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SKILDERYE IN DIE GALERIE VAN DIE EWIGHEID...

Het die skouspel van die see u al ooit in vervoering of verwondering gebring? Of die hemelruim: die wit vloot wolke - skoon, sag, rustig, óf die stormjaers wat deur die winde voortgedryf word - onheilspellend?

Hoeveel kunsgalerye, museums, of monumente beeld gebeure, tydperke, die sterrehemel, mense, diere, of die natuur uit? In die Sistynse Kapél in die Vatikaanstad, Rome, staan jy vasgenaai voor Michelangelo se asemrowende uitbeelding van die Skepping en baie ander Bybelse verhale, asook die uiteindelike Verdoemenis wat vir sommige wag! In die Voortrekkermonument kan ons meeleeft met die verhale van lief en leed van ons voorouers wat deur die fresco's uitgebeeld word.

Maar wat is skouspelagtiger as die menslike siel, die grenslose gees met al sy verskillende fasete en kompleksiteit? En die volle som van hierdie menswees het 'n blywende effek wat ons INVLOED noem. Dit is iets wat ALTYD van ons lewens uitgaan, soos die lig van 'n lamp, die hitte van 'n vlam, of die reuk van 'n blom...

Om te lewe, is om invloed op ander se lewens te hê, óf ten goede óf ten kwade. Ander mense let op ons lewenswyse en hulle dade of optrede word deur ons s'n getemper of gewysig. Elke GOEIE lewe oefen 'n tweevoudige invloed uit: direkte uitvloeisels wat tot seën vir ander mense is, asook die stille inspraak waardeur ander beter gemaak of besiel kan word om soortgelyke goeie dinge te doen.

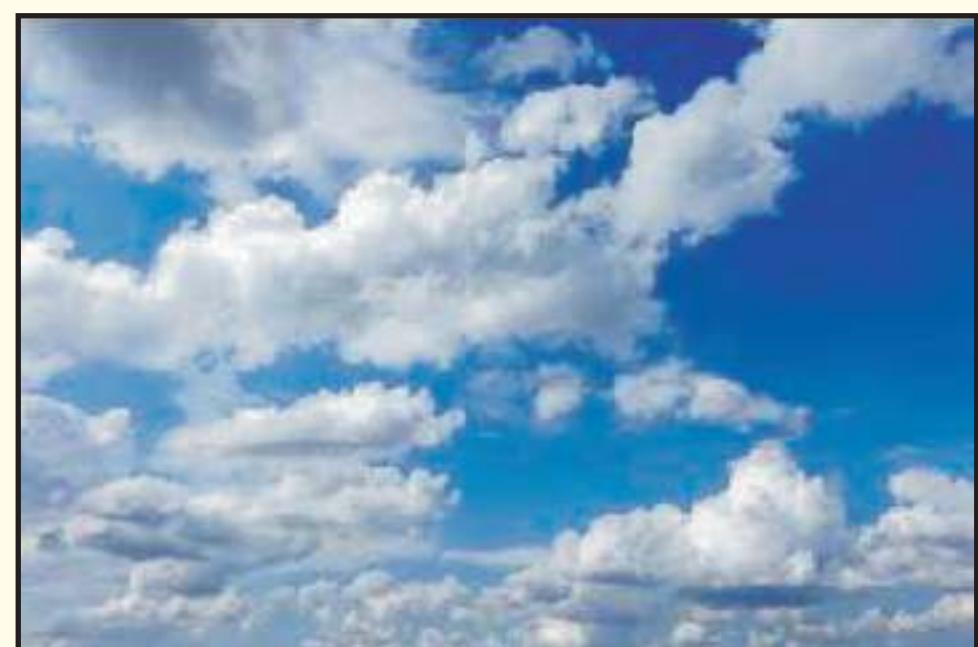
Deur ons alledaagse handelinge kan ons die aandag op JESUS

vestig. 'n Vriendelike glimlag, 'n besoek aan iemand wat ernstig siek is, 'n saamry-geleentheid vir 'n weduwee wat nie kan bestuur of 'n voertuig het nie - 'n getuenis aan iemand wat die Here nie ken nie - 'n lewe van oorgawe en gehoorsaamheid aan God en die ondersteuning en uitbreiding van Sy Koninkryk op talle maniere, insluitend my finansiële bydrae wat 'n GOEIE nalatenskap sal verseker... Dit alles sal sorg dat JESUS gesien en beleef kan word!

Selfs die dood beëindig nie invloed nie. Dit duur voort! Dink maar aan bekende Bybelfigure en geloofshelde wat deur hulle lewensinvloed vandag nog vir ons tot inspirasie dien.

ABRAHAM moes kies om te bly waar hy was óf om sy gesin te neem en weg te trek na 'n onbekende bestemming om sodoende aan God se Stem gehoorsaam te wees. Hy moes kies tussen sy bestaande sekuriteit of 'n onsekere toekoms. Sy gehoorsaamheid aan God se opdrag het die geskiedenis van die hele wêreld beïnvloed en tot vandag toe deel die mensdom nog in die seën van die ontstaan van die volk wat God gebruik het om Homself te openbaar en waardeur Hy Jesus Christus as Verlosser na die hele wêreld sou stuur!

SAMUEL is gebore in antwoord op 'n moeder se hartstogtlike gebede. Sy naam beteken weliswaar "van God afgebid". Omdat hy van kleinsaf gewillig was om in klein takies 'n toegewyde dienstnug van God te wees, is hy deur God geroep om o.a. priester, profeet, raadgewer en rigter van Israel te wees. SAMUEL se lewe word só geskilder: "Samuel het grootgeword. Die Here was by



hom en het nie een van Samuel se woorde onvervul gelaat nie. Die hele Israel van noord tot suid het gemerk dat Samuel betroubaar was as profeet van die Here" (1 Sam. 3:19-20).

DANIËL se hele lewe demonstreer 'n persoon wat in woord en daad nie afgewyk het van sy beginsels nie. Hy het met wysheid God se Woord op sy eie lewe van toepassing gemaak. Hy was nie net 'n hoorder nie, maar ook 'n dader daarvan! Beide sy fisiese en geestelike dieet het 'n baie belangrike deel gevorm van sy intieme verhouding met sy God. Sy volhardende, volgehoue gebedslewe is vir elke mens wat na sy afbeelding kyk, kosbare inspirasie. Ten spyte van verdrukking en vervolging het hy getrou aan God gebly!

JEREMIA se geweldige uithouvermoë ten spyte van antagoniste en apatiese toehoorders laat ons verwonderd toekyk hoe sy lewe afgeskilder word. Hy moes leer om met al sy menslike krag en vermoëns aan God en aan God se liefde vas te klou. Met sy

hele wese het hy die waarheid verkondig terwyl hy soms geignoreer is en dikwels in lewensgevaar verkeer het en baie erg vervolg is. Sy waarskuwings is in die wind geslaan en hy het met bittere trane aanskou hoedat koning na koning die volk van God verlei het agter ander afgode aan. Hoewel hy menige keer moed wou opgee, het hy ten spyte van sy volk se wederstrewigheid, getrou aan God gebly tot die einde toe.

STEFANUS is deur die apostels as diaken gekies wat moes help met die daagliks versorging van die Griekssprekende weduwees wat afgeskeep is. Hy is beskryf as iemand wat "vol van die Heilige Gees is en wysheid het..." (Hand. 6:3). Hy het sy taak met getrouwheid verrig en het bekend geword as iemand "aan wie God baie genade en krag gegee het" en hy "het groot wonders en tekens onder die volk gedoen" (vers 8). Hy was ook 'n baie goeie spreker en voor die Joodse Raad het hy uitgewys hoe die geskiedenis in Jesus vervul is. Met hierdie

Vervolg op p. 4

ELKE LAMP MOET GENOEG OLIE HÊ...

In Matt. 25 vind ons die gelykenis van die tien maagde wat gewag het op die koms van die bruidegom. Daar was vyf wyse en vyf dwasse maagde. Let op: almal was maagde, die wyse sowel as die dwasse. Albei partye se paaie het vir 'n baie lang tyd saamgeloop, en dus het dit geskyn asof almal dieselfde lewenspeil handhaaf.

Geen onderskeid kon tussen die twee groepe getref word nie behalwe aan die heel einde, met die uur van beslissing. Hulle het saamgeloop, was in mekaar se geselskap, het saam gelag, gesing en as kamerade verkeer. Hulle het immers vir dieselfde doel bymekaar gekom - om te wag vir die koms van die bruidegom. Hulle het dieselfde belangheids gehad.

