

The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator (USPS Standard Mail Permit Number 876) is published monthly (subscription free) by the Central Baptist Church, PO Box 876, Grenada, MS. Postage paid at Grenada, MS 38902.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator PO Box 876, Grenada, MS 38902-0876

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Non-profit Org.
Presorted Standard
US Postage Paid
Grenada, MS 38901
Permit No. 876

The Grace Proclamator & Promulgator
PO Box 876
Grenada, MS 38902-0876

Address Correction Requested

(Lee—continued from page 4)

fringes upon or seeks to regulate the worship of our God or our service unto Him.

In I Chronicles 12:32 we read of “the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do”. Even so, we as Christians today ought to know what to do: “We ought to obey God rather than man”! My prayer is that we as citizens of the United States will never have to make such a choice. But if and when the time comes that we must make a choice, every Christian and every church in this land should already know what they ought to do. ♦



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

To testify the gospel of the grace of God.. Acts 20:24

Published as a mission project of
Central Baptist Church Grenada, Mississippi

July 2020

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THANK YOU!

PASTOR BILL LEE

For the last issue of our paper I wrote an article concerning the “URGENT NEED” of the saints in the villages of northern Thailand. Because of the Corona virus the villages have been under strict quarantine. They were not allowed to leave their villages. If any violated this quarantine order and did leave their village, they were not allowed to re-enter the village and return to their homes. Because of this quarantine, these were not only unable to go to their work, nor were they able to tend to and/or harvest their personal crops, which are all outside of the villages.

The people of these villages are hardworking people. This includes both men and women, as well as children who are old enough to work. For the most part, they work in rice fields, on banana plantations or on tea farms, which are owned by Thai landowners. The average daily wage for their hard work is \$6 per day in Thailand and \$3 per day in Burma. I will also add, they know nothing of an eight-hour day, nor of any type of fringe benefits.

The villages themselves are always on the poorest of the land. The better land, close to but outside the villages, is always reserved for their personal gardens and crops. But because of the quarantine, they are not only unable to go to the fields and work for wages, they are also unable to go to their personal gardens and crops.



The problem has not been that the villagers did not know how to grow their own food, nor has the problem been that they were not diligent in doing so. The problem is this virus caught everyone by surprise. No one, neither here nor there, saw this virus and its consequences coming! What a terrible thing it must be, to know that you have crops ready to be harvested, but you are unable to go and harvest these crops. Then, all of a sudden, you have no food for yourself nor your family. It would be difficult for us to imagine, not just having a little food, but having no food.

As I mentioned in my last report, these villagers, living in bamboo huts, do not have pantries, cupboards, nor freezers full of food to fall back on in a crisis such as this virus has caused. I am certain they each would have a small supply of rice, and some dried meat and vegetables they would have dried over an open flame. But these small supplies were quickly diminished and they soon ran out of food. They suddenly found themselves isolated and quarantined in their villages, with no food.

Immediately upon being notified of this need in the villages, I sent money to Bro. Paul Brown and Bro. Matthew Villandry in order for them to begin getting food to the villages. But I also knew this need was going to be greater than we could possibly meet by ourselves. Therefore, I wrote the report in order to make others aware of this “URGENT NEED”.

The response to my last report has been overwhelming! Churches and individuals have recognized both the reality and the urgency of this need and have responded with generous financial assistance. This assistance has not only supplied the needed food, it has also been a great lesson in Christian charity and love. To those who have helped in this matter let me say, your care, concern and interest in the people of these villages has had a great impact upon them. It is almost unbelievable to them that Christians here, so far away from them, would have such love and compassion for them, and come to their aid as you have done.

