

**In Times Like These
(Socialism and America's Future)**

Inspired by a trip to Pikes Peak in 1893, Katherine Lee Bates wrote the poem "America the Beautiful."

"O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!"

Many of us come to church today in shock and amazement, possessing a kind of hollow feeling in our souls, at the events we have witnessed since Tuesday evening. We have seen something occur in America which has never happened before. At the present time, the Socialist/Communist part in America has stolen an election by extensive fraud and cheating. Any honest American without "Biden blinders" can see what has occurred in the last several days. Seventy million voters who voted for President Trump are being cheated out of a victory by the leadership of Democratic governors and participants who have rigged the election in various ways within certain states.

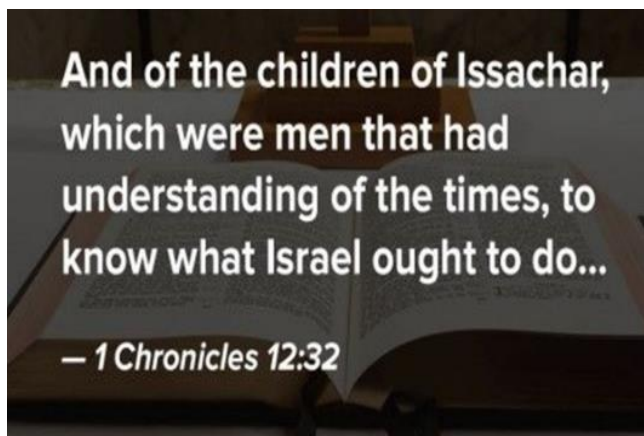
Think of the ramifications of socialistic policies taking over America? How these policies will begin to eat away at our liberties. Furthermore, Untold thousands of Americans have died to rescue other countries from communism, and they have died to also maintained our own freedoms from communism. Sadly, these patriotic Americans have shed their blood in vain if America turns the corner and starts down the road to radical socialism and the loss of our American freedoms.

Although there will be much litigation as a result of these election results, the president seems to be swimming upstream against the strong current of socialism, other world leaders, corrupt courts, ant-constitutionalists, lawlessness, the swamp creatures of Washington DC and the devil himself. You can call me a radical, you can call me anything you want to, but this country is hanging in the balances as I

speak today. Untold thousands of people are celebrating a Biden win in the streets (and they are not social distancing!) when we are facing the possible demise of the American dream and experiment.

Chuck Schumer said this regarding winning back the legislative control of the Senate: “Now we take Georgia and then we change America!” This sounds like a message from the devil himself! Is this the beginning of the end of America, the FREE America which was founded upon the constitution and which wars were fought to defend? If socialism has its way, then we will lose our constitutional republic. If socialism has its way, we will not recognize our freedoms which we once had – freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom to protect ourselves, freedom to live our lives independent of tyrannical government overreach.

Socialism or Marxism is a hater of capitalism, hater of freedom, hater of religion, and a hater of Israel. Everyone is talking about the new administration would only push “soft socialism” on the people. This analogy is similar to a soft rock. Were you ever hit by a soft rock? These are difficult times. They are perilous and very hard to bear. We see the foundations of country teetering. Many people don’t realize what is happening and many others don’t care. Of course, there are those who know exactly what the evildoers are doing. They really do want to change America forever.

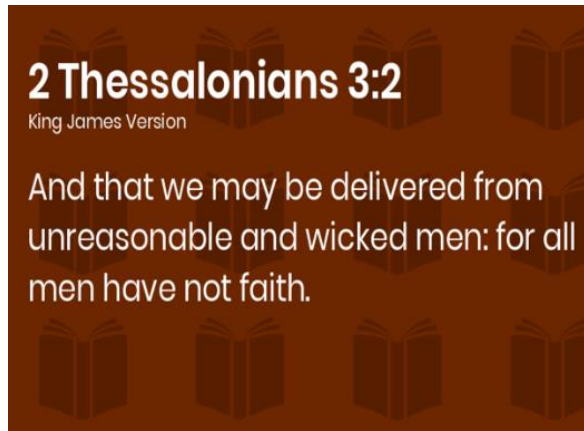


As God’s people, we are to understand the times and what is really happening to our country. We should see exactly what is occurring and be alarmed and deeply concerned for America’s freedoms and future. We live in the socialistic, atheistic, perilous, ignorant, compromising, degrading, humanistic, mystical, confusing, and critical times within the history of