Die dwaasheid van die dwasse maagde lê nie daarin dat hulle geen olie gehad het nie, want hulle het genoeg olie gehad tot voor die koms van die bruidegom. Hulle dwaasheid lê daarin dat hulle nie voorsiening gemaak het vir ekstra olie nie. Hulle het dus die vertraging van die koms van die bruidegom onderskat, en was

dáárom nie gereed vir sy koms nie. Matt. 25:7 lui: "Toe staan al daardie maagde op en maak hulle lampe gereed." Die Griekse woord vir "gereedmaak" is *kosmeō*, wat o.a. beteken "gereedmaak", "in orde bring", "om te versier." Dink bv. aan woorde wat hiervan afgelei is, soos "kosmetiek" en "kosmeties". En omdat dit hier gaan oor die gereedmaak van die maagde om die bruidegom te ontmoet, strek die gedagte wyer as net bloot lampe wat reggemaak moet word.

Die bruid (al die gelowiges wat in 'n intieme verhouding met die hemelse Bruidegom verkeer) moet gereedmaak vir Sy koms: **Die sentrale gedagte van die gelykenis is gereedheid!** Dit beteken dat ons nie in die verklaring van die gelykenis verstrengeld moet raak in die fynere detail van die gelykenis nie. Die gelowige kan gevra word: Is jy gereed vir die koms van die Bruidegom? Is jou lamp aan die brand? Of is jy in sóveel dinge verstrengeld dat jy nie 'n intieme verhouding met Jesus het nie?

In Grieks staan daar dat elkeen

haar eie (*eautōn*) lamp gereedgemaak het. Elke gelowige moet sorg dat hy/sy self gereed is vir die koms van Jesus Christus. In Luk. 12:35 staan geskryf: "Laat julle heupe omgord wees en julle lampe aan die brand." En in 2 Pet. 3:14, "Daarom, geliefdes, terwyl julle hierdie dinge verwag, beywer julle dat julle vlekkeloos en onberispelik voor Hom bevind mag word in vrede." Die Amplified Bible verklaar: "So, beloved, since you are expecting these things, be eager to be found by Him [at His coming] without spot or blemish and at peace [in serene confidence, free from fears and agitating passions and moral conflicts]."

Die bruid moet haar gereedmaak vir die Bruidegom. Sy moet haar skoonheid - wat van Hom kom, vanuit 'n intieme verhouding met Hom - aan Hom vertoon. Sy moet haarself *kosmeō* (gereedmaak soos 'n bruid vir haar bruidegom), om op haar beste te lyk vir Hom!

Dink ook daarvan dat elkeen van ons se geestelike voorbereiding nie op die laaste oomblik gekoop of geleent kan word nie! Ons persoonlike verhouding met Jesus



moet deurentyd innig, opreg en standhoudend wees. In Op. 19:7 lees ons: "Laat ons bly wees en ons verheug en aan Hom die heerlikheid gee, want die bruilof van die Lam het gekom en sy vrou het haargereed gemaak."

Jesus self verklaar in Op. 2:5: "Onthou dan waarvandaan jy uitgeval het, en bekeer jou en doen die eerste werke. Anders kom Ek gou na jou toe en sal jou kandelaar van sy plek verwyder asjy jou nie bekeernie."

Kom, laat ons gereedmaak, Jesus Kom! Maranata!
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'N UITNODIGING TOT BEKERING!

"Maak my vas aan die altaar, O Here!"

Voel jy ook partykeer om van die dakke en straathoeke af te skree: 'Beker jou!' "Word wakker, jy wat slaap, en staan op uit die dood; en Christus sal jou lewe verlig" (Efesiërs 5:14)?

Ken jy God die Vader? Ken jy Jesus Christus, jou Verlosser? Ken jy die Heilige Gees? Het jy 'n verhouding met God? As jy dit nie het nie huil Hy oor jou hoogmoed! (Jer. 13:17). Dan bedroef jy die Heilige Gees! (Efesiërs 4:30).

Gee jou lewe nou oor aan God! Die tyd raak min. Gee elke faset van jou lewe oor aan Hom - al jou probleme waarmee jy so worstel en almal waaronder jy jou bekommer: jou man/vrou, kinders, kleinkinders, broers en susters, jou ouers... Moet dan nie inmeng en self jou probleme probeer oplos nie.

Jesus het ons gekoop met Sy heilige, rein bloed! Is dit nie genoeg rede om erns te maak met jou verhouding met God nie? Is

dit nie genoeg rede om uit te roep "Here, maak my vas aan die altaar" nie? (Psalm 118:27).

Roep die altaar jou om jouself te offer? Indien jy daarvan wegskram, laat jy 'n kans verbygaan om geestelik te groei. Vra die Heilige Gees om jou vas te maak aan die altaar met die rooi koord van verlossing - die rein bloed van Jesus - die goue koord van liefde en die silwer koord van hoop op die tweede koms van Christus!

Wanneer jy jou lewe in Christus vind, verloor jy dit volgens menslike maatstawwe. Maar dan het jy 'n verborge lewe in God waarvan die wêreld nie weet nie. Stry daagliks teen die invloed van aardse dinge wat jou aandag aftrek en jou in versoeking stel om op God die rug te keer.

Wanneer ons Jesus liefhet, het Hy ons ook lief en sal Hom aan ons openbaar. Hy het geregtigheid lief. Die opregtes sal Sy aangesien (Joh. 14:21b). Is dit nie wonderlik nie? Ons moet daarna streef! Die lewe is Christus en die sterwe wins (Fil.1:21).

In die hitte van die vuur moet ons God verheerlik! 'We must win the victory in the furnace' (Margaret Bottome). Die 3 vriende van Daniël het ongeskonke uit die vuur gekom; trouens, dit wat hulle bewegings beperk het, die boeie, was af!

As ons werklik dissipels van Jesus is, moet ons onaangeraak deur die vlamme uit die bakoond stap, vry van die boeie wat ons groei kelder. "Hy sal die seuns van Levi reinig en hulle louter soos goud en soos silwer, sodat hulle aan die Here in geregtigheid 'n offer sal bring" (Maleagi 3:3).

Ons Verlosser, Jesus Christus het die Bose ontwapen (Kolossense 2:15). Ons sonde is vergewe, die straf vir ons sonde is opgehef! Ons hoef nie in ballingskap te wees nie; dikwels is dit self-opgelegde ballingskap. Die Gees maak ons vry - die Gees van krag, liefde en selfbeheersing.

Is jy gewillig om voortdurend 'n lewe van totale oorgawe aan God te leef? Ter wille van die Evangelie moet ons soos Paulus 'n deel-



Estette Bredenkamp

genoot daarvan word - en die boodskap uitdra sodat mense gered kan word (1 Kor. 9:23).

Gebed:

O Vader, bind my vas op die altaar, sodat ek myself sal gee as 'n lewendige, heilige, welgevallige offer (Romeine 12:1). My siel dors na U en ek hoop op U Woord! Help my, Here, dat ek nie my roeping op aarde sal versaak nie! Amen.
- Estette Bredenkamp
082 8654 381.

Yahweh is my best Friend and my Shepherd. I always have more than enough. He offers a resting place for me in His luxurious love. His tracks take me to an oasis of peace near the quiet brook of bliss. That's where He restores and revives my life. He opens before me the right path and leads me along in His footsteps of righteousness so that I can bring honour to His Name.

Even when Your path takes me through the valley of deepest darkness, fear will never conquer me, for You already have! Your authority is my strength and my peace. The comfort of Your love takes away my fear. I'll never be lonely, for You are near.

You become my delicious feast even when my enemies dare to fight. You anoint me with the fragrance of your Holy Spirit; You give me all I can drink of You until my cup overflows. So why would I fear the future? Only goodness and tender love pursue me all the days of my life. Then afterward, when my life is through, I'll return to Your glorious Presence to be forever with You!
(Ps. 23:1-6 TPT).

THE GOODNESS OF GOD

LORD, your constant love reaches the heavens; Your faithfulness extends to the skies.

Your righteousness is towering like the mountains; Your justice is like the depths of the sea. Men and animals are in Your care.

How precious, O God, is Your constant love! We find protection under the shadow of Your wings.

We feast on the abundant food You provide; You let us drink from the river of Your goodness.

You are the Source of all life, and because of Your light we see the light!

[Ps. 36:3-9, Good News Bible, Bible Society of South Africa, Cape Town, 1982].