On behalf of saints living in very remote villages half way around the world, saints whom you will never meet until we are all in glory, I want to say **“THANK YOU”!!!** And as the Apostle Paul wrote in I Corinthians 16:19; “The churches of Asia salute you!” For now, this need has been

IN MEMORIUM

Ruth Ann Camp

February 16, 1939—February 10, 2020

*Faithful wife and
widow of brother Wayne
Camp died February 10, 2020.
A pastor's wife and Christian
mother of five children.*



*Ruth earned a degree
in Business Education from
Illinois State University. She
worked as a bookkeeper for many years at both Hilton
International and Anderson Electric in Memphis, Ten-
nessee. She was the typist for **The Grace Proclamator and
Promulgator** in the years before computers.*

*Ruth was a very generous person in a quiet way.
She was a member of Grace Baptist Church of Bartlett,
Tennessee when she passed. She is buried beside her hus-
band in White Hall, Arkansas.*

Beware of expecting a millennium to be brought about . . . by any method of government, by any system of education, or by any political party.

Labor to do good to all men; pity your poorer brethren, and help every reasonable endeavor to raise them from their low estate. Do not slacken your hand from any endeavor . . . to increase knowledge, to promote morality, to improve the temporal condition of the poor.

But never, never forget . . . that you live in a fallen world, that sin is all around you, and that the devil is abroad. ♦

RICHES AND POVERTY!

J.C. RYLE

Many in every age have disturbed society by stirring up the poor against the rich. But so long as the world is under the present order of things, *universal equality cannot be attained.*

So long as . . . some are wise, and some are foolish; some are strong, and some are weak; some are healthy, and some are diseased; so long as children reap the fruit of their parent's misconduct; so long as sun, and rain, and heat, and cold, and wind, and waves, and drought, and blight, and storm, and tempest are beyond man's control--so long will there be inequality in this world.

Take all the property in England by force this day, and divide it equally among the inhabitants. Give every person over twenty years old an equal portion. Let all share alike, and begin the world over again. Do this, and see where you would be at the end of fifty years. *You would just have come round to the point where you began! You would just find things as unequal as before!*

Some would have worked--and some would have been lazy; some would have been always careless--and some always scheming; some would have sold--and others would have bought; some would have wasted--and others would have saved. And the end would be that some would be rich--and others would be poor.

We might as well say . . . that all people ought to be of the same height, weight, strength, and cleverness; or that all oak trees ought to be of the same shape and size; or that all blades of grass ought to be of the same length--as that all people were meant to be equal.

Settle it in your mind that the main cause of all the suffering you see around you, is sin. Sin is the grand cause . . . of the enormous luxury of the rich--and the painful degradation of the poor; of the heartless selfishness of the highest classes--and the helpless poverty of the lowest.

Sin must be first cast out of the world; the hearts of all people must be renewed and sanctified; the devil must be bound; the Prince of Peace must come down and take His great power and reign --all this must be before there ever can be universal happiness, or the gulf be filled up which now divides the rich and poor.

met. Of course, we do not know what the future may bring, nor do we know how long this virus will cause the people to be under quarantine. But as for now and the foreseeable future, because of your most generous help, we have sufficient funds to meet this need. Each village, as well as each individual who has received food during this time of need, has been informed that this food did not come from us, but from caring saints and churches throughout the U.S.

I will close with the following words: "And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? Or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me". Matthew 25:33-40 ♦

BIBLE CONFERENCE

August 11-13, 2020

Victory Baptist Church — Pastor Josh Sommer

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Speakers: Ron Crisp, Daniel Chamberlin, Laurence Justice,
Josh Sommer, and Robert Walker

Music: David Howard

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RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

PASTOR BILL LEE

We are living in difficult times. The virus which has swept across the globe has brought many changes into our lives. Everyone, everywhere, has been affected either directly or indirectly by this pandemic.

Both locally and nationally, new rules and regulations regarding our conduct as individual citizens have been put into effect by governmental leaders. And the question is often asked; “What are we as Christians to do regarding this virus and these new rules and regulations?”

First and foremost, we are to remain true to our faith. God has not relinquished His throne in the midst of this pandemic. He still rules over all, and He still works “all things together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose”, Romans 8:28.

Also, as Christians, we are to be subject to the laws of our land. The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 13:1; “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God”. Christians ought to be model citizens, obeying the laws of the land.

