

WICKEDNESS IN EVERY AGE

The following statement was written by Martin Luther, who lived from 1483 to 1546. "The darkness grows thicker around us, and godly servants of the Most High become rarer and more rare. Impiety and licentiousness are rampant throughout the world, and we live like pigs, like wild beasts, devoid of all reason. But a voice will soon be heard thundering forth: 'Behold, the bridegroom cometh!' God will not be able to bear this wicked world much longer, but will come, with the dreadful day, and chastise the scornors of His Word."

I am sure that godly men in all ages of time have felt much the same as did Luther in his day---that wickedness had reached a crescendo and that the Lord's return was imminent. We cannot help but wonder what those men would think if they could see current conditions in the world. I would not be surprised if they would conclude that the age in which they lived had been almost angelic compared to ours. But, from God's perspective I feel certain that in every age the world has been sufficiently wicked to merit destruction. There has not been any age that I am aware of in which the words of John 5:19 would not have precisely described the state of things as they then existed: "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." Christ "gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world" (Gal. 1: 4).

In every age fallen men are all, at their best state "altogether vanity" (Psalm 39:5), and we need not expect better of them than they are constantly rendering. But there is indeed coming a day, in God's own time, when "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat," and "the earth also and the works therein shall be burned up" (II Peter 3:10). Naturally the scoffers hope such a day will never come, and they may actually think it will never come, but that will not prevent its arrival, exactly on time. The saints will be taken home to Glory and the wicked will be appointed their portion in the lake of fire.

---Elder Ralph Harris