

STRAIGHTWAY

And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him [Mark 1:18].

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Seeing the End Time

Dr. H. T. Spence

In the years of his ministry, my dear earthly father often told his students that they needed to know where they were in history and where they were in the light of biblical prophecy. Such knowledge was to enable them to preach the master truths along with the gospel message needed for their times. No one knows exactly how many years history has been in existence since God created this earth. The calendars have changed even in the past two thousand years. But it is interesting to note that following the chronology of Archbishop Ussher, who placed the Creation at 4004 B.C., this present calendar year would place us exactly six thousand years from Creation.

But aside from the issue of chronology, it is evident that we are living in a most peculiar time

in the history of man. The Scriptures also reveal that we are living near the time of the Second Coming of Christ. What are we seeing today, and in what season of time are we living?

The Concept of Time

Although God dwells in the dimension of eternity, He has placed His creation in the dimension of time. For an entity to dwell in the dimension of time, it must have a beginning. Therefore, as that entity continues in history, it has a past, a present, and a future. In that they have a beginning, angels live in some concept of time (though not in the same concept as man). Only eternity will reveal how their concept of time is measured. There was a time in their existence when all of them were holy; then there was

the falling away of some, all of which have a continuing existence. Revelation 12:12 speaks of the future: “for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” It is a future for him that ultimately leads to the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:10).

But man’s concept of time is based on the rotation of the planet earth and its rotation around the sun. He too has a past, present, and future. His concept of time is by circular and linear measurement. God gave His eternal Word to man through the dimension of time (covering approximately 1,656 years and forty to forty-four writers). Seventy percent of Scripture is dedicated to His revelation through history; even biblical prophecy is simply history foretold. Although Christ (in the eternal present tense view of God) was slain before the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8), He had to come in the dimension of time to die and save

mankind. Man fell from his perfect state *in* time; therefore, he must be redeemed and restored *in* time. History is “His Story,” and all of history is viewed either before His first coming or after his first coming (B.C. and A.D.). Hebrews 1:2 states that God “hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds [or *ages*].” God has already set time: its beginning, its completion, and all of time in between. Our own lives are found in history; we were born in time, we live in time, we sinned in time, we must be saved in time (although our salvation in God is tied into eternity), we must live for Christ in time, and one day we will die in time.

Two Concepts of Time

The history of sacred Scripture reveals two concepts of *time*. They are presented with the two Greek words *chronos* and *kairos*. *Chronos* (from which we get the word chronology) is a term to designate the quantity of time or time’s duration, such as a time line, or the natural unfolding of time. But *kairos* does not measure so much the quantity of time as it does the quality of time. It is a word that represents a period of time possessed by certain characteristics; it designates more of the understanding of a season of time. In Matthew 13:30 the word *time* or *season* is in regard to characteristics that mark harvesting. In Galatians 6:9-10, it is a season of time marked by the characteristics of reaping and opportunity. In Luke 12:42, a

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season of characteristics is marked by the discharging of duties. And in Acts 24:25, a season of convenience or opportunity is given to the hearing of the gospel. Hebrews 3:7, 8 warns, “the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts.” It is a season of His dealings with us.

Amidst the *chronos* of time, we are in the season of the end of an age. We must know and be aware of those characteristics that mark this season. To see the end of the age, Christ gave us understanding of other days— days presented in the Bible that had the same characteristics of the days in which we live. Many of these characteristics were given in His Olivet Discourse:

Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors (Matthew 24:32-33).

What are some of the characteristics? He describes in Matthew 24:37-39 that the end time will be like the days of Noah. Luke includes “likewise also as it was in the days of Lot” (Luke 17:28). Therefore, it will be like the days surrounding Noah before the flood and the days surrounding Lot before the destruction of Sodom.

Days of Noah

The days leading up to the Flood were marked with unique characteristics. We carefully observe that the first five chapters of Genesis are

dedicated to individuals. Two lines of humanity are evident by the end of the fifth chapter: the godly and the ungodly lines. Two spiritual seeds are clearly displayed with their progenitors found in Cain (Genesis 4:16) and Seth (Genesis 4:26). But again, those chapters are dedicated to the distinguishing of individuals. In chapter four Cain’s ungodly line reaches an apex in Lamech. In chapter five Seth’s line, the godly line, reaches an apex with Enoch who walked with God and pleased God; he was then translated.

But there was a point in time “when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them” (6:1). When the population of man increases, somehow the congregating becomes the scene of the development of evil on a greater scale. Moral waywardness comes with the increase of people. Since the time of the Flood, there are now more people on the face of the earth than at any other time in history. In that all were born in sin, the greater the number of sinners is, the greater the abounding of iniquity among humanity. It is clearly seen in cities today that the larger the city, the more cosmopolitan it is, and the greater is sin promoted.