Good Morning

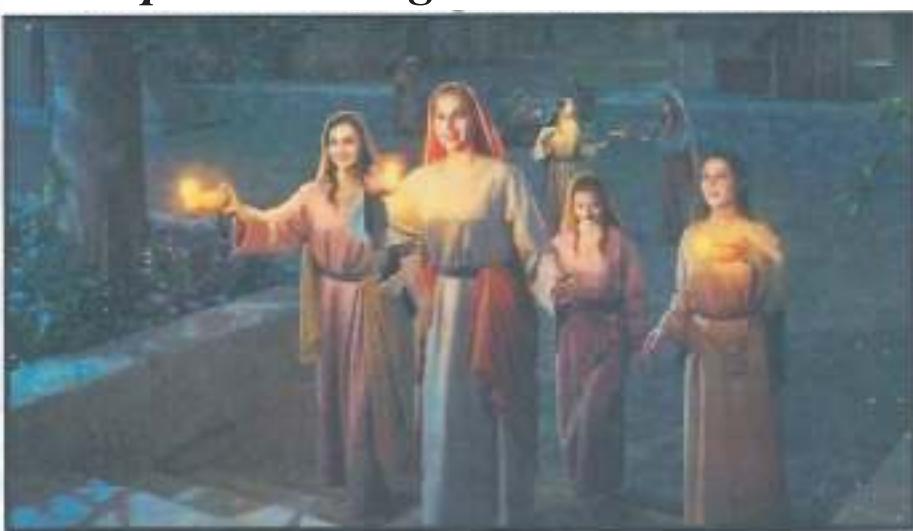
**GOD HAS US IN A POSITION WHERE MONEY AND STATUS DO NOT MATTER
EVERYONE IS IN NEED OF THE SAME THING RIGHT NOW
His Mercy**

In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses every man's understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus

Phil 4:5-9

Go tla gape ga Jesu. A o siame? (The 2nd coming of Jesus. Are you ready?)

*Give me oil in my lamp,
keep me burning until Jesus comes!*



DIKAKANYO

Beibele e re ruta mme e re gopotsa gore Jesu o tla tla gape. E rile fa a tlhatlhogela kwa legodimong baengele ba ne ba bolelela barutwa le batho gore o tla boa fela jaaka le mmone a tsamaya. Fa re bona dilo di senyega jaana mo lefatsheng mme re bona le malwetsi a a tlileng lefatsheng re se lebale gore tsone dilo tse di bolelawa mo Lefokong. Di bidiwa ditshupo tsa dinako tsa bokhutlo jwa lefatsheng. A wena o amogetse Jesu go nna Mopholosi wa gago? A o na le lookwane mo diponeng tsa gago? Lookwane mo diponeng go raya gore a o na le Jesu ka mo pelong ya gago? Buisa ditemana tse di latelang mme o

ikgopotse ka bokhutlo bo le gaufi. Dirang o tlatse dipone tsa gago ka lookwane. O tlhoka Jesu gore fa a ka tla o se sale morago. Ke nako! A o siame fa letsatsi leo le ka tla jaanong? Gongwe gompieno ke letsatsi la rona la bofelo mo lefatsheng?

DITEMANA

gonne go tla ga Morwa-Motho go tla nna jaaka logadima lo lo tleng lo tswe kwa botlhabsatsi, lo bonalele le kwa bophirimatsatsi (Matheo 24:27).

Ya re ba sa ntse ba leletse kwa legodimong a ntse a tlhatloga, ga ema banna ba le babedi fa go bone, ba apere diaparo tse

ditshweu, ba re: "Lona banna ba Galelea, lo emetseng lo leletse kwa legodimong? Jesu yole yo o tsholeleditsweng kwa legodimong, a tswa mo go lona, o tla boa a tla fela jaaka lo mmoneye a ya kwa legodimong" (Ditiro 1:10-11).

Ka moo, phaphamang! Gonne ga lo itse letsatsi le Morena wa lona o tla tleng ka lone. Kana lo a itse gore fa mong wa ntlo a ka bo a itsile nako ya bosigo e legodu le tla tleng ka yona, o ka bo a disitse, a sa leseletsa ntlo ya gagwe go phunngwa. Ka moo, le lona, nnang lo iketleeditse; gonne Morwa-Motho o tla tla ka nako e lo sa e gopoleng (Matheo 24:42-44). A re elaneng tlhoko gore re tlhotlhetsanye mo loratong le ditirong tse di molemo, re se tlogele go phuthega ga rona, jaaka bangwe ba tlwaetse, mme re kaelane, bogolo thata ka lo bona letsatsi le ntse le atamela (Bahebere 10:24-25).

Bokhutlo jwa dilo tsotlhe bo atametse. Jaanong nnang tekano, lo iphe nako go rapela. Bogolo go dilo tsotlhe ratanang thata; gonne lorato lo bipa dibe tsotlhe. Tsholangan mo maetong go se na ngongorego. Direlanang, mongwe le mongwe ka fa neong e o e amogetseng, lo nne badirisi ba ba molemo ba methale ya bopelontle jwa Modimo (1 Petero 4:7).

"Ke nna Alefa le Omega," go bua Morena Modimo yo o leng teng, e



**Johan Zerwick
Sêle ke 083 458 3837**

bile o ne a le teng, e bile ke yo o tla tleng, Mothatayotlhe (Tshenolo 1:8).

Reetsa, ke tla akofa ke tla; tshwara se o nang naso gore go se nne ope yo o go amogang serwalo (Tshenolo 3:11).

Jaanong Jesu a bua a re: "Bona, ke tla akofa ke tla, mme tuelo ya me ke na nayo, gore ke duele mongwe le mongwe ka fa tiro ya gagwe e ntse ka teng. Ke nna Alefa le Omega, wa ntlha le wa bofelo, tshimologo le bokhutlo (Tshenolo 22:12).

Yo o supang dilo tseo a re: "Ee, ke tla akofa ke tla." Amen! Tlaya, Morena Jesu! (Tshenolo 22:20).

THAPELO

Jesu yo o rategang, tlaya mo pelong ya me mme nna Mopholosi wa me. Ke batla go nna ngwana wa Gago. Ke nna..... mme ke dumela mo go wena Jesu Keresete wa Nasaretha. Ke kopa o kwale leina la me mo bukeng ya bophelo. Ke kopa o tlatse dipone tsa me ka lookwane! Tlaya, Morena Jesu! AMEN.

Opela monate:

<https://youtu.be/lvhZUCB0Jg>

SKILDERYE IN DIE GALERY VAN DIE EWIGHEID...

Vervolg van p. 1

woorde het hy sy eie doodsvonis uitgespreek. Lede van die Raad het op hom afgestorm, hom buite die stad uitgesleep en gestenig. In sy sterwensoomblikke het hy gebid en gevra dat God hulle sal vergewe! In sy kort lewe het hy baie gou soos Jesus geword, want hy het eers sy lewe geleef vir die Evangelie van Jesus Christus en toe gesterf daarvoor! As ons na Stefanus se skildery kyk, is ons bereid om regtig vir Christus te lééf en ook om vir Hom te sterf?

Met bogenoemde voorbeelde in gedagte kan ons ook weer met nuwe oë na die geloofshelde van Hebreërs 11 kyk. Hul lewenskilderye is "n groot wolk van getuies" (Hebreërs 12:1) vir elkeen van ons nog vandag. Deur na hulle opregte en toegewyde lewenswandel te kyk, word ons aangemoedig om die goeie stryd testry en moet ons ook "elke las aflê en die sonde wat ons so maklik omring, en met volharding die wedloop loop wat voor ons lê, die oog gevestig op Jesus, die

Leidsman en Voleinder van die geloof..." (vers 2b).

Van elke mens wat ooit geleef het of wat nog sal leef, word 'n skildery gemaak waarna gekyk kan word en uit wie se lewensportret ons die goeie of die slegte kan neem. Hoe sal ander mense ons skilder of uitbeeld? Hoe sal ons selfportret lyk? Want deur ons woorde en dade skilder ons eintlik 'n skildery van onsself! Watter invloed laat óns lewens na? Goeie invloed of slegte invloed, want slegte lewens en slegte dade het OOK hulle invloed.

Daar word vertel dat 'n sterwende man, wie se lewe ander baie geskaad het, uitgeroep het: "Versamel my invloed en begrawe dit saam met my in die graf!" Die man het hierdie wêreld verlaat, maar sy invloed het agtergebly en die GIF daarvan ook om vir geslagte lank in die lewens van ander te werk en uit te woed.