America. I wish more people in Washington and Christians were discerning of the times and they knew what to do. I also wish they would have done what was right by voting for righteousness – not Marxism, atheism, and socialism. Their infatuation with Marxism is like a bubble waiting to pop. Marxism never in the end satisfies the masses. It actually enslaves them at an enormous cost. History has repeatedly

shown this again and again. The problem with so many today is that they have no understanding of the times in which they are living, how serious the situation is in America, and the great moral decline and the apostasy taking place in our country, the undermining of truth, the Constitution, and the historic roots of this country.

Our prayer during such a time as this can be this: 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2 “Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have *free* course, and be glorified, even as *it is* with you: And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all *men* have not faith.’



Let's set the record straight. The socialist who are trying to hijack this country and do away with our constitutional rights are the unreasonable and wicked people of our times.

What should we remember in times like these?

There are two important matters to remember in times like these.

1. We must remember about God's providence

A. God moves world nations according to His plan.

Daniel witnessed this in his prophetic writings. God mapped out the future plan regarding the rise and demise of nations. Many have wondered why America is not seen in this table of world powers mentioned in Daniel chapters two and seven. There are various reasons why. First, America is not a European and Middle East nation which is where much of the action will be taking place during the End Times. Second, the superpowers mentioned here are related to Israel and her land. Third, America will not be a world superpower during the End Times. Her global strength and war machine will be limited.



Daniel 7:1-3

In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, *and* told the sum of the matters. Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven (north, south, east, West) strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.”

Daniel was envisioning four great world empires that would arise on the world scene and then pass off the world scene according to God’s sovereign purpose for each nation. God was mapping out the nations of the world – their rise and fall.

- ✓ Babylon World Empire (existed during Daniel’s day)

Daniel 7:4

The first *was* like a lion, and had eagle's wings (*the winged lion was the emblem of ancient Babylon and spoke of the powerful conquest of this nation*): I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it (*King Nebuchadnezzar’s experience representing the nation of Babylon*).

Babylon was eventually replaced by the Medo-Persian Empire.

✓ Medo-Persian World Empire

Daniel 7:5

“And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side (*Medes took power first but eventually the Persians rose to power over the Medes and was much more powerful in this union*), and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it (*countries of Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon which preceded this empire – they essentially conquered and replaced these previous world empires*): and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.”

This empire eventually passed off the scene and was absorbed by the next world empire.

✓ Grecian World Empire

Daniel 7:6

“After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard (*Grecian Empire, like a leopard swiftly conquered all its rivals in the world to become a world empire*), which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl (*4 leading generals of Alexander the Great*); the beast had also four heads (*the empire split into four sectors with each general leading a specific portion of the empire*); and dominion was given to it.”

This empire would also eventually be defeated and pass off the scene and was absorbed by the next world empire.

✓ Roman Word Empire

Daniel 7:7

“After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it *was* diverse from all the beasts that *were* before it ...”

This was the greatest world empire up to this point in time. It was like a ferocious beast with iron teeth that would overtake everything in its path. The Roman Empire with its Caesars was the power during Jesus’s earthly ministry and the days of the early church.

The Roman Empire eventually fell apart from within and it today is represented in the nations of Europe and the Middle East.

✓ Revived Roman Empire

Revelation 7:7b-8

“... and it had ten horns (the final form of this empire will consist of ten ruling kings and kingdoms in the vicinity of the old Roman Empire). I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn (the rise of the Antichrist from one of the nations of the old Roman Empire), before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots (*Antichrist overtaking three of the ten and then eventually all of them*): and, behold, in this horn *were* eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things (*words of genius but also words of blasphemy against God*).

This is a future Revived Roman Empire that will come back to life for the Tribulation Period and which will become a world power and force. The horns represent ten kings and kingdom within the area of the old Roman Empire.

Daniel 7:24

“And the ten horns out of this kingdom (the area of the old Roman Empire) *are* ten kings *that* shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.”

