

SEED & BREAD

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

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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MORE ABOUT THE WORLD

The Greek word *kosmos* in New Testament times was a much employed word. This will be seen in its numerous usages and applications to be found in the Greek Scriptures. Its history is a long one. Kittel, in his lexicon, gives thirty-one pages in an attempt to trace its many convolutions. Its diversity of applications is apt to cause confusion if someone concludes that it means the same thing in every occurrence. Our understanding of the meaning of this word must come from its inspired usage in the New Testament, where it is translated "world" 187 times and "adorning" once (1 Pet. 3:3). Its basic meaning is system, order, arrangement. Those who question as to where the idea of "beauty" comes in will need to remember that the Greek idea of "beauty" was that which was well ordered or properly arranged. In these studies the word "world" is used of the world system that God created, the arrangement made to make our planet (earth) a proper habitation for mankind.

Our world is a unity of many individual things, such as the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, plus a thousand-and-one vitally important things too numerous to mention. All of this our God created. This is the world that He loved and still loves.

The words "world" and "earth" are so closely related that we can say that if there were no earth, there would be no world. We cannot imagine an incredible arrangement that has to do with nothing. If our planet had no world it would be a dead planet.

So far as our solar system is concerned all the scientific evidence tells us that planet earth is the only celestial body that is capable of sustaining life. This is because earth has an ecosphere which we call the world. If anything happens to our world, earth will become a dead planet, even as the others.

An interesting point was brought out in regard to this in recent discussions in scientific circles. A Russian physicist, Dr. M.A. Markov, a leader of the Soviet Academy of Sciences and chairman of the Soviet Pugwash group, declared that he is

haunted by the possibility of a nuclear war. He imagines Mars to be a dead planet because its atmosphere was destroyed by some past nuclear conflict. He readily admits that such an idea has no scientific foundation, but he cannot rid himself of the tormenting idea that the earth could become the same kind of a dead planet as the result of a nuclear war. "I do not exclude such a possibility on our planet," he declared.

I suppose that Dr. Markov would quickly brush off any such idea of the Son of God standing by divine commission and placement as the Savior and Preserver of the world, but we who know and believe the record God has given of His Son exclude from possibility any idea of this world being destroyed by men, either erroneously or deliberately. This world has a Savior, and in this truth we rest and are enjoying perfect peace.

In the past thirty years many scientists have earnestly studied what the effects of a nuclear conflict would be on the world as a whole. Their findings have been dismal and distressing indeed. However, in view of the ever-increasing number, power, accuracy, and location of nuclear missiles, new studies are continually being made. Over the past two years (1982-1983) a new study has been made by more than a hundred physicists, biologists, and atmospheric scientists. Late in 1983 a group of eminent scholars in these fields held a conference at which they presented the findings of this two-year study. An excellent summary of these was published in *The New Yorker*, November, 1983, from which I will quote one paragraph verbatim:

"A few weeks ago, a group of eminent scientists - including, among many others, Dr. George M. Woodwell, the director of the Ecosystems Center of the Marine Biological Laboratory at Woods Hole; Dr. Walter Orr Roberts, president emeritus of the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research, at Boulder, Colorado; Dr. Paul Ehrlich, professor of Biological Sciences and of Population Studies at Stanford University; and Dr. Carl Sagan, the director of the Laboratory for Planetary Studies, at Cornell - held a conference at which they presented the findings of a two-year study of the effects of a nuclear holocaust on the ecosphere as a whole. More than a hundred physicists, biologists, and atmospheric scientists had participated in the work and approved its conclusions. (Later, it was reported that a forthcoming study by the National Academy of Sciences was on its way to arriving at similar conclusions.) The study's principal new finding was that in a nuclear holocaust in which five thousand megatons of explosive power was released (less than half the explosive power of the world's present nuclear arsenals) dust from the explosions and soot from the world's burning cities and forests would create a blanket over the whole earth - first over the Northern Hemisphere, where it was assumed that the explosions would occur, but then also over the Southern Hemisphere - that would block as much as ninety-five per cent of the sunlight from reaching the ground, and this would reduce temperature, even in summer, to thirteen degrees below zero, or even lower. The study also found that a 'limited' nuclear war in which as little as a hundred megatons of power

was released over cities could produce a somewhat thinner global shroud of soot and dust which could be ecologically disastrous. In the judgment of most of the scientists at the conference, this newly discovered consequence of a nuclear holocaust, in combination with the consequences already discovered (not to mention those that in all likelihood remain to be discovered), could result in 'the extermination of Homo sapiens,' as Dr. Woodwell put it."

