

SEED & BREAD

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

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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A NEGLECTED PROPHECY

One of the greatest prophecies of the Old Testament, the importance of which is emphasized by its restatement in the New Testament, is, I believe, one of the most neglected and ignored of all prophetic declarations in the Bible. I refer to that declared by Matthew 12:18-21 which in the *King James Version* reads as follows:

"Behold My Servant, Whom I have chosen; My Beloved, in Whom My soul is well pleased: I will put My Spirit upon Him, and He shall shew judgment to the Gentiles (nations). He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench, till He send forth judgment unto victory. And in His name shall the Gentiles (nations) trust."

In the past twenty-five years I have examined scores of commentaries on Matthew to see what has been said on this passage, those on my own shelves, those in libraries, and those offered for sale in the many bookstores which I regularly visit. This has been an exercise in futility; for I am amazed at how completely this passage is ignored, how sadly it is neglected, and how many explain it away by inferring that it was fulfilled during the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. Some infer that it will be fulfilled at His second advent, but they make no attempt to reconcile the statements, "He shall not cry, neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets," with "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout" (1 Thess. 4: 16). Both of these statements cannot refer to the same event.

Three positive statements are made in this prophecy: (1) He shall show judgment to the nations; (2) He will send forth judgment unto victory; (3) In His name shall the nations trust. These three things were not done at His first

coming, and there is nothing in history to show they have been accomplished since. This remains an unfulfilled prophecy.

I am convinced that the neglect of this beautiful prediction is based upon the fact that it cannot be fitted into and that it even contradicts all present schemes of prophetic fulfillment. However, there is one prophetic plan that it fits perfectly. This is the truth that the next great event in God's prophetic calendar is the divine assumption of sovereignty which brings God's beneficent government, even the kingdom of God, upon the earth.

We need to examine the entire portion in which this passage is found, become familiar with it, incorporate it into our thinking about the future, and make it our expectation concerning what God is going to do for the nations of the earth.

This portion began with an omnipotent miracle which I challenge any healer to duplicate. A man with a withered hand stood before the Lord and the Pharisees assembled in the synagogue. Instantaneously, and in the sight of every one of them, the withered hand was healed. He did not touch the hand; He did not command it to be healed; He only asked the man to stretch forth his hand. When he did, it was restored whole, like the other.

The rage of the Pharisees was immediate. They left at once and "held a council," an official meeting, to consider ways and means whereby they might destroy Him. These were powerful men and the machinery of government was in their hands. They had the capability of doing what they set out to do, bring His life and ministry to an end. Our Lord did not treat their plans with contempt, as He certainly could have done. He was equal to any attempt they could have made against Him, but He did not want to be forced into the position of kill or be killed. Yet, He would not yield to death one step short of His appointed time at Calvary.

So when Jesus knew of their plans, in order to avoid conflict, He withdrew Himself from that locality. Still great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all, but gave them the strict charge that they should not make Him known. If they reported these miracles, it would excite still greater opposition from the Pharisees, and they would come after Him bent upon His assassination: Of course, if they did, all He needed to do was speak the word and bring about their incineration. But He had not come to destroy any man's life, so He did not want this conflict. What He wanted was, **"that it**

might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet" (Matt. 12: 17), a prophecy that gives us much information as to how divine government, the kingdom of God comes upon the earth. The idea that His withdrawal and the charge that they would not make Him known fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy is sheer foolishness. God's prophecies are not fulfilled by something being done of which the prophet has not even spoken.

"Behold My Servant." These words call upon the hearer to attend to what is said, to give due heed, observe, and consider the person of the One Whom God calls "My Servant" and "My Beloved," Who was chosen to be God's man, Who would bring into complete fulfillment every Old Testament promise and prophecy. There was nothing in this Servant that could in any way be displeasing to the Absolute of Whom He was the projection.

"I will put My Spirit upon Him." This is His complete equipment for the task He will perform. He will invade the earth by His Spirit, conquer the earth by His Spirit, and set up His own order upon it by His Spirit. Indeed it is, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord." He will pour out of His Spirit upon all flesh as the initial step of bringing His government upon the earth. In fact, divine government in this earth is brought about by the second coming of the Holy Spirit, not by the second coming of Jesus Christ. He will never leave His position at the right hand of God until His enemies have become His footstool.

"He will shew judgment to the nations." The Greek word for "shew" (*apangello*) means to proclaim, to make known openly, to declare. The Psalmist spoke of a time when God's judgments would be in all the earth (105:7), when He would cause judgment to be heard from heaven (76:8). Amos spoke of the day when judgment would run down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream. (Amos 5:24). All these promises will be fulfilled when He proclaims judgment to the nations. Judgment is a commodity that all nations lack today. There is a world scarcity of this valuable asset. There is no nation on earth that knows what to do. All this will be changed when He makes known judgment to the nations.

"He shall not strive." All governments have had their beginning in strife and conflict. Not so God's government. When God invades the earth by His Spirit, there will be no conflict, no wrangling.

"Nor cry." This is definite proof that this passage has no reference to His

first advent, for then, "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let Him come unto Me and drink" (John 7:37). Neither can this prophecy have to do with His second coming, for then "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout" (1 Thess. 4:16).

"Neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets." This cannot be said of His first advent, nor can it be said of His second. This passage deals with Jesus Christ coming in His government, not in person.

"A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench." No one is hurt or injured by the divine assumption of sovereignty, which is something that cannot be said of His second coming. Then He will 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 Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting punishment from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power (2 Thess. 1:7-10). However, let no one make the mistake of thinking that none will be punished when God assumes sovereignty. The next phrase makes this clear.

"Till He send forth judgment unto victory." This sets forth the process by which He overcomes all opposition. He sends forth judgment. All judgment is based upon light, knowledge, truth, and understanding. Wave upon wave of these will flow forth from God so that the victory will be His. Then, and not until then, He will deal with the rebellious and those who are unfit for a place upon this earth under His righteous government. The outcome of His victory is declared in the next sentence.

"And in His name shall the nations trust" This is a beautiful picture - the nations trusting in Jesus Christ. The word "nations" here means exactly the same as when we say, "Canada and the United States are nations with a written constitution," or when we speak of the 130 nations that form the United Nations. This is a truth that is hard to believe, yet it is going to be even as God said, "In His Name shall the nations trust." This truth is repeated in Romans 15:12, and it explains why the nations will then be willing to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks - in other words to turn all their instruments of war to peaceful uses. May God speed the day.

We have considered one of the most important prophecies in the Bible, yet it is one that is ignored and neglected. Do you have any room for its fulfillment in your thinking?

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