

# Berean Waters Of Shiloah

## No. 1

To our brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus scattered throughout PNG, all of whom we long to see, and to a brother and sisters in the Philippines who we were also intending God willing to visit this year, but because of the COVID19 pandemic, our plans have been delayed, May Yahweh's grace mercy and truth comfort us all in these uncertain times as we await our Lord's sure return.

Though absent, we felt compelled to communicate and encourage all in the one true great salvation and the power of God which the gospel altogether is among those who believe. We have earnestly prayed to our loving heavenly Father on your behalf as the COVID19 pandemic afflicts all nations of the earth, whether through fear of what this potentially deadly virus could bring, affecting disproportionately the most vulnerable in society, or the economic consequences which will be felt for years to come.

To date our fears that the pandemic would sweep PNG have not been realised, though we have heard in just the last couple of days of a worrying outbreak in Port Moresby. We are thankful that Yahweh through our Lord Jesus Christ our great mediator, that PNG have few reported cases of COVID19 and no deaths to date!

PNG was already struggling to contain infectious diseases before the threat of COVID19. As you may all know, PNG has one of the highest prevalences of tuberculosis in the world, and is one of only 14 countries to be classified as having epidemics of TB that is drug resistant. PNG also has high rates of the pneumonia and malaria infection. In addition, PNG has a very poor healthcare system, and the vast majority live in rural areas where access to what little healthcare is available is very difficult. COVID19 could have a devastating effect on such a vulnerable society. Some of you we remember in particular to the throne on high because of existing health issues and old age. But we have "rejoiced in the Lord and again rejoiced" because of our Lord's tender mercies towards you all in keeping you safe from this hour of judgement that has come upon the world. Let us then "*not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let our requests be made known to God. And the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus*" (Philippians 4–7).

### **A word in Season, at such a time as this,**

We meet together on this first day of the week to remember our Lord who loved us and gave himself for us in the way he has appointed until he comes. We come around the emblems of God's love to be encouraged to "*take hold of the eternal life*" by "*keeping the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (1 Timothy 6:12, 14). That commandment contained in the gospel is an anchor to our souls in troubled times. The times in which the world is now being made to pass is a precursor to a far greater manifestation of divine judgement soon to

break forth in unparalleled and unrelenting ferocity. What the world is now experiencing is but the distant rumblings of a coming terrible storm.

We are convinced that the ecclesia of the living God will not be spared the consequences of this gathering storm, and indeed is necessary to test the faith of those who may continue even to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. These divine judgements are necessary, as Yahweh through Isaiah reminds us “*For when your judgements are in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness*” (Isaiah 26:9). We may however feel at times the earth being moved and all that once seemed stable and sure and familiar is turned upside down, as Moses – the servant of God was made to experience when he ascended the Mount of God and all turned to darkness and gloom and a tempest and a blazing fire and the sound of a trumpet which waxed louder and louder. Moses in experiencing the divine condemnation of sin said “*I tremble with fear*” (Hebrews 12:21). That mountain says the apostle Paul represented the condemnation of sin. It was a mountain he who we come to remember this morning also had to climb, and climb it he did in perfect faith. It is a mountain all God’s servants— who truly dedicate their lives to him who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant— will be asked to climb to some extent.

Unlike the world, we are able, however, to make sense of the events that are convulsing it. Of the gathering gloom and darkness and fiery judgements and of another trumpet blast not distinguished by the world but whose resonance, those who by the gospel have divine sensitivities, can clearly distinguish. For 226 years this trumpet call has been heralding the culmination of divine judgement but we are reassured “*that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be fulfilled, just as he announced to his servants the prophets*” (Revelation 10 :7). “*Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet... The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time of the dead to be judged and for rewarding your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear your name, small great, and to bring to ruin the destroyers of the earth*” (Revelation 11:15–18).

“The terminal epoch of the seventh trumpet now upon us, will make the ears to tingle only to hear the report of its terrors. Daniel was informed that it would be ‘a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation to that same time’. ‘The time of the end’ of the third woe trumpet is a time of unsurpassed calamity, and will extend to all nations in **all parts of the earth. Their trade, commerce will be ruinously perturbed; their countries devastated by war; their hundreds of thousands prostrated by famine, pestilence and sword; their armies scattered like chaff before the wind;** their ‘religions’ abolished as abominations and blasphemies; their priests, clergies and ministers punished as sorcerers, murderers, impostors, hypocrites and plunderers of the poor; and their Kings, nobles and gentry destroyed as ‘the destroyers of the earth’.” (Bro. Thomas Eureka 2B pg. 319).

