

# Drinking of the Cup

**W**HATEVER your opinion may be on the issue of Global Warming, there is plenty of evidence (besides the concern of most scientists in the world) coming in to support the assertion that the world is getting warmer. The effects are already upon us in the environmental changes and extremes that we see happening around the world. These are some of the “signs” of our times.

From a Biblical viewpoint, that is interesting to me, as the book of *Revelation* speaks of some of the effects of man’s accumulated acts of selfishness:

## **Revelation 11**

<sup>18</sup> And the nations were angry, and your wrath is come, and the time...[to] destroy them which destroy the earth.

Here, men are blamed for destroying the earth. So their actions directly affected the stability of the earth’s environment. Let’s look at a few more judgments that relate to the environment:

## **Revelation 16**

<sup>3</sup> And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.

<sup>4</sup> And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.

<sup>8</sup> And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.

<sup>9</sup> And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which has power over these plagues: and they repented not to give Him glory.

<sup>21</sup> And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

These plagues are all related to the environment, and the second and fourth ones in particular are very compatible with the current predictions about the future of the earth under increased

global warming. I don't say global warming is the only cause of all these plagues, but it certainly could be one of the causes.

These judgments are not just “bombs” hurled from the throne of God that have no direct connection with man's behavior. The “wages of sin is death,”<sup>1</sup> and therefore these consequences are directly related to the sins of mankind. God's judgments are not simply threatenings of what He will do to those who displease Him, but consequences that we bring upon ourselves by rejecting His solutions to our problems.

In the book of *Revelation*, we are told that the angels hold the winds of strife:

### **Revelation 7**

<sup>1</sup> And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

They have a restraining role, and therefore, we may say that by the grace of Christ, the world enjoys much more peace and prosperity than it ought to have. When these restraining forces are removed, we will know much better that the “wages of sin is death.” But God help us to learn it before that time! For then it will be too late to change. Even now, as we see some of the consequences of sin, it ought to spur us to draw closer to Him, and to separate ourselves from the selfish lifestyle choices that lead to these kinds of consequences.

Other than the picture of the restraining angels, there is another illustration in the Bible which has a similar lesson: that of the wine cup. This symbol is used in both positive and negative ways:

### **Psalm 16**

<sup>5</sup> The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup: You maintain my lot.

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<sup>1</sup> *Romans* 6:23.

<sup>6</sup> The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yes, I have a goodly heritage.

### **Psalm 116**

<sup>12</sup> What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?

<sup>13</sup> I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.

In these verses, the cup is a symbol of blessing: drinking in the life of the Lord. This symbol was later used by Jesus when He instituted the Lord's Supper. The juice in the cup represents the life of Jesus, poured out for us to wash away our sin and give us new life.

But there is another type of wine: a false gospel. This is called the "wine of Babylon":

### **Revelation 17**

<sup>4</sup> The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her sexual immorality.

<sup>5</sup> And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: "Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations."

A woman represents a church,<sup>2</sup> and a harlot woman is an unfaithful church. Instead of being married to her Lord, she is married to the kings of the earth. On a larger scale this means political alliances, but the origin of it is in wanting to live like the world, yet claim the name of Christ:

### **Isaiah 4**

<sup>1</sup> And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat *our own bread*, and wear *our own apparel*: only let us be called by your name, to take away our reproach.

This union of the church with the world is the prime cause for the corruption that exists. The church was supposed to be the

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<sup>2</sup> *Jeremiah 6:2.*

“salt of the earth” preserving it from corruption by a pure example. When the “salt” loses its “savor” then it ceases to preserve. Therefore, not at the hands of atheists and abortionists is to be laid the charge of the world’s ills, but at the hands of the unfaithful church, for by her unfaithfulness she not only did not prevent the evil, but actually encouraged it:

**Revelation 18**

<sup>24</sup> And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slain on earth.

Just as the Lord has a cup of salvation, which he offers to the world through His gospel, Babylon has another cup, another “gospel” which she offers the world instead. This cup is full of “abominations and the impurities of her sexual immorality.” It is a false gospel that claims Christ’s blessings, but excuses the sinful worldly lifestyle which she leads. The clean and unclean are strangely blended in such a way that those who drink of it become “drunk”: unable to reason correctly. They actually believe that the spirit of the Lord guides them in all their abominable practices.

This mixture of the world and Christ is seen in many ways:

**Dress**

Church-goers dress like the world. If the world has mini-skirts, the church-goer must have them too. If the world pierces their body, the church must do likewise. If the women of the world dress like the men of the world, then it must be so in the lives of the church-goers as well. All this vanity and fashion-slavery is contrary to the law and the gospel:

**Deuteronomy 22**

<sup>5</sup> The woman shall not wear that which pertains unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord your God.

## **1 Peter 2**

<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show forth the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

## **1 Timothy 2**

<sup>9</sup> In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array.

## **Food**

In most of the churches of today, food is considered a matter that their gospel has no say in. “All things are pure” and “let no man judge you in food and drink” are the excuses offered. Under these excuses slide all the sins of addiction to appetite, eating of high-fat, high-sugar, highly processed foods, extravagances, parties, feasting, junk foods, supporting the crime of factory foods with their slavery of animals, and so forth.

Consequently, church goers have the same health problems as the world: obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and cancer. Out of the top ten causes of death in world studies, most are directly related to improper diet. With the sanction of the churches of this world, most people are slowly killing themselves. A few Christians may refuse alcoholic drinks but this is considered “optional.” Smoking cigarettes is also a practice that may be continued by church members in good standing, even ministers. Yet the habit pollutes the body, of which it is said in the Scriptures that:

## **1 Corinthians 3**

<sup>17</sup> If any man defile the temple of God, God will destroy him.

