

Enduring Perilous Times

By Jani Lynn Warner

We are living in perilous times: “...*in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away*” (2 Timothy 3:1-5).

We are living in times when even the secular world recognizes the “lovers of their own selves” and has labeled them “narcissists” in their own vocabulary. It is interesting to note that many psychologists claim narcissists cannot be helped because they refuse to recognize that they have a problem.

In 2 Timothy 3, these “lovers of their own selves” are described as a danger to all those around them. Our world today is clearly being run by these dangerous “lovers of their own selves.” They seem to be on a pathway to controlling and destroying everything around them in these days of worldwide distress – including economies, populations, and even the earth itself. Sometimes we may wonder how close we are to the prophecy of the seventh trumpet, when the 24 elders worship God and say that the time of His wrath has come, and He “*shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth*” (Revelation 11:15-19).

One thing we see today is that the marketing of fear and terror is certainly lucrative in these times – doomsday information is everywhere on almost every subject, whether on economies, wars, persecutions, earthquakes, weather modification, disasters, terraforming the earth, transformationalism, scalar weapons, plagues, nuclear radiation, food toxicity, and possible disaster scenarios for the “end of the world” on every front. Certainly, this is a time when there are “*men fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken*” (Luke 21:26 RSV). The KJV translates the Scripture as “men’s hearts will fail them for fear.”

To “faint” is to fall, to dismay or deprive of strength. The 1828 Webster’s Dictionary defines “dismay” as a fall or loss of courage, yielding to fear, a loss of firmness effected by fear or terror. If ever we Christians worldwide need encouragement to have our hearts and minds fixed firmly on God and His Kingdom, it is now. In Joshua 1:9, God declares, “*Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid; neither be thou dismayed.*” The hymn “How Firm a Foundation” was inspired by Isaiah 41:10, and the second verse reads: “Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed, For I am thy God and will still give thee aid; I’ll strengthen and help thee, and cause thee to stand Upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand.”

The world is in terror and fear, I believe, because they know they have a problem – Jesus is coming! Today, mankind is making shelters in the deep places of the earth, “*in the caves and the rocks of the mountains*” (Revelation 6:15). Some of these shelters are even for seeds! The world’s problems, however, are not the Christian’s problems. The Christian’s problem is fear of the world. When we fear the world, we fear its terrors. Such fear is idolatry, because we are to fear God and God alone. We are saved from God’s wrath and have a future and a hope in Christ. How do we overcome the world, the deceiver, the accuser, that old serpent called the devil, and Satan, “*which deceiveth the whole world*” (Revelation 12:9)? In Revelation 12:11 we read: “*And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they*

loved not their lives unto the death.” God will not forsake us, for He is our firm foundation, faithful and true. The last verse of the hymn declares: “The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose, I will not, I will not desert to its foes; That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake, I’ll never, no never, no never forsake.”