Items For Prayer And Praise

By Lois J. Stucky

Idolatry! Oh, the unspeakable loss it brought to the nations of Israel and Judah because they turned from obeying the First Commandment, turned from worshiping God to worshiping idols! We look back at them and are appalled that they threw away the marvelous blessing that could have been theirs had they kept God enthroned. They exchanged the blessing for the curses, destruction, captivity, scattering and death that came to them as a result of idolatry. How could they have been so mistaken, so foolish, so terribly wrong?

Yet – beware Western nations, and Western Christians! How oblivious we can be to our own danger and perhaps to our own dreadful error and sin! The articles in this issue are aimed to help us examine our priorities and to set them right if there is need. What, who are we really worshiping? What, who has first place in our hearts? This matter is far more serious than we perhaps realize.

John White in his book, *Money Isn't God*, expresses his conviction that judgment is coming on the West, including the church in the West, in part, perhaps in large part, because of our materialism, our putting such great importance on material things that they take the place God should have in our lives. Right in our churches we might even lead people to put their trust in such things as programs or procedures for the help they need, rather than in God and His plan for our redemption and deliverance.

The Bible tells us to keep our hearts detached from material things and to keep devoted to God. *"Set your heart on things above...Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things"* (Col 3:1, 2).

When we look around at our Western society, we might almost despair at the great degree to which God is being replaced by this and that. Is there any hope of recovery?

At one time when Israel and Judah were steeped in idolatry, God gave strong words to Hosea to speak to them. There thundered forth from Hosea's lips the accusations, *"Israel...hath increased the altars...they have made goodly images. Their heart is divided"* (Hos. 10:1-2). Shame and destruction will come, is the divine pronouncement that follows.

And yet right then and there, God graciously gave this exhortation and promise: *"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord till He come and rain righteousness upon you"* (Hos. 10:12). In the mercy of God, there was still opportunity to repent and be restored! There is still opportunity today.

Whether society as a whole will heed or not, whether the church as a whole will hearken and do, let us, you and me, examine our lives and make sure that God has the rightful place, the supreme place in our hearts and lives. Let us have no other gods before Him. It may take time

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to search out and to break down the idols. It may make significant changes that will not be easily made. There may be pain and sense of loss.

But we can be part of a remnant, if that is all that is left, who truly have no other god before our great and wonderful and worthy God! He is seeking such to offer Him the joyful worship of an undivided heart. Will it be the utmost desire and the greatest aim of our life to enthrone Him forever as the supreme One?

Let us also keep faith and hope and love alive within us for the church and for our respective nations, in spite of increasing iniquity. Let us pray for repentance and for that rain of righteousness that God so graciously, so very graciously promises to an undeserving, Satan-deceived world. God's promises let us know what His will and desire are. Let's endeavor to do our part to get that will done on earth as it is in Heaven!

Thank You for Praying for Us!

We are greatly encouraged here to know many of you pray for us. Pray God will accomplish in us all He desires, that He might work more freely through us. Sometimes God withholds our heart's desire that He might work His heart's desire for us, which is doubtlessly higher and better. He is working for Eternity. He might see some character flaw that can be best corrected by trial, affliction, delay, etc. He has in mind to make us shine throughout eternity to His glory, and the polishing must take place here on earth. Pray we will get the deeper lessons He wants to teach us through the things that come upon us.

Pray we will remember this as we pray for requests that come to us in letters. Our first thought is, "Heal, Lord!" "Supply this need!" "Deliver from this trial," etc. If God were to promptly answer our prayer, it might rob someone of something rich God would give that person if he or she endures the trial cheerfully until a higher purpose is worked out. Ask God to help us pray wisely.

Pray our zeal will not outrun our wisdom and faith as we learn of marvelous opportunities to spread the Gospel more widely. These are crucial days when we all need to be right in step with the Holy Spirit if we are to have the full blessing of God upon our ministries. What else matters more?

Praise God

For the privilege of belonging to such a great and wonderful God and of proclaiming His Name and His salvation into many countries of the world.

For friends He has provided to partner with us in this glorious task,

Please Pray

That many Jewish people will be saved. Pray for the ministry of the Jewish Salvation herald, Hear, O Israel, both in English and in Russian.

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For the anointing of the Holy Spirit on this issue of Herald of His Coming, that through it God will accomplish that for which He sends it forth.

For God's blessing on volunteers who work long hours putting Heralds into envelopes for foreign readers.

That more souls will come to salvation through Right Choice Salvation herald.

"Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the Lord have created it" (Isa. 45:8).

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