All of this means America will no longer be the world power during the Tribulation Period. This Revived Roman Empire will be the new superpower of the End Times. We discover that during the End Times (Tribulation Period) there will be a great power shift to Europe and the Middle East which is the area of the old Roman Empire. The greatest world power will no longer be the United States but what some have called the Unites States of Europe.

We see in this prophetic outline of world powers that God knows how to raise up nations but He also allows them to pass off the world scene, or at least be absorbed by other super powers, as these historic nations were. Another nation would eventually overtake them and become the dominant world power over planet earth.

What are some lessons we learn from the prophecy of world powers? We learn that God has a precise purpose that He is bringing to pass among the world nations and powers that exist in the world. In fact, nations will exist as superpowers according to God's timetable. God has providentially ordained every nation to be in existence as a world power but can also demote them as a world power in accordance to His plan. Daniel's outline shows us that America will not remain the world's superpower longer than God has providentially determined. America is on God's timetable as it relates to its existence as a free country, its place among the nations of the world, and will possess a lesser degree of power in the world during the End Times.

Many have asked me where America fits in to the End Times or the seven-year Tribulation Period that leads up to the end. The best answer is that it will no longer be the greatest world power during the Tribulation Period. America will simply be an extension of a greater world power, likely the Antichrist's war machine in Europe and the Middle East, which will destroy many nations during the End Times in its rise to world power and which will eventually seek to destroy the nation of Israel.

The nations mentioned during the End Times are European and Middle East nations for this is where Bible prophecy will be predominately fulfilled during the End Times in relation to God's purpose related to Israel. The current status of nations that we see on the world landscape today, including America, will likely still be in existence when the Tribulation Period begins following the Rapture. There is no scenario where America will actually be obliterated and not exist during the End Times (Rev. 16:13-14; 18:3). However, the key players and powers of the earth will change to the Europe and the Middle East.

America, although still retaining military strength and power in the world, will no longer be the world's superpower, but an extension of the Antichrist's powerful kingdom and likely support his efforts during the End Times, as he gains power against what the Bible terms the Kings of the East (China and other oriental nations), the King of the South (Egypt and a collation of southern nations), and King of the North (various Islamic nations north of Israel). Daniel 11:40 and Revelation 16:12 speaks of the End Time players who will be defeated by the Antichrist and his war machine during the End Times.

Due to America's internal conflicts and the Rapture of untold millions of Americans, the country of America will be annexed in some way to Antichrist's powerful rule and role in the world since America is not seen revolting against the Antichrist for world dominance and power during the End Times (Daniel 11:37-45).

Folks, God is still on the throne. He is moving the nations of the world according to His own providential plan for these nations.

Proverbs 21:1

"The king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, *as* the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will."

Isaiah 46:9-11

"Remember the former things of old: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else; *I am* God, and *there is* none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure (what I please): Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken *it*, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed *it*, I will also do it."

B. God moves world leaders according to His purpose.

Daniel 2:20-21

"Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons (*God's providential changing of the seasons*): he removeth kings (deposes them), and setteth up kings (*God's providential changing of world leaders*): he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding" (*God's providential wisdom being part of our lives*):

Nebuchadnezzar was on the throne because God determined to use him there to fulfill His will. The same was true with president Donald Trump and the same will be true with President Biden if God allows (permits) him to win this election through the greatest fraud ever perpetrated on the American people.

The Marxists are trying to hijack America. Can God be in this evil scheme? Not directly since God never condones sin in any way.

James 1:13

“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man (*God tests us but he never tempts us!*).”

The holiness of God keeps Him from moving toward evil. In other words, there is nothing in God to which evil can make an appeal. This is because God is absolutely impeccable and filled with pristine holiness. This means that God is never directly responsible for evil, but neither is He outside the events of evil occurring on earth. In other words, God on some grand scale is orchestrating all events in the world, even evil events (cheating to win an American election) to fulfill His greater purpose in a fallen world of sin.

Daniel reminds us that God is always moving and working by providentially placing leaders in power and deposing them to fulfill His purpose for world leaders and powers on earth. If Donald Trump cannot win this election through the court system, then we must surrender to the sovereignty of God in allowing Joe Biden to become the next president of the United States.

