

America's Hope Monthly

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The Miracle Nation

By C. O. Stadskev

There are two principal schools of thought concerning the identity and destiny of our Nation, the United States of America. One school teaches we are Gentiles or heathen people, and as such are destined to lose our sovereignty and have our way of life destroyed. The other school of thought teaches that the Anglo-Saxons are the Israel people of the Bible, and that this Nation was founded and developed by these Israel people; it will therefore, according to Bible prophecy and Bible promises, not be destroyed but will be cleansed and used of God to usher in the Kingdom of God on earth.

Here we are in the greatest single Nation in all history with more temporal, physical and material blessings and benefits than all other nations in history combined. More has been done under the blessing of God in America in fifty years to lift the curse of heavy toil and drudgery than in all previous recorded history.

Thoughtful people are asking, What does this all mean? What is the identity and destiny of this Nation which in a few years, has made the North American wilderness to blossom as a rose, and has filled the earth with fruit, as we read in chapter 27 of Isaiah and the sixth verse?

Can you imagine God inspiring holy men of old to write prophecy concerning practically every nation on earth today and give no prophetic statements concerning the United States of America, the greatest single Nation in all history? In Amos 3:7 we read, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets."

No nation in history, including our forefathers under Moses, has been so blessed and favored of God as has the United States of America.

You ask, Why did this Nation, and how could this miracle Nation, come into being without more people becoming aware of its destiny?

First of all, we must realize and remember it was so prophesied to be. Another reason is that we as a people, including Christians, have been so blinded by unscriptural tradition that we could neither see nor understand what was coming to pass in this great North American wilderness.

One unscriptural tradition which has done much to blind and confuse people as to the significance of what has come to pass in this new world in the last 175 years is the unscriptural teaching that the Church is the Kingdom of God, and that the Kingdom of God is purely spiritual.

The term "the Kingdom of God" or "the Kingdom of heaven" is not synonymous with the Church of God and is never so used in the Scriptures. True, the Church is a part of the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of heaven on earth, but it is not the whole kingdom.

In Matthew 21:43 Jesus said the following to the chief priests and the Pharisees who certainly did not have or possess the Church of Jesus Christ, for they accused Him of being Satan-inspired: "Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

The Kingdom of God was something the scribes and the Pharisees had which was to be taken from them and given to "a nation." Note, not to the world but to a nation. From this it is evident that the Kingdom of God is not synonymous with personal salvation, for the Christ-hating Pharisees did not have personal salvation; personal salvation was never given exclusively to a nation.

What did the scribes and Pharisees have that was taken from them? And to what nation was this that was called the Kingdom of God given?

In Matthew 23:2,3 Jesus said concerning the scribes and Pharisees: "... The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do: but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not." And in Matthew 15:6 Jesus said, "... Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." Here we learn that the scribes and Pharisees had the commandments of God and sat in Moses' seat.

Moses' seat was clearly and definitely a seat of civil authority in contrast to, yet in cooperation with, Aaron and the Levites who officiated in religious and spiritual matters. But instead of honoring and faithfully observing the civil, moral and social laws given by God through Moses, the

scribes and Pharisees made God's commandments of none effect.

To what nation was the law of Moses and the commandments of God given? In other words, is there a nation founded and developed upon the civil, moral and social laws of Moses and upon the principles found in the Word of God? The answer is, Yes, the United States of America is such a nation.

Even during the time of Moses, Joshua, David and Solomon the Kingdom of God was sinful and wicked; in fact, so wicked that in the time of Moses God threatened to destroy it. But we have now come to the time of the cleansing of the Kingdom of God on earth; hence, the tremendous upheaval and turmoil throughout the earth.

Another reason we have failed to see and understand the significance of what is coming to pass in the great North American wilderness is because many think the Jews of today are Israel; they expect the great national blessings and restoration promised and prophesied to come to Israel to take place in little, old Palestine, and we might add, God forsaken Palestine.

The national blessings expected and falsely claimed for Palestine has come, and is now coming upon the North American wilderness a thousand times more than could ever come to little, old, rocky and barren Palestine. If little, old, destitute Palestine is the great blessed and favored nation that was to blossom as a rose in the last days and be used of God to feed and lead all other nations, why do not all people, including ourselves, clamor and rush to enter Palestine?

