

MULTIPLIED SORROWS

November 22, 2015

II Corinthians 7:1-16

**“Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god.” Psalm 16:4a
“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of
the world worketh death.” II Corinthians 7:10**

For many, the world is more dangerous and uncertain than they have ever known it to be. Recent attacks by Islamic terrorists, and the continual threat of more, set nerves on edge. Anxieties and frustrations mount when national leaders seem apathetic toward reality, failing to discern or admit the true nature of our enemy, and thus appearing to leave our nation insecure. Despite all of the efforts and expenditures for pleasure, this world is a very unhappy place.

Its turmoil demonstrates a biblical truth. “Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god” (Psalm 16:4a). “The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked” (Isaiah 57:20, 21).

God alone is the only source of peace within the troubled heart, among troubled nations and in a warring world. To heed His word is to secure peace and prosperity (Deuteronomy 28:1-14). “Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the LORD” (Psalm 144:15). To reject His word is to incur loss, fear, failure, defeat, despair and ultimate destruction (Deuteronomy 28:15-62). “The pleasures of sin [are] for a season” (Hebrews 11:25b), but “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23).

God commands, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3). When this is ignored, sorrows multiply. Sin begets sorrow. “When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (James 1:15). “From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not because ye ask not” (James 4:1).

The warnings made to Israel in the first five books of Scripture have been fulfilled in Israel’s history. Because of their idolatry, they were carried away captive to Babylon and Persia. A remnant returned to inhabit their homeland. God revealed Himself to them in their Messiah, Jesus Christ. “He came unto his own, and his own received him not” (John 1:11). Consequently, they were then driven from their homeland, and for 1900 years there was no nation called Israel.

Multiplied sorrows have accompanied the lands where animism has dominated. The history of lands where Islam has been dominant is filled with misery. Yea, most of human history is the story of wars, of one Godless tyrant fighting to dethrone another tyrant, while pitiful survivors of their wars live under their iron fists, ignorant of God, oppressed, impoverished and miserable, devoid of the blessings promised to the nation whose God is the Lord.

God's people also have sorrows. But they "sorrow not, even as others which have not hope" (I Thessalonians 4:13b). Their sorrow is purposeful (Romans 8:28-39). They experience a "godly sorrow" that leads them to repentance and a right relation with God (II Corinthians 7:10). He prepares a table before them in the presence of their enemies (Psalm 23:5). "We are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:37), for nothing can separate them from the love of God.