

Message of the End-Times

To The Seven Churches

By Paul M Hanssen

The title of this message stirs both excitement and curiosity among listeners. I am always intrigued and drawn to anything concerning the end times; why? Because we are there! You and I were chosen by God before time began to walk through, witness, and experience the end times. This is an honorable calling, but it carries a weight of responsibility unknown to the brethren of times past. Why? Because the world has never faced the demonic manifestations against the Truth as it does in this present day and, moreover, in the days to come. The people of God in this generation have a war on their hands that previous generations have not faced.

The days of Noah (in which God destroyed everything with water) and the days of Lot (in which God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah with fire) are upon us with a vengeance (Matthew 24:37-42, Luke 17:28-30). This is the time in history that the Prophet John wrote about the end times: "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." (Revelation 12:12)

Many people throughout history have remarked on how incredible it must have been to be alive during certain periods: times of revival and spiritual awakening, times of prosperity, times of signs and wonders, and even the period when the Messiah walked on earth the first time. However, what many miss is that there has not been a season in this present creation as important to God and His people as the day in which we live. Of course, every part of human history and God's dealings with mankind has been important and purposeful. However, this time and season, which the Word calls "the last days," emerges from the ocean of history like a volcanic island rising from the sea: turbulence, waves, shaking, fire, smoke, toxic gases, uncontrolled overflow, and tribulation as never before witnessed.

The seven churches in John's day were prophetic examples of the seven church ages and also the churches of the end times. As far as the church ages are concerned, we are in the Laodicean Church age. However, all seven churches exist today and together make up the totality of the church.

John's revelation centers on God's purpose being fulfilled in the end times. It is not written to the world; it is written to the seven churches. Verse 1 of chapter 1 clearly declares that John's message is prophetic and will soon come to pass.

John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; (Revelation 1:4)

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. (Revelation 1:10-11)

The seven churches in Asia Minor were real churches. They were all located near each other in what is today western and central Turkey. However, the messages sent to them are detailed prophetic messages from the Lord Jesus for ages to come. In fact, the final words of Jesus recorded in the New Testament were directed toward the seven churches.

And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. (Revelation 22:12-13)

*I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you **these things in the churches**. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. (Revelation 22:16)*

He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. (Revelation 22:20)

This know also, that in the last days **perilous times** shall come. (2 Timothy 3:1)

Perilous = the *reducing* of strength; *difficult*, that is, difficult because of *danger*, or (by implication) a *furios and fierce* time.

What will these perilous times look like?

- **Matthew 24:10-12:** Jesus said “And then many will **fall away** and **betray one another** and **hate one another**. And many **false prophets will arise** and *lead many astray*. And because **lawlessness will abound**, the **love of many will grow cold.**”
- **Matthew 24:22:** For then there will be **great tribulation**, such as has not been from the **beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be again**. And if those **days are not cut short, no human being would be saved**. But for the sake of the **elect, those days will be cut short**.
- **Luke 21:11:** There will be **great earthquakes**, and in various places **famines and pestilences**. And there will be **terrors and great signs from heaven**.
- **Daniel 12:1-4:** Daniel was told that in the last days, many will **run to and fro**, and **knowledge will increase**. Daniel was told to seal up the book until the time of the end; that time is upon us. People are certainly **running to and fro via the host of transportation options** (never in history has there been such human migration and movement as now), and the **Internet and AI have helped increase knowledge** worldwide, but not necessarily useful knowledge. But in Daniel’s day, it wasn’t time to reveal the end-time events, hence he was told to “*seal up the vision, for it concerns the future.*” However, we shall see that sealed vision unfold in our day!
- **2 Timothy 3:1-5:** Paul characterizes the "last days" as "times of peril" marked by rampant wickedness, intensifying the urgency of spiritual vigilance. Paul clarifies: But understand this, that in the last days there will come **times of difficulty**. For **people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power**. Avoid such people.
- **Jude 1:18-19:** In the last time, there **will be scoffers**, following their own **ungodly passions**. It is these who **cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit**.

- **Revelation 12:9-12:** Depicts the final, **intense struggle between spiritual forces of evil and the church**, noting that the devil has "great wrath" because he knows his time is short.
- **Joel 2:28-32:** Promises a dramatic, global outpouring of the Holy Spirit, marking this period as a time of significant spiritual manifestation before the "great and awesome day of the Lord".
- **Matthew 24:14:** Jesus emphasizes the **global proclamation of the gospel of the Kingdom**, stating it is the final sign before the end.
- **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 & 1 Corinthians 15:52-54:** These passages detail the **resurrection and the rapture, framing the end as the momentous event of Christ's return.**

Both the natural and the spiritual world are in motion. What is seen and what is unseen to the naked eye of the spirit world (but revealed in the Spirit) should stir something inside of us and cause a shaking and an awakening as we have never experienced. I have vowed to my Lord never to cease to blow the trumpet; some will hear, others will scoff; some will receive, others will reject. But you can be sure of this: if you plan to stick around here, you will hear Word that will prick you, gauge your spirit, hit where it hurts, and cause you to be stirred when slumbering, or falling asleep.

