

SEED & BREAD

FOR THE SOWER ISA. 55:10 FOR THE EATER
BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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CHARACTER OF THE LAST DAYS

In Issue No. **SB014**, I set forth my conviction that the "last days" set forth in 2 Timothy 3:1 are the concluding days of God's present dispensation of grace. It was further stated that this segment of time is characterized by twenty-one specific manifestations of unusual wickedness and that the appearance of these evils in concert and intensity will demonstrate to the believer in God's Word that we are living in the last days of the present evil eon. In this study we will together examine these twenty-one social conditions that make up the syndrome of the last days. The reader should have his Bible open to the third chapter of 2 Timothy.

1. **PERILOUS TIMES.** The word translated "perilous" here is *chalepos*. It is found in the New Testament only here and in Matt. 8:28 where it is translated "fierce." It could be literally translated "dangerously violent." If one is discerning and sensitive all he needs to do is to read a summary of the news for any week and he will say, "These are dangerously violent times."

2. **LOVERS OF THEIR OWN SELVES.** These five words are but one in the Greek, *philautos*, which means self-lovers, and it describes those who care unduly or supremely for themselves and who feel that any desire within themselves justifies any moral action.

3. **COVETOUS.** The Greek word here is *philarguros*. It means lovers of money, but more specifically means a lover of silver. The love of money and especially the love of silver is a prominent characteristic of men throughout the world today. Its manifestation is especially seen in the great rash of gambling that is prevalent everywhere.

4. **BOASTERS.** The Greek word used here (*alazones*) has to do with those who speak and think more of themselves than the reality justifies. It

speaks of the ostentatious, the empty pretenders, those given to pretentious parades. This characteristic is seen in most religions today. A whole book has been written on this characteristic by Vance Packard under title of *The Status Seekers*.

5. **PROUD.** The word here is *huperphanoi*. It means haughty, arrogant, a disposition to take to oneself more honor than is warranted or justly due. This type of person abounds in society today. Many world leaders are afflicted with this malady.

6. **BLASPHEMERS.** The Greek word *blasphemoi* means a calumniator, one who accuses falsely and maliciously, one who seeks by aspersion and villification to destroy the name or reputation of another. This is now normal practice in political warfare. It is the chief tool of fanatical extremists.

7. **DISOBEDIENT TO PARENTS.** The Greek word translated "disobedient" here is *apeithes*. It means to be stubborn or unpersuadable, or, to be more specific, to be in obstinate opposition. There is no social condition that is quite as prominent and conspicuous in the world today as is the obstinate opposition of children toward parents. Books and articles by the thousands have been written on this phenomenon. Even the titles of these are quite revealing. *The Revolt of Youth*, *The Teen-Age Tyranny*, *The Rebellious Young*, *The Overthrow of Parental Authority*, and *Parents on the Run* are a sample. The stubborn rebellion of children is one of the frightful characteristics of our times.

8. **UNTHANKFUL.** The word here is *acharistoi*, which is the word for *grace* with the negating prefix "a" (*alpha*) before it. It means ungrateful, and it speaks of those who have no proper sense of feeling for favors received and no willingness to acknowledge or repay a benefit. However, this word may also mean without grace, and can be used to describe anything that lacks attractiveness or charm, so much of which is seen in the unkempt looks and crude manners of today.

9. **UNHOLY.** This is a very poor translation of the Greek word *anosios*, which means unbenign or malignant. Anyone is malignant who is actuated or characterized by virulent ill will or extreme malevolence. This word describes those who are disposed to do harm, to inflict suffering, or to cause distress. There are so many of this kind today that it is a cause of anxiety to legislators, educators, peace officers, and parents. The cry of "Hate, Hate," is

rampant in many lands.

10. **WITHOUT NATURAL AFFECTION.** These three words are one (*astrogos*) in the Greek. It means calloused, hardened in sensibility and feeling. Every case of child abuse and every abortion gives testimony to the prevalence of this condition.

11. **TRUCEBREAKERS.** This is a very poor translation of *aspondos*, which means implacable, and is so translated in its only other occurrence in Rom. 1 :31. It has reference to those who are not satisfied until they have done their worst. Such people are devoid of any pity or feeling that would cause them to relent and restrain through compassion the fury or violence of their rage, hatred, or hostility. In the commission of crimes, more people are being beaten, stomped, or kicked to death than has ever been known in the recorded history of mankind.