Kom ons besin ernstig oor die



invloed wat vanuit ONS lewens uitgaan. Laat ons waak oor elke woorde, gedagte en optrede. Net in dié mate wat ons met die Gees van God vervul is en die liefde van Christus in ons gestalte gevind het, sal ons invloed heilsaam en tot seën vir ons medemens wees.

Mag die geur van ons lewens en die invloed wat van óns uitgaan, welriekend wees en diegene wat deur ons lewens aangeraak word, besiel om die volkommenheid van menswees na te jaag...

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SOMS HERE...



Soms Here, kom sit die moeg lewensgroot in my hart vas. Dis 'n anderster moeg, Here. Dis nie 'n lyf-moeg nie. Dis 'n harts-moeg.

Ons almal se harte het moeg geword, Here. En onder daardie moeg, kruip soveel ander stukkies 'voel' weg. Ons verlang, Here. Ons verlang vir ons hart se mense wat net weggegaan het, na U toe gegaan het. Ons verlang na ons hart se mense wat ver in 'n ander land weggesluit word. Onder ons harte se moeg, lê daar soveel bang-wees. Ons is bang vir mōre en dit wat anderkant mōre lê. Ons is bang ons werk maak toe, vir altyd toe. Ons is bang ons gaan nie meer vir ons hart se mense

kan sorg nie. Ons is bang dat die siek-wees in ons lywe gaan inkruip. Ons is bang as ons hoor van hospitale wat vol raak en asem wat min word.

Onder ons hart se moeg lê daar stukkies hartseer, Here. Ons huil tranen wanneer ons die deur agter ons toemaak. Ons huil as ons die seer langs ons en rondom ons en binne-in ons sien. Onder die moeg kruip daar soveel 'alleen' weg, Here. Alleen wanneer die Huis vir Bejaardes se kamerdeur agter ons toegaan. Alleen wanneer ons hart se mense weg is en net die verlang agterby. Onder ons hart se moeg, Here, kruip daar soveel stukkies voel weg - kwaad, magteloosheid, bang, alleen,

onseker-wees. Ons kan dit nie 'n naam gee nie, Here, in die aand as ons die deur agter ons toemaak, dink ons stil-verward: Ek is só moeg!

U het geweet van al die stukkies voel wat onder moeg gaan wegkruip, daar diep in ons harte, Here. En op 'n dag het U die Bybel stil oopgemaak en stadig-versigtig daar in Matteus geskryf: "Kom na My toe, almal wat moeg is." U het nie gesê dit sal weer beter gaan nie. U het nie gesê ons moet die silwerrandjie agter die donker wolk gaan soek nie. U het nie gesê dis ons eie skuld dat ons so moeg is nie. U het nie gewonder waar ons moeg vandaan kom nie. Nee, Here. U het stil voor ons kom staan, U arms oopgemaak, en sag gesê: "Kom."

Daardie een woordjie sê so baie, Here. Dit sê ek is enige tyd, enige oomblik welkom by U. Dit sê U kyk nooit weg van my nie, U sien al die stukkies voel wat onder my moeg wegkruip. Dit sê dat U so graag wil hê ek moet kom wegkruip in U liefde. En wanneer ek versigtig naderkom, is dit U wat vorentoe hardloop en my in U arms toevou. Daar waar dit veilig is. Daar waar

moeg maar sonder woorde mag praat. En wanneer U stil langs my sit, U arm om my gevou, haal U die stukkies voel een vir een onder die moeg uit, kyk U woordeloos saam met my daarna en dan bêre U dit daar by die kruis. Daar waar U al my moeg lank terug al op U skouers getel het.

Dankie dat U handjesvol vrede diep in my hart gaan neersit, Here. Daar waar die moeg is. Dankie dat ek by U mag sit en weet U gaan my nie los nie... nooit nie los nie. Dankie dat U treetjie vir treetjie saam met my deur my dag loop. Dankie dat U my optel en verder met my loop as die moeg te swaar vir my hart raak. Dankie dat U in die aand by my bed sit, met sagte oë na my kyk en my moeg weg-bêre sodat ek kan slaap. Dankie dat U verstaan van moeg, Here. Dankie dat U ook weet van my hart se moeg en stil vir my kom sê: "Kom na My toe... bring jou moeg vir My, my kind. Ek wil so graag jou hart weer rustig maak."

Baie dankie Here dat U my so lief het!

Amen.
- Oorgeneem

SIN RUNS RAMPANT IN SOCIETY

SIN runs rampant in society - daily headlines and overflowing prisons bear dramatic witness to that fact. With child abuse, pornography, serial killings, terrorism, anarchy, and ruthless dictatorships, the world seems to be filled to overflowing with violence, hatred, and corruption.

Reading, hearing, and perhaps even experiencing these tragedies, we begin to understand the necessity of God's judgment. We may even find ourselves wishing for vengeance by any means upon the violent perpetrators. Surely they are beyond redemption! But suppose that in the midst of such thoughts, God told you to take the gospel to the worst of these offenders - how would you respond?

Jonah was given such a task. Assyria - a great but evil empire - was Israel's most dreaded enemy. The Assyrians flaunted their power before God and the world through numerous acts of heartless cruelty. So when Jonah heard God tell him to go to Assyria and call the people to repentance, he ran in the opposite direction.

The book of Jonah tells the story of this prophet's flight and how God stopped him and turned him around. But it is much more than a story of a man and a great fish - **Jonah's story is a profound illustration of God's mercy and grace!**

No one deserved God's favour less than the people of Nineveh, Assyria's capital. Jonah knew this. **But he knew that God would forgive and bless them if they turned from their sin and worshipped Him.** He also knew the power of God's message, that even through his weak preaching, they would respond and be spared God's judgment.

But Jonah hated the Assyrians, and he wanted vengeance, not mercy, and so he ran. Eventually, Jonah obeyed and preached in the streets of Nineveh and the people repented and were delivered from judgment.

Then Jonah sulked and complained to God, "I knew You were

a gracious God, merciful, slow to get angry, and full of kindness; I knew how easily You could cancel your plans for destroying these people" (Jonah 4:2).

In the end, God confronted Jonah about his self-centered values and lack of compassion, saying, "Why shouldn't I feel sorry for a great city like Nineveh with its 120 000 people in utter spiritual darkness?" (Jonah 4:11).

As you read Jonah, see the full picture of God's love and compassion and realize that no one is beyond redemption. The Gospel is for all who will repent and believe. Begin to pray for those who seem to be farthest from the Kingdom, and look for ways to tell them about God. Learn from the story of this reluctant prophet and determine to obey God, doing whatever and going wherever He leads.

*** ^ ^ ^ *** ^ ^ ^ *** ^ ^ ^ ***

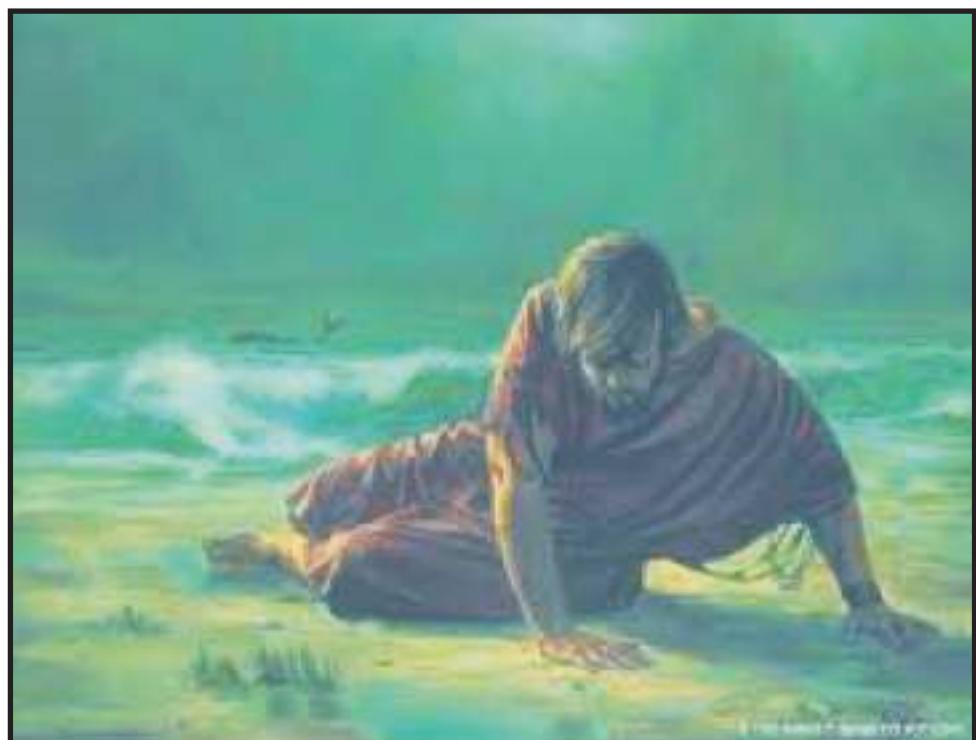
Although the prophet Jonah tried to run away from God, God was in control. By controlling the stormy seas and a great fish, God displayed His absolute, yet loving guidance.

