



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

A Question Frequently Asked But Rarely Answered



The question in the headlines of The Belfast Telegraph has been asked by many in Ulster over the last 30 years. Few have ever received a satisfactory answer, chiefly because they ask the wrong person. We should direct the question to the Lord for He it is Who rules and reigns in the kingdoms of men. He orders all things after the counsel of His own good will.

The answer may only be discovered when first we know why we have "sorrow and grief" in this Province. Where have our troubles come from? Is it because of a lack of neighbourliness? Is it something in

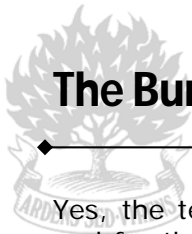
the national profile of the Ulster people?

Ecumenists and sociologists have been boring us to distraction expounding their views on this subject for years. Nothing of what they say makes any sense, since their prescription for a cure is what we have been forced to swallow for years with no benefit whatever. Rather, the situation grows worse.

Why have we trouble?

Let it be stated clearly that God does send trouble and affliction upon nations and communities. *I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it*, Leviticus 26:16. Why did God make such a threat to Israel? The verses that appear before this text tell us the reason why. *I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright. But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; and if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant: I also will do this unto you . . .* Leviticus 26:13-16. Any people who profess to be followers and worshippers of Jehovah cannot disregard His Word with impunity. Rather, the consequences of such disobedience is His heavy hand of affliction and judgment upon that people.

Now this runs contrary to the teaching and the practice of modern Christianity. Those who profess to be Christians believe, for they are so taught, that whether we read and obey God's Word has no real bearing on our life here on earth and where we go after death. Every day there are those buried who neither knew nor cared what God said in His Word and yet the mourners were assured by the cleric at the grave that their loved one would one day rise from the dead and share in the glory of Christ. That is an abominable lie! *But if ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as it was against your fathers*, 1 Samuel 12:15.



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Yes, the terrorist murderers are responsible for the grief and heartbreak that they cause and for these things they will be judged, but they are but instruments in the hands of an offended God. Unpalatable as this doctrine may be for some, it is nevertheless truth. O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets, Isaiah 10:5-6. The wicked and idolatrous Assyrians were the instrument of God's judgment against disobedient Israel.

So then, the question must be asked of the Lord, if we are to come truly to the root of the troubles in Ulster. If we do seek an answer from the Lord, then we will find it in His Word. We will not only have the cause of the troubles explained but the way to peace and prosperity clearly set down. This is a process through which God's people have passed on many occasions. As the prodigal (Luke 15:11-24) recognised that his troubles were his own making, and that returning home to the father he had offended and openly repenting and seeking forgiveness from him was the right way to go, so let Ulster see that a return to the God Whose name we profess, is the path that will lead to blessing and true peace.

Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it , Isaiah 1:18-20.