12. **FALSE ACCUSERS.** The word here is *diabolos*, which is probably familiar even to those who know no Greek. It is translated "devil" in thirty-five out of thirty-eight occurrences in the New Testament. It means a slanderer, one who speaks evil for the purpose of injuring and without regard for the truth. However the word *devil* seems to properly characterize many men today when their acts are considered.

13. **INCONTINENT.** A continent person is one who exercises restraint in the indulgences of desires. The incontinent are those who constrain no desire, particularly the sexual desire. The Greek word *akrates* means without self control or uncontrollable. This is seen everywhere today in alcoholism, compulsive gambling, impulsive killings, and especially in the great wave of unrestrained sexual indulgence that is now sweeping the world.

14. **FIERCE.** The word *anemeros* means brutal, inhuman, cruel. Civilization boasts of its long and gradual rise from a savage state, but at present it is faced with a truly savage spirit among men. The violence that is reported daily in the news is proof of this.

15. **DESPISERS OF THOSE THAT ARE GOOD.** These six words are only one in the Greek, *aphilagathos*. It means averse to the good or despisers of goodness. This describes perfectly all who would destroy every moral landmark and principle simply because they have no relish for that which is good. They "call evil good, and good evil; they put darkness for

light, and light for darkness; they put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter," as the prophet Isaiah (5:20) so graphically declares it. On every hand today we find those who heartily approve wicked practices. Those who despise good are never neutral. They love wickedness.

16. **TRAITORS.** The Greek word *prodotes* used here can best be understood when we consider that it is used to describe Judas Iscariot in Luke 6:16. It has reference to all who today betray the Lord, His word, and His work.

17. **HEADY.** Rash or headstrong is the meaning of the word *propetes* which is used here. It means imprudent hastiness in word or action. It describes those who rush imprudently in pursuit of their own will. It is seen in the rush of the young to get married, and the rush of the married for divorce; in the sudden changes of belief, and precipitate disavowals of God and Christ. We see it in mobs, in riots, and in revolts. We see it in nations that are seized with a sudden passion for war that none can explain.

18. **HIGHMINDED.** The Greek word here is *tuphoomai*. It means conceited, but it has also the meaning of beclouded or besotted, as when something has made one blindly or stupidly foolish. This may have reference to those whose minds are deranged by the use of drugs. But it may have to do with the multitudes whose minds have become so beclouded and besotted by sin that they cannot think clearly in regard to any matter.

19. **LOVERS OF PLEASURE.** The Greek word for this characteristic is *philedonos*, and the full description is that they are "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." Who could' be so blind as to deny this manifest and extraordinary development seen everywhere today, pleasure-loving more than God-loving? A more accurate description of man's present attitude could hardly be given. The love of pleasure is a social characteristic of the present time.

20. **HAVING THE FORM OF GODLINESS, BUT DENYING THE POWER THEREOF.** The greatest religion on earth today is unbiblical and unspiritual Christianity, in which the forms of godliness predominate while the power of godliness is denied. Among professing Christians there is a total ignorance of everything that is Biblical. The prevailing view today is that it is important to have faith but that it does not matter much in what or in whom.

21. **THE JANNES AND JAMBRES DECEPTION.** These two appear in a lengthy statement (2 Tim. 3:6-8) and they have reference to the two magicians who stood before Pharaoh and reproduced the same miracles that Moses produced in confirmation of his divine mission and credentials. Everywhere today we find miracle workers who claim that they are acting in behalf of God in the works they are doing. They loudly proclaim their belief in miracles but will never be heard to proclaim their belief in the divine statement that there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

The twenty-one characteristics that have been set forth are in no way intended to be signs of the second coming of Jesus Christ. They are the signs of the last days of God's long display of grace. They do not tell us that Christ is coming soon, but they do tell us that we are in the closing days of the present dispensation. The second coming of Christ is not next. The next act of God is to intervene and inject Himself into the affairs of men and of nations. In this passage this act of intervention is set forth in the words, "But they shall proceed no further." Evil men are going to be stopped. May God speed the day.

END Issue SB016