The word of God from our readings of today, as is always our custom, may be used to centre our minds on the reasons we have come around the emblems of God's love. There is something here of substance, something that is eternal, something that is the anchor to our soul that we delight in, which is in contrast to all that now seems uncertain and transient in the world. In our readings from

Isaiah our presiding brother has alluded to the problems of the world, the finger of God that has afflicted the nations, to remind those who have eyes to see and how few have eyes for the divine principles governing present circumstances.

In our news for instance we read the ruler of the latter-day Tyre blaming the Chinese for the American woe! He refers to it as the invisible Chinese virus, invisible indeed it is, but its true source is clearly discernible by the student of Bible prophecy. The Chinese likewise accuse the US of developing the virus and sending it into China in the first place, and tell the US they should concern themselves with trying to competently manage their own medical response—which has been nothing short of a chaotic disaster to the extent that the world has looked upon the response of the world's so called super power with bewildered amazement and pity!

We see other world rulers full of pride like Jair Messias Bolsonaro of Brazil similarly dismiss or try to lessen the impact the finger of God is having upon his country by referring to it as “a little flu”. It is interesting when you look at the countries that have been most afflicted to date, all have a common factor—they are all headed up by either autocrats, authoritarians or those full of pride and arrogance who would be an authoritarian if only circumstances allowed them! Where ever countries are ruled by arrogant men full of pride, appropriately enough in complete denial as to the severity of the pandemic, are those countries which are inflicted with the largest loss of life! (This exhortation was given at the beginning of April 2020. By the end of July, over 4 million Americans had been infected by COVID19, and 1000 Americans were dying from it every day!).

We cannot but think of the great theme that runs through Isaiah, in particular the first half of the prophecy—the **divine judgement upon pride**—is one of the most prominent underlying themes of God's prophecy through Isaiah. You could go to just about any chapter in the first half of the prophecy to see that this is either alluded to, or itself the subject of a section. We are told for example in the twin introduction of Isaiah of that time when Yahweh's judgement will fall upon the nations, not as they are now by the hand of Providence which is causing such misery both in regard to the fatalities but also of the terrible economic consequences, but such judgements that will cause terrified man to “enter into the rock and hide in the dust from the terror of Yahweh”. The purpose of these judgements will be to remove “the **haughty looks of man**” which “**shall be brought low, and the lofty pride of men shall be humbled... Yahweh of hosts has a day against all that is proud, against all that is lifted up** – and it shall be brought low; against all the Cedars of Lebanon, lofty and lifted up; and against all the Oaks of Bashan”. All the proud, haughty and arrogant leaders of the nations will be brought low – whether it is China's Xi Jinping, where God's judgement began to be poured out with respect to COVID19, or Russia's Vladimir Putin or Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro, or India's Narendra Modi, to the Philippines' Rodrigo Duterte, or the utter humbling of the Tarshish power of Britain and its ally Donald J Trump's latter day Tyre. You look at all these nations and you see the divine hand of rebuke against the pride and haughtiness of man. Yahweh is going to level the mountains and the hills and chop down all these lofty trees so that in the end only one will be exalted in all the earth – Yahweh. How we all pray for that day!

We have such an illustration in Isaiah 14. “*How you are fallen from heaven, O day star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! **You said in your heart,***”

*I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the Mount of assembly in the far reaches of the North; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the most high.*’ But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit”. We have in Isaiah 14 in the first place an historical basis set in the destruction of the ancient Kingdom of Babylon and the humbling of its final profane arrogant King. But these things are only an enacted parable—types of a far greater humbling that will commence with the destruction of the Gogian host on the mountains of Israel. Russia’s alliance with the papacy causes the standing up of Nebuchadnezzar's image, bringing together those Eastern and Western elements all animated by that one policy described in Revelation 16:15 which will not be realised until Jerusalem is turned into an international city from which religiously and politically the power of the serpent—the Dragon, the beast and false prophet—might rule the earth unopposed. It is all about man's **pride**, brethren and sisters.

“Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him,” Paul says in 2 Thessalonians, “*that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of sin or lawlessness is revealed, the son of perdition, who **opposes and exalts himself***” (Where do we read that? Isaiah 14) “*against every so-called god or object of worship...*” (Where do we read of that? Daniel 8:25). The King who makes religious deceit to prosper and in **whose mind he shall become great**; it's the King of Daniel 11:36 who **magnifies himself** above every God and speaks astonishing things against the God of gods. It's that King that seizes control of the ancient Roman territory at the crisis of the time of the end. In ancient times it was the King ruling from Constantinople—the great theme of Daniel chapter 8 in its hostility against Jerusalem. It is the King who rules in Constantinople whose religious policy would cause the elevation and prosperity of the papacy, and it's the revival and the lifting up of that system against Judah and Jerusalem, which is the focus of God's prophecy through Isaiah at the crisis of the time of the end, that Christ comes to truly humble and to utterly destroy!