No time in human history has the powers of darkness been as manifest, bold, outspoken, and as fierce as today. People get tired of hearing me say that we must be on guard and remain on our war horse, harnessed, clothed in the armor of God, and always ready for battle.

Even though there are different warnings, admonitions, and commands for the end-time people of God, there is one message of the last days that sticks out but is mostly disregarded and/or avoided. It is the **message of REPENTANCE!**

More than 80% of the mentions of repentance in the Bible are found in the New Testament. That's an interesting fact that should pique our curiosity, as the question is asked: "Why does God demand repentance in the New Testament dispensation to a greater degree than in Old Testament times?" Oh yes, God certainly required and demanded repentance countless times during the periods of apostasy and idolatry in OT

times. However, in the end-times, repentance is at the forefront of the voice of the Spirit that says, “he who has ear to hear, let Him hear.”

It is a statistical fact that the mention of repentance from the pulpits of churches is the most loathed word by today’s Christians. Repentance demands accountability; it requires a change of heart and a genuine, honest look at oneself.

The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. (Matthew 4:16-17)

Apart from the work Jesus accomplished on the cross, His mission was to teach/preach about the Kingdom of God, a concept new to Israel.

*And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: **for therefore am I sent.** (Luke 4:43) - highlight added.*

John, the forerunner of Christ, also came teaching the Gospel of the Kingdom. Repentance is part of the teaching of the Kingdom of God. Multitudes of people want to experience the blessings, power, dominion-authority, and glory of the Kingdom; however, without repentance.

Repentance is not achieved with words, even though words are a part of repenting. Repentance is achieved through action, deeds, works, and fruit.

Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. (Matthew 21:43)

Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: (Matthew 3:8)

- To **repent** means to *sigh*, that is, *breathe* strongly; by implication to *be sorry*, to think differently, to exercise the mind, and to reconsider.

There are three phases to genuine repentance:

- **Conviction** - An inner recognition and awareness of one's need for change brought by the Holy Ghost and leading to godly sorrow (contrition)
- **Confession** - Admitting, agreeing with God, and acknowledging the sin or weakness to Him, demonstrating a willingness to be honest about yourself.
- **Conversion** - A deliberate turning away from what the Holy Ghost has convicted you of and turning toward God, resulting in a changed life through obedience and a transformed heart.

Conviction is common, honest confession is less common, and conversion is even less common. I am not referring to sinners being saved, but rather God's people who need a genuine change, a conversion of mind and spirit.

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; (Acts 3:19)

- To be **converted** means to *revert-back* (literally, figuratively, or morally), come again, return, turn, turnabout, turn back again, and change direction. The times of refreshing, the end-time move of God, will not come to a people who do not have a mindset of repentance. Repentance moves the hand of God; it shakes the heavens, it opens prison doors, and repentance is key to victory and overcoming power.

One of the great mysteries of the church is the pride that exists among those who have received so much Truth and **have never been converted by it**. For all we know, theoretically, we should all be scrabbling to run up Calvary's Hill and allow the carnal mind that is at enmity with God to be nailed to the cross.

Conversion involves returning to the starting point. In our carnal way of thinking, we esteem ourselves going forward when the **way forward is going back - returning to the starting point**. Not back to the world, but back to the heartbeat of God - the origin of your existence.

The prodigal son thought he was progressing and moving forward by going his own way. However, he didn't receive the ring on his finger, the garment prepared by his father, and shoes on his feet until he **returned to the Father's House**, to the starting point. The starting point is the bosom of the Heavenly Father. This is where the Son of God dwells (John 1:18).

And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 18:3-4)

Conversion takes you back - back to being a child (not to be immature but a child in the sense of sonship, dependence, and trust in the Father). The Kingdom is not for the mighty; it is for the small, it is for the poor in spirit (*Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:3*), and it is for those who humble themselves before God - becoming a child who knows nothing but the trusting arms of the Father.

One of the main things Jesus spoke to five of the seven churches was repentance.

- **Ephesus:** Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, (Revelation 2:5)
- **Pergamos:** So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. (Revelation 2:15-16)
- **Thyatira:** Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. (Revelation 2:22)
- **Sardis:** Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. (Revelation 3:3)
- **Laodicea:** As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. (Revelation 3:19)