Rather than running from God, trust Him with your past, present and future. Saying "no" to God quickly leads to disaster. **Saying "yes" brings new understanding of God and His purpose in the world.**

God had given Jonah a purpose to preach to the great Assyrian city of Nineveh. Jonah hated Nineveh, and so he responded with anger and indifference. **Jonah had yet to learn that God loves all people.** Through Jonah, God reminded Israel of their missionary purpose.

God wants His people to proclaim His love in words and actions to the whole world. He wants us to be His missionaries wherever we are, wherever He sends us.

When the reluctant preacher went to Nineveh, there was a great response. The people repented and turned to God! This was a powerful rebuke to Israel who thought themselves better and



yet refused to respond to God's message. **God will forgive all those who turn from their sin.**

God doesn't honour sham or pretense. He wants the sincere devotion of each person. It is not enough to share the privileges of Christianity, we must ask God to forgive us and remove our sin. **Refusing to repent is the same as loving our sin.**

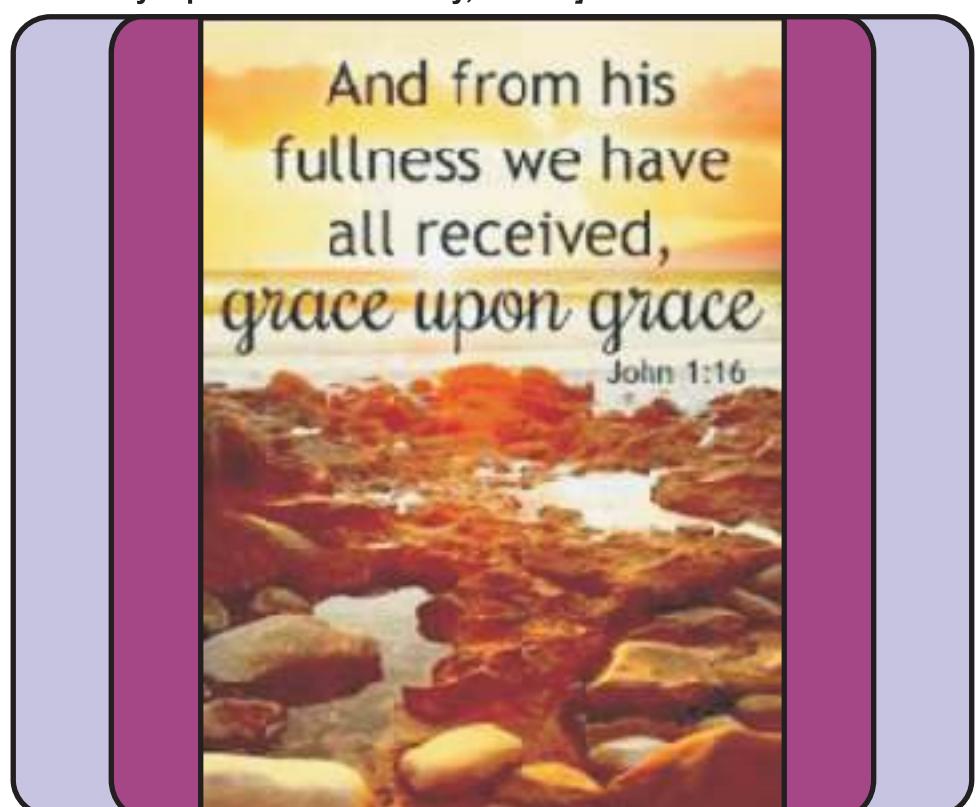
God's message of love and forgiveness was not for the Jews alone. God loves all the people of the world. The Assyrians didn't deserve it, but God spared them when they repented. In His mercy,

God did not reject Jonah for aborting his mission. **God has great love, patience and forgiveness.**

God loves each of us, even when we fail Him. But He also loves other people, including those not of our group, background, race, or denomination. **When we accept His love, we must also learn to accept all those whom He loves. We will find it much easier to love others when we truly love God!**

[*LIFE APPLICATION BIBLE, The Living Bible, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. and Youth for Christ/USA, Wheaton, Illinois, 1988.*]

And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace
John 1:16



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Determination

I had a dream...

I was driving my car on one of our roads. The road was tarred and neat, had no potholes on it. I was happy and enjoying the drive when suddenly, out of the blue, this beautiful tarred road was full of mud!

My car swerved slightly to the right and then to the left, but I did not lose control. I managed to drive my car safely over the mud, only to be confronted with yet another obstacle. Bigger and by far more dangerous.

Right in front of me the road was covered with huge rocks! Some had deep holes in them; others had sharp points. I looked at this and for a moment I was bewildered. I had just overcome the muddy road and what was in front of me was extremely dangerous and difficult, more like a nightmare! How will I pass through without getting stuck or damaging my vehicle?

As I stared at the rocks in front of me, overwhelmed and very afraid, a great determination came over me to carry on with my journey and with power and strength I did not know I possessed, I rode forward, missing the holes and the sharp points and rode right over all those rocks!

When I thought about this dream, a few things stood out for me. We travel on our life's journey and it's a smooth life and we are happy and content. Then suddenly something unexpected happens which places us in a slippery situation that makes us slip from one side to the other. No matter how hard we cling and hold onto our steering wheel (our way of living), the car just slips and slides.

Once we succeed to overcome this slippery situation we are then confronted with yet another barrier, far more serious than the one behind us.

If we are honest with ourselves, we will agree that we all did our utmost to create a comfortable life for us and our families. What we did was the best we could for our future. But then the unexpected happens. Nothing to do with our lifestyle and how we run our lives, but everything to do with the road we are travelling on (the times we are living in).

It is a slippery road that hurls us from one side to another. We need to make drastic changes and often don't know how. For example: I lose my job: not my fault, the

company went bankrupt. I get sick: also not my fault, it's this Corona-virus that has spread all over the world. These and many other things that we have to endure, all result in severe hurts and problems.

But by the grace of God I can overcome anything, however scary it might be, even these awful rocks with their deep holes and sharp points!

Are you perhaps in a similar situation? Is it difficult for you to move forward? Are you afraid? Do you have more questions than answers? Do you ask yourself, "What will help me overcome this huge and dangerous hurdle?"

My answer is: **determination!** In my dream, I was determined to get safely over those rocks and I made it!

Determination means: A resolute purpose or conduct. Strong-minded, firm, deliberate. It means to be focused, decided, adamant and intent to overcome.

Some rocks had such sharp points, others had deep, deep holes in them. Mission impossible! Yet, in my dream, I had within me a power and a strength that I did not know I possessed. Something in me was forcing me forward.

In such unexpected and serious situations, we cannot overcome on our own. Determination is the starting point to help us overcome, but with that we need our inner wisdom and strength to help us further, and **that can only come from God!**

"You are of God, little children, and you have overcome them, (adversaries, problems) because He Who is in you is greater than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

"For everything that has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith" (1 John 5:4).

"Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:5).

To be determined to overcome any adversary, we need to be focused on our Saviour, Jesus Christ. We need to believe that He is the Son of God! We need to have faith in Him.

We need to faithfully read and be strong-minded in the Word of God, in what we believe about Jesus.

Jesus is in you and He is greater than any problem. He overcame the world. Have faith in Him. Jesus have spoken these things to you so that you might have peace in Him. **"In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world"** (John 16:33).

Please don't give up! Don't be focused on the negative and on the problems, but trust the Lord who lives in you. Trust Him in every situation that you face. Have faith in Jesus. Your strength lies in Him. Your ability to overcome lies in Him. The determination that you need to be able to proceed, to go forward, no matter what, lies in Him!

"But in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us" (Romans 8:37).

"Now to Him being able to keep you without stumbling, and to set you before His glory without blemish, with unspeakable joy" (Jude 1:24).

"Keep yourselves in the love of God, eagerly awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to everlasting life" (Jude 1:21).



