
Resting in Jesus in Perilous Times

By David Wilkerson

October 27, 2008 For years, I have been faithfully warning of a soon-to-come worldwide economic holocaust. Right now, we are seeing this coming to pass around the globe. I have warned that Christians are going to suffer, that there will be great loss and hardship, and already this is happening. Multitudes of precious saints all over the world are now enduring great financial and mental stress.

As awful as these things are, none of them should be the focus of our energies and ministry. Rather, we must continue proclaiming the love of God the Father and the tender mercy of our Savior Jesus for us.

I know the American lifestyle — indeed, the lifestyles of those in every prosperous nation — are about to change permanently. I know everything is reeling and shaking. But when I get up in the morning, I don't worry, "What are we going to eat? What are we going to wear? What about heat, light, security?" Jesus warned us not to do that.

Instead, when I go to bed at night, I rest in my Father's love. The fact is, I know I am not God and that he alone is in control of all these things. I simply do what the prophet Isaiah did: *he put his mind to rest by fully trusting in his Lord*. This prophet declared to believers in every age, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Isaiah 26:3). God cannot lie.

Scripture makes it clear: we are to be alerted and warned by the prophetic messages delivered by godly watchmen. Likewise, we are to heed every prophetic message revealed and confirmed in Scripture. In short, we are to gather all the knowledge we can about the oncoming storms, so we can prepare our hearts for whatever we will face.

But we are not to let fear or anxiety consume our thinking, dominate our minds or take hold of our hearts. Darkness is certainly coming and judgment is at our very door. But as God's people, we cannot allow any cloud of darkness to hide the great light of his promises of love and mercy toward his people. We must be well informed by God's Word and his prophets, but we are not to dwell on prophetic knowledge so much that it takes over our lives.

The devil would love for this to happen. He knows he can't get us to doubt the Lord's Word concerning judgment, so he will attempt to take us to another extreme and drive us to a fearful obsession with perilous times.

Simply put, Satan wants to rob you of all hope by consuming you with foreboding thoughts. But you cannot figure out the future through being totally preoccupied with this. In reality, it can get you bogged down in fear and obsessing about frightful events.

The apostle Paul reassures us with this instruction: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, *think on these things*" (Philippians 4:8, my italics).

In other words: "You have heard all the warnings. Now, take heed to what God's Word reveals and to what his watchmen are saying. And, finally, fix your thoughts on Jesus and his goodness."

In a time when great judgments were falling on the nation all around him, Isaiah testified he had a double portion of peace. The same wonderful outlook that Isaiah had in the perilous times of his day is available to us also. This promise of rest applies to *“all whose minds are stayed on him.”*

Isaiah was overwhelmed by what he saw happening in the world around him. But Scripture reveals he enjoyed great peace. How did he come into such a place of peace, with everything he saw? There were two reasons for it:

First, as judgments were poised to strike the nations, Isaiah was in constant communion with God in prayer. *“Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee”* (Isaiah 26:8). Isaiah was prepared for anything because he was already *“praying without ceasing.”*

I must ask you: as the storm rages, are you going to the Lord in prayer, as Isaiah did? If you are, then you're gaining strength, because your mind is becoming fixed on your sovereign heavenly Father's love, and he is continually revealing his power to you and encouraging you that you'll make it through.

It is not God's will that any of his children face the perilous times ahead with paralyzing fear. The Lord does not desire that biblical prophecies and warnings frighten us. Instead, here is Jesus' heart on the matter, stated very plainly: *“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid”* (John 14:27).

In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus prophesied of world events to come that sounded frightful. He spoke of wars, pestilence, earthquakes in various places. And he warned his hearers, *“You are going to be afflicted, and some of you will even be killed. Iniquity will abound. False prophets and messiahs shall arise deceiving many.”*

Later in Matthew, Jesus explains his reasons for forewarning of these catastrophic events. He says he told us these things so we would believe in him when we saw them coming to pass.

Jesus wasn't trying to put a burden of fear on us. Rather, he simply doesn't want us to be surprised when we are hit by awful storms. He doesn't want our faith to be shipwrecked when suddenly we face incredible suffering. Most of all, he wants us to believe there is a Lord over all these awful things, a Father who is loving enough to warn us about them and keep us through them all.