And how come America is playing the role a thousand times greater and better than Palestine ever could?

None is so blind as those who will not see.

Psalm One

1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

4 The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

6 For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

The Epistle of Jude

By C. O. Stadsklev

Positive thinking and emphasizing the positive is good and well for spirit, mind and body if they do not carry it so far that it becomes an excuse and justification for compromising with error and evil. This one chapter in the Epistle of Jude is an example of scriptural preaching and teaching.

In verses one through three we read: "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called: Mercy unto you, and peace and love, be multiplied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

Jude apparently intended to write to Christians about personal salvation which they have in common, but he found it needful to exhort them to earnestly contend for the faith which at that time was in the Old Scriptures.

In verse four Jude states why he found it needful to exhort the Christians to contend earnestly for the faith: "For there are 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." Jude had learned that ungodly men had crept in unawares into Christian fellowship "turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness." They were making the grace of God a license to sin. We read in 1 John 3:4: "... sin is the transgression of the law" not the ordinances which Christ fulfilled and put away. These ungodly men also denied our Lord Jesus Christ. There are more ways to deny Christ than to deny Him as a Person.

In John 1:1 we read: "... the Word was God." Verse 14 of John 1 states: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." We receive Christ by receiving the Word. We deny Christ by denying the Word.

In verse 5 Jude wrote the following: "I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not." These were the people who had been saved out of Egypt but did not believe the Word of God concerning the gospel of the kingdom.

Read carefully chapter 14 in Numbers, noting especially verse 11. According to this chapter the only ones who believed the gospel of the kingdom were Moses, Aaron, Joshua and Caleb. Did that mean they were the only ones who believed and followed the ordinances for the

forgiveness of personal sin? No, there were many. Verse 10 states, "But all the congregation bade stone them with stones." (Just as they do today.) "And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel."

Psalms 78 also tells us that those who were saved out of Egypt were destroyed because "they believed not" the gospel for the kingdom. In verses 22-23 we read: "Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation: Though he had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven." This is repeated in verses 32-33: "For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works. Therefore their days did he consume in vanity, and their years in trouble." With a teachable mind, read the entire 78th Psalm.

The writer of Hebrews also uses the sad and tragic experience related in Numbers 14 to exhort Christians to believe the gospel of the kingdom. We read the following in Hebrews 3:17-18: "But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?" Please take note that this was written to the "holy brethren" — Christians. Is it possible for Christians to believe some scriptures and not believe and appropriate other scriptures? Certainly. They have done so throughout all human history with sad and tragic consequences.

Verses 6-13 in Jude's Epistle are negative but with tremendous positive good if faithfully expounded. These verses have been true throughout history and that which they set forth is now so rampant, extensive and entrenched in every phase of life, the only solution now is that which is prophesied and promised in the last chapter in the Old Scripture, many other scriptures and the Lord's kingdom parables.

Verse 14 states: "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints." From the time of Enoch, the seventh from Adam, the main theme in the Scriptures is the gospel of the kingdom and the second coming of Christ. The first thing the Lord told us to pray for was "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, in earth, as it is in heaven."

Verse 15 in Jude tells us why "the Lord cometh." "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." The Lord does not come to turn the world over to the ungodly and some great Antichrist.

In verse 16 Jude gives some further characteristics of the ungodly which are of course negative. Jude devotes the balance of his epistle to exhortations to Christians.

Verse 17: "But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Remember ye the words." As believers our whole and

constant emphasis must be on the Word of God.

We have various and different experiences. My experiences have been to guide, direct and confirm me in my calling, hence they are a personal matter. It is one thing to relate an experience, witnessing to an answer to prayer or God's overruling providence, it is something else to relate experiences for self-exaltation. We must focus our whole and constant effort on the Word of God.

Christians who have signs, visions and dreams to guide and direct them are not more spiritual. God seems to grant these things to those who are called to go beyond that which is generally believed and accepted among Christians, to those who are called to break new ground.