Will it be easy? No! But God’s providential purposes, whatever they might be, are not always easy. Now don’t get me wrong. I am praying that the God of the impossible will show Himself in a mighty way and reverse the attempt of the evildoers to overturn this election. I am praying that God will part the Red Sea and open up a pathway for victory for our president. If these fake and fraudulent numbers can be reversed and these results overturned, it will be an act of God’s mercy upon this nation. There can be no other explanation for it! God has the last and final vote!

Jeremiah 33:3

“Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.”

Here are some practical points of application:

- God’s providence involves changes.
- God’s providence involves challenges.
- God’s providence involves choices.

- ✓ Will we surrender to His providential work or fight against it forever, never accepting it and rejecting it wholeheartedly?
- ✓ Will we admit that God is doing something that is outside our comfort zone and is moving the world, including America, according to His own path and purpose?
- ✓ Do we realize that the world stage is being set up for the End Times?
- ✓ Do you personally realize that God in His providence is also working everything together for your good?

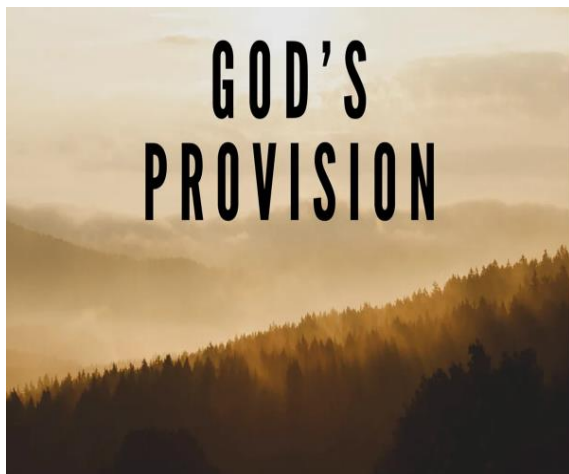
Romans 8:28

“And we know that all things work together for good (*even a Biden presidency or a difficult medical diagnosis*) to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.”

What is the message of Romans 8:28? Keep on believing! Keep on believing that God is working out His ultimate purpose to make you more like Jesus Christ!

What should we remember in times like these? There is a second important matters to remember in times like these.

2. We must remember about God’s provision



In times like these you need a Savior,
 In times like these you need an anchor;
 Be very sure, be very sure,
 Your anchor holds and grips the
 Solid Rock!

This Rock is Jesus, Yes He's the One,
 This Rock is Jesus, the only One;
 Be very sure, be very sure,
 Your anchor holds and grips the
 Solid Rock!

There are four areas of spiritual provision for the Christian life.

➤ His power

Ephesians 6:10

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”

We must be strong in the Lord’s power and strength during these difficult and unsure times. We are still working through a virus epidemic, not a fraudulent election which is trying to overturn American values and our very constitutional liberties. Add to this other trials and tribulations that you might be passing through (financial, physical, relational), and you are a candidate for a spiritual breakdown, unless you claim the power of God to overcome your life and strengthen your inner man.

Ephesians 3:16

“That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.”

The inner man (our interior life) is the spirit of man where our true self and personality can be controlled by the new nature and Holy Spirit and where God communicates to us, fellowships with us, and supplies us with all of our power and spiritual wealth. 1 Peter 3:7 talks about the same thing when he mentions the “hidden man of the heart” (the inner life being influenced and controlled by God).

God’s main field of work is still the inner man, because that is where spiritual life exists and where it must grow. It’s here that the Holy Spirit changes the life of the believer from glory to glory. Although the outer, physical man becomes weaker and weaker with age, the inner, spiritual man should continually grow stronger and stronger with power through His Spirit.

The Holy Spirit strengthens our inner man, which means our innermost part of our being (our human spirit and soul). It’s not the job of the Holy Spirit to strengthen our muscles but our entire inward person. It’s the Holy Spirit that picks us up, lifts us up, and helps us grow up. John W. Peterson wrote:

“Come Holy Spirit dark is the hour
We need Your filling
Your love and Your mighty power
Move now among us stir us we pray
Come Holy Spirit revive the church today!”

➤ His peace

We can have a sense of inner peace and tranquility during these times of unrest and uncertainty. It's real peace that comes from a real God and it can reign in our hearts and lives today.