Isaiah preached hope in perilous times. Isaiah was looking beyond all the things that were happening, toward a greater vision God had given him. In this vision, Isaiah saw the Lord coming to wipe away the tears of his children, remove their burdens and deliver them from all guilt and fear:

“It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation... He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it” (Isaiah 25:9, 8).

Here is the second reason Isaiah had come into a place of peace despite all the upheaval around him. He was saying to us — indeed, to believers of every age — in effect: *“You who live in the very last days can also have this double portion of peace. Abandon yourself to simple trust in the Lord, your Rock.”*

“Trust ye in the Lord at all times: for in the Lord Jehovah is [your] everlasting strength” (26:4).
“Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation” (12:2).

God does have a word of hope for this hour. For many months, I have searched and studied the Scriptures, pleading with the Lord to give me a message of hope and encouragement for these hard times. My spirit has cried out, “Lord, please speak a word to my heart for your children, for you alone have the words of eternal life. Only you can speak a word of comfort to us in such times.”

The Holy Spirit answered my prayer, speaking the following to my heart: “I am going to give you a single promise from my Word. And if you will commit your very life to it, this word will keep you through any and all perilous times.”

Beloved, I know if we will especially embrace this one verse, fully believing it, it will be a daily power-source of faith. Here is the promise the Spirit showed me:

“YOUR FATHER KNOWETH WHAT THINGS YE HAVE NEED OF, BEFORE YE ASK HIM” (Matthew 6:8).

In Luke 12, Jesus enumerates the things he says our heavenly Father knows we need. Those needs are, in short, food, drink and clothing. “Therefore, I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on... If then God so clothe the grass, which is today in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?” (Luke 12:22, 28).

Jesus speaks of grass that is full and green today but tomorrow is cut down. He would have us remember he gave it life and care. We dare not think he cares for our needs less than for grass. He knows full well what we need, whether it is food, finances or clothes.

Jesus added, “All these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things” (12:30). Again Christ reminds us, “Here is all you need to know: *your heavenly Father knows what your needs are.* He has already enumerated them.”

My theme now is this: GOD KNOWS, AND THAT IS ALL THAT MATTERS.

God will never abandon his “little flock.” Jesus promises, “Rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock” (Luke 12:31–32). If we will simply trust him, our Lord will bless us with all we need.

If you are concerned for your family’s welfare in the coming days, I have good news for you: Your children are God’s children. And he cares for your loved ones more than you do. Jesus knows exactly what you all need to survive.

HE KNOWS ABOUT YOUR NEED TO HAVE A ROOF OVER YOUR HEAD. HE KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT YOUR RENT BILL OR MORTGAGE PAYMENT IS EACH MONTH. HE KNOWS ABOUT THE MOUTHS YOU HAVE TO FEED AND THE AMOUNT OF FOOD IN YOUR CUPBOARD. YOU CAN TRUST HIM FULLY TO MEET ALL OF THESE NEEDS, BECAUSE HE PROMISES TO DO IT.

Tragically, many people are going to grow bitter in the coming days because God won’t answer their prayers to protect their present lifestyle. Many have never known the kind of suffering we now face.

But the Lord says to rich and poor alike, “Don’t fret about your worldly possessions. Give me quality time and trust me. I am going to take care of all your future needs. You will be supplied all the essentials you need to get by.”

There is one lesson every believer must learn and practice. At this moment, world events are moving so fast that nobody can keep up with them. Even as I write these words, the American stock market has lost billions. The implications of such things are too deep and complex to fathom.

Our faith is anchored in this: OUR HEAVENLY FATHER KNOWS US — HE KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT WE NEED AND WHEN WE NEED IT — AND THE VERY FACT HE KNOWS IS PROOF ENOUGH THAT WE ARE UNDER HIS CARE. HE DELIGHTS IN US, AND WE ARE SNUGGLED IN HIS BOSOM, SAFE AND SOUND.

Daniel said of the Lord: “He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him” (Daniel 2:22). God knows all about the dark days ahead. And he knows that even this darkness cannot obscure his face from us.

Indeed, our clear path through hard times will be found only in trusting the Lord. He is calling us today to have a simple, childlike trust in his faithfulness.

Let us all keep our eyes on Jesus. Let us trust his great love and care for us. “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you” (1 Peter 5:7).

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