Twice Gideon asked God for signs when he was not sure regarding God's will, and God gave the signs. It is one thing to ask God for an indication of His will in a particular situation, but asking God for a sign that His Word is true is evil. We must never do that. Christ will depart from such people. Your sign is in the Word of God. Verse 18 states "in the last times" showing here as in verses 14 and 15 that he was writing about the present end times.

Verse 19 in Jude is a serious and challenging scripture. We are confronted with discerning between that which is sensual or natural, and that which is spiritual. I will relate an experience I had to illustrate this.

I had preached a sermon in which I was very conscious of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. After the service something was said, and immediately my natural spirit arose within me. I suppressed it, but I was startled that there was such a sudden change from that which is spiritual to that which is natural. No, that was not the only time the natural arose and tried to take over. I have had to resist the natural and trust in the Spirit my entire Christian life, and will continue to do so to my last breath. Some temperaments have more difficulty with that which is natural to them than others. But if the Holy Spirit can crucify the natural, God can use it to do His will. There seems to be much of that which is natural in Christian efforts today, but that must be left to God.

In verse 20 Jude wrote, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost." Praying is the oxygen in the Christian's life. Jesus said, "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." The Christian who does not habitually and regularly pray about the things which confront him or her will faint and fall back into the natural. They will make themselves limited to their own ability, wisdom and resources and there will be very little difference between such Christians and the unsaved.

The Apostle Paul exhorted us to "pray without ceasing" (I Thessalonians 5:17). This does not mean that all we do is pray, it simply means pray about everything. If you do, God will be your Helper. Praying in the Holy Ghost is not determined by how loud or how long a Christian prays.

When Hannah prayed for Samuel no one heard her. We read in I Samuel 1:13: "Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard." This was

one of the most effective and far reaching prayers in Bible history. Praying in the Holy Ghost would seem to mean that we base our prayers on specific scriptures and that which we know to be the will of God.

Verse 21 exhorts "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." The only way that can be done is to keep yourself in the Word of God where the love of God is revealed. If we are to look for "the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life," there is only one place to look — the Word of God.

In verses 22 and 23 Jude tells us to make a difference. All unsaved people are not the same. All cannot be pulled out of the fire. The Lord's kingdom parables clearly teach this.

Verses 24 and 25 are beautiful and reassuring. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen." God our Saviour does our keeping. It is He who will present us "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." The "glory and majesty, dominion and power" are His for ever. Amen.

Not True as to Fact

It is startling to realize that much of God's Word is not literally true. Some of its most precious and important statements simply cannot be taken as they stand. "God is light" is not an actual fact. Literally stated, He is, in the spiritual sphere, in some ways like light in the physical realm. But how much more forceful and beautiful to condense all this into a short and striking sentence, even if it is not strictly correct. This should open our eyes to realize

that not everything in the Scriptures must be taken literally.

When the Lord told His disciples that Lazarus had found repose and that He was about to wake him out of sleep, they took His word literally, which was misleading. So He told them frankly that Lazarus had died. By this figure, which was not true in fact, He had foreshadowed the great truth that Lazarus' death was like taking a nap, for He would rouse him from the tomb. We should be on our guard when Scripture states that which cannot be true. Such words are not false, but figurative.

Because the Scriptures unfold to us the metaphysical and the spiritual, for which we have no organs of Perception, these are usually spoken of in terms of the physical and the material. Hence we should expect to find many figures in God's revelation. Words used literally of things in the lower sphere, accessible to our soulish senses, are needed in a superior sense for that which belongs to a higher sphere. Such conceptions as light and darkness, life and death, high and low, are freely used as figures. In fact, many have been so often used in this fashion that we mistakenly speak of the figurative usage as a special "meaning," when it is really a faded figure.

Of the vast importance of figures of speech in interpretation, there can be no question. In the Reformation a single metaphor, "this is My body," led to conflicts and divisions which would never have arisen if there had been even an elementary knowledge of figurative language. On some subjects, the Scriptures seem to contradict themselves, simply because figures are taken for facts. When the figure is recognized, the conflict vanishes.

An investigation will show that differences of interpretation occur especially often with words which are frequently used figuratively. As a rule this has affected their literal significance and clouded the passages in which they appear. In such cases, if the literal is sharply distinguished, the discrepancies will disappear.

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