But if the laws enacted by either local, state, or national elected officials are ever contradictory to the laws of our God, we ought to always obey God rather than man, Acts 5:29. There should never be any hesitation or equivocation regarding this matter. We simply will not relinquish our religious liberty and faith in order to comply with the laws of men.

The founding fathers of our nation were well aware of this matter of religious liberty. The first article of the Bill of Rights clearly states; “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble....”. There is no room for any exceptions in this amendment, not even for the Corona Virus. We simply will neither respect nor obey any law which in-

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ness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”

2. **This fact should cause us to live holy lives in expectation of Christ’s return.**

Romans 13:12 has reference to Christ’s return when it says to Christians, “The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.”

3. **This fact should cause every sinner to repent of his sin and trust in the coming Christ for salvation.**

Christians, those who have repented of their sins and placed their trust in Jesus Christ for salvation have this blessed hope of which our text speaks,

But all those who are without Christ in this world have no hope! All who are not waiting for the return of Christ are **truly** without hope in this world.

Sinner friend! Won’t you stop rejecting this coming Christ and trust him today as Lord and Savior? I want to close with the words of a preacher of another generation, Edward Griffin, and direct his words to those of you who have not repented of your sins and trusted in Christ for salvation. He “shall come in the clouds of heaven, arrayed in the brightness of ten thousand suns; when the heavens shall flee away at his presence and worlds shall be enkindled by the breath of his mouth; when the dead shall awake at his voice and every sinner in earth and hell shall be arraigned at his bar; then with another mind will you look at him whom you now reject.” ♦

**AND WHEN THESE THINGS BEGIN TO COME
TO PASS, THEN LOOK UP, AND LIFT YOUR
HEADS; FOR YOUR REDEMPTION
DRAWETH NIGH. LUKE 21:28**

I Peter 1:3 calls this hope a lively hope or literally a living hope. “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” And our text in Titus 2:13 calls this hope the blessed hope and what a blessed hope it is!

All of history is now preparing for the installation of Christ as King of Kings when he returns. All the future is brightened for us at the prospect of Christ’s coming! Christ is all powerful and all wise and thus will know how and will be able to deliver us from evil. The coming of Christ will be the solution to all our problems. What a comfort to know that on that great day truth will triumph! Our hope is not in the kingdoms of this world but in Christ the King! Our hope as Christians is in the future, not in the present. Our hope is heavenly, not earthly. The future for us is Christ, his coming splendor and approaching glory.

Without the appearance of Christ the future would be empty and we would be the unhappiest of men. When we Christians read the newspaper or watch the TV news and see all the tragedy and trouble in this wretched world, we can always fall back on the glorious assurance that Jesus Christ is coming again!

SOME PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE FACT THAT THE RETURN OF CHRIST IS THE GOAL AND CLIMAX OF HISTORY

There are three:

1. **This fact should cause us to love and look for the return of Christ.**

Our text says that believers in Christ are looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. I Corinthians 1:7 describes Christians as those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord. “So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming (apokalupsis – revelation) of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Philippians 3:20 says of Christians that “...we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.” II Timothy 4:8 says there is a special reward for Christians who love Christ’s second coming. “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteous-

JESUS CHRIST, THE GOAL AND CLIMAX OF HISTORY

LAURENCE JUSTICE

Titus 2:13, “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

This world is not getting better and better! False teachers are rampant, Islamic fanaticism is on the increase, socialism and humanism have swept over the world and political corruption is in every government. A cultural revolution is destroying our history and traditions. Virtue is often oppressed while vice triumphs. Murderers often go free or just get a slap on the wrist. Democracy has not triumphed, war has not been abated and true peace is as elusive as ever. History has demonstrated that neither kings nor emperors nor dictators nor popes nor presidents nor prime ministers have the ability to rule rightly. They all strive for power and make wonderful promises but when they get power they often become corrupt and disaster inevitably follows.