It is interesting when we come back to Isaiah 14 that we read today, that it falls into a little section of chapters 13 to 23 of the burdens of Yahweh's judgements upon the nations which had interaction with Judah and Jerusalem which then is followed in chapter 24 to 27 where this theme is broadened to particularly focus on the crisis of the ages at the time of the end. Throughout the section which the chapter we read this day belongs (chapters 13 to 23) we find the constant refrain of Yahweh's judgements falling upon the proud and haughty. In the context of God's judgements upon ancient Babylon in chapter 13 Yahweh gives a glimpse of the broader theme captured in later chapters (24 to 27) when we read, “*I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; I will put an end to **the pomp of the arrogant, and lay low the pompous pride of the ruthless**. I will make people more rare than fine gold, and mankind than the gold of Ophir*”.

Then directly after God's judgements upon ancient Babylon and its arrogant King, who took to himself the appellation “*day star, son of the Dawn*”, comes Yahweh's associated judgement upon the Assyrian. Again with the more, all-encompassing theme to follow in later chapters (24 to 27) the spirit adds, “*This is the purpose that is purposed concerning **the whole earth, this is the hand that is stretched out over all the nations**. For Yahweh of hosts has purposed and **who will change it? His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back?***” Yahweh's hand is truly stretched out, my dear

brethren and sisters, over all the nations now in preliminary judgements, the rumblings of which forebode a terrible gathering storm. Who will change it if the God of Israel decrees different to man's feeble attempt to protect themselves from what God deems necessary to afflict the nations? Will a Donald J Trump, if he should prepay for all the vaccine in the world, succeed in circumventing what the God of Israel has decreed in relation to the humbling of the latter-day Tyre?

What follows next is Yahweh's judgement upon Philistia given in the year that King Ahaz died – that faithless arrogant king who refused to ask Yahweh a sign in heaven above or in the earth beneath as evidence of Yahweh's gracious deliverance from the enemies of Judah and Jerusalem. The Ahaz class always refused the waters of Shiloah. In the year that that man died, a long anticipated change was typically set forth in the coming to the throne of David of a King who would rule in righteousness and judge the nations. It is in that context God's judgement upon Moab is also couched. “*We have heard of the pride of Moab – how proud he is! – Of his arrogance, his pride, and his insolence; in his idol boasting he is not right*”. If this was true of ancient Moab, how much truer it is for the latter day Moab! “*This is the word that Yahweh spake concerning Moab from then. Now Yahweh has spoken saying ‘In three years, like the years of a hired worker, the glory of Moab will be brought into contempt in spite of all his great multitude, those who remain will be very few and feeble*”. The Assyrian would be used by Yahweh to judge Moab of old as the other nations which surrounded Judah, and the latter day Assyrian will likewise have the victory over the Moabitish power of the latter days despite her multitude and will reveal that her boasting was vain indeed.

The background to chapters 17 and 18 is the Immanuel prophecy and Yahweh's judgement that would fall upon the coalition of Ephraim and Syria that plotted to remove the house of David from Judah and Jerusalem usurping God's eternal promise with David of Immanuel. The Assyrian would be used to ruthlessly take away the ten tribes and Syria, and it is against the background of that divine judgement against those who would usurp Yahweh's glorious purpose with the everlasting covenant that the Assyrian likewise is contemplated coming to his end outside the walls of Jerusalem in the eventide prophecy which concludes the 17th chapter. The deliverance in the days of Hezekiah is highly typical of the destruction of the spoiler and scatterer of Israel at the time of the end.

The wonder of God's prophecy through Isaiah is that it not only contemplates the Jewish people as the subject of Yahweh's divine judgement “*scattered and oppressed meted out and trodden down*” (Isaiah 18) but of necessity, for all the great types contemplated in the prophecy to have any meaning, that nation has to be in existence again in the latter days for those things enacted in the days of Hezekiah to have their fulfilment. So these prophecies also **contemplate an Israel restored**, though in unbelief, as faithless as Ahaz and as full of pride and arrogance as Uzziah **before** the coming of a greater than Hezekiah, as it is written, “*The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah*” (Isaiah 1:1). So the Oracle concerning “*the land of shadowing wings*” or the Tarshish power is introduced to reveal how Yahweh would use that nation providentially to set in motion the remarkable circumstances that would witness the rebirth of the nation of Israel, so that in Israel's final humbling, the latter day Assyrian would “*fill the breadth of your land, O Immanuel*”.

