

THE FOLLY OF THE WISE

By

Elder Enoch Ofori Jnr

Text: "Professing to be wise they became fools" (Rom. 1:22).

Satan Creates a World of Wise Fools!

They rule the corridors of power; they project themselves as the saviours and defenders of mankind; they wow millions with their bombastic speeches and political finesse and stagecraft; they announce the dawn of a new epoch for mankind, a new world order, as they speak hope into the hearts of billions around the world.

But God just took them down a peg or two. It's all hot air, He says; they lack depth. They are good at rhetorics, but it's all folly repackaged as wisdom. He goes on to say, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe [scholar]? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" (1 Cor. 1:19-20).

They have all been shamed into silence. Their "wise" ideas terribly fall short!

Why is the wise of the world not so wise after all?

True wisdom is an elusive puzzle encased in a trite Biblical aphorism. Still, that's just a bit of the puzzle. The bigger mystery is that the wise, like the majority of mankind, are half dead and respond to stimuli that produce more death!

Sin has killed all unregenerate humanity, but sin is a way of life and that is the way of the world because lust rules the world of men.

This is how it works (note the interaction between the principal actors):

*And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;
Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:
Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others (Eph. 2:1-3).*

Believers alone are exempt. For the rest of humanity, they follow “the course of this world” charted for them by Satan, “the prince of the power of the air”.

How does Satan ensure that people follow his way of evil? He gets them to fulfill the lusts of the flesh and of the mind. He enslaves them to their (Satan-inspired) evil passions and by so doing gets them to obey him making them “the children of wrath” as far as God is concerned. A class of mankind who continually provoke divine wrath by their devilish way of living! From their thoughts to their hobbies!

Satan has all unregenerate men, including the so-called cream of society – the intelligentsia, the rich, the political class under his evil sway (1 John 5:19). He has deceived the whole world of fallen mankind (Rev.12:9).

The Creator has not made Himself unknown or unknowable. The clear evidence of His existence and “eternal power” is in the creation (Rom. 1:19-20) but men have chosen to ignore all these hard facts of a supernatural divine creation and allowed the devil into their lives as their master.

The title Christ gave the devil in recognition of his evil influence over men is “the prince of this world”:

Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out (John 12:31; also 14:30).

God is the Ultimate Ruler; “He is the Governor among the nations” (Ps. 22:28), but in terms of people’s behavior and lifestyles, Satan is the king of the world. As his modus operandi, he has divided himself into many tin gods: the god of money, the god of pleasure, the god of sex, the god of sports and the god of booze. His deceived followers devote their time and energies to these gods of materialism (Rev. 9:20). They’ve no time for the Creator.

But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him (1 Cor. 8:5-6).

Satan “the prince of this world”, also known as “the god of this world”, is the evil power most of the world’s great men owe allegiance to and answer to. He is their boss, and he has not only blinded their minds to the light of the knowledge of the glorious gospel of Christ (2 Cor. 4:3-4), but has also kept away from them true wisdom:

Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

*But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:
Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory (1 Cor. 2:6-8).*

The superior wisdom of God is “hidden”, but it’s not inaccessible; it’s obtainable from where it’s hidden – Christ “In whom are hid all the treasures of [divine] wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:3).

At once, the believer is wiser than all the world’s wisest people because he is in Christ, the repository of all divine wisdom, and Christ is in him:

*In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight.
All things are delivered to Me of My Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him (Luke 10:21-22).*

What a wonderful privilege! To know the Father God and His Son Jesus Christ. “This is life eternal” (John 17:3). It takes us into the very centre of the divine fellowship between the Father and the Son, and they take us into their confidence (John 14:20, 23) and we come to know “all things” (spiritual and vital to our salvation) than the world’s wisest people could ever know:

But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things (1 John 2:20).

The “unction from the Holy One” is what makes the difference! The unction is the anointing from Him. This is what we have received from Him as believers setting us apart and sharpening our sense of spiritual perception and understanding of God’s will.

This same anointing makes us wiser than Satan. We outsmart him (2 Cor. 2:11). We see through his tricks and therefore live above the lust-driven life in the world. The make-up of our character is more heavenly than earthly; we share in the nature of God (2 Pet. 1:4).

