

## 2021 A TIME TO SHINE

Our promotion text 'THE BEST OF TIMES – THE WORST OF TIMES' **SLIDE** is borrowed from the opening lines of R L Stevenson's 'A Tale of Two Cities'. It describes in a nutshell the dichotomy we face as we enter another new year.

We see two distinct scenarios: one for the believer, and one for the unbeliever.

We can see this also in several scriptures such as ...

Proverbs 4:18-19 **SLIDE**

*The path of **the just [righteous]** is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.*

*<sup>19</sup>The way of **the wicked is like darkness**; they do not know what makes them stumble.*

As a believer, you are in a different path to the non-believer.

As a believer, you live and walk in another realm ... a true, safe and secure realm ... in Our Lord Jesus Christ ... a way of light and revelation ... covered by the God who created the heavens and the Earth ...

Colossians 1:13 NKJV & NLT

*He has delivered us from **the power of darkness** and conveyed us into the kingdom of His dear Son.*

So when we see these negative circumstances manifesting in the world, even though we might be in the world, we know we are not a part of this world. The Lord is with us in the midst of it all.

We see this contrast of **light and darkness** again in our text for today –

Isaiah 60:1-3 Berean Study Bible **SLIDE**

*Arise, shine [be the light], for **your light has come**, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.*

*<sup>2</sup>For behold, **darkness covers the earth, and thick darkness is over the peoples**; but the Lord will rise upon you, and His glory will appear over you. <sup>3</sup>Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.*

**NB: DARKNESS IS MENTIONED TWICE IN THIS VERSE**

1. DARKNESS THAT COVERS THE EARTH
2. DARKNESS THAT IS OVER THE PEOPLE

**1. 'DARKNESS COVERS THE EARTH'**

**This refers to ACTUAL NEGATIVE EVENTS SUCH AS ... FIRES ... FLOODS ... AND PANDEMICS ...**

This word 'Darkness' is (*ha·ḥō·šek*) = A Physical Darkness. It is the same word used in Genesis 1:2 (*The earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the deep ...*) but also can be used of actual negative events such as cause misery, destruction, death ...

Jesus spoke of physical disasters regarding the end-times in Matthew 24 and in Luke 21 ...

Luke 21:11

*... There will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and **pestilences**; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.*

**Pestilences** (*loimoi*) a pestilent – infectious, contagious, diseased fellow. Something unknown and unfamiliar; a plague, epidemic or fatal disease

**2. 'THICK DARKNESS OVER THE PEOPLES'**

**This refers to, THE SPIRITUAL CONDITION OF MANKIND.**

**This word 'Darkness' is** (*wa·'ā·rā·ḥel*) like a thick Cloud of oppression.

So, God considers **the spiritual condition of this world system as lost in thick darkness** and getting darker every day as people fumble toward the end.

**WE USED TO SING THAT BARRY MAGUIRE SONG**

*It's a happy day ... And I praise God for the weather  
It's a happy day ... And I'm living it for my Lord  
It's a happy day ... **And things are gonna get better**  
Living each day by the promises in God's word*

We used to sing ... **'THINGS AREN'T GONNA GET BETTER ...**

For the non-believer this is true ... things are getting darker and darker ...

**THE WORLD SYSTEM IS NOT GETTING BETTER.  
IT'S GETTING WORSE.**

*New Year's Eve was a fizz as the pandemic continued to control.*  
IT IS A MANIFESTATION OF SPIRITUAL DARKNESS.

SO, WHAT IS THE SPIRITUAL DARKNESS OF THIS WORLD?

**DARKNESS IS THE ABSENCE OF LIGHT**

*How do you get darkness?  
You turn off the light.*

Genesis 1:2 tells us Physical Darkness was upon the face of the deep.

It was the condition of creation before light was born.

But then came SPIRITUAL DARKNESS because of Adam's Sin.

As a result, we are all born in spiritual darkness.

Unregenerate man is like a creature of the night ...

Until Jesus 'The Light' came (Matt 4:16 NIV *The people living in darkness have seen a great light ...*)

John 1:4-5 Berean Literal Bible

*In Him was life, and **the life was the light of men.** <sup>5</sup>And the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

**SPIRITUAL LIGHT COMES FROM THE LIFE OF CHRIST**

John 12:46 NASB 1995 **SLIDE**

*I have come as Light into the world, so that **everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.***

John 8:12 Berean Literal Bible **SLIDE**

*Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "**I am the light of the world. The one following Me shall not walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life.**"*

John 9:5 NIV

*While I am in the world, **I am the light of the world.***

NB: JESUS WASN'T JUST ENLIGHTENED ... HE **WAS LIGHT** IN THIS WORLD.