Back in Genesis 3:15, God had placed a hatred between the godly and the ungodly lines. However, this hatred was now waning. Yea, we will read of one of the seeds beginning to view the other with desire. Enoch evidently saw the powers of the ungodly increasing,

and he cried out against them:

And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, 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 (Jude 14-15).

Enoch was one in concluding generations of the godly before this transition took place (Genesis 6:1-2.)

In church history, a parallel generation to Enoch's is found in the Philadelphia Church Age (from around 1750 to 1900); this period was marked by a height of spirituality and godly men. It contrasts with the next church age, the Laodicean Church Age, described in Revelation 3:17:

Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

By the time of Noah, a new element was already evident in his generation: "That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose" (Genesis 6:2). When the godly began to look upon the ungodly, powers of desire commenced within their hearts. The key attraction was their fairness. It was the fleshly side rather than the spiritual aspect that drew their sight. Being "fair" was the singular attraction. The appetite for the flesh is evident in that they "took them

wives of all which they chose," or those they liked best.

Sight, the Greatest of the Senses

Sight is probably the greatest of the senses; it is this sense that attracted the flesh to those identified with the godly. In Genesis 3, when the serpent cast forth his temptation concerning the forbidden fruit to Eve, she saw first that it was "good for food and pleasant to the eyes" (3:6). In Genesis 13 Lot chose his geography by lifting up "his eyes" and beholding all the plain of Jordan (13:10). However Genesis 13:14-15 states,

the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest.

God directed the sight of Abraham, but human desire directed the eyes of both Eve and Lot.

Sarai was "a fair woman to look upon" (Genesis 12:11), and the Egyptians viewed that aspect of her (12:14,15). Abimelech (Genesis 20) took Sarah, but we do not read of any impropriety with her, for his heart was right. Whereas Pharaoh looked upon Sarah with fleshly, lusting purposes, Abimelech looked upon her with honorable propriety. (Read the distinction of God's judgment upon the two.)

In Joshua 7:21 the look of Achan upon that which was forbidden by God in Jericho led to his coveting. In II Samuel 11:2 David's look upon Bathsheba commenced his

wrong desires for her. In Ezra 9:2 the remnant from the Captivity took of the daughters of the enemy and brought sin upon the remnant. The same was evident in Nehemiah 13:23-24.

When the godly look upon the ungodly, it becomes the classic presentation of carnality. It is the releasing and the turning over of their lives to the fleshly part. Over a period of time, the two seeds finally become fully mixed. Coming out of this mixing will be men of great stature, inspiring fear, and men of renown (or men of name). Such men will become outstanding men of wickedness and debauchery. We have witnessed many of such men in the powerful Charismatic personalities who have made names for themselves in wealth and fame.

The End Time

We are in the times of Noah. The deeper spirituality the godly line lives (Genesis 5), the deeper will be the reaction if they return to the flesh. Very deep sins will come out of the commingling of the flesh and Spirit. The powers of pornography today are tied up in the "sight" of man for the flesh: we read in II Peter 2:14, "Having eyes full adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children." We are living in a generation in which even Christian youths convince themselves that they must dress for this "sexual," fleshly appeal. The allurements of this age are tied up in the power of the flesh. This is why

sanctification is so important for the Christian life; sanctification is for the confrontation of the Spirit and the flesh (I Thessalonians 4 and Galatians 5). The great violation that comes to the Christian in these matters is the overthrow of the doctrine of biblical separation. If this guardian principle of the Christian life is cast aside, it will be the downfall of "godliness."

The powers of the flesh and the Spirit are coming together in the Church today, and lukewarmness is its product. Christ in Revelation 3:15-16 would rather for the Church to be cold (the flesh alone) or hot (the Spirit alone); but this mixing He hates.

More than before, our children must be careful in the selecting of mates for marriage in this age. What does one desire in a mate? Is it the "fairness" of the flesh or the "fairness" of godliness? It is evident in Genesis 19:14 that the young men who married daughters of Lot were young men who had no concept of God. Although Genesis 24:16 speaks of Rebekah being "very fair to look upon," we also observe godly qualities in her life. Later, she gave evidences of weaknesses with her sons as well as deception in her marriage. The strange woman of Proverbs 7 dressed for the sight and fleshly appeal of a young man; through it she destroyed many a young man. She also was a woman who could not be trusted by her "good man" (her husband) while he was away (Proverbs 7:19-20). In contrast, Proverbs 31:11 presents the

virtuous woman who could be trusted by her husband.

When godly men (from godly homes) begin casting their eyes upon the daughters of men (the ungodly), they first become passive to the things of God. If this passivity is not dealt with, then aggressiveness against God and God's people will begin taking over the heart. After a while the desires for the fleshly things will greatly increase—"they took them wives of all which they chose," or all they wanted or thought was the best. The restraints were cast away, and polygamy (of the Cainite line) became common.