Philippians 4:7

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Peace (inner rest) is a wonderful provision that God wants to give to His children. It's ours to experience but many times God's children opt for depression, discouragement, and doubt in their lives. They miss out on God's wonderful provision of peace that He has for them. We need to look at our own personal lives today and make sure that our circumstances and trials have not robbed us of God's wonderful calm and peace that He wants to give to us.

"Peace, peace, wonderful peace,
Coming down from the Father above!
Sweep over my spirit forever, I pray
In fathomless billows of love!"

The WAY to find peace is stated in verses 4-6.

Philippians 4:4-6

"Rejoice in the Lord always: *and* again I say, Rejoice (*be joyful*). Let your moderation be known unto all men (*be gentle and kind – not angry and revengeful*) The Lord is at hand (*be aware of Christ's presence and return*). Be careful for nothing (*be anxiety free*); but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (*be prayerful*).

The RESULT of peace is then stated in verse 7 ("And the peace of God").

Once we learn how to have peace (vv. 4-6), we come to verse 7 ("And the peace of God" will be ours!) You can't get to verse seven until you experience verses 4-6 (joy, gentle spirit toward others, the Lord's presence, worry-free living through prayer). It's these very things that bring peace into our hearts.

If we do not have God's peace – we might just go to pieces!

In describing peace we discover several things.

a. It's inner tranquility - "the peace of God" (7a)

The prescription that we all need is inner tranquility of soul. God wants us to live with peace in our hearts even when the bottom has dropped out of our lives. This peace takes the place of anxiety in our heart. It's called "the peace of God" because He is the One who provides it. This peace has a divine source – not a worldly source.

Isaiah 26:3 says:

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee (God): because he trusteth in thee" (Isa. 26:3).

God's peace is a sense of holy repose and calmness which floods the soul of the believer when he is leaning hard upon God.

Frances Ridley Havergal
"Stayed upon Jehovah,
Hearts are fully blessed;
Finding, as He promised,
Perfect peace and rest."

b. It's indescribable quality - "which passeth all understanding" (7b)

This means God's peace "surpasses all comprehension." It conveys the thought that God's peace is totally foreign to the experience of the unsaved man. Unsaved people of the world cannot understand it at all, but even Christians who possess it find a wonderful element of mystery about it. They are surprised at their own lack of anxiety in the face of tragedy or adverse circumstances when God's peace is permeating their heart and life.

Muller said this of God's peace:

"It excels and surpasses all our own intellectual calculations and considerations, all our contemplations and premeditated ideas of how to get rid of our cares."

In the modern vernacular we might say: "It blows our mind away!" "Wow! I can't believe the sense of peace (inner calmness) I have when I face life's problems and difficulties."

The story is told about a wounded soldier who was being taken to a hospital tent by some of his comrades. After they had carried him but a short distance, he urged them to put him down and go back to rescue someone else. As he was mortally wounded, he knew there was no hope for him anyway. Granting his request, they left him and returned to the combat area. In a few minutes, however, an officer stopped to ask him whether he could assist him in any way. The wounded soldier weakly replied, "No, thank you, sir. There's nothing at all you can do."

"But can't I at least get some water to quench your thirst?" the officer inquired. The dying man again shook his head saying, "No, thank you, sir. There is one thing, however, you could do for me. In my knapsack you will find a New Testament. Please open it to John 14. Near the end of the chapter you will find a text beginning with the word 'Peace.'

I would appreciate it if you would read just that one verse to me." The officer found the passage and read these words, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27). "Thank you, sir," said the dying soldier. "I have that peace and I am going to the Savior who made that promise. God is with me, I want no more." Shortly after that, the wounded man entered into the presence of his Lord. This is a peace that passeth all understanding!

c. It's invaluable safety - "shall keep your "hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (7c)

The word "keep" translates a military term which means "to protect or garrison by guarding." Like soldiers assigned to watch over a certain area, God's peace garrisons or guards our hearts and minds (the emotions and thoughts of God's children). This peace acts as a guard to keep worry or anxiety from flooding into our heart and overtaking it. Peace can be viewed as a kind of spiritual surveillance system to monitor our hearts. How do you guard your life from worry? You possess God's peace!

