



*"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." —Matthew 24:14*

February 5, 2009

Dear Brethren and Friends,

Those in the UK may have seen the recent advertising campaign that was launched last month by an atheist group. It stated: "There's probably no God... now stop worrying and enjoy your life." This £140,000 campaign on buses in major cities around the country and in trains was also extended to a further 1,000 advertisements on the London Underground. The creators of this advertisement said that it had a positive message which encouraged people to enjoy life instead of worrying about what happened afterwards. Perhaps they might like to consider that God's Word says: "Professing to be wise, they became fools" (Romans 1:22).

There were many complaints received by the Advertising Standards Agency (ASA) who decided that this campaign was "an expression of the advertiser's opinion and unlikely to mislead or cause serious or widespread offence." As a secular agency, any consideration of the rightness of things or of an insult to the Almighty would not have been part of their thinking, nor would it have entered their heads to have included such concerns. It never seems to be a consideration by those who promote the ever downward spiraling of morals, ethics, business practices and many other areas of life, that there is a law of cause and effect. In the books of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28, there are many details of cause and effect reflected through blessings and cursings.

In Leviticus 26:3 God says: "If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them, then I will give you rain in its season...." Further blessings are listed from verses 4-13. However, in verse 14, the diametrically opposite of obedience is revealed. From verse 16 onwards God lays it clearly on the line as to how disobedience will be treated. God spends much time here and in other places spelling out in detail many material rewards and considerations. They should have motivated ancient Israel historically, and they should motivate us today, to become, and stay close to God, and to do His Will which is always for our benefit.

A reading of the Bible reveals a God Who is patient—much more patient than any human being could ever demonstrate. But even that patience now must surely be wearing very thin. The advertising approach denying His very existence is a rebuff to the One Who has given us everything we have.

Political leaders sometimes made a passing mention and acknowledgement of God in their nation's history and welfare. Abraham Lincoln wisely said about America that "We have been recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven. We have been preserved in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power." It would be interesting to know how many political leaders today—outside the USA, perhaps—would use such language? In an ever increasingly secular society in the west, such language would be derided, considered old fashioned and would damage the reputation of the leaders in the eyes of millions of people who may have put them into power in the first place.

You will have seen recently the euphoria of the inauguration of Mr. Barack Obama as the 44th President of the USA. That great country is anticipating a better future with a new and charismatic leader. "Change" was the watchword, but it often is when a new leader takes over from the old guard. Real change will be whether or not the public's expectations are met. The change that is often spoken about may eventually apply to the electorate themselves as they change their attitude and proposals when their expectations are not met.

Interestingly, in mid January, a newspaper headline in the UK stated: "Obama can save us! Polls showed a wave of optimism sweeping the nation." One businessman was quoted as saying: "He cannot not succeed. He has to succeed because the world really depends on him right now." (No doubt, when we have an election within the next twelve months or so in the UK and in other European countries, "change" will again be the word used to try and garner support.)

You will have noticed the screaming and shouting for the new U.S. President, the waving of banners, the frequent applause and the well rehearsed rhetoric that caused all of this excitement. In the middle of last month, during an appearance before the US Senate Hillary Clinton endorsed the use of "smart power" to reassert global U.S. influence. Similar positive sound bites are broadcast whenever some changes in leadership take place, but the same old problems surface

with few answers. And yet, so many people remain optimistic that change, this time, will be for real. We must remember that every leader has a shelf life. Only God does not!

But often, such kind of euphoria can be short lived as promises are not kept and things don't always improve and then disappointment sets in. This is because of both the frailties and limitations of leaders as well as the number of insurmountable problems that man creates for himself. In just about every facet of life, society continues to deteriorate at an alarming rate. We would need many pages just to list these, but we can all recognize a society—no matter whether we live in the USA or in the UK—that is virtually unrecognizable from just a few decades ago.

You will recall from 1 Samuel 8 that ancient Israel wanted a king even though, up to that time, they had God as their leader! Samuel told them that such a one would demand much from them, including exorbitant taxes. Samuel made it clear that they were sinning in demanding a king. However, “the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, ‘No, but we will have a king over us...’” (1 Samuel 8:19). Theocracy, according to Webster's 1847 edition, is “Government of a state by the immediate direction of God; or the state thus governed. Of this species the Israelites furnish an illustrious example. The theocracy lasted till the time of Saul.” The rest, as they say, is history as it all ended in tears and finally in captivity.

Leaders today have many frailties and shortcomings; God has none. Leaders today put on a brave face and give the impression that they are on top of things, but this is usually to settle the nerves of the governed and often to keep themselves in a job. Leaders today cannot solve the increasingly insurmountable problems that now face them. But with God in charge and obedience from human beings, we would never have arrived at the current mess we are in. There are no limitations with God.

And now we have arrived at yet another unthinkable situation where in big, bold advertising in many cities of the UK, the very existence of God—let alone of the true God of the Bible—is being questioned. Will any of our leaders come out in defense of God? To date I haven't heard one voice raised from any of our leaders—what the people think is much more important to them than what God thinks.

One verse in the Bible that they, and we, ought to muse on is a verse about cause and effect. Galatians 6:7 states quite simply: “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.”

Only the return of Jesus Christ will solve the current unsolvable. His return, eagerly anticipated by true Christians for so long, will produce the society that leaders and politicians promise, but never deliver. And at that time, it will not be necessary to have campaigns denying the existence of God because Jesus Christ will be ruling for the good and welfare of all concerned. Atheism will be a thing of the past. Those who now bathe in the glow of fronting an atheistic advertising campaign will be most surprised when Christ returns, if they are alive at that time. A Being that they didn't believe exists will return to earth to rule in majesty and power—and for their well-being! If they are not alive at that time, imagine their surprise when they awake in the Great White Throne Judgment to a life and an opportunity that they didn't believe in, and fought against. Much like the apostle Paul who fought Christianity until his conversion. He, of course, did have a strong belief in God—but his understanding of the true God was very flawed.

Great things are just ahead for all of us. Let us all make sure that the effect of negative advertising and secular thinking, the cares of this world and our own human nature don't cause us to stray from the path towards the Kingdom of God and eternal life with God. Atheistic propaganda and advertising notwithstanding, it is our potential to live for all eternity with the Father and Jesus Christ—two all powerful God beings who DO exist and who have ALWAYS existed. Let us not be swayed by charismatic individuals who may be well intentioned but who cannot solve the unsolvable. A charismatic but deceptive leader will appear at the end of this age (compare Revelation 13:14). He will deceive most people! And so, we must be on our guard. How?

“Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand” (Ephesians 6:13). That must be our approach—at all times.

With Christian love,

  
Brian Gale