How is our sight? Upon what are we looking? How are our thoughts in regard to that which we look upon? Letting our thoughts run wild is the evidence of choosing all that we see and desire. But God sees our thoughts: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5).

As our Laodicean Church Age came on the heels of the greatest spiritual church age, Philadelphia, it is evident there are dangers in going on with God. The deeper the godliness of a people, the deeper the sins will be if they ever return to the flesh of the world. Shallow churches may not witness deep sins; however, a deep church that has committed its legacy in deep spirituality will find its falling to be deeper. Lucifer, the anointed cherub of God's throne and highest

of the angelic beings, fell; his fall was irrecoverable. When one takes the powers of the Spirit and commingles them with the flesh, very deep sins will result.

Conclusion

In light of the deep sins of his generation, the Bible states that Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. This is the first time the word *grace* is mentioned in the Bible (Genesis 6:8). Mankind had come to complete insensitivity to divine influences. Hence, God's Spirit was to be withdrawn. But Noah, in finding grace in the eyes of God, was found as a just man, upright, declared righteous by God. He was perfect, complete, and whole in the various compartments of his life. This does not mean sinless, but he was a man of maturity while living in such a godless, compromising world. He lived through several generations and saw the mixing of the seeds through that time period. But his heart before God was perfect. He had only one wife, and he walked in the legacy of his fathers (5:22). He was a preacher of righteousness (II Peter 2:5), and he announced the coming of the judgment flood (Hebrews 11:7). In a time when ungodliness was the hallmark of man's heart, Noah was found "fearing" God (Hebrews 11:7), or "godly." He responded to that "fear" before the Lord and "prepared an ark to the saving of his house." He was a man committed to the preservation of the seed! We need to be found as a Noah who had faith in his God when it was not

found in anyone else in that last generation before the Flood (Luke 18:8).

In these days when the flesh has become the central attraction to the world and the institutional church, may God enable us to keep our eyes

upon the Savior and His Word. May we pray for godliness in these days of deep ungodliness. In this end time, may we long to know the fairness described in Song of Solomon 4:1—the beauty of Christ in the yielded human life.

Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

(Ephesians 1:15-23)

The Children's Charter

(excerpt from *The Human Spirit*, Vol. 1,
by Dr. O. Talmadge Spence)

Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me:
for of such is the kingdom of heaven.
(Matthew 19:14)

In looking into the early period of the life of Jesus with His parents, and on into His adult life of teaching and preaching concerning children, we see a charter of seventeen articles.

- I. The Father Guardian of the home receives warning and direction from God for the children. Joseph did.
- II. The Mother Wife of the home sets forth submission to the Father Guardian and the hardships which follow submission. Mary did.
- III. The Father Husband shared obedience and submission to hardships, also, which were brought about by their obedience to God. Joseph did.
- IV. The Father Husband has especial audiences and authorities from God during various nights with his family. Joseph did.
- V. All around the family are dangers with a great slaughter of children going on. Joseph and Mary knew this.
- VI. Not only are there dangers and slaughter near them, but also surrounding them, in the coasts thereof. There was no other place of safety known to go but to God. Joseph knew this, and God directed him to go to Egypt.
- VII. After the parents obeyed the will of God for their only child, the Word of God was fulfilled, and safety and preservation kept them. The entire family knew this.
- VIII. "The Star of Providence" guarded and confirmed the way

and led others to see this God-led family in harm's way. The Wise Men saw this.

- IX. God protected the child from slaughter until those forces against the child were stopped. His pathway of danger was removed when the King and those who assisted Herod were removed in death.
- X. Jesus, in His great earthly ministry, opened up the universal invitation to all children: "suffer little children to come unto" Him; that they should not be forbidden; and He blesses them in His midst.
- XI. The capacity and gift of the human spirit extended by God to each child is of such value to God that Jesus compares it spiritually to regeneration.
- XII. Jesus raised at least two young people from the dead, which is exemplary of their capacity for life and His desire that they have their life. Jesus believed children should live life.
- XIII. Jesus drove out a demon from a child. He intended for children to be delivered from Satanic power and influence.
- XIV. When Jesus was on His way to be crucified, women wept like mourners after Him. Instead of telling them not to weep, He simply redirected their weepings to be for their children rather than for Him.
- XV. There was a time when some of the children from the home of Joseph and Mary did not understand the ways and words of Jesus. Likewise, there could be different children in a home that do not understand the Lord.
- XVI. Even Mary, in her life, is thought of as either not understanding Jesus or having a different opinion than He did on some occasions.
- XVII. In looking back over these articles in "The Children's Charter," it is easy for the parents to equate appropriate application to their own family: headship and submission are most important.

JANUARY

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by Dr. O. Talmadge Spence

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