The word of God says that as time goes by the world will get worse, not better. Ephesians 5:16 challenges Christians in this age to redeem the time because the days are evil. The scriptures state that the last days will be an age of lawlessness when evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse deceiving and being deceived.

II Timothy 3:1-5 along with many other scriptures tell us that in this present age wickedness will abound. “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.” This is not talking about pagans and Muslims but of professing Christians



I Timothy 4:1 says this age will be characterized by apostasy or falling away from the faith and II Timothy 4:3-4 says that people will not endure sound doctrine but will seek out preachers who will tell them what they want to hear. Everywhere God's word tells Christians that we are to expect tribulation and persecution in this world. In John 16:33 the Lord Jesus says to his disciples "...In the world ye shall have tribulation ..." We Christians should not be surprised if the world hates us. It hated Christ before it hated us! This is what we can expect in this world.

Sin has wreaked havoc in this world! By one man sin entered the world and look what it has done. "And death by sin." There can never be justice or victory or peace in this world until sin is overcome but who shall extinguish the raging fires of sin?

Some say that this biblical view of history is a gloomy and pessimistic view and they call it the philosophy of despair. Does history have a goal and climax or is it only spiraling ever downward toward destruction and despair?

THE RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST IS THE GOAL AND CLIMAX OF HISTORY

God has a predetermined and prophesied program for this world! He is sovereignly working all things according to the counsel of his own will. According to God's word human history has a definite beginning and moves on a determined course to a definite goal and climax. The very words of scripture indicate that history has a goal and climax toward which it is moving. Verses like I Corinthians 1:8 speak of "the end." "Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." Verses like John 6:39 speak of "the last day." Here the Lord Jesus says, "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Verses like I Peter 1:5 speak of "the last time." "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." And verses like Matthew 13:39 speak of "the end of the world." "The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels."

His coming will be unexpected by the world. In Matthew 24:37-39 the Lord Jesus says concerning his return, "But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." In Luke 21:35 the Lord says, "For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth."

We who are Christians have only one hope in this world, the coming again of Christ our Lord! Our hope centers in Christ. All hope that the New Testament presents to us centers in the Person and work of Christ, who he is, what he has done and what he will yet do. Paul speaks in I Timothy 1:1 of Jesus Christ our hope. "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Savior, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope." This hope is identified specifically with Christ's return in our text in Titus 2:13 where his return is called that blessed hope. This blessed hope is the glorious appearing of our Lord himself.

The blessed hope is not deliverance from persecution. It is not the resurrection of the dead. It is not the transformation of the living to be like Christ. We are not waiting for the end of the world. We are waiting for Christ. We are waiting for the very person of the Son of God. Only Christ can drive sin from the earth. The final victory over sin and death will be won by the coming again of Jesus Christ! The return of Jesus Christ is the only hope of victory.

CHRIST AS THE GOAL AND CLIMAX OF HISTORY IS THE OPTIMISTIC VIEW OF HISTORY

There are three possible attitudes toward the future: one of fear, one of false optimism and one of biblical optimism. The biblical view is the optimistic view involving ultimate, final, climactic victory for Christ, his cause and his people. We who are believers do not despair! Far from it. There is nothing terrifying about the Lord's return for the Christian. For the child of God the return of Christ and the events that surround and follow that return fills his heart with hope and encouragement.

forever. Christ's coming will be the end of the world's glory and pride and pomp. When Christ comes he will, on the plains of Megiddo, destroy the last powerful military force on earth. Accompanied by the armies of heaven he will come to put all enemies under his feet! Look at II Thessalonians 2:8. "And then shall that Wicked (referring to the man of sin or the Antichrist) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." And look at II Thessalonians 1:7-9 here. "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

He will accomplish some great things. He will raise the dead saints and change the living saints and they will then reign with him. He will convert and restore the nation of Israel. He will bring all men to judgment. He will set up his kingdom and govern the nations with a rod of iron. When Christ comes men shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks according to Micah 4:3. And according to Isaiah 11:9, when Christ comes back the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth as waters that cover the sea.

