

we find ourselves at the boiling point. But there is hope and promise in this passage. God will intervene and **they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was** (2 Tim. 3:9). The folly of Pharaoh's magicians Jannes and Jambres was made known when Aaron's rod became a serpent and swallowed up their conjured serpents (Ex. 7:10-12). Pharaoh's sorcerers were defeated; they progressed no further. God will intervene against men in the last days of our dispensation as well, and they will **progress no further!**

I encourage you to read Psalm 64. This short Psalm is Hebrew poetry describing these same last (resultant) days of 2 Timothy 3:9. To stop the wicked, rebellious workers of iniquity, God shoots at them with an arrow and suddenly they are wounded. The arrow is God's word being spoken. God rises up and sets forth what is right and what is true. God achieves victory through His declarations. Man's goings on are suddenly interrupted. No one can stand against God's truth. They will progress no further! This will be the day when God's judgments are in the earth. This is when the kingdom (government) of God is once again a reality upon the earth after being suspended at Acts 28:28. This is the government moving into the head stage according to the parable of Mark 4:26-29.

God's grace is patient. Even though we want very much for God to rise up today and act, God patiently continues to write into the record of the grace that is inherent in His character. God is patiently completing all that needs to be accomplished concerning this present day, the Dispensation of Grace. On the day that He acts to bring in His kingdom, sin and unrighteousness in humanity will progress no further. Until that day, may we strive to display patient grace in our lives just like that which is found in God's patient grace.

Seed for the Sower · Bread for the Eater · Isaiah 55:10

SEED & BREAD

Otis Q. Sellers, Founder

Patient Grace

By Bob Juneau

Patience is a fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22. People often struggle to display patience, but God's patience is perfect. Moses longed for God to move by declaring, **Rise up, O LORD! Let Your enemies be scattered, And let those who hate You flee before You** (Num. 10:35). (NKJ version used throughout). Just before the Lord ascended back to the Father, His disciples asked Him, **'Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?'** (Acts 1:6). It is normal for believers to desire that God rise up and manifest the victory He has already had over sin and death. We must have Godly patience in order to endure. **Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution** (2 Tim. 3:12).

Sin and wickedness are winning out over righteousness and uprightness in our fallen world. Many argue that man is basically good, and that evil (calamitous) behavior is the exception to our nature, not the rule. This can only be believed if one ignores what God has to say on the matter. The Bible declares mankind to be in a fallen and helpless state of sin and rebellion against God, and the results of this fallen state are seen on every hand.

Among the many awesome qualities of God, grace is a quality inherent in God's character. Ever since the proclamation made in Acts 28:28, God has been dealing with mankind by means of grace, and by no other means. This dispensation has been a tremendous blessing for us and has brought countless believers into His future plans. However, showing grace to mankind has not produced the character He desires of man. **Let grace be shown to the wicked, Yet he will not learn righteousness; In the land of uprightness he will deal unjustly, And will not behold the majesty of the LORD** (Isa. 26:10). One of God's goals for mankind is that we *do* learn righteousness, but if God is dealing with us only in grace today, how will this happen? By studying, meditating on, and submitting to God's word.

ISSUE NO. 347, July 2022

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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Since grace will not produce a righteous character in humanity, how will God gain the victory in the hearts of men regarding righteousness? God must intervene. **For when Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness** (Isa. 26:9). God's judgments manifested in the earth will produce the character in people that God desires. This has been His end goal in all His dealings with us. The kingdom (Gk.-*basileia*), or government of God is the dispensation when God's judgments will be in the earth. The Lord taught His disciples to pray for it in Matthew 6:10, **Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.** Believers with this understanding are compelled to ask, "When will God bring this dispensation to a close and resume His kingdom work?" Asked another way, "Are we in the last days of this dispensation?"

When we come upon the phrase "the last days" in Scripture, it is our responsibility to discover which last days are meant by the context. This phrase is found five times in the *KJV* New Testament. To better describe what the Bible means by the word "last" (Heb.- *acharyth*) and (Gk.-*eschatos*) in this phrase, Otis Q. Sellers concluded these words have inherent in them the idea of result or outcome. He translates this phrase as "the resultant days."

One of the most pertinent passages for our present day is 2 Timothy 3:1-9, which details the character we can expect to see in humanity in the last (resultant) days of the Dispensation of Grace. The apostle Paul declares in 2 Timothy 3:1, **But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come.** The word *perilous* (Gk.-*chalepos*) means: hard to do, hard to take, hard to approach, hard to bear, troublesome, dangerous, harsh, fierce, savage. Paul goes on, saying, **For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God** (2 Tim. 3:2-4). These character traits are being displayed in our society with alarming ferocity.

Could these last days refer to the whole of the dispensation of grace? Paul tells Timothy, **and from such people turn away** (2 Tim. 3:5), indicating that these conditions existed in his day. Man has been showing these traits since Adam's fall, so Paul could not be referring only to men in the Dispensation of Grace. Paul's opening words would be unremarkable if Timothy hadn't understood that Paul

is referring to a future day by the use of the future verb "will come" (Gk.-*enistēmi*). Also, this must refer to a time when things have gotten much worse than they were in Timothy's day. **But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived** (2 Tim. 3:13). This list is given as a sign of things to come by declaring how ubiquitous these character traits will be at the end of the Dispensation of Grace. Is today that day? Are we in the last (resultant) days of this dispensation? Reading 2 Timothy 3 compels us to say, yes.

Interestingly, even religious men are referred to in this list. **Having a form of godliness but denying its power** (2 Tim. 3:5). In the next chapter Paul also declares, **For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables** (2 Tim. 4:3-4). There are those who would never miss a church service; they claim to have faith, and they say God means everything to them. They may be sincere and some may even know Christ as Savior, but they have no desire or motivation to study God's word, to know Him through His word. They are denying the power of God. It's one thing to deny the power of God by ignoring His word, but more and more men are defying the word of God. The attacks against the veracity of the Bible today are unprecedented. We would expect these attacks from the secular world, but many Christian organizations and so-called Christians reject the truth that the Bible is the perfect, inspired, authoritative word of God. Even when not stated, this marginalizing is practiced through traditions, creeds, ceremonies, and edicts that most often disregard or supersede Scripture.

Another telling verse in this list is: **always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth; Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith;** (2 Tim. 3:7-8). This portion refers to both the religious and the secular. The ability to learn in our modern world has never been more available to the common man, yet men seldom come to the knowledge of truth. Many tools are available to us to help us learn God's word, but few use them. It seems that the higher one's education, the less truth is obtained.

The last (resultant) days of 2 Timothy 3 are the result of man's long indulgence, acceptance, and normalization of sin. Like a frog in a pot, we have scarcely noticed the temperature slowly rising, and now