Soulla Swanepoel

Through Christ we can overcome. Be intent to overcome all obstacles. Again I say, have faith in Jesus. Christ in you, is your strength, your wisdom. It is He who will help you overcome. Be determined to overcome! God bless you on your life's journey.

- Soulla Swanepoel, 082 457 3913.

SPEAK TO THE MOUNTAIN!

Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter, remembering, said to Him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away."

So Jesus answered and said to them, **"Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea', and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says."**

"Therefore I say to you, 'whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them" (Mark 11:20-24).

PATHWAY OF MIRACLES

Real and tangible obstacles often loom as blockades against the accomplishment of God's purpose through His sons and daughters. Jesus' command to speak into the face of such obstacles is not a figure of speech, nor is it a superstitious exercise. **It is an act of faith!**

Learning to speak to our "mountains" helps us to grow in strength, and seeing those mountains moved by God's merciful Hand encourages us to continue to believe for the miraculous. He makes the impossible not only possible, but He makes impossible things actually come to pass by His power. We truly serve a God of signs, wonders, and miracles; and **He is able to move the mountains that are standing in our way!**

[**NEW SPIRIT FILLED LIFE BIBLE**, Thomas Nelson Bibles, 2002].

Are We Living in the Last Days?

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" (1 Cor. 14:8).

1. APOCALYPTIC TRENDS

"For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these [are] the beginning of sorrows" (Matthew 24:7-8).

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Timothy 3:12-13).

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20).

Luke contains a very interesting statement from Jesus Christ which can be found in Luke 21:25-28. These verses declare, "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

It is noteworthy that Jesus specifically states there will be **distress** of nations, with perplexity in the days leading up to His return. While we live in a world where distressing things happen quite frequently, it is less common for events to occur which cause distress upon multiple

nations at once.

As I watched a recent news broadcast, I could not help but notice the dramatic imagery being shown on the screen. There was talk of drought, wildfires, violence in the streets, and a new surge in Covid-19 cases being driven by a variant of the coronavirus which originated in India and is commonly referred to as the Delta variant.

The news of our day has taken on a decidedly apocalyptic tone, and it is an undeniable fact that we live in perilous times. **While the average person might be reluctant to suggest a spiritual or even prophetic context to current events, those who study God's Word faithfully might discern a startling familiarity amid the images we are shown on the news.** If it seems like there's something familiar about what we see happening before our eyes, perhaps it is because the book of Revelation declares the earth would be scorched with a great heat (Revelation 16:8-9) and we are now seeing heat waves and wildfires!

Jesus Christ warned that there would be **famine** and **pestilence** in the days leading up to His return (Matthew 24:7-8), and we are now seeing devastating drought and the coronavirus pandemic, which appears to be worsening once again. Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ also warned that the latter days of Earth's existence would bear a strong resemblance to the days of Noah (Luke 17:26) which were also characterized by widespread **violence** (Genesis 6:11).

Not only are we seeing horrifying violence in the streets of our largest cities, but belligerent airline passengers and ornery (unpleasant) restaurant custo-

mers demonstrate that many people have forgotten the concept of good manners. Additionally, there is intensifying hostility toward those who have chosen not to receive the Covid-19 vaccines, and recent reports suggest that those who continue to decline the shots will be forced to live heavily restricted lives.

Evil men and **seducers** are waxing worse and worse just as the Apostle Paul predicted (2 Timothy 3:13), and as we see worldwide conditions deteriorate, God's children will no doubt find themselves crying out, "*Even so, come, Lord Jesus!*" (Revelation 22:20).

2. A PLANET SET ABLAZE

On a recent July evening, I was driving my car just as the sun was setting. I looked up at the sky and was slightly taken aback. As the sun was setting in the western sky, it glowed bright red and looked quite unusual. I looked around and noticed a hazy sky and the smell of smoke permeating the air.

People in my small community of Beaver Dam began to ask why the sun looked so strange, why the sky was so hazy, and why they seemed to smell fires burning. We learned later that these peculiar conditions were caused by **wildfires** hundreds of miles away from us in the neighbouring country of Canada. The pollution from the fires eventually became so thick that a warning was issued by officials from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources regarding the poor quality of the air.

July has been a rough month for Canadian firefighters. On 4 July 2021, it was reported that more than 180 wildfires were burning in the Canadian province of British Columbia. Many of these fires

started after a record breaking **heat wave** inflicted misery in the province where the little village of Lytton saw temperatures rise to 49.4 degrees Celsius! Between 30 June and 1 July 2021, more than 700 000 lightning strikes were detected in the region. As for the village of Lytton, the tiny community of about 250 residents was almost entirely wiped out. A fire destroyed 90 percent of the community. To this day, much of Canada continues to burn. A report dated 21 July 2021 indicates that there are 263 wildfires burning out of control in Canada. Another 105 fires are "being held" and 207 are controlled.

Wildfires have been a concern in the United States, too. As we move through time, wildfires are growing in severity and frequency. According to news reports, large blazes have broken out in Russian Siberia in places that usually do not have fires. "New fires have appeared in the north of Yakutia, in places where there were no fires last year, and where it had not burned at all before," said a reconnaissance pilot from the Siberian region.

Thomas Smith, an assistant professor in Environmental Geography at the London School of Economics also noted the intensifying fires. "The fire season is getting longer, the fires are getting larger, they're burning more intensely than ever before," he said. Indeed, the Middle Eastern country of Turkey is also battling unprecedented wildfires. Nearly sixty fires broke out in Turkey in just one week, which prompted Antalya Mayor Muhittin Bocek to say, "Something like this has never happened before."

While witnesses are marvelling at the intensity of the fires that we

Continued on p. 8

To God be the Glory! We give Almighty God, the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit all the praise, honour and glory for walking with us these past years. We also wish to extend to all our customers our sincerest thanks for your support, prayers and words of encouragement during these past 18 years.

Our Prayer for you:

The Lord bless you and keep you: The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord turn His face towards you and give you peace. Numbers 6:24-26

18 Years Old

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Die Here sal jou sien en jou behoed; die Here sal Sy aangesig oor jou laat skyn en jou genadig wees; die Here sal Sy aangesig oor jou verhef en aan jou vrede gee. Numeri 6:24-26

18

18 Jaar Oud

Ons bring aan die Almagtige God, die Here Jesus en die Heilige Gees al die lcf, eer en heerlikheid vir Sy goeie gawes die afgelope jare. Ons bedank al ons klante ook opreg vir u ondersteuning, gebede en bemoediging gedurende die afgelope 18 jaar.

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Are We Living in the Last Days?

Continued from p. 7

are now seeing on this planet, the biggest wildfire is yet to come.

According to Scripture, in the end, the entire planet will be set ablaze. 2 Peter 3:10 declares, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." As we see massive fires engulfing much of the earth, it is getting easier to imagine the day spoken of by the Apostle Peter. In fact, the pictures and videos of these fires we see on the news present a jarring preview of what is to come!

3. HISTORIC FLOODING

While much of the world burns, other areas of the world suffered from jaw-dropping historic flooding in July 2021. Such was the case in Europe which was hit with a deluge beginning on 13 July 2021. By 20 July, it was reported that at least 165 people had perished in Germany and 31 more lost their lives in Belgium. After surveying the damage in her country, German Chancellor Angela Merkel was almost lost for words, stating, "It is a surreal, eerie situation. It is shocking - I can almost say that the German language doesn't have words for the destruction that's been wreaked."

Residents from the town of Schuld described their ordeal. "Caravans, cars were washed away, trees were uprooted, houses were knocked down. We have lived here in Schuld for over 20 years and we have never experienced anything like it. It's like a war zone," said a 65-year-old resident. Much of the damage was caused by a swelling river, which usually has a depth of about 1 m, in the ordinarily quiet town. As the rains poured, the river's level rose to more than 8 m. The flooding happened quickly. "The water kept rising and 10 minutes later it had penetrated the house. The water took everything with it," lamented a 53-year-old resident.

A resident from another town, about 40 km away from Schuld, also marvelled at the rapid speed of the flooding. "At 23:30 there was only a little water. At 1:00, everything was underwater - our flat, our houses, our neighbour's houses - within 15 minutes."

Scientists were stunned by the destruction in Europe and especially in Germany. "This event was really unprecedented in a lot of ways. We've heard from a lot of

the local meteorological agencies in Germany and other parts of western and central Europe where the level of rainfall that we saw within a matter of 24 - 48 hours was beyond what many of them have ever recorded," said Steve Bowen, managing director and head of a catastrophe insight and impact forecasting at the insurance firm known as Aon.

