Ephesians 1:10 (Paul Wilson) 147023

Prophetic Terms, Prophetic Terms: The Fullness of Times

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We have now considered the term, "the fullness of the time," as being the time when the probation of man ended. God had tried man in every way, so that none could say that anything was left untried or undone. Every trial ended in the failure of man to bring forth fruit for God, and proved all, both Jews and Gentiles, to be under sin. All hope for man had thus ended, unless God would act in pure grace. This God did, for He sent His beloved Son—the dearest Object of His heart—down into this world of sin and sorrow, saying, "Maybe they will reverence my son."

But when men saw the Son, they rejected Him, and finally cried, "Away with Him." Both Jews and Gentiles were guilty of His death, but God again abounded over their wickedness, and brought salvation to men through the sacrificial death of His Son. The offer of a free and full salvation went forth, and today continues to go forth.

Friend, have you accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as your own Savior? There is no hope and no salvation for you unless you personally accept and acknowledge Him.

From where we stand today we look back to "the fullness of the time," but we may also look forward to

"The Fullness of Times."

God has decreed, "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times [plural] He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him." Eph. 1:10.

This looks forward to a time yet future, but not in the distant future, when all things in heaven and earth shall be brought under the Lord Jesus. Although He is now disowned in this world He created, the time is coming apace when all in heaven and in earth shall own His rights, and confess Him as Lord.

During the interval between "the fullness of the time" and "the fullness of times" it might appear that God is indifferent to the dishonor and maltreatment accorded to His Son in this world. God is patiently waiting and beseeching men to be reconciled (2 Cor. 5:20) while He forbears to execute judgment on this world where His Son was murdered. God shall yet avenge the death of His Son, but today is the time of His longsuffering and patience. He has assured us that judgment will fall, and Peter speaks of the delay in these words:

"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Pet. 3:9.

This world today is in the position of a guilty criminal who has been duly tried, then condemned to execution, and is just awaiting the day and hour of execution.

Should any read these lines who are still unsaved, remember that you are a part of this world over which the judgment of God hangs. You are either saved by Christ's death and precious blood, or you are numbered among His murderers and rejecters who are awaiting certain doom. There can be no neutrality concerning Christ; you are either for Him or against Him. If you have not already accepted Him, accept Him quickly while there is still opportunity, and before the judgment overtakes you.

During the interval we have spoken of, the Lord Jesus sits at God's right hand waiting until His enemies be made His footstool (Psalm 110:1). During this long period of the non-intervention of God with this condemned world, the gospel goes out, but soon it is going to end. In one place God speaks in His Word of this period as "the mystery of God." Note what God says:

"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets.... And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever." Rev. 10:7; 11:15.

Yes, Christ shall yet reign and have dominion over all, but He shall first put down all His enemies. He shall visit this world with great and sore judgments, and gather out of His kingdom all things that offend. Then shall be the "fullness of times," when all things in heaven and in earth shall be headed up under the Man of God's counsels.

When God first made man, Adam, He placed him in the garden of Eden and gave him dominion over the earth. He made him Lord of the creation, and even brought the animals to him to have him name them. But Adam gave his ear to the devil's lie and fell. Ruin, sorrow, misery, and death followed the fall of man. Not only man, but the whole creation suffered because of the fall of its first head. Satan, the deceiver, became usurper of man's place. He, was even able to offer the kingdoms of the world to the Lord Jesus when He came (Matt. 4), for he said, "They are 'delivered unto me." The Lord Jesus refused to receive them from Satan.

It might have looked as though God's purpose to place man at the head of this creation had failed, and as far as the first man and his posterity were concerned, it had failed; but God shall yet have all under the Man, the second Man, the last Adam, during the "fullness of

times." What the Lord Jesus refused from Satan, He shall yet have from God. He is going to take the headship of the creation, not only by right, but by redemption, for it had fallen under the power of the enemy through man's sin. All that had been ruined in the hands of the first Adam, shall be more than made good in the last Adam—the Son of God and Son of man.

The 8th Psalm, and the second chapter of Hebrews both speak of His coming dominion, and His present exaltation at God's right hand. In Hebrews we read that we do not see all things put under the Lord Jesus yet, but we do see Him crowned with glory and honor.

And during the period of waiting, called the "patience of Jesus Christ," a bride is being gathered out from among the Jews and Gentiles to be His joint heirs, and share His glory in that soon-coming day. Fellow-Christian, such is our portion!

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