This is a grim picture indeed - one so terrible that many find comfort in saying that a cataclysm so horrendous can never happen. But this is a childish posture that denies reality. When scientists such as those whose names have been given tell us with compelling supporting evidence that the human race is in immediate peril of extinction, we need to give heed to their words. However, with all due respect to Dr. Woodwell, Dr. Roberts, Dr. Ehrlich, Dr. Sagan, and all others of the one hundred scientists associated with them, I must say that the harrowing events you have predicted will never come to pass. Upon the basis of absolute truth declared in the Word of God there stands One who is the Savior of the world. It is plainly stated in 1 John 4:14: "The Father commissioned the son to be the Savior of the world." This commission He has fulfilled in the past, He is fulfilling it at the present moment, and He will fulfill it in the future.

It is generally recognized that a nuclear holocaust could come about in two ways. It could arise from a nuclear accident, in which some human error brings it about, something that is always possible as long as fallible human beings have anything to do with it. And it could be the result of some world leader pushing the button or giving the signal that would start clusters of nuclear bombs winging their swift way to targets (great cities and installations) selected in advance for total destruction. Remember, the answer to the question: "Can they really hit a football field from the other side of the globe?" is an unqualified "Yes."

We are living in the day of man when by divine permission all men and all nations are permitted to walk in their own ways (Acts 14:16, also the Greek text of 1 Cor. 4:3 and Seed and Bread **SB054**). However, since man's offensive weaponry has advanced to a place that the use of it would destroy the world, ruin the earth, and annihilate mankind, God cannot now permit any such conflict to start, either by mistake, accident, or design. This fact now magnifies the need for One and the importance of One who is fully capable of being the Savior of the world. He must be One who can foresee an accident shaping up and have the ability and wisdom to stop it, One who can know in advance, if He cares to, the plans of a world leader and bring an end to them. The world has this Savior. He is now located in the perfect place to be its Savior (Mark 16:19). All the power He needs is in His possession (Matt. 28:18) and at His disposal. Whenever He sees fit to do so He can take to Himself His great power (Rev. 11: 17) and govern the nations upon the earth (Psa. 67:4).

At one time in the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, He had conversation with a Samaritan woman who was so impressed by His words that she went to the men of her city and said: **"Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: Is not this the Christ (Messiah)?"** (John 4:4-29). The men to whom she spoke accepted her words and started out to investigate. When they came to Him, **"they besought Him that He would tarry with them, and He abode there two days"** (John 4:40). It was indeed a gracious act that He would give these men this much of His time, and these days were indeed precious to these men since He spent them giving forth His own word (John 4:41). Most certainly He revealed to them certain facts concerning Himself. Today, we wish we had a full record of all He said, but we have the most important fact He revealed: **And they said to the woman, Now we believe, not because of your saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ (Messiah), the Savior of the world** (John 4:42).

This they learned directly from Him, and this they believed concerning Him. This we believe and in this we rest. The Apostle John is the revelator of this truth to us.

Ancient Greek philosophers reveal in their writings that they had knowledge of the amazing arrangement that made the earth habitable. They, of course, were recipients of that work of the Son of God, the Logos, the Light that enlightens every man that comes into the world. Starting from this point of knowledge they could, and did, consider the invisible attributes of God which are detected from creation's order (**ktiseos kosmou**), these being understood by His achievement, so that they were without excuse (Rom. 1 :20). Sad indeed, that when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God.

Kenneth S. Wuest declares that *"the word logos was already in use among the Greeks before John used it. It was used by them to denote the principle that maintains order in the world."* John laid hold of this word and tells us that the Logos was in the beginning maintaining and preserving the order that is our world.

Let all who believe in Jesus Christ rejoice together. This world has a Savior. He will do whatever needs to be done to save it. And at this point in human history it seems that what He will now need to do is to assume sovereignty and govern the nations upon the earth. So again I say: "Acquaint yourself with Him and be at peace." I am!

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