

## **452 Standing, praying, watching**

The Lord God is “working His purpose out as year succeeds to year” as He moves towards fulfilling the great end-time prophecies He has set out for us so clearly in His Word. By way of reminder and in summary, these prophecies involve the true Church, the apostate Church, the Jews and the Gentile nations, divine judgments, with the Lordship of Jesus Christ being acknowledged by one and all and His millennial Kingdom being established on this earth, leading on finally to “the eternal state”. Our Christian comfort is that in Christ all shall be fulfilled as promised and all shall indeed be well; and our Christian concern is for all those who are yet apart from Christ, whose sins remain unforgiven.

We are living in times of clear divine warnings including: a growing list of “natural disasters”, which are becoming more frequent, more widespread and more extreme; the Covid-19 pandemic which seems to be here to stay; new and frightening capabilities to wage war on each other; this Afghanistan shambles and its consequences; and the steady march of Islam. The message from the Lord could hardly be clearer: man in his godless folly is messing things up more and more with every year that passes; there remains just the “one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (I Timothy 2.5-6, KJV); and the path to “peace with God” by faith in His Son Jesus Christ, with all that that peace involves for now and hereafter, remains open for the time being (John 3.14-18,35-36).

Of those various divine warnings mentioned above, the most immediate and potent threat arises from Islam, as we came across in last week’s Reflection and need to give further brief attention to just now. A recent quotation from Christine Douglass-Williams of Jihad Watch is worth including here. “Despite the plain history of jihad, and the extensive information available about Islamic conquest — which includes stealth invasion via immigration and massive birth-rates — western globalists continue to fall into the trap of open borders ... The majority of Muslims do support Sharia — which according to mainstream Islam is divine and irrefutable. Sharia and democracy are incompatible. A flood of Muslim migrants will change the values of non-Muslim societies over time”.

Such changes are happening right now all around us, but are never properly addressed because politicians understandably are desperate to maintain social peace and the “mainstream media” (MSM) constantly portray Muslims as the victims of rampant “Islamophobia”. Thus across

the once-Christian West “free speech” steadily retreats and Islam steadily advances.

A second quotation, by Daniel Greenfield, regarding the West’s plans to deal now with the Taliban in Afghanistan, is also timely – “There’s no point in negotiating with terrorists. The only thing such negotiations can do is achieve a temporary truce in line with Islamic laws governing pacts with infidels. And beyond that the Jihad continues. Anyone who thinks that Jihadists can be negotiated with is a fool”.

Added into the mix are three other new factors: a doddering US President in the hands of his left-wing “minders”; western countries in considerable disarray, now confronted with potentially millions of Afghan refugees; and a weak Israeli government dependent for survival upon the votes of anti-Israel, pro-Muslim Brotherhood, parties.

The message from all this is not that new but is starkly plain: there is a real war on in which Christians have a crucial part to play. The world needs the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ more than ever, and if people like us do not speak up about that Gospel then we can be quite sure that no-one else will do so! The war involves the old clash between God and Satan, with “the wiles of the devil ... principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high [places]”. It is being fought with the assurance that God’s victory in Christ, over Satan and his agents, over sin and over death, is certain (I Corinthians 15.50-58).

Our instructions are clear. “Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might ... put on the whole armour of God ... that (we) may be able to withstand ... and having done all, to stand ... praying always ... and watching” (from Ephesians 6.10-12,18). And then also, “Rejoice in the Lord ... I count all things [but] loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them [but] dung, that I may win Christ ... Rejoice in the Lord alway: [and] again I say, Rejoice ... I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, [therewith] to be content ... I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (from Philipians 3.1,8 & 4.4,11,13, KJV).

And then finally for this time, “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity” (I Corinthians 15.13-14).