

# Orlando Bible Students Newsletter

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## Why Do the Heathen Rage?

As the 2024 election approaches, the Christian might ask, how will the result fit into God's plan for our country and the entire world. Psalm 2:1-3 describes our current day. "Why are the nations in an uproar And the peoples devising a vain thing? The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!"—*New American Standard Bible*

Ever since the garden of Eden, man has cast God's instructions and law aside for his own. This has led to heartbreak, a multitude of sorrows and tears and a race condemned to death due to their disobedience to God. Still, man continues to search vainly for a solution to their problems, being blinded by Satan to the most obvious solution, returning back to God and asking him to save them.

Even the nation of Israel, released from Egyptian bondage and led by God back to the land promised to their father Abraham, failed to obey the Law God gave them at Mt. Sinai. In punishment, God cast them out of the promised land and dispersed them for 2500 years before gradually regathering them back to the land as promised.—Jer. 23:7,8

God foresaw man's disobedience through his foreknowledge and allowed it, to teach man the futility and utter disaster of trying to live apart from him and his law of righteousness. Jesus said that allowing man to rule himself would lead to a time of "great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. Unless

those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short." (Matt. 24:21,22, *NASB*) When man reaches the point of self-destruction, God through "the elect" will intervene to stop man and then begin the process of drawing man back to himself, on God's terms and his principles of righteousness through Christ's kingdom.

While man continues to imagine a vain thing, solving his own problems based on human wisdom, selfishness and powerful leaders, God says in Psalm 146, there is no salvation there. "Don't put your confidence in powerful people; there is no help for you there. When they breathe their last, they return to the earth, and all their plans die with them." (Ps.146:3,4, *New Living Translation*) Human leaders only live for a few short years and then die and their plans die with them.

However, God has selected a leader who will never die and together with a group of associates, will bless all the families of the earth. We are speaking of Christ and his faithful followers, the church. Also described as a "little flock" or the "bride" of Christ, together with Jesus, they will be kings and priests and reign over the earth for 1,000 years.—Luke 12:32; Rev. 19:7,8; 20:6; 21:2,9

This kingdom will restore all the willing of mankind back to the perfection, everlasting life and harmony with God that Adam and Eve enjoyed before they disobeyed in Eden. This opportunity will be available to all human beings that have ever lived. (*Continued on next page*)

## Why Do the Heathen Rage? (continued)

Jesus prophesied in John 5:28,29 (*NLT*): “Don’t be so surprised! Indeed, the time is coming when all the dead in their graves will hear the voice of God’s Son, and they will rise again. Those who have done good will rise to experience eternal life, and those who have continued in evil will rise to experience judgment.”

This judgment will not condemn man for what he did in this life. No, man will be judged in Christ’s kingdom for what he does then, after his eyes have been opened to God and been taught God’s principles of righteousness. Isaiah prophesied, “For when the earth experiences Your judgments The inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.”—Isa. 26:9, *NASB*

Rev. 20:13,12 (*NASB*) explains how this will work: “And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.”

Jesus described this judgment in the parable of the sheep and the goats found in Matt. 25:31-46. The sheep represent those of mankind who successfully learn God’s righteousness and demonstrate it through their love for their fellow man. “‘When did we [sheep] see You [Jesus] a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.’” (Matt. 25:38-40, *NASB*) By their love for their fellow man, they will gain everlasting life.

What will convince man to abandon the ways of evil, pride, disobedience and selfishness that so prevail in today’s society? It will be the overwhelming blessings of Christ’s kingdom that will soften man’s heart and enable him to love his brother, regardless of ethnicity or background. Psalms 146:7-9, (*NASB*) describes some of these blessings. [God] “Who executes justice for the oppressed; Who gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets the prisoners free. The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; The LORD raises up those who are bowed down; The LORD loves the righteous; The LORD protects the strangers; He supports the fatherless and the widow, But He thwarts the way of the wicked.”

Because of Jesus’ faithful sacrifice unto death, God will remove the oppression of sin and death from all mankind allowing them to be raised from the dead. Likewise, he will remove the oppression of Satan, the rich and the powerful off the backs of the poor. (Isa. 65:22) None will be hungry either for temporal food or God’s truth. (Isa. 25:6) God will set the entire human family free—from the grave, illness, darkness, lies and superstition of this present evil world. (Isa. 60:2,3) God will heal both man’s literal blindness as well as his spiritual blindness. (Isa. 29:18) He will also heal the deaf, the lame, the mute and all of man’s physical ailments. (Isa. 35:5,6) In Christ’s kingdom, “no resident will say, ‘I am sick;’ The people who dwell there will be forgiven their iniquity.”—Isa. 33:24, *NASB*

God will raise up those bowed down by the effects of sin. They will be able to stand before God in righteousness. God will love them for they will become his children. “‘As I live!’ declares the Lord GOD, ‘I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways!’” (Ezek. (Continued on next page)

## Doers of God's Law

Does a Christian need to be only a hearer of the Gospel of Christ and accept it? The Apostle Paul wrote: "For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified." (Rom. 2:13, *English Standard Version*) As these words indicate, walking in the Christian way requires being both "hearers" and "doers" of God's law. By this the Christian will mature in faith and bring forth spiritual fruit. "God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. ... and increase the fruits of your righteousness."—II Cor. 9:8,10, *New King James Version*

An oft repeated theme in the Apostle Paul's ministry is that none will be made righteous by works of the law. This has frequently been misunderstood by Christians to mean, "No works are required." This has contributed to a misunderstanding. It is the works of the law given to Moses that will not, and cannot, make us righteous. However, being made righteous by faith in Christ and his shed blood, works will come forth. This is the fruit-bearing Jesus spoke of in the Gospel of John, and it is an evidence of our union with Christ and the working of his spirit within us. "By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples."—John 15:8, *ESV*

Faith is manifested in actions. Paul acknowledged this Christian ethic in I Corinthians 15:10. "By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me." (*ESV*) Paul clearly understood the purpose of God's grace manifested toward us. His grace makes our works of faith acceptable, even when they are inevitably stained by our human sinfulness and frailty.

James affirmed the relationship between our standing with God by faith and the consequent works that must accompany it. "Faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, You have faith, and I have works. Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works."—James 2:17,18, *NKJV*

Living a life consistent with faith is of vital consequence. Our works of faith may be evident in public, but they are just as important, perhaps more so, in private. One true measure of someone's character is their conduct when no one else is around. What do they explore on television or the internet? What do they post on social media? How do they treat their spouse, children, or parents when behind closed doors? Let us not merely be hearers of the Word of God, but faithful doers in all things. "Be doers of the word, and not hearers only."—James 1:22, *NKJV* ■

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### Why Do the Heathen Rage? (continued)

33:11, *NASB*) All will have a chance to turn from wickedness and live forever.

In this kingdom, God will protect all, Jew and Gentile alike, the fatherless and the widow. But He will thwart the plans of the wicked, especially Satan. As a result, all creation will praise the Lord. "Praise the LORD, all nations; Laud Him, all peoples! For His lovingkindness is great toward us, And the truth of the LORD is everlasting. Praise the LORD!" (Psa. 117:1,2, *NASB*) This result is only possible through the wisdom, love, justice and power of our Heavenly Father, the one who created the heavens and the earth and keeps his promises forever. —Psa. 146:6 ■

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### Calendar of Events

**Orlando Bible Students Convention**  
**October 26-27, 2024**

South Seminole Lodge  
122 Triplet Lake Drive  
Casselberry, FL 32707

For further information contact:

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