We handle life better, the godly way. No binge drinking, neither sexual promiscuity nor cheating but a sober, forgiving, caring spirit. We showcase the values of heaven. We order our life in the light of God’s Word (Ps. 119:105; Prov. 6:23). It’s the wisdom of God in practice.

Sadly this is the wisdom the elites of society have rejected and what wisdom have they?

The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them? (Jer. 8:9).

They have none of God's true wisdom, but they still bear the tag "wise men". And they are in no mood to agree they are unwise because they lack the wisdom of God found only in the Word of God, Christ. They are going to prove their worth!

The Folly Starts at the Foundation!

It flies in the face of common sense, but society's "key people" pretend to do the impossible: They have rejected Christ the foundation of all wisdom and knowledge and yet presume to build! Christ is the Stone the builders set at nought, but the reality is that He is simply indispensable:

*And He beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?
Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder (Luke 20:17-18).*

The occasion on which the Master spoke this prophetic truth was when the chief priests and the scribes and elders (the Jewish Council of Elders or Sanhedrin) descended on Him as He taught in the temple to ask Him a question: "Tell us, by what authority doest Thou these things? or who is he that gave Thee this authority?" (Luke 20:1-2).

His response was to pose His own question to them:

³*And He answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer Me:*

⁴*The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?*

The question caught them off guard, with all their malice and dishonesty on full display. They were caught between a rock and a hard place. They would simply not admit the truth:

⁵*And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; He will say, Why then believed ye him not?*

⁶*But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet.*

⁷*And they answered, that they could not tell whence it was.*

⁸*And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.*

It was at this stage that Christ spoke a parable to the people in which He rebuked the leaders of the people for being unfaithful and wicked stewards of God's "vineyard", representing His people. With His Word planted in the hearts of men but He Himself far away in heaven physically speaking, Jesus said, the Father leased out His vineyard to these leaders (or under-shepherds, see 1 Pet. 5:2-4), but when He sent His servants one after another, *at the time of harvest*, to demand fruit from the vineyard, they beat and maltreated the servants and drove them away empty-handed (vv. 9-13). Finally, He sent His own Son, thinking that they would

have some regard for Him, but His presence infuriated them the more. They conspired, “saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. So they cast Him out of the vineyard, and killed *Him*. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?” (vv. 14-15).

The sin of the “husbandmen” (leaders) given charge of God’s property is threefold: Not only did they fail to tend the vineyard to yield fruit (acceptable to their Lord, which is “fruit meet for repentance”, Matt. 3:8) but also persecuted those He sent (“His servants, the prophets” Amos 3:7) to demand from them fruit and accountability, as He was lawfully entitled to. Worst of all, they threw the Son out of the vineyard—they dispossessed Him of it—so they might have the vineyard all to themselves and run it the way they wanted! But they just courted their own destruction (v. 16).

The husbandmen have completely taken over the vineyard. The Son would neither have the vineyard nor any control over it whatsoever. Yet the Son is no ordinary son. He’s “the head of the corner”, and you can’t do without Him (John 15:5).

Even so, the building must be built.

And so the folly starts right at the foundation. Sadly, this will not be made manifest until the building has progressed far enough. Having rejected Christ, “the Wisdom and Power of God” (1 Cor. 1:24), the so-called builders are building on sand; the building will soon creak and come tumbling down:

*And every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:
And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house;
and it fell: and great was the fall of it (Matt. 7:26-27).*

So is the state of the world today. It’s a collapsed society, rotten to the core. Although this ‘modern’ society believes itself to be enlightened, their doings and life principles betray them as lacking in basic wisdom! The statistics make a heartrending, stomach-wrenching read. Lawlessness is a thriving subculture bubbling just below the surface of civil society – and particularly in the so-called advanced Western societies. Crime is the alternative lifestyle!

According to international crime rates monitored online, 12,408,899 criminal cases were recorded in the United States in the year 2011; 2,112,843 were recorded in Germany, 1,172,547 were recorded in France, 1,041,340 in the Russian Federation, 900,870 in Italy and 628,920 in Canada that same year (source: www.mapsofworld.com/world-top-ten/countries-with-high-reported-crime-rates.html).

