

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XII

March 30, 2003

No. 13

GOD'S USE OF WAR

By: Jerry Fite

War, with all its “shock and awe” and “suicide bombings”, has captivated our attention of late. Grim scenes of death and destruction parade daily before our horrified eyes. Because war is so terrible, we should not be surprised to hear protestors decrying it as evil, demanding its immediate end. We see public demonstrations against war occurring not only in our own country, but all over the world. While many look upon all war as inhumane, does God view it as an inevitable human experience? Could our good God ever use horrific war for His purposes?

While we would prefer to live in pleasant times of healing, building, laughing, embracing and peace, God tells us of other inevitabilities. There is also “a time to kill”, “break down”, “weep”, and “refrain from embracing”. Yes, God says there is “a time for war” (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8).

God does not allow us to experience these things in order to dampen our spirits, but to arouse our consciousness to a higher perspective. When we see the massive World Trade Center rise tall

in times of peace, only to see it tumble tragically in a act of war, God wants us to answer the question, “What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?” (Ecclesiastes 3:9). When men work around the clock in negotiations to have peace, only to see it quickly unravel in war, God asks us, “What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?”.

God allows times of healing to turn into a time of killing, and times of building up things to turn into times of tearing down things in order to move us to find our true profit beyond the affairs of this world. The spiritual labor in fearing God and keeping His commandments is where we find true permanence and profitable purpose (cf. Ecclesiastes 12:13). We might not ever search to this end if we always had peace on earth, and all that we worked hard to build never crumbled.

God uses war between nations to uproot evil. Jehovah used the nation of the Medes to overthrow the Babylonian empire. He said, “Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them...” (Isaiah 13:10). As the Assyrian nation

was “the rod” of God’s “anger” against the Israelites who had become profane (Isaiah 10:5), The Medes would be in God’s hands to destroy a prideful Babylon (Isaiah 13:19).

We must not allow war’s horrid scenes of innocents being destroyed to take our eye off the fact that God is using war between nations to fulfill His purpose. The Medes with “their bows shall dash the young men in pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children” (Isaiah 13:18).

Centuries ago the region around the Tigris and the Euphrates Rivers was inhabited by a “bitter and hasty nation” who had no fear of the true God, Jehovah, but who came upon man for the sake “of violence”, “even he whose might is his god” (cf. Habbakkuk 1:5-11). Babylon, found wanting, was brought down to defeat before the Medes and Persians (Daniel 5:25-30). Could God be ousting a cruel and evil regime today in the same region? Remember, God uses war to make us think, and uproot evil.