

# THE NEW AGE TO COME

By Christopher J. Patton

In the course of human experience, the search for life, liberty, and justice has been constantly frustrated and opposed by the conflicting needs for physical survival. The increasing presence of other people on the earth means that we are forced to compete constantly with others for the necessities of daily living.

In the early history of mankind smaller or more peaceful peoples were merely driven off of their chosen territory and forced to wander until finding another place either occupied by a group weaker than themselves or vacant of humans. Eventually, all corners of this planet, the desirable and the undesirable, have become populated with people.

As a consequence, gracious generosity, tolerance, fairness and love became victims to the greed of human power lust. The story is the same the world over – though the stage differs. In the wealthier nations, where resides a small, privileged minority of the human race, we compete for better pay and a better neighborhood. However, for innumerable masses of peoples, the stage issues are far more basic – today’s ration of rice and a tarpaper roof over the shanty shack of a home. Most of you reading this only have a TV flash image of what that reality is like. It is grindingly gruesome and depressing absent of all vestiges of human hope.

The rough realities of global existence seem to corrupt the gloriously well-intentioned ideals about the brotherhood of mankind. Like the fabled touch of old king Midas, everything man touches turns to gold: there is a material price demanded for the spiritual death of beautiful ideals. Hope, therefore, wavers in the face of the twin gargantuan monoliths of global government and mega-corporations.

As believers, we say, “NOT!” to the falsely closed options of poor alternatives promoted by a deceptive media driven by advertising revenue growth targets. We can say, “NOT!” in confidence only because there is another book, a big book backed by omnipotence that promises that these Goliath-like giants of corrupt human government and global commercialism shall fall to the small Davidic stone of one person’s changed lifestyle and values – yours!

If hope springs only from the human breast, it will never be eternal. True hope comes from God’s promises.

In a world so torn by strife and greed - but still so wondrously beautiful in its natural potential, what is a thoughtful person to do? Quietly deny or rationalize the truth that he or she has come to understand and just go with the flow? Are we to quit before we start? Or settle for a few easy-to-do behavior changes?

Indeed, not. Rather, we should embrace the sharp sword of truth and so cut out of our own lives what is harmful to our neighbors, our environment, and us. Yet, we are to do so humbly, in submission to the principles of the Creator, who is ultimately responsible for all He has made and will come again to restore it to harmonious perfection.

*“If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.” (Proverbs 24:10 KJV)*

But what if you feel that your strength is weak and not all that strong? Especially when faced with the daunting changes you need to make in your own life? It is not easy for anyone to live in a manner that runs against the rush of society. This is especially true when that way of life also runs against our natural inclinations. It is pretty

easy to become discouraged and even depressed when facing the facts of one's internal state of being and/or the realities of a world at war with itself.

## **A Vision of the New Age to Come**

Imagine with me a time of peace, of beauty, of cities dispersed among forests and fields of green, of animals and children playing, and of people working and relaxing in harmony with each other, with nature, and with God. I but briefly describe the coming Kingdom of God to earth, when Israelis and Arabs will share the Mideast peacefully, making alliances of blessing to fill the earth. In fact all peoples of all nations shall dwell together autonomous and recognized, each for our unique cultural identity. Individuals and families will live free from fear and undue want, pressed only by self-imposed lessons of non-fatal challenge that might result from inclinations yet mortal, though moving towards the eternal values of the righteous love. Yet, New Age to come will not be a time of primitive subsistence but one of a technology so advanced in biological integration that true abundance exists for all.

“When will the waiting end?” you ask. Probably in our life times. How will this dream come about? Only by divine intervention executed in accordance to ancient promises made to the patriarchs of Israel. What do we do while we wait? All that we can do is live our lives as God would grace us. Part of that living must include a active commitment to planetary stewardship, which included caring for our won bodily health!

God will intervene to save an unbelieving world partly for the sake of those of us who change our lives now. We live and act in anticipation of the guaranteed hopes of the earth's future renewal, beginning in Israel. The wonderful thing is that when we change today, our changes make a difference now – wherever we find ourselves living. The present age is prophesied to experience growing planetary deterioration, culminating in global catastrophes that will nearly destroy all biological life, including humans. But, the Bible warns us not to be the means of evil's coming. We are not to be witless participants, instruments of evil used in destroying the earth. (Matthew 18:7; Romans 6:12-18 and 12:1-2)

We can step outside the world's insane rush to self-destruction and enter into the peace of God, becoming change agents that not only protect the earth but also spread the true love that endures forever. This does not mean a life of no struggles or problems, but it does mean one of purpose, hope, and the kind of spiritual growth that not only improves one's soul but also extends to blessing and improving the lives of others.