His coming will be preceded by some signs. II Thessalonians 2:1-4 & 8 tell us that two things must come to pass before Christ returns: 1. the great apostasy or falling away and 2. the revelation of the man of sin or antichrist. "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God...(Now verse 8)...And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

So, what is the goal and climax of history? What is the ultimate event in God's plan for this world? The main and climactic event is not the judgment of the world nor the restoration of Israel nor even the triumph of good over evil. The main event, the goal and climax of history is the glorious advent of the Son of God, the second coming of Jesus Christ!

The scriptures tell us that God will intervene in history. His Son will once again be sent into this world, this time to be the recognized Supreme Ruler. Christ is not only the One from whom the world proceeded. He is the One in whom this world's history will be consummated! His glorious return will be the climax of the eternal purpose which he hath purposed in Christ and all history is moving toward this goal. Even the wrath of man is working toward the ultimate goal of Christ's coming! The New Testament paints a terribly dark and tragic picture of this age but at the same time it sets before men a glorious hope and that hope is the return of Jesus Christ to this earth in power and glory!

This goal and climax of history is a prominent subject in God's holy word! Three hundred and eighteen times in the New Testament direct statements referring to Christ's second coming occur. One out of every thirty verses in the New Testament refers to Christ's second coming. Paul mentions Christ's return some fifty times in his New Testament letters. Christ's return is mentioned at least once in every chapter of both First and Second Thessalonians.

History is moving steadily and certainly toward this goal. In Isaiah 46:9-10 God says, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

The return of Christ to this earth is the climactic event of history because of what will happen when he comes. **He will come personally.** In Acts 1:11 the angel said to the Lord's disciples, "...Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." They saw him go into heaven bodily, personally, visibly

and he will come back the same way.

Several different Greek words are used in the New Testament to describe Christ's coming. One is the word **parousia** which means literally a coming, a bodily presence. I Thessalonians 2:19 uses this word in speaking of the return of Christ. "For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming (Greek – parousia- his bodily presence)?"

He will come visibly. When the Lord Jesus comes back Revelation 1:7 says that every eye shall see him. "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

Christ's return will be open and public and seen by all rather than secretly. Turn to Matthew 24:26-27. "Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." This is the only place the word secret is ever used in scripture in connection with Christ's return and it is a warning not to believe it to be secret. Jesus Christ will at his return appear in the sky so he can be seen by all men on earth.

Another Greek word that is used to describe the coming of Christ is the word **apokalupsis**. It is translated revelation in our KJV and means literally an unveiling or uncovering, the opposite of hiding or secret. Look at I John 3:2. "Beloved (this speaks to Christians), now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear (apokalupsis – be revealed or unveiled or uncovered), we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Turn to I Peter 1:7. "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing (apokalupsis – revelation, unveiling, uncovering) of Jesus Christ."

He will come gloriously. The Lord's first coming was in hu-

miliation and suffering and shame but he's coming the second time in power and great glory. Look at Matthew 24:30. Here the Lord Jesus says, "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Our text says that his return will be a glorious appearing. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." This world will yet witness Christ's personal glory! His coming will be glorious because of the circumstances surrounding it and because of its effects on the world and on God's people.

He will come with the holy angels according to II Thessalonians 1:7-8. "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." This is also a part of the great glory of his return.

He will come victoriously. At the hour of deepest crisis Christ will come again and put down all the rebellion and sin in this world! When he returns this blood-soaked, corrupt world will be cleansed of its vileness and then all this will be replaced with righteousness and holiness and peace. Turn to Psalms 2:1-7. The scriptures speak here of man's rebellion and Christ's coming victory. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, *saying*, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou *art* my Son; this day have I begotten thee."

When Christ returns every movement against God and his Anointed will be forever crushed! Evolution will disappear. Socialism will evaporate. Feminism will not be found. Communism will disintegrate. Materialism, humanism, Atheism, hedonism and secularism will all vanish