Less than a week after the disaster in Europe, China experienced historic flooding, too. On 16 July 2021, heavy rain began to fall in China's Henan province. The torrential rain, which has been ongoing, has thus far affected 13 912 800 people in 1 616 villages and towns. The flooding has been especially dramatic in the city of Zhengzhou where an astonishing 8 inches (20 cm) of rain fell in just one hour on 20 July 2021. Rain continued to pour, and by the end of the day, 25 inches (64 cm) had saturated Zhengzhou. This was nearly a year's worth of rain in just one day!

This sudden downpour quickly overtook the city's subway tunnels and left about 500 train passengers trapped. Tragically, twelve of those passengers lost their lives. A piece published by *The Wall Street Journal* recounts the harrowing ordeal. A 26-year-old woman who was aboard the train recounted that she and her fellow passengers were trapped for hours. It was difficult to breathe as the air supply was limited, and before she was finally rescued, the water had reached all the way to her neck. The woman was unsure of how she survived, but was thankful to walk away unharmed. "I don't know if someone did something to stop the water from rising further, or God had mercy," she said.

Meanwhile in India, the rain throughout the month of July has been unrelenting. Rainfall has been especially heavy in India's western state of Maharashtra. According to reports, the state's Ratnagiri District received 77.1 inches (1 958 cm) of rain between 1 - 22 July. The Satara District received 42.3 inches (107 cm) of rain in just a 48-hour period ending on 23 July 2021.

"Unexpected very heavy rainfall triggered landslides in many places and flooded rivers. Dams and rivers are overflowing. We are forced to release water from dams, and, accordingly, we are moving people residing near the river banks to safer places," said Chief Minister Uddhiv Thackeray, who leads Maharashtra's state government.

4. HISTORIC DROUGHT

While portions of Europe, China, and India received far more rain than they needed in July, the same cannot be said for the western United States. Nearly 90% of the American West is dry, and scientists are now saying this is the worst drought the region has suffered in 122 years. An article published on 30 June 2021, by the farm journal known as AG Web states, "California has fallen under a drought of biblical proportions." The report notes that 95% of the state was already suffering severe drought before summer even started. Water allocations for farmers in California have already been reduced significantly this year, and the State Water Resources Control Board is set to vote on a plan on 3 August 2021, that would prevent farmers from taking water out of rivers and streams. "We don't take this action lightly; we know that it's going to impose hardship on folks," said the board's director Eileen Sobeck.

The drought in California could impact the nation's food supply. According to the California Department of Food and Agriculture, California grows over one-third of the country's vegetables and two-thirds of the

country's fruit and nuts. Drought in one state is bad enough. However, since most of the West is dried out, the full consequences of the historic drought of 2021 are not yet completely comprehended.

It is a remarkable thing that our planet is suffering historic wildfires, historic drought, and historic flooding simultaneously, but these are remarkable days. As we continue to watch and pray, it becomes all the more obvious that we are living in a time unlike any other in history. Thankfully, we still have an opportunity to turn to our God for help in the time of need. Revelation 3:20-21 declares, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

If you have not yet repented of your sins and dedicated your life to God, I urge you to do so now!

- Samuel David Meyer, Last Trumpet Newsletter, August 2021.
http://lasttrumpetnewsletter.org/2021/08_21_1.html

Wees Gereed!

Rudi Smit, 083 298 1963, skryf

Aardbewings, geweldige droogtetoestande, hewige oorstromings, pessiektes en talle ander onverklaarbare natuurverskynsels dwarsoor die hele wêreld waarvan ons bykans daagliks in die koerante lees of oor nuusuit-sendings van kennis neem, het my noodwendig weer herinner aan 'n beeld wat ek op 30 Januarie 2011 "gesien" het.

Ek het 'n aardbol, ongeveer 175 mm in deursnee, met blou en wit kleure, gesien. Oomblikke later kom daar uit die Suide 'n groot, massiewe, ronde voorwerp wat met die aarde bots, maar dit skiet toe weer weg deur die wolke, en laat net 'n groot gat agter!

Direk daarna vorm baie naby voor my gesig 'n silwer syfer 2 wat verdwyn en daarna die syfer 1 wat ook verdwyn. Daarna sien ek skuins regtig voor my vier blokkies met 'n 1 en 'n 2 in die eerste 2 blokkies. Die laaste 2 blokkies verdof net.

Daarna sien ek 'n bruin, regop voorwerp wat effens dunner word na bo. Amper soos 'n houtstomp of klip, ongeveer dieselfde dikte as die groot, ronde voorwerp wat ek gedurende Januarie gesien het.

Op Sondagmiddag 22 Mei 2011 lê ek op my bed en wonder weer watter lande deur die ronde voorwerp getref gaan word. Ek "sien" die landskap Asië, spierwit met 'n swart randjie. Die regter Oostepunt is afwaarts gebuig na die Suide. (Moontlike menslike uitleg: die massiewe ronde voorwerp swaai die Aardbol Noordwaarts. Daarom swaai die Oostepunt van Asië afwaarts na die Suide, dalk 'n Poolverskuwing).

En so laat al die geweldige natuurgebeure wat daagliks oor die hele wêreld plaasvind, 'n mens wonder wat alles nog gaan gebeur. En dan besef jy net weer eens dat die Woord van God jou voorberei in Skrifgedeeltes soos Matt. 24 en Lukas 21 en natuurlik ook die boek Openbaring om gereed te wees vir die koms van Jesus Christus!



The Invisible God

Fake news is rampant today. One does not always know for sure what one can believe, despite the sources claiming to be reputable. Broad and bold statements are being made on social media, but these should be carefully considered in order to root out half truths or half lies. Oftentimes, there are also crude misconceptions, sleek deception, or even blatant lies. Moreover, some even deny the very notion of objective and universal truth! It seems that *truth* about everyday events - or motives behind these events - may be elusive and hard to find in the moral twilight that we are living in.

Scientists are also searchers of *truth*. They are curious about nature and want to understand its *mysteries* and *hidden treasures*. They do this by formulating laws, constructing hypotheses, testing these ideas via experimentation, interpretation, and refinement. Their understanding of 'natural' truth or truth about nature is a dynamic and usually incrementally-growing entity. Many scientists collaborate and spend countless hours to refine a worldview that evermore closely approximates the truth of reality. This process of uncovering knowledge and gaining understanding is a most exciting endeavour that inspires scientists to make careers out of this noble pursuit.

Interestingly, while scientists study the visible Universe, there are instances when scientists observe the effects of underlying - yet *invisible* - causes, and they have to invoke concepts to describe these causes, for example:

■ **Dark matter:** Scientists detect the gravitational pull of some mysterious substance on stars within galaxies; yet we do not observe this substance. However, if this substance did not exist, galaxies would fly apart. Something must hold them together. So Zwicky postulated the existence of dark (invisible) matter in 1933.

■ **Dark energy:** The Universe is not only expanding, but is doing so in an accelerating fashion. Something is driving it outward. In the most sophisticated and standard cosmological model we have today, this is called dark energy: an invisible entity that acts like negative pressure or an

outward force. We cannot detect it, but we observe its effect.

■ **Electrons:** these atomic particles are so small that scientists are unsure whether they even possess internal structure. They have never been directly observed. Yet, our society cannot even think to function normally without electricity. We have compasses that detect magnetic fields due to currents of charged particles such as electrons. We detect radiation by accelerated charges. No one doubts the existence of electrons, yet we have not "seen" them in the normal sense of the word.

Not only are these scientific concepts, but there are physical laws in which these appear in the form of quantities, currents, fluxes or energy densities. Thus, *unseen* entities are part and parcel of our most sophisticated scientific theories and understanding of nature. They are part of the *hidden treasures* of nature.

Now in a spiritual context, many argue that God is *hidden*. He is spiritual and no one has ever seen Him. His presence is seen as *mysterious* and His very existence is even doubtful by many. What is God's nature? Where is He when I suffer? Is He even there? Does my life interest Him at all?

The Bible offers a few answers:

■ **Creation:** God's fingerprints are all over nature. His unparalleled wisdom and awesome artistry are seen in His complex, harmonious and beautiful creation.

"*God's splendour is a tale that is told, written in the stars. Space itself speaks His story through the marvels of the heavens. His truth is on tour in the starry vault of the sky, showing His skill in creation's craftsmanship. Each day gushes out its message to the next, night by night whispering its knowledge to all without a sound, without a word, without a voice being heard, yet all the world can hear its echo. Everywhere its message goes out*" (Ps. 19:1-4 TPT).