In the New Age to Come there will also be problems, but the problems will be limited. The fallen angels, Satan and its demons, will be shut out of action, bound in a metaphysical abyss. Human nature will continue because people will still be mortal. Just as it is for us today, immortality will only be granted to those who die to self and accept in faith the nature of God, who is the Holy Spirit, through the personal participation in the sacrifice of Yeshua / Jesus as one's Savior. The way to change human hearts does not change, but the conditions under which the gospel is presented and lived will definitely change – dramatically! From our perspective now, it would seem a cinch to believe under such ideal conditions, but I suspect that with evil less rampant, the great depths and riches of God's grace could become less appreciated. Besides, we are alive today. Now is our day of decision, and decide we do with every thought we ponder and every deed we do – including what we eat!

## **Our Present Calling**

Yeshua / Jesus came preaching for all men to repent, or change, and to “believe in the gospel” “for the Kingdom of God is at hand” (Mark 1:15). The “gospel” simply means “good news”, and the truly good news is that there is an omnipotent hope available to all who will receive it in faith. We begin by admitting to ourselves where we

are wrong and God is right, then we ask His help to change. We express belief in His promised answer by taking some baby steps in the right direction. He has promised the strength to succeed, and we are to be confirmed in those promises by immersing our consciousness in His Word, the Israelite/Christian Bible.

Gospel redemption only begins with the soul. It does not stop there. A changed life today is a living prophecy, a light that looks forward to a healed world of changed lives tomorrow. We are to begin to live now in accordance with the way the Messiah will rule the world tomorrow. That is only feasible by having Him rule us now. Through us His rule can be spread into our homes and to our neighbors, if they will accept His reign over them. At this point in the plan of God we are sojourners on earth. We do not force others to live as we do. Rather, we are live as lights, sharing our insights and cooperating in our work together as we are able and have opportunity.

*“If you are slack in the day of distress, your strength is limited. Deliver those who are being taken away to death, and those who are staggering to slaughter, Oh hold them back.”* (Proverbs 24:10-11 NAS)

Because we live in the age of Babylon, we cannot help but work with those who have different perspectives on life’s meaning, value and purpose. What we are able to accomplish now will always be a compromise, but we need not compromise our own faith and vision. The practical hopes now presented in our daily lives may by necessity be limited to efforts that are merely more positive than negative and not the ideal of perfection. In essence we accept the challenge of “redeeming the time” of our sojourn on earth knowing that the long term promise of a better age to come rests on God’s grace and not on the fruits of our own efforts, whether they be undertaken jointly with others or not. Even as we must focus on our own life purpose or mission, so we need to remember that we are not alone in serving God. We should also support, as we are able, the life missions of others in the Body of Messiah, who through their differing functions also advance the works of God in the lives of men and women, children and animals, one at a time.

The New Age to come will not result from improved international cooperation mediated by the United Nations. Peace and prosperity will not result from an integrated global economy based on a socially humanitarian, multicultural democratic global economic system. This false hope of Babylonian materialism is increasingly presented as the universal spirituality that will solve the world’s problems. It is the commodified form of love and life called mammon in the Bible. Babylon represents the reciprocal exchange of material goods and social contracts necessary to maintain and extend mortal life. It is the global system of preserving the interconnected unity the physical lives of people, plants, and animals by elevating that unity to the divine altar of worship. Such idolatry will only end in total destruction of all life because it ignores the spiritual realities of the universe.

Those realities include the existence of spirit beings and forces actively at work to destroy the earth and its inhabitants. But just as we cannot ignore these negative beings, neither can we ignore the all powerful Creator and Redeemer who inspires their hatred and violence. We can only overcome the forces of evil. We cannot battle them on their own turf. By “overcome”, I mean that the just and loving Creator God is the only power capable of overcoming the evil now reigning this age. Through Messiah, we have a way of transferring our eternal identity to God, who has already overcome Lucifer the Adversary in the life, death, and resurrection of Yeshua.

Even when all visible and experiential evidence tells us that hope is lost, that we are defeated in a world utterly destroyed; we must exercise faith in His promised restoration. At the day of ultimate darkness, healing waters will flow from the Father’s and the Son’s joint throne in Jerusalem to transform the waste of a world polluted with human sin and destroyed by demonic fury against God and humanity. With the establishment of God’s government over the earth natures of both mankind and animals will be transformed to peaceful plant consumers. Gone will be the violent culture of materialistic greed. Gone will be the destructive wars that make today’s efforts to ecologically save the earth so seemingly pointless.

Yes, due to God's omnipotent intervention, our success is assured. It is not dependant on our own power, on our collective human strength, or even in our personal belief in the sureness of our success. Meanwhile, as a living expression and proof of our faith and love for God, the Bible tells us to continue in well doing, as faithful stewards of our bodies and our planet, until He comes. (Matthew 25:44-47)

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