

Signs Everywhere

‘[A] man pulled into a service station in the deep south, walked to a soda machine, and stared at the sign, which said [\$10.00]. “[Ten] dollars for a soda”, he said. “That’s incredible”. “Wall, it ain’t really [ten] dollars. The machine’s broke. I put up an outa-order sign, but people kept puttin’ their money in anyways, and I had ta git it out again, so’s I put that sign up and ain’t had no trouble since”, the friendly serviceman said. / We keep putting our money, time, and efforts into worldly things, instead of investing in God’s love, and find we lose our money. When the price of living without God gets too high, we will quit trying to buy the goods.’

Doesn’t that explain why when societies grow wealthy, they, usually or always, also grow arrogant, proud, and soon forget whatever humility, respect and belief they had in a Higher Power? We read about this exact phenomenon over the thousands of years of earth’s history in general, and, lest there be any doubt, in the detailed history of God’s Chosen People in particular. When things start going swimmingly, as people had all things in abundance, building ever grander homes and creating ever-more exclusive social hierarchies, like today’s A-list celebrities, who lord it over those still in the B-list, and they over those still trying to make it big, while they lord it over those who seemingly don’t have the

talent, education and smarts to even try to climb the social ladders. As their bank accounts swell, their respect of those “beneath” them dwindles. Soon, they find themselves wanting to “help” those supposedly “less fortunate” than themselves, patronizing others, convinced that they have somehow earned the right to tell others who just don’t have the perspective to know what’s best for them in the world, what to do and how to live. Somehow, it’s become their “duty” and “service” to the world to rule over those “beneath” them, to keep them in line for their own good. Even if that comes to entail the sacrifice of some intransigents, all for the greater good! And so we have here the inevitable development of tyranny.

In our day, we’ve seen this over and over again. The rise of the Nazi party in pre-World War II Germany immediately comes to mind. Mind you that the Nazi party is the political party whose English translation is “National Socialism”. In other words, they were communists in all but name. While seemingly staunchly anti-communist, they were operating from the same playbook! And integral to their modus operandi was the necessity to control information, to create unending propaganda to feed the masses so they all would think and act properly. Dissent would not and could not be tolerated, for it threatened the “peace” and “unity” of the society. Censorship of all facets of society and social intercourse quickly becomes de rigueur. We’ve known it for many years as political correctness, or more recently as “wokeness”.

The last several years we've all lived through have revealed to us in spades that our lives of chasing after the goods and praise of the world system are costing us more and more, far exceeding inflation. More and more people are finding they can no longer afford these lifestyles that model worldly success. They can no longer make it. And so many people, even in many parts of the world, are starting to look for their life's true purpose. Fortunately many are turning to God; at least the sales of Holy Bibles have been setting new records! The proliferation of the Scriptures in more and varied versions and mediums is also portending a soon-coming revival around the world. Truly the signs are there. The ongoing wildfires in California; Israel's seven-front war with Iran's tyrannical regime and its client Islamic terrorist groups; Russia's inconceivable and unjust invasion of Ukraine; China's unjustifiable threats against Taiwan and the whole of east and southeast Asia, and its fermenting of unrest and instability in Africa, South America, and South Korea; North Korea's increasing belligerency; the list could go on, all this discord and agitation is shaking up the status quo around the globe, and many are waking up to the fakeness and hollowness of the world's supposed wisdom. Thankfully, many now are looking for signs to show them how to extricate themselves from this mess.

The Holy Bible is God's Word written down so that it could never be forgotten. It is a whole book of signs. Every page points us in the direction we each need to go to live our lives with ever-

increasing perfect peace that surpasses our understanding. But, speaking of signs, how many of us have missed a sign a time or two? When did we just not see a sign that is plain as day to others? I was ticketed once many years ago for making an illegal left turn downtown. I had not seen the sign, but the officer insisted it was there. After he let me go, I drove back around to prove to myself that it wasn't there. And there it was, plain as day. Similarly, we can miss the signs in the Bible, put there specifically by God for us to see, heed and obey.

But to find those signs, we have to read and study the Bible diligently. Quick read throughs won't cut it. We miss whole treasures of meaning with just cursorily read passages. We need to slow down, ask questions about every little thing there. Why is it there? What does it really mean? Take for example the account of Matthew 2. These "magi", spiritual priests, holders of the most advanced degrees in the arts and sciences, advisors to rulers and kings, saw in their studies of the stars the sign that Lord Jesus was shortly to be born. They knew it for a fact, for the signs do not lie. They knew what to look for, for they obviously had been analyzing the Old Testament. They recognized the signs.

Not so the ruling elite, Jerusalem's intelligentsia. Not until these wealthy, truly wise men arrived did anyone in the capital even look for the Scripture signs for their hoped-for Messiah's arrival. Then they looked, and at least in answer to the wise men's question about the Messiah's birthplace, found the passage

where God told Micah that it would be Bethlehem. Now remember that Bethlehem was no mega city. Only a small village, just 6 miles from Jerusalem. Any of Jerusalem's bigwigs could easily have gone there in a couple hours and easily found the new born King of the Jews. Apparently, they weren't interested. Apparently, they did not believe what they had just read. Or worse, they were quite happy with the way things were. At least under the Roman hegemony, they knew what to expect and had ingratiated themselves with King Herod and their overlords to live with all the accoutrements of worldly success. They were doing just fine, thank you very much. While a Messiah from God might come in handy some day, it would be just too messy if He came now. The timing is all wrong. He couldn't be born now. These wise men may be on to something, but at the very least their timing was all off.

As the Bible is literally a book of signs, in just today's readings we can easily see the layers of meaning in the words, if we but open our eyes. Since the Lord God has already taught us in Ecclesiastes 1:9 there is nothing new under the sun, we should know that what will be has already happened, and if we look for that in the Bible, then we can know how and in what circumstances it will happen again. Reread today's passages and see how they were fulfilled in the past, and how they will be fulfilled again in the future. But this time, in completeness. See how in Psalm 72 these prophecies have already been fulfilled, even as long ago as when Joseph was serving as the prime minister of

Egypt. Then again when the Queen of Sheba brought her extravagant treasures to King Solomon. Then again when these wise men brought their costly gifts to the Infant Jesus. And then again when in the soon-to-be-inaugurated Millennial Kingdom of Christ Jesus, the nations will parade to Jerusalem, loaded down with their riches and presents, painstakingly brought at great cost in gratitude and praise of the Lord of All the Earth. And this fact was already prophesied in the ancient Feast of Tabernacles, which is celebrated every autumn. Lest the people forget, God instituted a holiday just for it. Yes, this will happen, people. It has happened, and it will happen again, and in ever greater measure and splendor. Truly, as Isaiah was led to write, Light has dawned upon Israel. It dawned hundreds of years later with Jesus' birth, and will dawn yet again in ever greater, perfect measure when in just a few more years, our Lord will return. Light-life-energy will engulf the whole earth and all creation. And the culmination of all things will ensue, never to be interrupted by sin ever again.

The signs are all there. Many are discernible only in our day and age. It's time now for them to be revealed, in our time, these end times. As we find each one, we are filled with amazement and praise of our God Who proves over and over again just how totally omnipotent and perfect in every way He is. Folks, it's actually fun to find the signs by yourself. Pray for Holy Spirit to guide you, and then embark on your journey in His Word. Doing so will keep you in peace during this tumultuous 2025.