With regard to abortion rates, 7,930,000 babies were aborted in China in 2011 representing 26.1 per 1000 women, 2,287,300 in the Russian Federation representing 68.4 out of every 1000

women, Vietnam 1,520,000 representing 83.3 per 1000 women, United States 1,365,700 representing 22.9 per 1000 women and Ukraine 635,600 accounting for 57.2 per 1000 women (www.whichcountry.com/top-5-countries-with-the-highest-total-number-of-abortions-in-the-world).

Of course, in China abortion is viewed as a method of birth control to keep its population in check in line with its one-child policy! Abortion is touted as a tool of population control for fear that a ballooning population – if unchecked – may outstrip resources and endanger lives and livelihoods.

It sounds plausible, but keeping the population low so that demand does not exceed available resources is not necessarily true if God is in the picture:

*Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry.
And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines... (1 Kings 4:20-21).*

The combined populations of Judah and Benjamin (two kingdoms) and Israel (ten kingdoms) were innumerable, but they ate and drank to their fill and had more to spare – they wine and dined in mirth!

The rule of God was acknowledged, and the citizenry enjoyed His largesse.

But in these days when the ruling elites have chosen to ignore God in nation building and therefore have thrown away Christ, the capstone as though He were some insignificant stone, it's the humanistic philosophy of trial and error that rules, often with disastrous consequences! They say let's free man from all notions of a divine Supreme Being; they say let people be – let them define their own morality and value judgments. And that naturally leads to a redefining of marriage and the family and even of their social significance.

The effect is staggering! Marriage is on shaky ground and begins to fall like a pack of cards. Modern nations compete to outdo one another in divorces. Here are the top 10 countries with the highest divorce rates:

1. Russia, 2. Belarus, 3. Ukraine, 4. Moldova, 5. Cayman Islands,
6. United States, 7. Bermuda, 8. Cuba, 9. Lithuania, 10. Czech Republic

Note that Eastern Europe, where Communism or rather political atheism once thrived, “has more marriage trouble than any other continent with 6 out of 10 countries from that region” (www.divorcecourt.com/top-10-countries-with-highest-divorce-rates).

Of course, a high divorce rate is not the only threat to marriage. The marriage institution itself – as God established it – is under threat. It has been bastardized into abominable unions – the moral disease of so-called same-sex ‘marriage’ in which the ‘married’ partners are two men or two women. It flies in the face of common sense, and its unnaturalness sticks out like a sore thumb. But hey, the ‘enlightened’ nations of the West insist it’s a leap forward in human rights. After all, the moral code has changed. It is not a Bible-thumping “Thou saith the LORD,” but what you feel; it is the reign of moral relativism.

Gay is the byword for ‘enlightenment’ in this Westernized godless world. The devil is having a guttural happy laugh! Human extinction is in the works!

Sadly, all of this is happening on the blind side of a technologically advanced society which considers itself the most enlightened, savviest human community ever to live on the earth.

Yet all the scientific and technological advancement and innovations, and the creature comforts they have produced, have made man none the happier. Stress and depression are the scourge of modern society. It’s boom season for psychologists and antidepressants!

“And when He [Jesus] was come near, He beheld the city [of Jerusalem], and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes” (Luke 19:41-42).

“O that thou hadst hearkened to My commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea” (Isa. 48:18).

“Great peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them” (Ps. 119:165).

“There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked” (Isa. 48:22).

Peace – and I mean not just the absence of war, but inner peace and tranquility – is a scarce commodity in the world today because the builders with all their claim to wisdom – and yet as foolish as they are – have rejected Christ, the Cornerstone, who is “the Prince of Peace”. How true the declaration of the Psalmist: “Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so He giveth His beloved sleep” (Ps 127:1-2). Yes, how true and yet how disdainful they have been! But judgment is on the way. He will grind them into powder!

The world does not know “the way of peace” because “There is no fear of God before their eyes” (Rom. 3:17-18).

The basic problem of the world is lack of godly fear “the beginning of wisdom” (Prov. 1:7). This fear of God is expressed through the keeping of the commandments of God:

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do His commandments: His praise endureth forever (Ps. 111:10).