This remarkable prophecy – Isaiah 18, for every attentive student of Bible prophecy, emphatically marks the beginning of the **Epoch** of “the time of the end,” in the King of the South driving the Turk out of the Middle East and critically from Judah and Jerusalem (1<sup>st</sup> half of Daniel 11:40). This was coupled with the issuing of the Balfour declaration setting in motion events that would constitute a homeland for the Jewish people on the territory once occupied by their fathers. As we are being constantly reminded by current events, it is all the more remarkable that **another pandemic originating in the United States in 1918** which swept the world, resembles the current catastrophe. We believe this is to remind the watchman on the walls of Jerusalem that there is a connection between those events which Isaiah 18 and Daniel 11:40 describe as commencing points of the epoch of the time of the end, and present providential operations —all of which herald that the greater than Hezekiah (Immanuel) is now at the door!

**This pandemic —which is similar to that of 1918 and coincided with the time when the Turk (the occupier of Constantinople the throne of the Dragon power) was driven out of Judah and Jerusalem by the King of the South—may be indicating the approach of the next event as outlined in Daniel 11:40 that defines the development of the time of the end. The COVID19 pandemic is undoubtedly causing tremendous economic, political and social unrest, and will contribute to world events that will bring the King of the North against that same power which is the subject of the first part of Daniel 11:40. This will enable the Russian autocrat to assume his destiny as “the little horn of the goat” before his invasion of Israel (2<sup>nd</sup> half of Daniel 11:40; 8:25 Revelation 16 :13–14).**<sup>1</sup>

Bro. Thomas reminds us in Exposition of Daniel “The occupation of the Dragon’s throne by a non-Catholic royalty is clearly exceptional. The Ottoman has never, as a matter of fact, ‘magnified himself above all’; nor has he honoured the Latin bishop as a god in his dominion, or shown himself at all a gracious patron of his saints and their temples. The power causing falsehood, or False-Prophetism, to prosper, must hold Jerusalem at the crisis of the accomplishment of the indignation...Hence the Sultan must be ejected, that a dynasty patronising a High Priest who forbids to marry, may come in. When, therefore, the Czar gets possession of Constantinople, he will not be hostile to the pope. On the contrary, he will honour and acknowledge him, and be the enemy of the Holy Land.” (Exposition of Daniel, pg 55).

The Jewish nation therefore of necessity is no longer scattered as it was prior to 1917. It now dwells in the midst of the earth, arrogant, full of pride, godless and full of iniquity, ready to be humbled that *“the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long*

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<sup>1</sup> These comments were made in April 2020, by the end of July news of the remarkable decision of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to convert the Hagia Sophia back into a mosque had sent shock waves around the world. The Russian autocrat will be urged, when it arrogantly assumes the role as the “guard” (Ezekiel 38:7) of orthodoxy by the papacy and the patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church who have been enraged by this decision to return this shrine of the apostasy to its rightful status. Built in the sixth century by a Byzantine emperor, Justinian I, as the premier cathedral of the Roman Empire and dedicated to “Holy Wisdom,” it was for almost 1,000 years the largest church in the world, a temple so majestic that upon its dedication the emperor is said to have proclaimed, “Solomon, I have surpassed thee!” We are reminded of Brother Thomas’ famous quotation concerning the “high exaltation of the Constantinopolitan Autocracy in the time of the end.” He writes “Impious and cruel as Antiochus Epiphanes, and as superstitious and fanatical as Justinian, with the **arrogance**, ambition, and profanity of the Latin prophet in his palmiest days, this Sin-Power administered by a Russian regime, will be wanting in none of the **arrogance** that has been predicted of Paul’s ‘MAN OF SIN and *Son of Perdition*’.” (Exposition of Daniel pg. 57–58).

ago” may begin to be enacted. It is as a result of the humbling of all nations by Yahweh’s judgements that the remnants of the humbled Tarshish and latter day Tyre (Isaiah 23) will bring a ‘present’ of a people “*scattered and oppressed, terrible from this time and onward, meted out and trodden down*” by their “*Babylon the great*” foe, “*to Mount Zion, the place of the name of Yahweh of hosts*” (Isaiah 18). However, this will not be until Yahweh of hosts has “*defiled the **pompous pride of all glory, to dishonour all the honoured of the earth***” (Isaiah 23:9).