This peace is a sentinel at the door of the heart and mind, all day, all night, all year, 24/7/365. Satan attempts to attack us and invade our lives then the sentry is off duty. However, when Colonel Peace is standing guard, He keeps constant watch over our hearts and deters any intruder from a forced entry. God's peace is the needed spiritual tonic for our lives in this day of neuroses, nervous breakdowns, tranquilizers, and mental distress! What a promise we have!

Philippians 4:7

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Someone described peace like this:

"It is a quiet confidence in him, a relaxing in his love, a resting in his caring arms— an inner composure which only comes when we are fully trusting in him. The storm may be hurricane force on the outside but we have a deep calm on the inside. In the words of Isaiah, it is 'perfect peace' (Isaiah 26:3)."

There is a peace that guards our hearts from worry!

There once was a King who offered a prize to the artist who would paint the best picture which represented peace. Many artists tried. The King looked at all the pictures, but there were only two he really liked and he had to choose between them. One picture was of a calm lake. The lake was a perfect mirror, for peaceful towering mountains were all around it. Overhead was a blue sky with fluffy white clouds. All who saw this picture thought that it was a perfect picture of peace.

The other picture had mountains, too. But these were rugged and bare. Above was an angry sky from which rain fell and in which lightening played. Down the side of the mountain tumbled a foaming waterfall. This did not look peaceful at all. But when the King looked, he saw behind the waterfall a tiny bush growing in a crack in the rock. In the bush a mother bird had built her nest. There, in the midst of the rush of angry water, sat the mother bird on her nest in perfect peace.

Which picture do you think won the prize? The King chose the second picture. Do you know why? 'Because' explained the King, 'peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. Peace means to be in the midst of all those things and still be calm in your heart. This is the real meaning of peace.'

“I’ve got peace like a river
I’ve got peace like a river
I’ve got peace like a river in my soul.”

➤ **His presence**

Matthew 28:20

“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.”

Jesus always promises His presence up to the end, whether it’s the end of the age, the end of your life, the end of America as we know it, or the end of our health that we once had. Jesus says, “I’ll be with you and care for you and empower you to do my will (like sharing the Gospel and discipling new converts) in the midst of trying and very difficult times. I will be with you so you can keep going. I will be with you up to the end. So, don’t worry and be overcome with anxiety and depression. I’ve got your back!”

Jowett concludes with these words:

“He is with me ‘all the days’—the prosperous days and the days of adversity; days when the funeral bell is tolling, and days when the wedding bell is ringing. ‘All the days.’”

God’s presence is with us daily and continually to enable us to go on in spite of great difficulties and trials. God is always there for us supplying each one of His children with power, strength, satisfaction, stability, joy, peace. We must remember that He is always as close as the mention of His name!

He will not abandon us!

Hebrews 13:5 says:

“*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*”

What a great and glorious promise this is!

“We’ve got a great, big, wonderful God
We’ve got a great, big, wonderful God,
A God who’s always victorious,
Always watching over us,
A great, big, wonderful God.

He’ll never, never, never leaves us,
He’s always standing by,
To pick us up if we stumble,
We’re the apple of his eye.

We’ve got a great, big, wonderful God,
We’ve got a great, big, wonderful God,
A God who’s always victorious,
Always watching over us,
A great, big, wonderful God.”

➤ **His promises**

2 Peter 1:4

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these (*promises of victory, God’s presence, Christian virtues, etc.*) ye might be partakers (*experientially and practically in the Christian life*) of the divine (*Godlike*) nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

There are so many promises that we can claim in times like these! If we tarry at a promise God will meet us there!

“In times like these oh be not idle
In times like these we need the bible
Be very sure, be very sure
Your anchor holds and grips the Solid Rock.”

- ✓ What promise must you claim today before you lose your way?
- ✓ Before you crack up?
- ✓ Before you speak something nasty to someone else?
- ✓ Before you lose your testimony as a Christian?
- ✓ Before you really know who the next president will be?

If we do not keep standing on God's promises, then we are going to be staring at the walls in utter dismay, discouragement, depression, and defeat.

“Standing on the promises of Christ my King
Through eternal ages let his praises ring
Glory in the highest, I will shout and sing
Standing on the promises of God.”