## **Movies and Books**

Popular works of fiction in books and movies are perfectly acceptable to modern Christians. They even prepare study guides to consider the themes of “forgiveness” and “redemption” that may be squeezed out of these sources. The facts that these sources put

people in romantic dream worlds, encourage trust in human problem-solving, excuse the worst kind of disobedience to God's commandments, fire up the worst passions of the human heart, and destroy the desire for serious Bible study, are all overlooked.

With each passing year the standard of the world in media drops lower and lower, and Christians follow a few steps behind. The importance of studying the prophecies to know the time we are in, and of bringing every thought and practice into harmony with God's will and work so that we are prepared to meet the Lord when He comes, are not so important as the latest popular exciting movie or book. The scriptural law of "whatsoever things are good, honest, just, true..."<sup>3</sup> is re-interpreted to mean:

"If I can find one small piece of something that is good, honest, just or true in it, then it's okay!"

## **Stock Market and Business**

Under this topic come a whole series of sins, all centered around the love of money. Men are made rich by charging interest (which was called "usury" in the Old Testament), involving themselves in investments into businesses whose main concern is to make a profit at the expense of others.

Millions of people in poorer countries are enlisted into factories, working inhumanely long hours under poor working conditions, so that we in the wealthier countries can pay less and less for our luxuries. We justify this by claiming that we are improving their standard of living, since they have a bit more money than they had previously in their simple rural lifestyle.

Businessmen are celebrated for their "philanthropy" and "charity," in giving large gifts to charitable organizations or foundations, but the excess money they have piled up is only stolen from the workers who were short-changed, so it is just stolen money. They stole it from the workers, and they then steal it again by giving it away.

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<sup>3</sup> *Philippians* 4:8.

In the modern pulpits, undue stockpiling of riches and hoarding or wasting of the world's dwindling reserves are called "enjoying God's blessings." To our time the words of the prophet Isaiah particularly apply:

**Isaiah 3**

<sup>15</sup> What do you mean that you beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? says the Lord God of hosts.

Having refused the Lord's cup of salvation, which would save Christians from the aforementioned sins, there is another cup that the Lord has, the...

**Jeremiah 25**

<sup>15</sup> ...cup of the wine of wrath.

This cup represents the consequences of evil. In the Lord's righteous government, there are blessings for those who will accept the gospel and come into harmony with His laws, and curses for those who persist in their disobedience. But for the disobedient, these curses are the result of their choice. They were born in sin, with the sentence of death and destruction upon them, but were offered deliverance. Having turned away from that offer of new life, they are left only with death.

For a while, during their lives, they drank blessings from the Lord's cup. He poured out to them the blessings of the earth, in spite of their sins. God showed them goodness while they were still evil, in order to draw them to Himself. They refused to be drawn, but instead used the blessings to produce more evil.

So, while the gospel represents the cup of blessings that the Lord offers, there must also be a cup of cursing which the impenitent finally drink:

**Romans 2**

<sup>3</sup> And do you think this, O man, that judges them which do such things, and do the same, that you shall escape the judgment of God?

<sup>4</sup> Or do you despise the riches of His goodness and forbearance

and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

<sup>5</sup> But after your hardness and impenitent heart you treasure up unto yourself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

<sup>6</sup> Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

<sup>7</sup> To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life:

<sup>8</sup> But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

<sup>9</sup> Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that does evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

<sup>10</sup> But glory, honor, and peace, to every man that works good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

<sup>11</sup> For there is no respect of persons with God.

### **Psalm 11**

<sup>5</sup> The Lord tests the righteous, but His soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence.

<sup>6</sup> Let Him rain coals on the wicked; fire and sulfur and a scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup.

This next passage is most interesting. It shows that the way God “puts down one and lifts up another” is strictly related to the cup of foaming wine in His hand:

### **Psalm 75**

<sup>6</sup> For not from the east or from the west and not from the wilderness comes lifting up,

<sup>7</sup> But it is God who executes judgment, putting down one and lifting up another.

<sup>8</sup> For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup with foaming wine, well mixed, and he pours out from it, and all the wicked of the earth shall drain it down to the dregs.

In other words, nations, kings, and individuals, are promoted or demoted depending on how they relate to His law. If they disobey, they bring curses upon themselves, and thus will eventually be put down. The cause of the lifting up or putting down of people is directly related to the blessings or curses that come upon



them through their obedience or disobedience to the Law of the Lord.

### **Jeremiah 25**

<sup>14</sup> I will recompense them according to their deeds and the work of their hands.

<sup>15</sup> Take from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it.

<sup>16</sup> They shall drink and stagger and be crazed because of the sword that I am sending among them.

<sup>17</sup> So I took the cup from the Lord's hand, and made all the nations to whom the Lord sent me drink it:

<sup>18</sup> Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, its kings and officials, to make them a desolation and a waste, a hissing and a curse, as at this day.

### **Revelation 14**

<sup>10</sup> The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.

### **Revelation 16**

<sup>19</sup> And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath.

### **Revelation 18**

<sup>4</sup> And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues.

<sup>5</sup> For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.

<sup>6</sup> Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she has filled fill to her double.

### **Isaiah 51**

<sup>21</sup> Therefore hear this, you who are afflicted, who are drunk, but not with wine:

<sup>22</sup> Thus says your Lord, the Lord, your God who pleads the cause of His people: Behold, I have taken from your hand the cup of staggering; the bowl of my wrath you shall drink no more;

<sup>23</sup> And I will put it into the hand of your tormentors, who have said to you, Bow down, that we may pass over; and you have made your back like the ground and like the street for them to pass over.