

June 11, 2015

Dear Brethren and Friends,

Last month, Friday 8th May 2015 was the anniversary of VE Day (Victory in Europe Day), marking 70 years since the end of the Second World War in Europe. There were many celebrations and parties up and down the UK as well as church services.

Less than a year ago, in August 2014, the 100th anniversary of the day Britain entered one of the costliest conflicts in history was marked, that being the First World War.

Wikipedia writes that this "was a global war centred in Europe that began on 28 July 1914 and lasted until 11 November 1918. More than 9 million combatants and 7 million civilians died as a result of the war, a casualty rate exacerbated by the belligerents' technological and industrial sophistication, and tactical stalemate. It was one of the deadliest conflicts in history..."

It is important to remember history as an educational aid to remind us what we should and should not do. George Santayana wrote in his book "The Life of Reason" (1905): "Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it." Sir Winston Churchill worried not so much that those who forget the past are condemned to relive it, but that the loss of the past would mean "the most thoughtless of ages. Every day headlines and short views" (House of Commons, 16 November 1948, as quoted on the website [www.nationalchurchillmuseum.org](http://www.nationalchurchillmuseum.org)).

According to Wikipedia, they list 34 large scale wars that occurred before the 20th century that were battles spanning two or more continents. The First World War was called that because it was expected that it would be the war to end all wars. However, such optimism was short-lived with the onset of the Second World War (1939-1945) and there have been scores of wars since then. And now we have civil wars in many parts of the world and even those trying to set up an Islamic state.

We have violence at every turn. Children have war games and violence on their computers; films, videos, CD's, DVD's and television programmes which inevitably seem to employ violence and killing as part of their "entertainment" content. War, conflict, argument and disagreement seem to be the staple of everyday life.

But we must ask the questions: Did the First World War stop all future wars? Did the Second World War stop all future wars? The answer is plain to see; wars always bring about death and destruction and no one seems to learn from history!

It is easy to take sides when such events take place, but do we look at it from God's point of view? No side is without blame and war brings about killing, which breaks God's Commandment not to kill.

In our free booklet "Should You Fight in War?" on pages 4 and 5 are some comments about "The New Testament Teaching on War" where the author, Norbert Link, writes as follows—this is a brief quote and there is much to read and can be done so on line at: <http://www.globalchurchofgod.co.uk/booklet/646>

"What, then, is the Biblical view of war? We will first look at the very clear and decisive teachings on the issue of war and peace in the New Testament.

"As a general truism, we are encouraged by Christ, as well as His apostles after His resurrection, to live in peace with ALL men. This includes, of course, a prohibition to fight against others, or to retaliate, or even to condemn. Romans 12:17-21 says: 'Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in

the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to [God's] wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. Therefore, "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.'

"We are told to overcome evil with good. We are also told that this means, NOT to avenge ourselves, but rather, to give our enemy food and drink. Obviously, this is telling us that we are not to kill him. That would be 'evil.' Rather, we are to overcome evil with 'good.' In feeding our enemy, we heap coals of fire on his head; that is, he will see our good deeds and he will be embarrassed when considering his animosity toward us, compared with our good will toward him.

"This Biblical principle teaches HOW to overcome evil with good, not by using a weapon and killing the person [which is evil], but by helping and providing for him [which is good]."

Unfortunately, the Bible is not a source that many, if any, world leaders consult about war or on any other matter. If they did, their populations, in general, would probably immediately dismiss such wisdom and vote the leader out of office! They "don't do God" as one spin doctor once famously said.

Sadly, it will take the Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord to concentrate many minds, although Scripture reveals that there will still be opposition during this "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation" (Daniel 12:1) and similar phrasing in Matthew 24:21. Such opposition at a time of great trouble can be read in Revelation 16:11.

The sign of the times must surely indicate that we are facing events which will lead to the Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord. This will be a time like no other. "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved [alive]; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened" (Matthew 24:22).

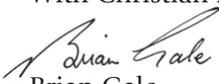
Jesus Christ will return to this earth to fight against men who, once again, will be waging war. The lessons of history will not have been learned. Christ on a white horse will defeat the Beast and his armies (see Revelation 19:11-21). Then there will be peace for almost 1,000 years with Satan and his demons banished for that period of time. These events are always discussed during the autumnal Holy Day season which pictures these momentous times.

We know that at the end of the 1,000 years, Satan will be released for a short time and will, again, revert to type, and those who follow him will be taken care of (see Revelation 20:7-10). Satan, the author of all evil, will finally no longer be able to deceive human beings into thinking that there are "just" wars, that wars can solve problems and that wars are necessary, and he will be dealt with accordingly (please review Revelation 20:10).

There will be no more war and pain and suffering. Revelation 21:4-5 are two of the most encouraging verses in the Bible: "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.' Then He who sat on the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.' And He said to me, 'Write, for these words are true and faithful.'"

When we know the wonderful things that God has in store for us, why would we want to be involved in any aspect of war? War and all those ungodly practices of man will be consigned to history, and we shall be able to look forward to the most incredible future. And what a future that is!

With Christian love,

  
Brian Gale  
(United Kingdom)