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man (Eccl. 12:13).

But still the lack of godly wisdom does not mean no other wisdom is at work. The wisdom that rules the majority world of fallen mankind is the ‘wisdom from below’ (in contrast to the one from above). The wisdom has been described as “earthly” denoting its origin, the earth, the realm of evil over which Satan is the ruler; “sensual” denoting its effects on people, the stirring of bestial sensual desires, and “devilish” referring to its nature and actual source (Jam. 3:15-16).

Elder James was on point. Ours is the age of desire. Every evil fantasy is tolerated as somebody else’s lifestyle.

...except what God says. That is outmoded and retrogressive.

But surely God’s way is always the BEST way. Nobody ever erred walking His way even if, they are considered foolish by the ‘wise fools’ of this world:

And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein (Isa. 35:8).

The Reign of Folly

The Biblical euphemism is, of course, “earthly wisdom”. But it is wisdom apart from God, and that is folly.

Now, how do we know this earthly wisdom (aka folly) is ruling great centres of earthly power? What are its characteristics?

First, it’s manifest folly of an elitist brand in which they delude themselves to be wise:

“Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools” (Rom. 1:22).

Their actions betrayed their folly! Their deeds did not show them to be wise but rank fools.

And the key element is spiritual bankruptcy. These two—*spiritual bankruptcy and moral bankruptcy* – broadly define the nature of the folly of the wicked God describes in Romans chapter 1.

First, they deliberately refused to acknowledge the Creator God and indulged in the spiritual perversion of image worship in the form of lifelike human statues (like those of the Greco-Roman pantheon) and then, as their folly deepened, in the form of animals. Because they intentionally shut themselves from God, God in His responding judgment withdrew all His restraining Spirit from them, opening the floodgates to the uncleanness of their unbridled hearts “to dishonor their own bodies between themselves”. In the process, creation became the object of worship rather than the Creator, “who is blessed forever. Amen” (Rom. 1:23-25).

It’s a world that has turned things upside down, a world that has turned the truth of God on its head and therefore missed the very purpose for which God created them – to worship Him who alone is worthy of worship and to be thankful for His creation. And worship He will be worshipped for He is “blessed forever. Amen”. There is no dislodging this reality! It’s “Amen”!

¹¹ *And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;*

¹² *Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*

¹³ *And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

¹⁴ *And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever” (Rev. 5: 11-14).*

Would that all men would burst forth in adoration of the KING on the throne and His Lamb “that was slain”! But oh, how man troubles his own soul! Man is not of his own. He will try, but he cannot find true meaning and purpose for his life apart from God.

The truth is, man is wired to seek God and to worship Him – wired so by the Creator God who is his natural object of worship. But since the Fall to date, man has toyed with the idea of being his own master, of not needing God in his life. Yet the desire for God is natural to man, an entrenched part of him. And so he ends up, in his confused state of spiritual perversion, substituting God for created things as his ‘god!’

This was not only a problem for the ancients but persists so this day. Devotion to God is often misdirected to devotion to hobbies or sports, education or career as one’s sole purpose in life. The sad result is that “the creature is worshipped more than the Creator who is blessed forever”!

An absurdity I recently read about was the inauguration of an “Atheist mega church” in the US city of Los Angeles after the successful launch of the church of unbelievers in Great Britain. According to *Yahoo News*, “the inaugural Sunday Assembly in Los Angeles attracted several

hundred people bound by their belief in unbelief. Similar gatherings in San Diego, Nashville, New York and other US cities have drawn hundreds of atheists seeking the camaraderie of a congregation without religion or ritual.” That’s the purported idea behind the formation of the atheist church – “to find a new way to meet likeminded people, engage in the community and make their presence more visible in a landscape dominated by faith”. But there’s more.

Atheists feel an inner hunger they seek to quench. One of the founders of the atheist church Sanderson Jones confessed in the story: “If you think about church, there’s very little that’s bad. It’s singing awesome songs, hearing interesting talks, thinking about improving yourself and helping other people – and doing that in a community with wonderful relationship. What part of that is not to like?” (www.noetheendbegins.com/blog/?p=15624&relatedpostsexdude=20578).

