

Glad Tidings

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

Vol. XXXIV

December 8, 2024

No. 49

In the end, God...

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The Scriptures begin with *“In the beginning God...” (Genesis 1:1)*. After God’s glory is manifested in the creation of the heavens and earth, and then the creation of man, the interesting narrative of man’s actions fill the pages of the Bible in the context of time. One generation after another spend their days on earth only to go the way of all the earth and return to the dust of the ground (*cf. Genesis 3:19, I Kings 2:2*). But that is not the end of the story. Whether we are exalted kings are unknown paupers, man or woman, or slaves or free, our varied paths lead to the same place, even after death. As Paul reminds us, *“...we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God.”* He then immediately stresses, *“As I live, saith the Lord, to me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then, each one shall give account of himself to God” (Romans 14:10-12)*. “In the beginning God” opens our minds with knowledge, while “in the end God” sobers our choices with reality.

Solomon concludes by Divine inspiration, *“... God made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions” (Ecclesiastes 7:29)*. God allows man to exercise his free will, but

warns us that choices have unavoidable consequences.

A familiar passage illustrates this reality from the days of Jeremiah: *“Oh Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps” (Jeremiah 10:23)*.

The tenth chapter opens with Jeremiah imploring God’s people to not *“learn the way of the nations.”* Israel is being warned to not be dismayed at the signs of heaven, like the superstitious nations around them. God’s people must not follow the customs of the nations into idolatry. It is not a wise choice, for idolatry is the way of “vanity.” These gods may be decked with silver and gold, but underneath lies only a stock of a tree. The idol has to be “hammered” into place to remain sturdy. “It cannot talk,” and has to be “borne” by others if moved. It does not deserve to be “reverenced” for the idol “cannot do evil or good” (*Jeremiah 10:1-5*).

Jeremiah could be reminding his people that without the revelation from God, they can easily be deceived in the way they go. After all, “there is no God like Jehovah” who is “great” and mighty in power. *“He hath made the earth by His power, He hath*

established the world by His wisdom, and by His understanding hath He stretched out the heavens” (Jeremiah 10:12). Turn to Jehovah. Walk in His wisdom. Man needs guidance from above in order to direct his steps.

While this is true, a closer look at the context leads us to another understanding. Jeremiah is warning the people of God that they are heading to unavoidable judgment. The false gods, the work of delusion, shall perish in the day of God’s visitation (*Jeremiah 10:15*). Regarding those besieged by the Chaldean army coming from “the north,” Jehovah will “sling out the inhabitants of the land at this time, and will distress them, that they may feel it” (*Jeremiah 10:17-18, 22*).

It is not in man that walketh to determine where his steps will lead. In the end, all of our steps lead to God in judgment. This thought moves Jeremiah to appeal to God that He will correct him and his people “in measure” not in God’s full force of His “wrath,” bringing him to “nothing” (*Jeremiah 10:24*). In the end, all steps lead to the sovereign God’s judgment. As the wise man says, “A man’s heart devises his way, but Jehovah directs his steps” (*Proverbs 16:9*).