

Our Missionaries Speak



JESUS IS COMING AGAIN

by Rev. C. D. M. Sanders*

The story of the wise men intrigues us and arouses our curiosity: Mat. 2: 1, 2. "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying, 'where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him.'" There is much that could be asked and much that could be said about these wise men, but I will limit myself to one question: How did they know? Though I cannot fully answer this question I can at least reply to it in part: they had the necessary discernment. Millions lived in the east, but so far as we understand, only three men had the revelation of this secret made to them. They were looking in the right direction and they correctly interpreted what they saw. They came and worshipped. There is a lesson for us in this story: we too may discern our times and know when the coming of Jesus is near, and we can be ready for the rapture, when He takes to heaven those who are ready and waiting. This thought should solemnize us, as well as protect us against fear, and being troubled.

When Jesus was about to leave His disciples He made two promises to them: John 14:15, 16 "If ye love me keep my commandments and I shall pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter that He may abide with you for ever." and verses 1-3 "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there ye may be also." The disciples were to wait for the coming of the Comforter, and also to wait for the coming again of JESUS. The former was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost when they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. The latter they expected and looked for but did not witness. Jesus has not yet come again.

I will not take space to list the verses in the Old and New Testaments which foretell this great event, but will go on to suggest why we should be vitally concerned about His coming.

For reasons known best to Himself, God purposely hid the day and the hour of Jesus' coming again. At one time Jesus Himself did not know it. Mk. 13:32. One big reason for keeping this secret is so that expectancy and continual preparedness would be the life of the Christian. It is a necessary element in the personality of the true believer. If you will look up all the verses that tell us to be ready because we do not know the time of Jesus coming, you will be impressed by the importance and urgency of being prepared for His coming. Because of the abundance of instruction on this point, no Christian is left without warning. Yet the surprising thing is that Scripture gives us to know that some will be taken and others left. And some of those who are to be left will be people who fully expected to be taken. Mat. 25: 1-13; Lu. 21: 34-36. Mat. 24: 36-41. The reason those are left is simply because they are

A MINISTER NOBODY WANTED

One of the toughest tasks a church faces is the wise choice of a wise minister.

A member of the Official Board undergoing this painful process finally lost patience. He'd watched the Pastoral Relations Committee reject applicant after applicant for some fault, alleged or otherwise. It was time for a bit of soul-searching on the part of the committee. So he stood up and read a letter purporting to be from another applicant.

"Gentlemen . . . Understanding your pulpit is vacant, I should like to apply for the position.

"I have many qualifications . . . I've been a preacher with much success and also had some success as a writer. Some say I'm a good organizer. I've been a leader most places I've been.

"I am over 50 years of age, I have never preached in one place for more than three years. In some places I have left town after my work has caused riots and disturbances.

"I must admit I have been in jail three or four times, but not because of any real wrong doing.

"My health is not too good though I still get a great deal done.

"The churches I have preached in have been small though located in several large cities.

"I've not got along too well with religious leaders in towns where I have preached. In fact, some have threatened me and even attacked me physically.

"I am not too good at keeping records. I have been known to forget whom I have baptized.

"However if you can use me, I shall do my best for you."

The board member looked over the congregation . . . "Well what do you think? Shall we hire him?"

The good church folks were aghast. Hire an unhealthy, trouble-making, absent-minded, ex-jailbird? Was the board member crazy? Who signed that application? Who had such colossal nerve?

The board member eyed them all keenly before he answered . . . "It's signed, The Apostle Paul"

not prepared. The reason they are not prepared is because they allowed something else in their lives to become more important than getting ready for the coming of JESUS. Friends, this is a serious matter to us as Christians. The consequences of being left will allow for no delay in preparing for His coming. The stakes are too high for any one to fritter away precious time, by doing other things when we know that the Lord may come any day, and you or I be left. You will never be able to buy back that day and event, it will be only once and you will either be in on it, or out of it.

Let me mention a second reason why we must be concerned about Jesus' coming: that we may have a burden for lost souls. You and I have relatives who are not ready for Jesus' coming, some are not even aware that He is expected to come, soon. Outside this little circle of our relatives and friends are millions of nominal Christians, and heathen peoples, who are not ready. We who are preparing for, and hastening unto the coming of the Lord, have two great reasons why we should be soul winners: the imminent coming of the Lord and the fact of death. So it is now or never both for us who are to be prepared for the rapture, and for precious souls that will soon be swept out into eternity, beyond the reach of mercy.

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