

THE FUTURE OUTLOOK

J. F. JOHNSON Editor & Publisher
 MISS EMMA P. JOHNSON News Reporter
 L. A. WISE Staff Photographer

Make all checks payable to and mail to:

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Misfortunes

During the winter season, families suffer more misfortunes—incidents and accidents—than any other season of the year. Quite often we hear the fire vehicles creating a noise going through the streets to some ramshackled house. Upon their arrival the house is completely destroyed by fire. If not, the firemen usually damage the property beyond its usefulness with water and other apparatus that is used to extinguish the fire. Such misfortunes usually happen in an old, delapidated, rented house where four or five children, or sometimes two families, are living. The cause of such fire hazards are: first, they are rentals, and no attention is given to some of the remedies that cause fire, such as shortage in the electric wiring, small inefficient oil burners, and loose-jointed, rickety wood and coal stoves which are left with the door half closed. Therefore, the wind blows through and in some windows in the stove where the panes are broken out, air comes in contact with the fire and causes combustion in such a place. The carelessness of fire at such places takes place when the tenant waits for the landlord to prepare his house while the tenant looks for a better place to live for cheaper rent. The tenant in a rented house never feels it is his duty to make any effort to protect the property from any misfortunes himself. Then when some incident occurs, he faults the landlord, especially when he has caused damage to the landlord's property. On the other hand, he doesn't have any household insurance. He is just looking for something for nothing without any protection. In most cases, it is the fault of the tenant when the door locks are damaged, windows broken, and so forth. They know when they rented the house they signed a contract to upkeep the property just as they found it, and if any damage, they will have to pay for it. They prefer staying there until some misfortune happens by fire, wind storms, or floods, as well as depreciated electric wiring and the house as a whole.

We urge all of our readers to invest in household insurance which will help minimize damage of many hazards that cause the many misfortunes.

Misfortune occurs in the time of death in the family, especially when it is accidental. In most cases when the man who is the head of his house dies, the wife and children become confused. They are unable to find the insurance policies, deeds, contracts, loans, and do not read them thoroughly to see if there is a clause showing that bills are paid. In case of a loan, it is automatically paid after death. Of course, the mortician usually advises them for enough to get a good burial payment out of these dividends.

I heard a widow state that she didn't know the financial condition the home was involved in until after the death of her husband. One agent would come and bring her a sum of money due from a certain insurance she didn't know about. The next day another agent would come with unpaid bills that required some amount of insurance money to pay that bill made by the deceased husband. This happened for about two years. Just about every week or two some unknown bill would come up from somewhere that she was not aware. There is no need of a woman thinking she will be able to keep up with all the bills her husband made, or on the other hand the same by the wife. I further suggest that a wife should invest in insurance on her husband whereby it will help to adjust many of the unknown bills after death.

Just about every week, especially when we read our Monday morning newspaper, we see a scene of a vehicle accident where both mother and father of five or six youngsters were killed on the highway. Now, the friends and relatives become upset as to what will become of these little children. If these parents have been progressive liver, well enough to own an automobile, they always have relatives or friends to come to their rescue to adopt these children with the understanding that a lawyer or the Welfare Department would change the face value of the insurance policy over to them as well as the property and other dividends where there is an income. It is a rare occasion nowadays to send a child in some circumstances to an orphanage home unless he turned out to be a juvenile problem.

It is dangerous to exhibit large sums of money in public places and to make change in public gatherings,

GOD JUDGES MEN AND NATIONS

Beginning Where You Are

A powerful car is moving down the highway at high speed. On the distant edge of the lighted horizon, the driver makes out the dim image of a white cross standing to the right of the highway. Just as he flashes past it, he makes out the words: "Jesus is coming. Be ready."

In a family room at a small funeral home a desolate divorcee sits, the body of her only son, who was recently killed in the service, lying in a coffin a few feet away. Her grief is heavy, but her eyes are dry. As friends come to mourn with her, she reassures them with the words, "It was God's will."

A Jewish rabbi sits at the breakfast table in a large city and reads the morning headlines. "If there is war, it will be the will of God," he says.

A young Catholic priest is talking with some older members of his church who say that changes are ruining it. "I know these changes may be hard to understand," he says, "but it is the will of God that we should change."

All about us are signs that some people interpret as illustrations of the judgment of God at work in our world. Some people see these judgments as happening now, while others think all judgments will occur in the future. Some think of judgment in personal terms, but others think that God judges nations as well as individuals.