Like all other humans, there is a vacuum in the hearts of atheists they long to fill; that vacuum is an innate desire for God (who they deny exists) in spite of themselves. But they have perverted the glory due to Him into devotion to an unreal god of reason. On a giant billboard mounted by the atheist movement in America advertising their Reason Rally in Washington DC were inscribed the words “Celebrate living without God!” against a skyline of skyscrapers.

Indeed, “the fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good” (Ps. 53:1).

Surely, if these atheists were not “fools”, they would have known that life without God equals death! Instead of life, they are celebrating a culture of death with the format of a religious service. Their refusal to acknowledge God is deliberate – a stubbornness the emptiness of their souls testifies against.

Be that as it may, they have chosen to be empty of God, and a heart emptied of God is emptied of holiness. Hence “even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient” (Rom. 1:28).

“A reprobate mind” is a rogue, corrupt mind thinking up only vile thoughts and behaviour. It’s a mind filled with uncleanness.

This manifests, first, in a dissolute life of sexual immorality, a life dominated by “vile affections”. And not just “vile affections” of the ordinary sort but “vile affections” typified by UNNATURAL SEX: women with women; men with men and reaping in their bodies a deadly venereal disease, a fitting penalty (vv. 26-27).

The rejection of God has produced a mind gone haywire – the effect of the withdrawal of God’s restraining Spirit from them as a fitting responding judgment to their conscious desire not to “retain God in their knowledge”. That is, to acknowledge Him for who He is as the Creator and

sustainer of life and therefore, worthy of worship. It also means they have refused to make God part of their store of knowledge and philosophy of life. To them God is not.

That singular act of unbelief is the slippery slope to all evil! Consequently, they were “filled with all unrighteousness” – a broad term heading an eclectic list of vices from fornication to unkindness (29-31). The sense one gets is that the God rejecters are already filled with the vices almost up to saturation point. Their whole being is immersed in them. Their life of evil works testifies to the fact that they are corrupt within; their inner selves are filled with evil. They are fornicators; they are wicked; they are covetous; they are malicious; they are envious, murderers and quarrelsome; they are deceivers and full of ill will. They are gossips and slanderers; they are God-haters as well as insolent and arrogant and boastful; they are inventors of new forms of evil; they are disobedient to parents; they are unreasonable, dishonest and loveless. They are implacable and unmerciful!

See how a ‘rogue’ mind alienated from God works. The thought crime! The evil it can think up! and realize how blessed you are as a believer! But leave the saintly spiritual ambience of Christian fellowship, and your mind can be just as depraved. In Christ, our otherwise corrupt minds are renewed by the Spirit of God resulting in our transformation into the righteous character of Christ (Rom. 12:2; 8:29; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9-10).

A converted heart or mind is what makes the difference in a world sold out to the devil. While an unconverted heart may recognize and wish to follow the righteousness of God’s law (Rom. 7:22), it takes the Spirit of God to strengthen the converted “inner man” or heart/mind to actually keep God’s spiritual law (Eph. 3:16; Rom. 8:2-4; Ps. 86:11; 119:34-36).

The God-rejecters are without this important heavenly resource and therefore remain fundamentally evil in their thinking and behaviour.

And they devise and do all the evil in full knowledge and awareness of the coming judgment of God. They have a hardness to the threat of divine judgment; they are unmoved by it. They have heard and read for themselves the inescapable judgment of God, but they are so steeped in evil to repent (see Acts 24:24-26). Ordinarily when people hear of God’s judgment they should seek to avoid it through the escape route of repentance. This was how people generally responded to John the Baptist’s message of repentance when all “Jerusalem and all Judea” went out to him as he preached on the banks of the Jordan river:

*Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan,
And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.
But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them,
O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?
Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance (Matt. 3:5-8).*

So then, the people who remain adamant to the message of salvation are those who have consciously elected to reject God or as the scriptures put it, refused to “retain God in their knowledge” or consciousness. These often consider themselves to be too sophisticated to take the Bible seriously. They would rather believe the ‘scientific’ theory of evolution than the simple creation story of the Bible.

