

THERE IS A FAMINE IN THE LAND!

The wise man, Solomon wrote, "*Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he*" (Proverbs 29:18). Some have mistakenly used this statement to point out that we must have a vision for the future, a belief in our future success. However, Solomon is talking about a message from God, His word. Often the writings of the prophets are referred to as the "vision of" (Isa. 1:1; Nah. 1:1; Hab. 2:2). The prophet Amos prophesied, "*Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it*" (Amos 8:11-12). This was a prophecy of the failure of vision, revelation from God to man. Lamenting the misery of Jerusalem, Jeremiah wrote, "*Her gates are sunk into the ground; he hath destroyed and broken her bars: her king and her princes are among the Gentiles: the law is no more; her prophets also find no vision from the Lord*" (Lam. 2:9). God's promise was fulfilled.

However, there is another "famine in the land", one of hearing the words of the Lord, not one of bread or water. This famine is self made, not the result of God withholding His revelation to man. This famine is simply the failure of man to read, study, and learn the revealed word of God found in the pages of holy writ. Paul, speaking to Timothy said that "*the holy scriptures,...are able to make thee wise unto salvation...*" (II Tim. 3:15). He then added that, "*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*" (II Tim. 3:16). The failure to "know the book" is a failure to "know" God's righteousness, for the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel (Rom. 1:16-17). Paul spoke of his fellow Jews saying, "*For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God*" (Rom. 10:2-3).

Friends, the world is full of people just like these, ignorant of God's word and establishing their own way of righteousness! Like Solomon said, "*Where there is no vision, the people perish...*"! We too shall perish without a knowledge of God's word?

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UNDER HER WINGS

An article in National Geographic several years ago provided an interesting picture of God's wings. After a forest fire in Yellowstone National Park, forest rangers began their trek up a mountain to assess the inferno's damage.

One ranger found a bird literally petrified in ashes, perched statuesquely on the ground at the base of a tree. Somewhat sickened by the eerie sight, he knocked over the bird with a stick. When he gently struck it, three tiny chicks scurried from under their mother's wings.

The loving mother, keenly aware of impending disaster, had carried her offspring to the base of the tree and had gathered them under her wings, instinctively knowing that the toxic smoke would rise. She could have flown to safety but had refused to abandon her babies. Then the blaze had arrived and the heat had scorched her small body, the mother had remained steadfast. She had been willing to die, so those under the cover of her wings would live.

A mother's love is so deep, so strong. This mother gave everything. But her love, our love, as great as it may seem is so small when compared to God's love for each and every one of us. We will never understand the fullness or the depth of His love until we meet Him in heaven.

However, far too many would abandon the safety found under the wings of Deity. Jesus lamented, "*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not*" (Matt. 23:37). One wonders where else one might think they can find safety? Certainly not in the opinions and beliefs of mere man.

What man must do is trust in God. When one trusts God concerning their eternal salvation, they will do whatever God has said in order to have that salvation. The psalmist wrote, "*He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust*" (Psalm 91:4). The wise man, Solomon said, "*Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding*" (Proverbs 3:5). The lack of trust in God has manifested itself in the multitudes of varying doctrines and beliefs presented to the world by man. Let's start trusting God more. Stay safe under His wings.