

A Message for Troubled Times

Lee Simons

Almost daily, the news media sirens blare with the troubles from the Middle East, the war in Afghanistan and Iraq, and threats from North Korea, Iran, and others. At home, we recently tested a new bomb called the MOAB, or “Mother of All Bombs” adding to war fears. Many worry about the rise and fall of the stock markets, the fluctuating interest rates, and rising energy costs. The security and value of the American Dollar is called to question. There is economic uncertainty as retail sales fluctuate, making the future more unforeseeable. The specter of layoffs and closings always looms.

There was another time long ago that a people found themselves all wrapped up in the political affairs and worries of the moment. They questioned the authority of their leadership as they asked, “What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt?” “Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us here in the wilderness to die?” Here were a people who forgot their God, and what He had already done for them. But Moses, having information known only to him by revelation from God, (Exodus 14:1-3) told the people to stand still (be calm) and see the workings of God. Ex. 14:13. God, however, told the people not to just stand still, but to go forward, to get on with the business at hand. And, forward they went – right through a seemingly impossible barrier, the Red Sea.

Bible readers can take comfort in the fact that God still takes care of His people today as He intervenes in the affairs of men. And, there is a message for the fearful. “Stand still (be calm) and see the workings of God.” What if war comes? Just go forward and get on with your life! What about all our young men being deployed overseas? Just get on with your life! What if the doctor tells me the bad news? Just get on with your life! What about the dreaded phone call in the middle of the night? Just get on with your life! What about germ warfare and terrorist attacks? Just get on with your life! What has

worrying ever accomplished? Why is it that we always have trouble seeing the big picture how that God may be working to craft something beautiful out of the world's mire?

A prophet of old once complained to God about all the violence, conflict, and wickedness around him. (Habakkuk 1:1-4.) But God answered, "Look among the nations and watch—Be utterly astounded! For I will work a work in your days, which you would not believe, though it were told you" (vs.5). He went on to record: "For indeed I am raising up the Chaldeans, a bitter and hasty nation which marches through the breadth of the earth, to possess dwelling places that are not theirs" (vs. 6). We know that God used the wicked Babylonians to purge the wickedness of His own people. And so it may be today that God still uses and allows wicked people to rule for a time to purge the wickedness of others – even His own. But we also know that God cares for those who follow Him, as shown in Exodus 15. Those who trust and follow God have the unshakable assurances quoted in Hebrews 13:5-6: "For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' 6 So we may boldly say: 'The Lord is my helper, I will not fear. What can man do to me?'" Do you want to be among God's people? Then don't let fear slow you down. What do the words "In God We Trust" mean to you?

Do not fret because of evildoers, nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart (Psalm 37:1-4).

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though its waters roar and be troubled, Though the mountains shake with its swelling (Psalm. 46: 1-3).