## THE REJECTION OF LIGHT

So today, the spiritual darkness engulfing mankind is because mankind has rejected the life of Jesus Christ.

The leaders of this world have turned off the light of life of Jesus Christ. They have rejected Jesus Christ and accepted and embraced spiritual darkness ...

### THIS SPIRITUAL DARKNESS IS ALSO BECAUSE THEY HAVE REJECTED THE GOSPEL

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 Berean Study Bible **SLIDE**

*If our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. <sup>4</sup>The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers so **they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.***

### **BUT IT IS EVEN WORSE THAN THAT**

Even worse than not accepting Jesus is to hate Jesus ...

And the darkness of this world actually hates Him ...

It militates against Him and His people ... and is hostile toward God.

THERE IS NOW IN THIS WORLD AN 'ANTI-CHRIST' CRUSADE where people become **hostile toward Jesus** and His believers.

Psalms 2:2 Berean Study Bible **SLIDE**

*The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together, against the LORD and against His Anointed One.*

NB THE PHRASE ... **GATHER TOGETHER**

**THERE IS A COALITION OF THOSE WHO REJECT CHRIST. THEY UNITE IN THE CAUSE TO PROMOTE ANTI-CHRIST PROPAGANDA.**

We can see this when both Herod and Pilot physically rejected Jesus. They became united in an anti-Christ, **satanic, purpose** against the Christ. They mocked and crucified Him and became friends in darkness.

Luke 23:11-12 **SLIDE**

*Then Herod, with his men of war, treated Him [Jesus] with contempt and mocked Him, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate. <sup>12</sup>That very day Pilate and Herod became friends with each other, for previously they had been at enmity with each other.*

**Acts 4:26-27** Berean Study Bible (Quotes Psalm 2:2 regarding Herod & Pilate etc)  
*The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers **gather together** against the Lord and against His Anointed One.*

**SLIDE** <sup>27</sup>*In fact, in this very city **Herod and Pontius Pilate** conspired with **the Gentiles and the people of Israel** against Your holy servant **Jesus**, whom You anointed.*

*Look how Herod ... Pilate ...the Gentiles and the Jews all united against Jesus. The hatred of Jesus (the Light) unites people in Satan's coalition / alliance.*

*Just as we are united in praise and thanksgiving of Jesus Christ, so the powers of this world are united in blasphemy and cursing of Jesus Christ.*

**NB: WHEN JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED ... DARKNESS FELL ACROSS  
THE EARTH AS A SIGN OF MANKIND'S SPIRITUAL STATE ...  
BECAUSE OF THE ABSOLUTE REJECTION & HATRED OF THE  
LIGHT – JESUS CHRIST ...**

Matthew 27:45 NIV **SLIDE**

*From noon until 3 in the afternoon darkness came over all the land.*

**TODAY**, there is a powerful, spiritual organisation that propagates the anti-Christ purpose and which affects people satanically across the whole Earth ... **SLIDE**

**IT IS MODERN DAY HOLLYWOOD WITH IT'S OUTRIGHT BLASPHEMY.**

**NB: NOT JUST SWEAR WORDS ... BUT OUTRIGHT BLASPHEMY.**

*We see, seemingly good and upright actors like, **Tom Hanks**, or **Kevin Costner**, openly blaspheming the Lord's Anointed ... This in itself propagates spiritual darkness, declaring disdain for Jesus.*

THESE ANTI-CHRIST BLASPHEMERS PROPOGATE DARKNESS BY  
REJECTING THE LIGHT ... SHAKING THEIR FIST IN THE FACE OF GOD ...  
AND **AFFECTING THE WHOLE WORLD SATANICALLY ... SPIRITUALLY.**

*The Story goes, a few years ago, when Jim Carey first went to Hollywood, he was reading in his hotel room, 'The Late Great Planet Earth'. At one point, he wanted to check a Bible verse ... So he pulled open the drawer to look it up in the Gideon Bible but found there was no Gideon Bible there. So he called the desk and said, "There's no Bible here." And the guy says, "**Sonny, you won't find a Bible in the whole of Hollywood.**"*

Paul wrote about this is 2 Timothy – His last ever Epistle before he was beheaded. He wrote about the 'last days', not from an events perspective but from mankind's spiritual condition

2 Timothy 3:1-2 **SLIDE**

*But know this, that **in the last days perilous times will come:**<sup>2</sup>for men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, **blasphemers**, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy ...*

**BUT WE CAN'T LEAVE IT THERE ...**

**THERE IS A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE BECOME 'THE LIGHT'  
& A HUGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO RESPOND TO THEIR LIGHT**

LOOK AT OUR TEXT

Isaiah 60:1 & 3 Berean Study Bible (inserting KJV – 'Gentiles') **SLIDE.**

*Arise, shine [be the light], for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.*

*<sup>3</sup>Gentiles will come to your light and kings to the brightness of your dawn ...*

**THIS IS OUR TIME TO SHINE**

**WHEN DID THE LIGHT COME? THE MOMENT WE BELIEVED!**

**WE ALREADY HAVE LIGHT**

From the moment you believed, a glorious spiritual light was deposited within you which cannot be extinguished.