And the things of God are usually simple requiring simple belief. As the Apostle Paul wrote in Heb.11:3, “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”

This conception of reality by faith is far simpler – and perhaps too simplistic – to the carnal mind than the convoluted theory of evolution which is full of guesswork and conjecture! God’s ways are simple but true and yet mysterious because He works by miracle.

Those who receive the Word of God as it is in truth – the wonderful Word of the Creator God – testify to its life-transforming power (1 Thess. 2:13).

But the wise fools of this world always consider themselves too smart for this and don’t even attempt to engage seriously with the WORD much less prove it. They’ll only realize the enormity of their folly when it’s too late!

Their End Proves their Folly

The doom of the Christ-rejecting wise men of this world is already decreed:

“Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder” (Luke 20:18).

The so-called wise builders have dared to reject the stone people reject at the peril of their eternal salvation. They stumbled over Him – that is, despised Him; attached little significance to Him – and He in turn fell on them in judgment, pulverizing them!

Christ cannot be held in contempt; He can’t be reduced to a footnote. He is the cornerstone. He is the linchpin of history. He is, in scriptural language, the “Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last” (Rev. 22:13). He opens and closes history; all events in between move towards the grand finale He has set; He and His saints have the glory with all the opposition crushed.

And the signs have already appeared. The nearer Christ’s return, the worse things get in the world. Of course, the prophet Daniel prophesied that the kingdoms of this world would be

marked by a steady deterioration in quality as the end approaches – a deterioration of quality from gold to dust:

³¹*Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.*

³²*This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass,*

³³*His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.*

³⁴*Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.*

³⁵*Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth (Dan. 2:31-35).*

The choice of precious metals communicates a specific message from God: the world will not get any better as time moves forward and world power changes hands. It's not the best but the worst in man that will come to define the earth's final days. Dr. Herbert Lockyer in his *All the Parable of the Bible* book writes:

“The degeneration of world kingdoms is represented in the diminishing value of the metals used. Silver is worth less than gold – brass less than silver – iron less than brass – clay less than iron, this latter being more perishable and more easily corroded or rusted than brass, silver and gold. The basic substance of each is dust, and dust must return to dust. All that failed in the hand of man is to pass away, and that which is kept in God's hand shall be introduced” (p. 94).

What about the stone “cut out without hands?”

Herbert Lockyer explains:

“After the process of deterioration there is the emergence and establishment of a new order represented by “a stone cut out of a mountain” crushing the feet of the colossus and tumbling it. None can doubt that this is the parable of the Messianic Kingdom, whose rule is to encompass the whole earth. Christ is the Stone able to grind men and nations to powder (Matt. 21:44). “In the days of those Kings” means those represented by the ten toes, ruling at the end of the Gentile Age. Gentile dominion was a gradual process passing from head to feet. But the Stone is not to fill the earth by degrees. Suddenly and swiftly, Christ, the King of kings, will come and usher in His universal reign. Some mistakenly hold that this Fifth Kingdom is a spiritual one – The Church. But this last kingdom is as literal as the four earthly Kingdoms we have considered. The Church is not here to destroy any earthly Kingdom but to extend her influence as a spiritual

Kingdom. As with the four metals, so with the Stone which is also made up of solidified dust. But what a difference! Christ took upon Himself the likeness of our flesh, and some of humanity's dust, glorified, in the wonder of heaven, and nothing can withstand the might of dust mingled with deity" (ibid. p. 95).

Presently we live in the age of the toes of part iron and partly clay – the worst period in man's history of which the Apostle Paul prophesied: "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:13). In Matt. 24, Christ spoke of this same time: "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (v. 12).

This is the age in which supposed educated, enlightened men and women are calling for the legalization of mind-bending drugs like marijuana ("wee) as well as prostitution.

It's a descent into hell, where it's the 'values' of hell that find the support of today's intelligentsia!

But the stone is coming! Blessed is he that has made the Stone his trust, but woe betide the world on which it falls. That day will manifest in full the great folly of the wise fools of this world:

¹⁵*And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;*

¹⁶*And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:*

¹⁷*For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev. 6:15-17).*

¹⁰*Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of His majesty.*

¹¹*The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.*

¹²*For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low" (Isa. 2:10-12).*

The LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. And He'll reign with His saints. Amen!