This section of chapters 13 to 23 of God's prophecy through Isaiah dealing with God's judgement upon the nations, as we have said, very appropriately follows the great foundation prophecy of Yahweh's revelation through Isaiah—the Immanuel prophecy, which profoundly speaks to us of how God was to be manifest in Christ in his first and second advents. In the spirit's dimension, this prophecy presents events, divinely controlled, which all take place in one continuum, to form an extraordinary singularity, all set against the coming of the Assyrian—the coming of the latter day Assyrian. This section we are considering comes immediately after the words of the 12th chapter which concludes the Immanuel prophecy. “*In that day, ‘I will give thanks to you, O Yahweh, for though you are angry with me, your anger turned away, that you might comfort me’*”. Isaiah contemplates by the spirit that time when he will identify with that remnant of purged national Israel and represent them, because at last that remnant will manifest the Abrahamic disposition: “*Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and will not be afraid; for Yahweh, Yahweh is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation*”. Like Abraham, purged Judah and Jerusalem will leap for joy seeing Christ's day (John 8:56) and will “*with joy, draw water from the wells of salvation*”.

The Hebrew word for ‘draw’ relates to being satisfied with drinking, which is what the Lord Jesus refers to in Matthew 5 about the blessedness of those who hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be satisfied. These words will be sung of the redeemed as it will be sung by the purged of natural Israel, for the redemption of the one will mean the salvation of the other, as Paul tells us in Romans chapter 11. The remnant of Judah and Jerusalem will see the immortal saints “*a nation brought forth in a moment*” (Isaiah 66:8) —the Elohist seed of Abraham—the “*beautiful garments*” with which Jerusalem will be arrayed, and they will see plainly what it really meant to drink deeply of the waters of Shiloah—of the virgin's spring, so that a virgin disposition, a virgin state of mind—the mind of the spirit— might be conceived. They will understand at last how Isaiah and his children and men like Hezekiah and Eliakim (Isaiah 22:15–25) stand now before them as immortal saints! These men will witness to national Israel the grace of Yahweh in their lives and the transforming power of the waters of Shiloah. It will create in Israel at last a different disposition, a transformation from that stiff necked and **proud** people embodied by Shebna, who thought that he was fastened in a secure place like Israel does in the land today because of their arrogant pride, yet be cut down and fall. A remnant having been transformed by God's judgements, showing forth an Abrahamic disposition, will draw from the wells of salvation and drinking deeply will sing, “*Give thanks to Yahweh, call upon his name make known his deeds among the peoples, proclaim that his name is exalted. Sing praises to Yahweh, for he has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth. Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, great in your midst is the holy one of Israel*”.

It is in this contemplation of Christ's great redeeming work, that we are able each first day of the week to consider how the power of sin was judged on the cross in the person of one who always

drew on that water of Shiloah, who drank deeply of the virgin's fountain, who always did those things which pleased the father. Yet it was that man's body which the Father required should be publicly hung on the tree, that his righteousness might be declared, that a remnant who have eyes to see and ears to hear, might acknowledge what is truly due to this body of sin, in which resides all **rebellion, pride arrogance and haughtiness against the father**—that it truly, rightly, is only worthy of destruction and it **pleased God to make that plain in the humblest of all men**. The reason why?

*“Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God (how did he take that form? By making plain a mental and moral twin likeness of the Father while under trial and yet) did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped (an allusion back to the fall of man, when passions were inflamed and a hand stretched forth to take of the fruit because there was a desire to be like the Elohim by a means Yahweh had forbidden— “the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and **the pride of life**” lay at the root of this rebellion) “but” says Paul, Christ “emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he **humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross**”.*

We see how Yahweh's judgements throughout the world are bringing **the pride of the rulers of this world low**. This morning we remember one who set forth publicly what is due to the power of sin in all its lusts of the flesh, lust of the eye and **the pride of life** by humbling himself even to the extent of the death the cross—he did that for us—for us, brethren and sisters!!! That we might behold it and be humbled, “therefore” and here is the consolation, “*God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*”—ALL TO **HIS GLORY**, ALL TO **HIS HONOUR**.

So Yahweh has sworn in our readings from Isaiah 14:24 "As I have planned, so shall it be, as I have purposed so shall it stand... This is the purpose that is purposed concerning the **whole earth**, and this is **the hand that is stretched out over all the nations**. For Yahweh of hosts has purposed, and who will change it? **His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back?**"

Who indeed! So my dear brethren and sisters with the prophet Isaiah and all the prophets we contemplate the coming of the Lord Jesus and we contemplate the humbling of all the earth and the exaltation of Yahweh's anointed, "Yahweh is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him" (Habakkuk 2: 20).