Matthew 5:14 Berean Study Bible

***You are the light** of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.*

WE DON'T GENERATE LIGHT ... **WE ARE LIGHT** ... JUST AS JESUS WAS LIGHT ... FROM HIS LIFE WITHIN

Ephesians 5:8 **SLIDE**

*For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.  
Walk as children of light.*

WE BECOME WHO WE ARE ... OPENLY & OUTWARDLY

Isaiah 60:1

*Arise, shine [**owri** - be or become light]; **for your light has come!**  
And the glory of the LORD [Yahweh] is risen [irradiates] upon you  
[over you].*

YOU ARE LIGHT ... NOW BECOME THE LIGHT YOU ARE

**THANK GOD, THERE IS ANOTHER GROUP OF PEOPLE IN THE EARTH WHO WILL ACCEPT & EMBRACE THE LIGHT ...**

Isaiah 60:3 Berean Study Bible (inserting KJV – 'Gentiles') **SLIDE.**

***Gentiles** will come to your light and **kings** to the brightness of your dawn ...*

**NB: TWO CATEGORIES OF PEOPLE RESPONDING POSITIVELY**

NOT ALL **PEOPLE & LEADERS** ARE ANTI-CHRIST.

Verse 3 tells us strangers and leaders will come ...

Light not only exposes sin it exposes need ...

People will see their need ... and Jesus being the answer to their need.

It also reveals hope to a people who have lost hope ...

SO TODAY, THE SETTING IS PREPARED

**FOR THE BELIEVER TO SHINE IN AN EVER-DARKENING WORLD**

Daniel 12:3

*Then the wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness ... like the stars forever and ever.*

As the world despairs, we see the True Believer's life start to shine with an indestructible hope. As people grow more and more confused ... the true

believer will grow more and more in faith and assurance.

**NB: YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT TO FEEL GOOD OR BE GOOD BEFORE YOU GO FORTH TO SHINE. HE HAS ALREADY FORGIVEN YOU OF ALL SIN & PUT HIS LIGHT IN YOU.**

**NB: Let your light shine. The light in you wants to shine out ...**

**Last week we spoke about 'Let our praise to God flow' ...**

**That was upward ... This is outward ...**

**THE BELIEVER EXPLODES UPWARDS & OUTWARDS ALL OVER THE PLACE ...**

**Isaiah 58:10** Berean Study Bible **SLIDE**

***And if you give yourself to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, then **your light will go forth** in the darkness, and **your night** will be like noonday.***

**As we reach out from a heart of compassion, **our light** will organically shine through us, and our night (depressions and fears) will turn to light.**

***'WAKE ME UP' - Avicii***

***So wake me up when it's all over ... When I'm wiser and I'm older  
All this time I was finding myself ... **And I didn't know I was lost ...**  
**And I didn't know I was lost ...*****

## **MULTITUDES IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION**

***Joel 3:14***

***Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.***

## **SUPPLEMENTARY**

**From 1934 'The Hays Act' prevented blasphemy etc in movies. A cinema could be fined \$2,500 for showing a movie with blasphemy in it.**

**So from the year 1934 to the early '60s, we got some good wholesome family movies ... some Biblically based, such as *Ben-Hur***

(from a book in the 1800s called 'Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ')  
... *The Ten Commandments* ... etc.

*However, in Hollywood in 1968 everything changed. Based upon a previous finding by the US Supreme Court giving movies the First Amendment right of freedom of speech ... Then the Hayes Act was discarded and all censorship preventing cursing and blasphemy was lifted giving way to unrestrained profanity, adultery and especially blasphemy.*

Ray Comfort 'Hollywood Be Thy Name' (& JSTOR Daily)

## THE POWER TO COMMUNICATE ANOTHER GOSPEL

The US Supreme Court also stated, "It cannot be doubted that motion pictures are a significant medium for the communication of ideas ... **they are designed to entertain as well as inform.**" (JSTOR Daily)