are ours, not because we deserve them but because of the grace of our wonderful Lord. We must rejoice today in whatever measure of life, health, strength, opportunity and capability which are ours. They are ours because of the grace of God. Yes, the Christian is rich indeed. Grace—‘tis a charming sound!

3. Because of the resurrection of Christ. The Apostle Paul, after dismissing his detractors, says “*Now is Christ risen from the dead*” (vs. 20). We rejoice to remember that ours is a living Savior. We do not gather at some tomb which contains the bones of our Redeemer, rather we meet a living Christ at His throne of grace. Because Jesus Christ lives, we share that resurrection life in our lives today. Therefore, the Christian, possessing eternal life, can never die. Never!

4. Because of the splendor of our own resurrection. Paul speaks of the glory of the sun, the moon, the stars, and then points to the resurrection of the Christian. The Christian will be one day “*raised in glory*” and “*raised in power*”(vs. 43). At the time of our own resurrection, the marvelous salvation will be complete. When a person is saved, it is his spirit that is, in fact, saved. The body will be “saved” at the time of his resurrection. What a splendid, wonderful day that will be! Yes, this mortal must put on immortality. The believer in Jesus Christ is promised “*As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly*” (vs. 49). These bodies, not yet redeemed, are subject to the vicissitudes of time. But, alas, just as Christ has been resurrected from the dead, we look forward to that glorious resurrection when we shall receive bodies celestial. Pain, human limitation will be forever past.

5. Because of the Rapture of the Church. Paul says, “*Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed*” (vs. 51, 52). Here we have the amazing truth that there is a generation of Christians who will not die. There is coming a moment in which every living believer in this world will be caught up into the presence of Jesus Christ, so to ever be with the Lord. This wonderful transferring of millions of believers to the world to come we have come to call “the Rapture of the Church.”

Here we have a restatement of the grand promise “*For the Lord himself shall descend from*

heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which 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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (I Thess. 4:16-18).

Wonder of wonders! The Church will be delivered from the dreadful days of the Great Tribulation and that form of deliverance is the Rapture. What a great hope! What a marvelous promise! Remember then that the Rapture of the Church could take place at any given moment. It may be today, it may be tomorrow, it could be soon! The imminent return of Christ is a cardinal Christian doctrine.

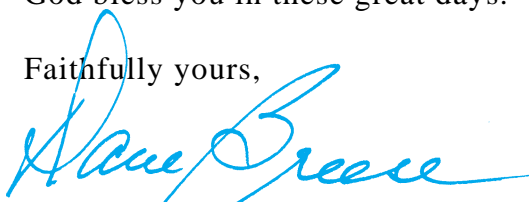
We do well to keep in mind then that the cause for the encouragement of a Christian is not simply in benign and cooperating human circumstances. The Christian may suffer tribulation in the world in the same fashion that the world does. The difference is that the Christian knows that adverse human circumstances are, in fact, preparing him for the infinite joys and responsibilities of eternity. Think for just a moment of what the Scripture must mean which says, "*For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's*" (I Cor. 3:21-23). Each one of us is, therefore, a part of God's master plan for time and eternity. Yes, He has a master plan! Never doubt it!

THIS IS A GOOD OPPORTUNITY for me to say also that you have been and are a very strategic person in the work of God here in this world. Your participation in the ministry of Christian Destiny has been a source of singular encouragement to us and of significant spiritual accomplishment. In many ways, this is wonderfully true. Your financial participation, your gifts to the ministry of Christian Destiny have been the very necessary human supply that makes our outreach for Christ possible. The Apostle Paul taught us that when we give to a reliable work for the Lord, this produces "*fruit that may abound to your account*" (Phil. 4:17). There are rich rewards in glory that come to those who have furnished the human means for spiritual accomplishment. You are one of these, be sure of it.

We are also grateful for your effectual prayers as well. You have prayed that God would give wisdom and direction and this has been abundantly the case. Nothing is more important in the world today than a bold proclamation of "the mystery of the Gospel" which alone can produce that needed spiritual result in the lives of people. General devotional messages may be helpful, but the bold preaching of the "mystery of the Gospel" is truly the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes. I promise you that that is our commitment in the ministry of Christian Destiny.

Thank you again, therefore, for your fellowship in the Gospel and for the joy of working together with you for the purpose of producing heaven's results in the lives of people. May God bless you in these great days.

Faithfully yours,



David W. Breese, President
Christian Destiny, Inc