Both His outward and inward creation reveals His *truth*:

"*For God in heaven unveils His holy anger breaking forth against every form of sin, both toward ungodliness that lives in hearts and evil actions. For the wickedness of humanity deliberately smothers the truth and keeps people from acknowledging the truth about God.*

In reality, the truth of God is known instinctively, for God has embedded this knowledge inside every human heart.

Opposition to truth cannot be excused on the basis of ignorance, because from the creation of the world, the invisible qualities of God's nature have been made visible, such as His eternal power and transcendence. He has made His wonderful attributes easily perceived, for seeing the visible makes us understand the invisible. So then, this leaves everyone without excuse" (Rom. 1:18-20 TPT).

■ **Scripture:** God's Word is an infallible and invaluable source of *truth* that revives the soul and gives wisdom for life:

"*The rarest treasures of life are found in His truth. That's why God's Word is prized like others prize the finest gold. Sweeter also than honey are His living words - sweet words dripping from the honeycomb!*" (Ps. 19:10 TPT).

■ **Christ:** God's greatest Self-expression and revelation of His truth is found in the Person of Christ, Who is Himself the *Truth*: "*For the perfect Light of Truth was coming into the world and shines upon everyone.*

He entered into the world He created, yet the world was unaware. He came to the people He created - to those who should have received Him, but they did not recognize Him.

But those who embraced Him and took hold of His Name He gave authority to become the children of God!" (John 1:9-12 TPT).

"*No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, Who is Himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made Him known*" (John 1:18 NIV).

Christ is thus the Revealer of the most intriguing secret: the very nature of God!

■ **The Holy Spirit:** God has also sent His Holy Spirit as a Witness, to testify to His truth:

"*But when the truth-giving Spirit comes, He will unveil the reality of every truth within you*" (John 16:13 TPT).

The Spirit is the Illuminator of *truth* and revealer of *secrets*. He is also the Guarantee of God's *truth*.

"*And this hope [of experiencing God's glory] is not a disap-*

pointing fantasy, because we can now experience the endless love of God cascading into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who lives in us!" (Rom. 5:5 TPT).

The scientific achievements of the past centuries have been impressive. Scientists from all corners of the earth have searched out the *mysteries* of nature. Yet we realize that God gave us the immense privilege to search out not only His natural *wonders* and *treasures*, but also his spiritual ones:

■ He has given us His Spirit and His power is operating within us: "*For God, Who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us*" (2 Cor. 4:7 NIV).

■ Intimate knowledge of God is reserved for those who live in a close relationship with Him: "*I will give you hidden treasures, riches stored in secret places, so that you may know that I am the LORD, the God of Israel, who summons you by name*" (Is. 45:3 NIV).

Finally, we come full circle: We can search out truth in nature, in morality, in wise sayings of man, in conceptions of philosophers or artists or sages. We can search for God. But in His mercy, He bowed down to us! God does not have to be hidden from us, nor do we have to hide from Him. But we can be hidden in God, protected from our enemies: "*Lord, you are my secret hiding place, protecting me from these troubles, surrounding me with songs of gladness!*" (Ps. 32:7 TPT).

"*He's the hope that holds me and the stronghold to shelter me, the only God for me, and my great confidence. His massive arms are wrapped around you, protecting you. You can run under His covering of majesty and hide. His arms of faithfulness are a shield keeping you from harm*" (Ps. 91:2-4 TPT).

Let us seek God's Face - His *truth* - throughout our lives. Let us cultivate our relationship with Him. Let us hide ourselves in Him. There, we will find untold protection, blessing, and communion!

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SOEK DIE MOSTERDSAADJIE...

Daar was een dag 'n weduwe wat geglo het die lewe draai net altyd sy rugkant na haar toe. En sy het goeie rede gehad. Na haar man se dood was haar seun haar hele lewe, maar hy het ook gesterf en haar weer alleen agtergelaat. "Waarom moet ek dan so swaarkry?" het sy dag vir dag gesug. Sy was ontroosbaar.

Ten einde raad neem haar vriendin haar na die ou wysgeer wat op die rand van die dorpie woon. "U weet so baie van die lewe," sê sy. "Kan u tog nie hierdie arme vrou help om van haar smart ontslae te raak nie?"

Die ou man sê toe vir die weduwe: "Gaan soek vir my 'n mosterdsaadjie wat uit 'n huis kom waar daar nog nooit hartseer was nie. Daarmee sal ek vir jou 'n wonder doen en jou hartseer genees."

Die weduwee het onmiddellik met haar soektog begin, want haar hart was baie seer. Ek sal eerste by die ryk mense van die omgewing probeer, dink sy. Hulle sal tog sekerlik niks hê om oor treurig te wees nie. By die grootste, mooiste huis klop sy aan. "Goeiedag," groet sy die vrou wat oopmaak. "Ek is op soek na 'n huis wat nog nooit hartseer geken het nie. Dit is seker so 'n huis dié?"

"Nog nooit hartseer geken nie?" vra die vrou terwyl daar tranen in haar oë kom. "As dit is wat jy soek, is jy by die verkeerde huis. Ek kan jou alles van hartseer vertel. Maar kom binne, dan gesels ons." Die weduwee het ingegaan en geluister. Na 'n paar dae was die vrou nog altyd aan die praat. Toe die weduwee uiteindelik voel dat sy die ryk vrou alleen kon laat, was hulle goeie



vriende.

Dié keer besluit die weduwee om by 'n kleiner, armoediger huisie te probeer. Maar ook hier was die reaksie omtrent dieselfde. Die hartseer was van 'n ander aard, maar niks minder nie.

En so was dit by al die huise waar sy aangedoen het. Van die koning se paleis tot by die nederigste krotjie. Geen tuiste was sonder sy kwota verdriet nie. In haar maandelange reis van dorp tot dorp het sy soveel deernis ontwikkel met die hartseer van ander dat sy van die wondermosterdsaadjie vergeet het. Die ander mense se pyn het vir haar belangriker geword as haar eie.

Haar deernis met ander het die mosterdsaad geword wat haar genes het.

--- ooo OOO ooo ---

"Deernis met ander is twee harte wat saam een vrag trek." (Benjamin Dasraeli)

"Die enigste geneesmiddel vir die verlies van iets of iemand wat vir jou kosbaar was, is om 'in 'n nuwe toonaard' te leer liefhe; nie meer ter wille van die vreugde wat jy self daaruit KRY nie, maar ter wille van die vreugde wat jy GEE deur ander wat óók swaarkry, te troos" (J Neville Ward). [Stories vir die Lewe Omnibus, Piet Naudé, Lux Verbi.BM, 2002].

SUSTAINING GRACE

God's grace is not a once-off event. It's a perpetual, eternal, unstoppable gift that will carry you and be with you eternally.

We aren't always aware of our need when life goes well and troubles are few and far between. It's when the cares of life and accompanying sorrows start gnawing at your heart that you realize your need of something you can not obtain for yourself - something beyond our reach which can not be purchased anywhere. And your soul will not find rest or comfort until grace dawns and the comfort of heaven starts flowing deeply into your being!

Beloved, there is a fountain that will never run dry. Our Father's grace is available, in sufficient quantity to bring relief to your deepest need. All we need to do to obtain that grace to sustain us through the worst desert imaginable is to acknowledge and embrace it. **Declare your need and receive grace.** If you do not accept it in your parched state, the corrosion will not end and the pain will not subside.

Remember how God sustained Elijah at the Brook Cherith where crows supplied him with bread and meat, morning and evening. If God can give predators charge to deliver food to His child in the desert, then surely He can do it again, and again. For you!

I want to encourage you to run to



that fountain where you will find grace to sustain you through this chapter of unspeakable pain and need.

The invitation still stands, "... let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive His mercy, and WE WILL FIND GRACE TO HELP US WHEN WE NEED IT MOST" (Hebrews 4:16). You don't need to proceed a single step further without that grace!

Beloved, your Father longs to pour out sufficient grace to sustain you in this challenge. Nothing in heaven or Earth can prevent that grace from working in your life to undergird you when you are falling apart. Accept it. Embrace it. It is yours!

- Helen du Plessis, 083 332 0895

"Mense wat 'n ander iets gun, het self altyd oorvloed. Hulle wat ander se dors les, is self altyd verkvik"
(Spreuke 11:25).

Jer. 20:11

★★★ **B&B** *Uit die Hand*

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