Before the first World War, many Christians believed that God executed his judgments in society. This meant that riots and labor troubles were caused by man's failure to fulfill the will of God.

Since the first World War, up to and including our own time, many Christians have thought that God's judgment could best be seen in affairs between nations. They did not believe that one nation was sinful and another was righteous, since the sinners and the righteous lived in both nations. Many believed that God used the sinners to punish the proud and the proud to punish the sinners. There was little place in such a scheme for self-righteousness; and the innocent had to suffer with the guilty.

There have been changes in attitudes toward judgment. One of the most significant has been that men have believed more strongly than before that one nation is the rod of judgment against another. But the tendency has been to attribute this judgment to impersonal factors in national and world society rather than to the direct action of God.

As always when we deal with questions of judgment, in this lesson we should be thinking

especially on street corners. That causes flim-flam and robbery. The insurance law advises that large sums of money which are to be paid to employees be counted in the office, locked away from the public.

May we advise our readers to be aware of the many misfortunes that are happening due to weather, auto accidents, flim-flam and robbery, and especially fire during this particular season. I am sure that if any misfortune occurs to you, you will think about what we are saying with many more thoughts of the same opinion.

about God's judgment on ourselves rather than how God is going to judge others, whether persons or nations.

Searching The Scriptures

The Scripture for this lesson is Amos 2:6 through 3:2; Matthew 13:1-51; Revelation 19. Selected verses are printed below. Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

24 Another parable he put before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field; 25 but while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. 26 So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. 27 And the servants of the householder came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then has it weeds?' 28 He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' 29 But he said, 'No; lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'

36 Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." 37 He answered, "He who sows the good seed is the Son of man; 38 the field is the world, and the good seed means the sons of the kingdom; the weeds are the sons of the evil one, 39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels. 40 Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age. 41 The Son of man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers. 42 and throw them into the furnace of fire; there men will weep and gnash their teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear."

Memory Selection:

Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, for his judgments are true and just. —Revelation 19:1-2

Exploring The Questions

The concentration camps in Germany in the second World War and the killing of millions of Jews have caused some Jewish theologians to form some definite ideas about the providence of God and his actions in the world. Despite the harassment and persecution of Jews wherever they have lived, nothing in the past changed their thinking as the concentration camps did.

An American rabbi wrote a

few years ago that Jews had traditionally believed that God in his wisdom and justice causes everything in human history to happen just as it does. But after the concentration camps, the rabbi said it became impossible for many Jews to believe in this traditional Jewish God. "What kind of God sits back and allows Adolf Eichmann, the killer of the Jews, to have health and strength and daily food so that he could continue to send God's ancient people to their deaths?"

The concentration camps and other experiences of man's inhumanity to other men have created theological and religious problems for Christians as well as Jews. How can one believe in a God of justice in a world in which so many innocent people suffer?

Christians have traditionally believed that God's judgment works in human events. This view is usually associated with the view that God will also judge men and nations at the end of the age. But is all judgment to wait until the end of time? Or may Christians reasonably expect to see some support during their own lives?

Finding Help With Your Questions

Right away we should agree that we are up against a deep mystery when we come to talk about the judgment of God. God's ways are not our ways, and our judgments are not our ways, and our judgments are not God's judgments. No man lives on the earth long enough to have more than a brief perspective on events going on around him; but God has unlimited time in which he sees the beginning as well as the end of every deed and thought.

We ponder our national destiny and wonder what will happen to our nation and society within the next century. But God already knows. When we think of our limited experience and God's unlimited power and knowledge, we realize how great is the mystery that faces us when we talk about judgment.

The weeds mentioned in the parable looked very much like a kind of wheat. When these weeds grew up with wheat, it was impossible to distinguish between the weeds and the wheat during the early stages of growth. Moreover, the roots of the weeds and the wheat became intertwined, so that it was impossible to pull out the weeds without pulling out the wheat as well. It was important, therefore, that the weeds should continue to grow with the wheat until the harvest time, when they could be separated.

Let us now look more closely at Jesus' explanation of the parable. It is a view that is held literally by many Christians, while others believe that the parable is better understood symbolically. Whatever interpretation we bring to it, we may be certain that Jesus and the tradition since his day have believed that there will be a judgment at the end of the present age. Some readers may feel that such a viewpoint is not congenial to contemporary Christianity; but most scholars agree that Jesus held such a view of the end of the age.

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